



PHOTO BY DANNY MILLER

Jim Dott plays the title role in "Variations of the Death of Trotsky." On the last day of his life, the Russian leader — who was murdered with an ice ax — ponders the role of the proletariat and the state of his flower garden.

EACH OF THE SIX PIECES STANDS ALONE; THOUGH, IN EACH, THE COMMON DENOMINATOR IS TIMING AND LANGUAGE.

"David Ives really arrived on the New York theater scene in installments in the late '80s sprinkling his witticisms around in the form of one-act plays at assorted festivals about town. When he gathered them up into a goofy six-pack on how we communicate and labeled it 'All in the Timing,' it was 'Open Sesame' to a long run," wrote Harry Haum in an interview with Ives in Playbill Magazine in 2013, during a 20th anniversary reprise of "All in the Timing" in New York City.

"(In one-act plays) you can fundamentally do whatever you want, so the range of things that happen is much wider than it is in conventional two-hour plays," said Ives in Playbill Magazine. "One-act plays are so often made of one image or one particular happening that explodes for 10 minutes, then stops. The intensity is all the greater because it's so short. It challenges a playwright's talent for compression, for making every word count, which is something I

really like."

"Ives has written quite an amazing play — a really worthwhile play," said James, director of the Astoria production. "He revolutionized short scene comedy. And he has a wild sense of humor."

James was also inspired to pick Ives' play because of the Performing Arts Center itself.

"I was intrigued by what I had seen at the PAC, the plays that had been there recently," James said. "With simple settings, the space intrigues me. I wanted to focus on the actors, doing something that fit in that space."

"Edward James left Astoria a zillion years ago to pursue his theatrical passion in New York, the Midwest and eventually Portland," said Carol Newman at December's Clatsop County Cultural Coalition awards. The show is funded, in large part, by a grant from the Clatsop County Cultural Coa-



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In "The Universal Language," a shy woman played by Gigi Chadwick, left, tries to overcome her loneliness by learning a new language called Unamunda. But can she trust the strange-speaking man (Patrick Webb) who helps her — or is he leading her on a merry dance?



PHOTO BY DANNY MILLER

Gigi Chadwick and Patrick Webb act out a scene during rehearsal for "All in the Timing."

lition using money donated to the Oregon Cultural Trust. To say that the North Coast cast appreciates James' expertise is an understatement.

"This is my fourth play working with James. His productions are just so good. It's his balance with the actors, the dialogue, the costumes, the stage sets and the staging — it just sort of happens if you get it just right. Edward James does that," said 30-year veteran costume and stage designer Terry McDonald, on her way to find a purple necktie for Patrick Webb's role.

"It's a thrill to learn from Edward James," said Webb. "He's so skilled; we're lucky to have him in our community. He's very good at interpreting, looking for vocal variety, focusing on what your lines mean. I've learned an enormous amount from him."

"All in the Timing" premiered off-Broadway in New York in 1993 running for 606 performances. According to harpercollins.com, in 1996, after Shakespeare's plays, it was named the most performed play in the U.S.

If, as the familiar saying goes "the play's the thing," get set for an evening of pure theatrical enjoyment.