

BLACK EXPO



Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Vickers



Mrs. Beria K. Brooks, Ruby Reuben, Michael "Chappie" Grice and Gwendolyn Grice (left to right).



'Zooman and the Sign'



Brenda Phillips (Ash), Rita Bankhead LeDuff (Grace) and Wanda Walden (Rachel), (from left to right).

Storefront Theatre will present the Northwest Premiere of 'Zooman and the Sign,' by Pulitzer Prize winner Charles Fuller, Oct. 29 - Nov. 20, at the Dolores Wainwright Theatre, Portland Center for the Performing Arts, 1111 S.W. Broadway at Main. The production is co-sponsored by Natures Fresh Northwest, Neil Kelly Residential/Commercial Remodeling and KBOO-FM.

'Zooman and the Sign' is described by the Philadelphia Tribune as "a compelling drama of the inner workings of a troubled Black community, a community which has just experienced the death of one of its young daughters, a community which is often unable to help itself in times such as these." The young girl has been accidentally shot in a confrontation between "Zooman," a Black teenager, and a rival gang member. When no one in the neighborhood will identify the girl's assailant, her father Reuben Tate tries to channel his family's anger and frustration away from plans of retaliation. Instead, he hands a sign on his porch that eventually brings some surprising results.

When it premiered in 1980 at the Negro Ensemble Company, 'Zooman and the Sign' was called "an arresting and compassionate piece of work" (N.Y. Daily News). The same company later produced

'A Soldier's Play,' which won Fuller a Pulitzer Prize, and recently opened his new play 'Sally' at the Black Arts Festival in Atlanta.

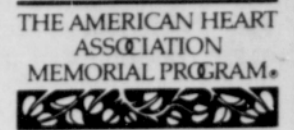
'Zooman and the Sign' is based on real events in Philadelphia, and it was produced there to great acclaim by the New Freedom Theatre in 1982. Storefront actor-director Rick Jones, who grew up in Philly, was involved in that production, and he will be directing the play for Storefront. The role of "Zooman" will be played by Brian Dance, and Reuben Tate will be played by Anthony P. Armstrong. Wanda Walden plays his wife Rachel, and other roles are played by Brenda Phillips, Al Jamison, and Rita Bankhead LeDuff, Nyewusi Askari, Eugene Hughes, Jr., Michael Winbush and Nathaniel Haynes. Due to the parallels between the play's subject matter and recent events in Portland, Storefront is planning to have audience discussions following some of the performances, but dates and participants are not firm yet.

Corporate co-sponsors for Storefront Theatre's production of 'Zooman and the Sign' are Natures Fresh Northwest and Neil Kelly Residential/Commercial Remodeling. Both companies agreed to partially underwrite the play due to their concerns about the effects of crime on the livability of our city. Their hope, and Storefront's, is that the production of 'Zooman and the Sign' will be a positive step toward stimulating the necessary community involvement in solving these problems. Media sponsor for the play is KBOO-FM.

'Zooman and the Sign' has low-priced previews at 7:30 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 29; 2:00 p.m., Sunday, Oct. 30 and 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 1. Tickets for these three performances are only \$10. Beginning Nov. 2, all tickets will be \$15, with discounts available for students, seniors and groups. (All prices include a 50¢ user fee.) Regular performances are November 2 - 20, Tuesdays through Saturdays at 7:30 p.m., Sundays at 2:00 p.m. and/or 7:00 p.m. Reservations may be made by calling the Storefront Theatre ticket office at 224-4001, or the Portland Center for the Performing Arts, 248-4496.

All Storefront Theatre productions are partially funded by the Fred Meyer Charitable Trust, the Metropolitan Arts Commission and the Oregon Arts Commission.

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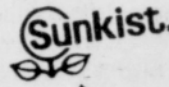


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