

IN YOUR FACE

THRIVING THEATRE! SHAKES UP AUDIENCES WITH IMPROV ABSURDITY. BY ALANA YANKUS

Once a month Iovino's transforms into a theater and hosts entertainment *a la* ABC's "Whose Line is it Anyway?," as the members of **Thriving Theatre! Improv** present an hour of improvisational comedy. Like the television show, actors take turns performing whatever silliness comes into their heads based on audience suggestions. Unlike the TV show, this live performance is uncensored. The audience is treated to heavy doses of sexuality, crude language, and an entertaining evening.

Thriving Theatre! Improv Nights are the brain-child of thespians Elle Poindexter and Kimberly Gifford Wear. The women formed Thriving Theatre! in 2002, performing a season's worth of two-woman shows and bringing a taste of "big city culture" to Corvallis. In 2003 they added several actors to the company and garnered a wealth of positive reviews. Later that year Elle and Kimberly started the improv group, bringing in Brad Fortier from Portland's Brody Theatre, a venue dedicated entirely to improvisational theatre and comedy. Fortier conducted workshops to help the creativity flow and kick improv nights off to a running start.

This season, the company made its debut at Iovino's to a small but intrigued crowd. The comedy was a surprise even to those who expected it. Though not the typical fodder of Corvallis weeknight entertainment, it was well

stage, actors chanted pornographic poems (complete with interpretive dance) and invented words such as "spontaneityously".

The December show was even crazier than the first two. It's possible that at some point every member of the company was fondled by (and fondled) every other member in a wide variety of sketches, and the packed house was very appreciative. Santa, who was tired of cookies and milk, stole someone's mommy and took her to the North Pole, where they apparently had incredible sex. Very upset by the situation, Daddy accused Mommy of sticking her neck out "like a Christmas dinner for everyone to suck on at will."

In a skit based on emotions written down by audience members and drawn at random from a hat (sound familiar?) anything can happen. A mother/daughter skit included the mother screaming, "Everyone on the block is gonna know what a little cunt you are," then two minutes later saying, "I just popped you out, you're free to do whatever you want once they cut the cord."

The show has its ups and downs. Some skits are better than others. You wish some would go on forever, while some go on too long. But the overall result of a night of improv comedy at Iovino's is five dollars of good entertainment and a free ab workout. The uncensored nature of the show will satisfy anyone's need for more sex and shouted obscenities in the entertainment world.

MEMBERS OF THRIVING THEATRE IMPROV! PERFORM NEXT AT IOVINO'S RISTORANTE JAN. 26.



received. Seasoned company veterans filled the hour with international poets, bizarre children's stories, and the most unusual portrayal of Halloween festivities Corvallis is ever likely to see. The next month's show introduced three new members of Thriving Theatre! Improv and a new dynamic. Skits that started with "Take that, sucka!" ended with making out on

A slap in the face to the FCC (which thankfully does not control live entertainment) and an hour of good laughs await those who make their way to Iovino's, a small Italian restaurant on Corvallis' First Street, for the next improv night Jan. 26. Thriving Theatre! Improv's dick and fart jokes wake up this sleepy town. ★

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