

MARriage

THE NAKED TRUTH ABOUT

LAUGHTER IS THE ONLY ITEM BEING SERVED IN THE COASTER THEATRE'S FALL PLAY 'DON'T DRESS FOR DINNER'

By NANCY McCARTHY

Those who attend “Don’t Dress for Dinner” at the Coaster Theatre Playhouse won’t have to wear formal attire, but they will have to bring an appetite for a comedy full of laughs.

In this tightly written romp that resembles a Shakespearean farce, the question to be considered by the actors and the audience alike is: Who is whom when?

Director Mick Alderman manages to keep the dizzying disarray of mistresses, friends, cooks and Suzis flowing smoothly. That may be because this is the third time he has encountered the play. He directed it as a readers theater for an American Association of University Women benefit in 2001 and designed the lighting for it when it was staged at the former River Theater in Astoria in 2007.

“I found it hysterical,” Alderman said. “I laughed all the way through rehearsals. It keeps me laughing. In my 30 years of theater, I’ve never seen a funnier play.”

A local playwright, filmmaker, actor and author, Alderman began telling stories in grade and high school when he and his friends filmed stop-motion animations with clay and action figures. In a theater class at Clatsop Community College, teacher Del Corbett taught Alderman how to design the



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In “Don’t Dress for Dinner,” Jean Rice, second from left, plays Suzette, a cook who must pretend to be the mistress of Robert, played by Jason Husa, third from left. But Robert is actually having an affair with Jacqueline, played by Jenni Tronier, left, who is married to Bernard, played by Ryan Hull, right. Bernard is also having an affair with his mistress, Suzanne, for whom Suzette was going to cook a romantic meal.

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lighting for theatrical productions, and Alderman has been doing that for several years at the Coaster Theatre and other North Coast venues.

As a screenwriter, Alderman wrote the scripts for several of his own films, including the supernatural thriller “Haunted Shore,” winner of the Best Narrative Feature of a Pacific Northwest Filmmaker at the

Eugene International Film Festival of 2011.

Several of his own full-length plays have been staged locally.

Alderman also authored a memoir, “Three Weeks With the Goonies,” detailing his experience on the set of “The Goonies” as a guest of director Richard Donner when the movie was shot in Astoria in 1984.

The “fun part” about directing a play, Alderman said, is not having to worry about camera angles and lighting each scene, which requires so much attention when making films.

“When I’m doing that, I don’t get to interact with the actors, but as a director, all I have to worry about is the acting, and that was great. We just have to tell the story.”

The story of “Don’t Dress for Dinner” takes place outside of Paris. Bernard has invited his mistress, Suzanne, to his home while his wife, Jacqueline, is away for the weekend. Bernard’s best friend, Robert — who, it turns out, is Jacqueline’s lover (unbeknownst to Bernard) — also is visiting, unaware that

Continued on Pg. 11