

ENTERTAINMENT



BROADWAY BOUND REPORT

"In The Spotlight"

Brenda Phillips - "Mamie"
In Simply Heavenly"



by Garland Lee Thompson

Currently featured in the Portland Repertory production, "A... My Name Is Alice," actress/singer, Brenda Phillips is "on a roll." This veteran player on Portland theatre stages is giving audiences another good "turn of the screw," as she puts "the Phillips screwdriver" method in motion and high gear at the Rep's new space. She is singing well and is wonderful with a good company of actresses; Suzanne Irving, Rae Randall, Adair Chappell, Jayne Muirhead, under Musical Director, Teresa Metzger and Brenda Hubbard, the Rep's artistic director, directing the show. Indeed, Ms. Phillips adds more than just "color" to the show.

The show is billed as an "adult musical," dealing with women's issues in the '80's, that came out of the Women Project of the American Place Theatre in New York. It's a "Saturday Night Live," revue-type format, without the guys, with the girls really "sticking it" to "the dudes."

This past season, Brenda Phillips' fans have seen her "fine theatrewares" in "Little Shop of Horrors," at the Portland Civic Theatre (This oldest of Portland's community Theatres might yet survive if they did more to keep her around).

Now, Ms. Phillips is teaming up again with actor/Blues singer, Michael Holiday (the voice of "the Plant," in "Little Shop"). This "dynamic duo" will now be featured as "Mamie" and Watermelon Joe," in the Portland premiere of Langston Hughes' wonderful musical comedy, "Simply Heavenly," opening Thursday, August 18th, 1988, 7:30 P.M., at the Lincoln Hall Theatre of Portland State University.

The famed Harlem playwright-poet's internationally acclaimed hit opened on Broadway and in London, 1957-58 and Hollywood in 1958. This is its first presentation on the West Coast in thirty years since it played Los Angeles in 1958 (I made my professional theatre debut in that production as "the newsboy, John Jasper").

So, "the B. P. Express" rolls on, and to think, she, Ms. Brenda, is still doing all this "showbiz" and theatre in "P.O." town, instead of just having to work at "the P.O."



(Post Office), or somewhere to stay "alive and well" at the end of the Union Pacific railroad line in Portland, Or. "Go for it," Ms. Brenda, and sing out, "Did You Ever Hear The Blues," one of the hot songs in, "Simply Heavenly," that made Claudia McNeill, "a star" in the original Broadway production. Yes, she's "Broadway Bound" at this "Report."

"Angry Housewives" Cast Reunion At Storefront Theatre

Yes, the "Angry Housewives," are still "angry" as they hook up an original cast reunion with, Nancy Benner, Wendy Westerville, Kathy Philpott, Sharon Knorr, Randy Knee, Greg Tamblin, R. Dee and the gang. I took twelve of our Upward Bound Program students from Portland State University, to see the production, which we first saw Summer before last (1986).

The show is Portland's longest running "hit" and is still a "riot" of laughs and gags that had me, sitting in the first row, pulling "Cornflakes" out of my hair long after the final bows and our kids meeting the cast. "Housewives," which started at the Pioneer Square Theatre in Seattle, Wa. and the Organic Theatre, Chicago (it opened and closed in New York), is in its fourth year at the Storefront Theatre on S.W. Third and Burnside (which reminds me a little of 42nd and Times Square in New York, with the street people on the scene). Check out the show, its great fun.

"Black and Blue" Due On Broadway

Speaking of Blues and Broadway, remember Ruth Brown, a veteran of the Apollo Theater in the 1950's? Well she and Linda Hopkins, who won a Tony Award for her performance in "Inner City," and headed for Broadway in "Black and Blue," the Black musical revue by Claudio Segovia and Hector Orezzoli, who created,

"Tango Argentino," that "blew folks away" last season in New York.

Also joining these "big blues diva" sisters, are choreographers, Cholly Atkins of Atkins and Honi Coles, Fayard Nicholas of the Nicholas Brothers, Bunny Briggs, Ralph Brown, Lon Chaney and Jimmy Slyde, who I first met years ago in Hollywood at the old Rainbow Studios, the day I auditioned for the company that gave me, my movie debut in "South Pacific," at Twentieth Century-Fox in 1957. Whoray for Jimmy! "Write On!"

