

"Staring Back" -- a Unique Play About Disabled People at IFCC

by Bob Lothian

"Staring Back," playing through July 20 at the Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center, is a comedy revue dedicated to those who work to dispel widely held myths about disabilities.

The play features two actors who are confined to wheelchairs, two who are blind, and one who is deaf and who has difficulty speaking. Two of the actors are able-bodied.

In 17 short skits, the revue sometimes pokes fun at able-bodied people. Perhaps the more difficult thing done in "Staring Back" is to attack stereotypes in a way that allows disabled people to laugh a little at themselves.

The play is not patronizing, but rather a performance statement that is part of the culture of disabled people. Several of the skits could be cartoons by disabled artist John Callahan brought to the stage.

In "Mr. Secretary," a new employee is hired into an office of disabled people. They are amused at how awkward he is in an environment they can cope with.

"When you see someone like that, it makes you feel how fortunate you are," says a woman in a wheelchair.

In "Handicapped Parking," an able-bodied man in a hurry parks in a spot reserved for the disabled. When the parking attendant confronts him for not having a permit, the man shoots himself in the foot.

"O.K., here's your permit," says the attendant.

In a disabled version of "Jack and the Beanstalk," Jack is confined to a wheelchair and wears a T-shirt that says, "Medicate Me."

Other skits feature Romanian wheelchair acrobats, a "disability store" where customers haggle over disabled workers as if they were used cars, and a restaurant with "waitresses on wheels."

The entire cast finishes the performance with a musical number where they sing "Stop Staring Back."

The final play in the IFCC multicultural season, "Staring Back" was written by Susan Nussbaum, an actress who was disabled as a

result of a car accident, and Lawrence Perkins. The play is directed by Terry J. Nelson and features Jim Ballantine, Patrick Bloedorn, Janine DeLauney, Jeri Dunham, Michael Foster, Ross Huffman-Kerr, and Druce Kelly.

"Staring Back" is another milestone play staged at IFCC, an artistic gem that both entertains and sensitizes.

Second Annual Banquet

The Portland Sickle Cell Anemia Foundation, Inc. will hold its Second Annual Banquet on September 20th, 1986, at 6:00 p.m. at the Executive Lodge, 6221 N.E. 82nd. A no-host bar begins at 5:30. The tickets will be on sale beginning July 15th, at the Foundation, located at 3802 N.E. Union. This year the banquet will be combined with an auction headed by Mr. Curt Cammack, Auctioneer, and assisted by Mrs. Mary Donald.

Auction items are needed. We are requesting new items and items can be such as simple wills, certificate for perms, hair cut, manicure, sewing machine repair, alterations, baby sitting, free lube jobs, etc. Those wishing to contribute may call the Foundation at 249-1366.

Contributors should send a statement of approximate value for your tax deductible receipt.

Gauze, the thin, open cloth made of cotton and other fibers, probably takes its name from the ancient city of Gaza where this type of cloth was first made.

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Author To Autograph Book

Cheryl Kolander, author of the new *A Silk Worker's Notebook* (Interweave Press), will speak briefly about her work and autograph her book at Hoffman Gallery Bookstore at the Oregon School of Arts and Crafts, 8245 S.W. Barnes Road, Portland, on Monday, July 7 at 10:30 a.m.

Kolander, a local weaver, dyer and silk merchant, learned weaving by studying old books and manuals. Her love of fine fabrics, damask weaving and brilliant colors led to a 15-year study of silk and natural dyeing. This study has crystallized into *A Silk Worker's Notebook*, which gives a history of silk and an overview of working with silk.

Cheryl Kolander is currently studying at the National College of Naturopathic Medicine in Portland, investigating the medicinal properties of silk.

Hoffman Sales Gallery and Bookstore is open Monday - Thursday, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m., and Friday - Sunday, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. The gallery will be open over the holiday weekend, July 5-6, and on Sunday, July 6, homemade cinnamon rolls, fruit and juices will be offered by the Hands-On Cafe.

Old Fashioned Summer SALE



PCC OFFERS DRIVER'S TRAINING FOR ENGLISH-AS-A-SECOND-LANGUAGE STUDENTS

A summer term class in driver's training for students with limited English speaking skills will begin Thursday, June 26, at the Portland Community College Ross Island Center, 049 S.W. Porter Street.

The 10-week course is intended to help students of English As a Second Language to pass the Oregon driver's test and obtain operator's licenses.

John Denecke will instruct the course, which will include six hours of behind-the-wheel training and 30 hours of classroom instruction.

The class will meet from 6 to 9pm in the third floor library at Ross Island Center. Tuition will be \$30. Students must possess Oregon driving permits.

Further information is available from Cascade Community Services, 240-5303.

ELDERLY MEAL SITE DIRECTORY AVAILABLE

To promote improved diet of the elderly, and therefore quality of life, The Portland/Multnomah Commission on Aging has published a meal site directory. The *Survey of meal sites for the elderly in Multnomah County* contains a listing of sites operated by churches, Loaves & Fishes, senior centers, ethnic organizations and other agencies. Information for each listing includes days of service, fees, eligibility restrictions, and other services available.

The Directory was prepared by the Nutrition Committee. It is free of charge and may be obtained at the Commission on Aging office, 1120 S.W. 5th, 4th floor.

Contact: **Becky Wehrli**
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