

Spring comedy hour brings laughs

By Greg Stoltz
The Clackamas Print

The spring-term Student Performance Showcase starts today, June 1, packing you into a lunch-hour full of nothing but humor.

Every term as part of the showcase with the same name, the Student Performance Showcase is all about fun this year. Whether you like your comedy light and silly, dark and edgy or maybe a little bit of the naughty side, you'll get it in this show.

There are three parts to the showcase: stand-up comedy, improv and student-directed plays.

The comic format is a no-proposition. The comedians have about three minutes so if you like them, they help but leave you wanting more. If you don't, well, they'll be gone before you know it.

The improv is fast-paced, energetic and full of opportunities for audience participation. Comedy improv is made up of individual games, or "forms" they are known in improv. Theatre Instructor David English said it's essentially like the television show *Whose Line is it Anyway?* When during practice, the improv moved at lightning speed with a whole bunch of people. The best of the day was "There and Back Again" and "Questions." Of course, the scenes are different every time so your results may vary.

In "Questions," the cast splits into two lines and the questions at the front of each line are questions at each other. If someone accidentally asks a question, makes a comment or freezes up, they go to the back of their line and the next person steps up.

"There and Back Again," a single cast member starts a scene until a referee yells "freeze." At each freeze, a new scene comes in and starts with the person already there. This continues until everyone is in. Then people go out one at a

time, revisiting and continuing each of the scenes they did before.

The student-directed plays consist of a one-act and two short scenes. Artist in residence James Sharinghouse, who directs all three, said he selected the plays because he wanted something that would be entertaining for the audience, and fun to work on.

The first scene, "One Minute Play," is a brief glimpse into the life of Dave, certainly one of the glumest fellows you're likely to meet. Sharinghouse describes the scene as funny, because it's so dark.

"Women in a Playground," the second scene, is very sarcastic, said Sharinghouse. He said it has the really bright, optimistic person and the really dark, not-so-social person.

"It's great to play with those characters," Sharinghouse said, "because you see those kinds of people everywhere."

The play portion of the show finishes with a farce called "The Hardy Boys and the Mystery of Where Babies Come From."

Derek Sweet, who plays Frank Hardy, said in this play, brothers Frank and Joe Hardy are 21-year-olds with the maturity of 12-year-olds.

Director Sharinghouse said, "I could make the boys either look really smart, but they're really stupid, or I could make them look really stupid but they're really smart." Sharinghouse did not, however, reveal which option he chose.

Asked about the play, Nick Jones, who plays Joe Hardy, said, "I'd say it's something that everyone can enjoy — maybe not like really small children."

The primary reason to keep the small children at home is Nurse Ratched, played by Madelynn Marcotte. As Sharinghouse put it, "A nurse is normally pretty straightforward and nice, but our Nurse Ratched is [a] very elderly, sexual woman."

The plays and improv are part of every performance, but because there are a dozen or so stand-up comics this term, only

four will appear during each noon show. The Thursday evening show will feature the full complement of comics as well as all the rest of the pieces.

The Spring Term Student Performance Showcase runs Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, June 1, 2 and 4, from noon — 1 p.m., plus a

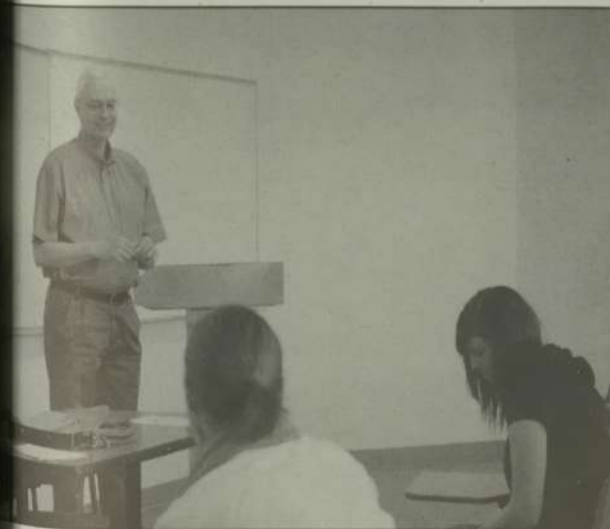
longer show, Thursday, June 4, at 7:30 p.m. All shows are in Niemeyer Center and admission is free.



Michelle Newby Clackamas Print

Stefon Smith practices his comedy act for his upcoming performance. The student showcase, June 1, 2 and 4, offers a chance to watch comedy in many forms, and in some cases get involved with the acts themselves.

Erotic fiction pays off for Clackamas English teacher



Jessica Foster Clackamas Print

Clackamas English Instructor Paul Crumrine answers questions in his English Composition course he is teaching this semester.

Abigail Neet

The Clackamas Print

Clackamas English teacher Paul Crumrine has been writing fiction stories for years, but it wasn't until he began writing gay erotica that he got paid for his work.

It started in the mid 90s with a story about Leonardo DaVinci.

"I actually made money from it," Crumrine explained.

He had written science fiction and mystery but had never made any money from his stories. It was not until he read gay erotica and knew he could do better than that things changed for him.

Crumrine's most recent work will be featured in "Best Gay Love Stories 2010" and is available at amazon.com.

"It's really fun. You get to do all sorts of stories," he said.

"He writes very, very well," his office mate of several years and

fellow English department member Leslie Ormandy said.

English department chair Kate Gray is ecstatic that he is getting published.

"When instructors succeed in their areas of expertise, the success can only benefit our students," Gray said.

All of his stories are completely fictional. In one story the main character is killed in the second paragraph and ends up in gay heaven. One reviewer called one of his stories the most subversive one in the book.

Crumrine has only been published in compilations, so far, but has written 10 novels in his lifetime and is negotiating with a publisher about writing a book of only short stories. The stories would have horror, science fiction and fantastical bizarre themes.

Another thing Crumrine likes to include in his writing is humor; he does not take himself too seriously and believes in keeping things light-

hearted.

"Even if someone gets killed it's fun," Crumrine described. "They are essentially happy stories."

Crumrine got into the erotica genre by seeing calls for submissions describing the criteria and just began writing to fit.

His obvious passion for fiction writing was described as something he falls into, unaware of the passage of time, with words coming out of his fingers without being conscious of typing.

He can get a trigger from anything, a leaf falling, which needs a person and it goes on and on.

Crumrine, who part-time teaches writing composition classes, joked that he spends his spare time grading student papers. That is not all he does. When not creating fantasy worlds he is politically active and is a fair-weather bicyclist. He also has a little Paul. Little Paul is his cat, who in fact, is not very little at 23 pounds. The name came from a friend of his who named him after him.