Three Posts Open At New Rose Theatre

New Rose Theatre is seeking applicants for three staff openings; a full-time managing director, with an application deadline of July 15th, a full-time development/marketing director, deadline, July 31st, and a three-quarter-time costume shop manager, deadline, July 8th.

Since New Rose Theatre has been moving more into Black and third world themes ("A Raisin in the Sun," color-blind casting in recent productions ("The Life of Galileo") and a planned 1989 production of African Nobel Prize winning playwright, Wole Soyinka's, play "Death and the King's Horseman," it would be appropriate to have some "people of color" in the key administrative slots also. So, please send a letter and resume to the theatre's search committee, 904 S.W. Main St., Portland, OR 97205. "Write On!" and give it your best show!

Taste Of History: New Orleans

by Jazz Historian Bill Russell

At the dawn of this century a new music was born in New Orleans. It was a "good time" music to make the people happy. Its appeal was so immediate that the music soon swept over the whole country and then circled the globe. It was not some much a kind of music as a style of playing. Essentially it was simply a way of "playing a melody with a beat." New Orleans musicians learned to work together to produce the loose, relaxed beat which is so irresistible that one cannot help but dance, or at least sway and pat one's foot to its swing. The easy going, almost hypnotic rhythm at times seems to run effortlessly by itself. In this style of music, where the musicians strive to help each other rather than grab the spotlight, it is natural for improvised ensemble choruses to be a feature. Working together harmoniously can generate a feeling of power. The ensembles often build with cumulative effect and surging momentum to thrilling climaxes.

New Orleans musicians seem by nature to be a friendly lot. It takes only a minute to get to know true New Orleans musicians. The friendly warmth and enthusiasm with which they work together is part of their life. Their audiences cannot help having a good time, because the band is having such a grand time.

In New Orleans Style the melody is always clearly heard. The melody is never disguised but is sung by the various instru-

ments with a beautiful vocal-like warmth. As one New Orleans trumpeter expressed it, the idea is to "play pretty for all the people." The tune is not obscured, by harmonic padding and complicated arrangements, for these musicians know that the secret of true excellence in music, as in life itself, lies in simplicity. New Orleans Style has never encouraged the hectic rushing and frantic, hysterical screaming that passes for jazz in many places. Instead, moderate, relaxed tempos to which people can dance or march even in a hot climate are chosen. New Orleans music has always been functional. To this day the business cards of most musicians read "music for all occasions" — not just dances, parties, and parades, but for everything from christenings and dedications to funerals.

A New Orleans "band of music" can be of almost any size and instrumentation. Traditionally the groups most favored have consisted of five to seven pieces with a more or less standard instrumentation. Each instrument has its own special role in building the final musical structure. Usually the trumpet (or cornet) is the musical if not nominal leader. He may call the tunes, except for requests; he stomps off the tempo to start the band; but mainly he plays, or rather sings, the melody (the "lead") in as beautiful and expressive a manner as possible and helps drive along the rhythm of the band. The trombone, big brother of the trumpet, also can sing a melody or a counter-

melody. Often he punches out a bass-like rhythmic part and utilizes the unique sliding (glissando) feature of his horn. The clarinet, most expressive of all the woodwind family, can sing voluptuously in the lower register or slash out dynamically in the upper range, but mostly the agile clarinet is used to "variate" and embellish the melodic line.

Although all the "blowing instruments" of a New Orleans band are responsible for their share of the bouncy, pulsating drive, several other instruments are specifically charged with supplying the steady fundamental beat of the band. The drummer, of course, is the "time keeper" as well as rhythmic powerhouse of the group. He can also control the dynamics of the band and inspire its spirit and performance. Historically the pianist of the New Orleans band has frequently been a girl. Capable of playing melodies as well as chording along in a harmonic accompaniment, the pianist can also double as a vocalist. The banjoist can play melodies with striking sonorities, but is most useful in producing the regular rhythmic pulse and harmonic chordal foundation. The bass viol, in modern times mostly plucked and slapped rather than bowed, can help produce a terrific swing and bounce in a band.

