

## SHADOW: Local play recounts Oregon cult

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In the first scene, we were introduced to siblings Henry and Jane (played by Sam Munger and Reba Sparrow, respectively). Henry is becoming more and more disturbed that his sister is spending time with Joshua and tries to convince her to leave. This scene was one where a relationship had to be established from the beginning, and these two actors did an excellent job. It truly felt like they were siblings and the emotion behind Henry's pleading made the scene all the more powerful.

The second scene was a monologue delivered by Joshua (played by Jeff Schwab) as he preaches to his followers. Schwab's portrayal of Joshua was at first very jarring, as he held nothing back in his delivery.

tar from his body, Joshua her why she left and why she returned now.

This scene also demonstrated the power that Joshua has over his followers, but specifically us the relationship between Henry and Jane. From this scene it was hard to tell whether he was hard to tell whether he was her or just wanted her to stay in the cult, but it was clear that she had feelings for him and didn't want to leave him.

"One of my biggest questions (was) where am I sincere, where am I being manipulated," said Schwab. "And I think of the time I'm sincere, I believe these things I'm not. I think being sincere is a choice. It's more interesting, more plausible and scarier."

For those concerned about the nude scene, Ryan Davis, an English instructor and the technical director, said it was handled tastefully.

"It's a progression of feelings of character, of consistency of faith, of loss of faith, of doubt and disbelief. We have these different levels of stripping away the facade. I'm sure you guys have seen, maybe not in theater or movies, where there was gratuitous nudity that served no purpose but to get tickets sold. That's what we're doing here. It's fully done and really in character and that's a necessary piece of the play, while in most mainstream media it is unnecessary."

PWNW is part of the Portland Ground Festival, a collection of new local plays. The event features 68 new works and passes are on sale at fertileground.org. The festival runs from January 20 through 30.

Although it was short, the presentation of scenes from "Shadow Testament" intrigued me and made me want to see the full show to learn what takes place. For those interested in seeing the full production, "Shadow Testament" will be performed January 20-22 and 24 at Performance Works North, 4625 SE 67th Ave. in Portland. All shows start at 8 p.m. and are \$10 per person. The door opens at 7:30 p.m. and are sold on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information, call 503-367-2000 or e-mail tickets@portlandw.com.

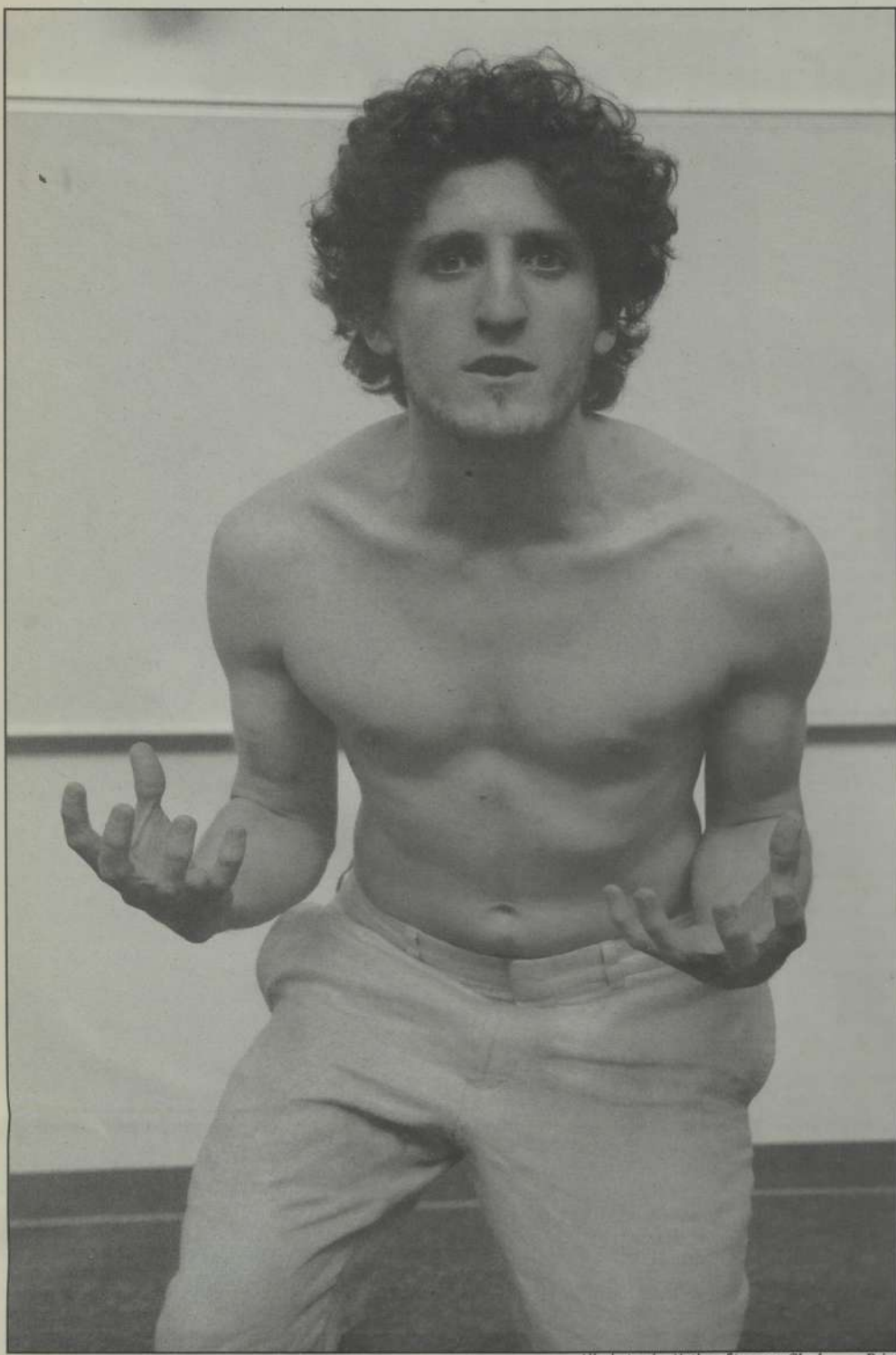
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*It's a progression of unveilings of character, of constitution ...*

Ryan Davis  
English instructor

"We see the power that Joshua exudes and the control he holds over these women with his words," said the play's director Angie Hughes. "He's very charismatic and very believable, and that helps draw these women in. He really makes them believe what he is saying and it causes them to do what he wants, or what they want, actually."

The third scene took place just after Joshua was tarred and feathered by the men of the town. They left him bound to a tree on Kiger's Island (where he and his followers held most of their meetings). Jane had already left the group, but she still cared for Joshua and returned to free him. As she removes the



All photos by Nathan Sturgess Clackamas Print

**Top:** Jeff Schwab delivers a prolific monologue as Joshua, a charismatic cult leader empowered by the control he holds over his followers in the play "The Shadow Testament."

**Bottom Left:** Reba Sparrow (center) plays Jane, a character based on real life Corvallis native Ester Mitchell who ended up in an insane asylum. The play is the story of how she came to be there.

**Bottom Right:** Reba Sparrow and Jeff Schwab act out a scene for "The Shadow Testament" in a presentation held for Clackamas students at Roger Rook 220 on Jan. 10.

