



NO SHAME EUGENE ACTORS  
CREATE A 'SHARK MOB'

PHOTO BY TODD COOPER

# WALK OF SHAME

**NO SHAME THEATRE** celebrates 5 years of renegade performances downtown on First Friday ArtWalk **BY RICK LEVIN**

**C**onversing with Jeff Geiger is an object lesson in the power of pure enthusiasm. As artistic director of No Shame Eugene, Geiger is a tireless advocate for the sort of populist, no-holds-barred participation in art that defines his outfit, which is less theatrical troupe than a renegade vaudeville venue in which anyone can participate. No Shame Theater, as Geiger describes it, approaches the planned chaos of flash mobs, where minimal rules harness maximum creativity.

"We're much more of an intentionally community theater," Geiger says of No Shame. "It's chaos. It's fun. It's kind of like putting together a mixed tape."

That mixed tape, as you will, comes together once a month in the Atrium Building downtown, during First Friday ArtWalk. No Shame shows consist of 15 performance pieces, each lasting five minutes or less and including everything from skits, dance and monologues to readings, short plays and musical performances — whatever floats your boat. It's not unusual for a night of No Shame to include, among other things, a belly dance, a shark attack, a monologue about punk rock and a comic digression on "the non-mystery of the male orgasm."

This Friday, June 6, No Shame Eugene celebrates five years of ongoing performances with a special show featuring the best five-



NO SHAME'S  
JEFF GEIGER

PHOTO BY ATHENA DELENE

minute acts from the past half decade. Also on tap is music by Betty and the Boy as well as performances by Eugene Ballet Company, Oregon Contemporary Theatre and Eugene Opera, all of whom were "challenged" to show up, Geiger explains with a smile.

"It's big," he says of the celebration. "It's kind of cool, thematically, because the whole thing is based on five-minute performances."

In fact, only three rules govern the madness that is No Shame Theater: All works must be original; all works must be under five minutes; and no breaking anything, "including the wall," Geiger jokes.

"It's an unjuried, uncensored show," Geiger says, adding that the whole thing has a classic "late-night" format similar to Saturday Night Live or Chicago's Second City. "It's the first 15 pieces," he adds of the monthly selection of live acts. "If there's more, we do a lottery system, and we don't know what we're going to get. A lot of them are walk-ins. It's anything — experimental, standup, sketch, prose, poetry."

No Shame Eugene is a local manifestation of more than a dozen No Shame theaters around the country, including outfits in Austin, New York, Los Angeles, Miami, Cleveland and Fairbanks, Alaska. The movement originated nearly three decades back at the University of Iowa, when students Todd Ristau and Stan Ruth wanted to provide