The traditional musical material of New Orleans is exemplified by a typical program. There are a few old "standards" — some of the cakewalk, march, or rag-based pieces such as *Georgia Camp Meeting*, *That's A Plenty*, or *Panama*. But mostly there are just popular songs of all ages, past and present — the tunes the people like and want to hear, which are transformed into the New Orleans idiom. There are a few hymns — *Closer Walk*, *Just A Little While To Stay Here*, etc. Then there is always a liberal assortment of wonderful blues — from the fast stomp-like *Dippermouth* to the slow moaning *Freight Train Blues* with its marvelous off-pitch blue notes. This music is a simple, satisfying and direct form of communication. Often its heartfelt emotions are eloquently and passionately expressed. Its directness and simple integrity cannot be mistaken.

Famous Faces



The original Smokey Robinson & The Miracles.

PORTLAND OBSERVER
"The Eyes and Ears of the Community"
288-0033

Skin Deep Beauty and Barber Supply

Skin Deep Beauty And Barber Supplies •
We Sell To The Public • We Carry Most Of The Products
For Beauty Care And Pleasure • We Will Stock Your
Order To Your Satisfaction!
— Remember, Beauty Is Only Skin Deep!!! —

1761 N.E. Dekum • Portland, Oregon 97211 • 283-5573
WHOLESALE AND RETAIL

THE LONG GOODBYE

300 N.W. 10th
Portland, Oregon
227-1991

FREEBIE FRIDAY — DOWNSTAIRS
FEATURING
DYHAN CHOCHAN
(Urban Contemporary Rock)

Monday - Friday SPAGHETTI \$1.95 5 to 9 p.m.
DAILY LUNCH SPECIALS \$2.95



MRS C'S WIGS

WHOLESALE & RETAIL
HUNDREDS OF WIGS
FOR YOUR EVERCHANGING LIFESTYLES

• NAOMI SIMS • BORNFREE
• MICHAEL WEEKS • AND OTHER
NAME BRANDS

BETTY CABINE
PROPRIETOR
TUES-SAT
11:30-6:00

EVERYTHING FROM CURRENT STYLES TO SPECIALTY WIGS
UNIQUE HAIR ORNAMENTS
HAIR BEADS & BEAUTY SUPPLIES
MRS. C'S EBONY ESSENCE COSMETICS
ZURI COSMETICS

281-6525

BEAUTICIAN
& STUDENT
DISCOUNTS
100% HUMAN HAIR
FOR BRAIDING & WEAVING

7TH & FREMONT (707 NE FREMONT)

PORTLAND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Commission Meeting

Date: July 13, 1988
Time: 9:30 a.m.

Special July Location:

PDC Eastside Office
Lloyd Plaza, Suite 200
1425 N.E. Irving Street

Commission meetings are open to the public. Agenda available by calling 796-5300.

PDC is the City of Portland's urban renewal and economic development agency.

OREGON AIDS HOTLINE

Timely, accurate,
confidential
information

Convenient Hours
10am-9pm Monday-Friday
Noon-6pm Saturday and Sunday

Fight The Fear
With Facts

223-AIDS

1-800-777-AIDS

toll-free in Oregon

A joint project of the Oregon State Health Division
and Cascade AIDS Project



Unity of Love Beauty Salon

— HOW TO DO A COLD WAVE —

If you ladies are still wearing curls—Your late. To wear just a curl isn't enough. Sometimes your hair should be able to move in the wind.

You say your tired of the curl, but what will you do? If you change over — your hair will fall out — not true.

Not with the Ocean Wave or Jajie line. You can have your curl removed and then wear it straight for 6 months ... then go back to the curl, or you can remove it today and put it back in three days after.

6720 N.E. Union • Portland, Oregon
(503) 283-5440

HOURS: Thursday thru Saturday - 8:00 a.m. -5:00 p.m.