

TUESDAY TRIVIA NIGHT

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Theater BY SHARLEEN NELSON

More Classics, More Whimsy, More Chills

Spring theater review, part II

Willamette Repertory Theatre and Cottage Grove's Cottage Theatre round out the 2007 theater season with a multiplicity of productions — from classics such as *The Glass Menagerie*, *Count Dracula* and *The Wizard of Oz* to a modern-day love story, a whimsical Irish comedy and a spine tingling ghost tale.

Willamette Rep kicks off the spring season with Tennessee Williams' *The Glass Menagerie* on Feb. 7. Rich in symbolic themes of disappointment, escape and expectation, Williams' play provides a disturbing snapshot of the lives of three dysfunctional family members — a shy young woman who retreats from the world to the comfort of caring for her collection of glass animals, an overbearing and bitter mother and a brother who longs to leave them both behind.

Stones in His Pockets, opening April 4, looks like it will be engaging and fun. Cultures clash when Hollywood invades a rural Irish village in this whimsical Irish comedy-drama. The production is particularly challenging because a cast of two assumes all of the play's 15



Michelle Morain will star in *Glass Menagerie*

phere and the power of suggestion to create audience fear and tension.

The Fantasticks opens on April 13 and *Prelude to a Kiss* follows on June 9. Opening Aug. 10 is *Working*, a dynamic and spirited musical based on the best-selling book of interviews with American workers by Studs

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roles. With Willamette Rep's reputation for solid, quality productions, *Stones* is sure to be well received. Returning on May 18, 19 and 20 is *Readings in Rep* — three days, three lesser known plays with three separate casts performing in a casual, intimate setting.

On tap this year from **Cottage Theatre** are two suspense/horror productions. Debuting Jan. 26 is playwright Stephen Mallatratt's adaptation of Susan Hill's 1983 novel *The Woman in Black*, which follows the story of a young solicitor sent to a remote house to wind up the affairs of a recently deceased woman and the menacing specter he encounters there. With only two actors on-stage, the play doesn't rely on fancy special effects; rather, it focuses on good old-fashioned storytelling, a taut, brooding atmos-

Terkel. Opening Oct. 12 at the theater is *Count Dracula*. In this adaptation of Bram Stoker's novel by playwright Ted Tiller, the story has been updated from its 19th century Victorian setting to a 1930s insane asylum. Billed as a witty mystery/comedy and featuring a number of surprising but uncomplicated stage effects, *Dracula* is well timed for Halloween spookiness. Still, when it comes to chills, I'll take a good ghost story over another version of the neck-biting, blood-sucking fiend any time.

Cottage Theatre ends the year with the perennial family favorite *The Wizard of Oz* on Nov. 30. Renowned for its signature large casts and elaborate staging, *Oz* provides an opportunity for Cottage Theatre to involve the entire community. **EW**

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Opening Nights

KIMBERLY AKIMBO

Opens Friday, Jan. 12 at the Lord Leebrick Theatre. What's scarier for a teenager: a chronic aging disease, freaky family members, death or true love? Apparently, *Kimberly Akimbo* can answer this question for all of us who survived the hormonal surges of adolescence and can, perhaps, give hope to those still in the terrifying teens. Show dates are Jan. 12-13, 18-21 & 25-28 and Feb. 1-3. Call 465-1506 for tickets.