

FOCUS

A Knock at the Door

Play seduces with political, personal overtones

Radicalism, religion and mixed-race relationships are dramatized in the Portland Center Stage production of "Things of Dry Hours."

The play, originally written in 2002 by Naomi Wallace, one of the most powerful and socially conscious writers for the theater today, performs every night except Mondays through Feb. 5 at the Newmark Theatre, 1111 S.W. Broadway.

The time is 1932; the place, Birmingham, Ala.; the setting, a rough, two-room cabin that is home to a black, Bible-believing member of the



Cari (Karen Kendrick) explains the rationale of mismatched shoes to her father Tice (Leon Addison Brown) in Portland Center Stage's West Coast Premiere production of Naomi Wallace's 'Things of Dry Hours'



Corbin (Michael Laurence) and Cali (Karen Kendrick) are tentatively intimate in 'Things of Dry Hours, a play about radicalism, religion and mixed-race relationships at the Newmark Theatre, downtown.

Communist party and his young, widowed, cynical daughter.

Then, in the dark of night, a white man unknown to the family, knocks on the door demanding shelter from the law. That knock would bring foreboding to any black family in that time and place but it's even more threatening because of the father's political activism.

After gaining refuge by blackmail, the three characters begin an intricate dance of skepticism and belief as each tries to determine what the others' truly intend. Various levels of seduction, political and personal, come into play until the unexpected and transformative climax.

The play's muted palette, primarily of black, white and gray, punctuated by red, points up the symbolism of words and race that drive the

action. The set's deliberate simplicity speaks to the characters' poverty as it exposes the political, moral and emotional complexity of their lives.

"Things of Dry Hours" stars Leon Addison Brown, Karan Kendrick and Michael Laurence. Kendrick may be best remembered for her role in Portland Center Stage's highly popular, 2002 production of "For Colored Girls."

Naomi Wallace, whose works have been widely produced in Europe and inspired a 12-theater, six-week festival in Atlanta in Fall 2001, ranks with Tony Kushner, Robert O'Hara, Eve Ensler and Reggie Gaines.

For tickets, call the Portland Center Stage Box office at 503-274-6588 or go online at www.pcs.org.

Ongoing and Upcoming Music

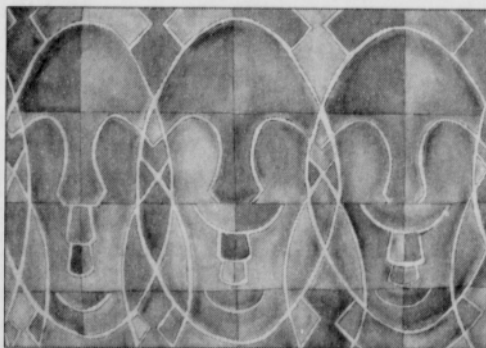
- The Blue Monk on Belmont plays live jazz. For a schedule, visit www.thebluemonk.com.
- Interstate Bar and Grill has mature live music at 4234 N. Interstate.
- The Black Notes play Thursdays at the Candlelight Room.
- Mel Brown plays jazz at Jimmy Meks on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays at Salty's on the Columbia.
- A Community Unity Breakfast is held every third Thursday at SEI at 7:30 a.m. Skip Elliott Bowman Jazz Trio plays Saturdays from 10 a.m. to noon at Hannah Bea's, on northeast MLK Jr. Blvd. and Shaver.
- R&B and live funk bands perform weekends at the Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center.
- After work, stop by The Red Sea, 381 S.W. 3rd Ave. from 5 to 9 p.m. Wednesdays.
- Don't miss Reggae Thursdays at Savannah's at First Thursday celebrations at 8 p.m.
- DJ OG ONE spins R&B at Savannah's on Fridays.
- Savannah's Restaurant welcomes Ron Steen Jam Session Sundays at 8:30 p.m.
- Live Reggae Fridays and Saturdays at Montego Bay, 1239 S.W. Jefferson.
- Politics and Poetry is every first and third Thursday at AJ Java's Internet Café from 6 to 8:30 p.m.
- Chicago Style Steppin is from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Fridays at Matt Dishman Community Center and Sundays from 7 to 11 p.m. at Flirts Holiday Inn Airport.
- DJ Vance spins on Saturdays at Bookies Sports Lounge on North Lombard and Albina; no cover before 10 p.m.

Art Walk Features African Artist

Kwa Franklin Ghong, a self-taught artist from Cameroon, West Africa presents his "mask" series Thursday, Jan. 27 with an artist's reception from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. at Tribe of the Winds gallery, 2217 N.E. Alberta St., as part of the Last Thursday Ark Walk on Alberta.

Ghong was born in 1979,

African Village life is reflected in 'Faces of Hope,' by Kwa Franklin Ghong.



the youngest of his father's 42 children from five wives. His art is reflective of village life and the carvings he learned about from his father, a master carver. He saw the women of his family work hard to farm, gather water and find firewood to care for their children. His art reflects the work of the women of his family, a theme relatively unique among African art, as men seldom recog-

nize the hard work women do for their families.

He hopes that his art — which echoes the spiritual and physical life of the Agem people — will help make the struggles of the women more appreciated.

The exhibit runs through March 27.

Tribe of the Winds specializes in immigrant art and imported gifts and goods.

ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

Love a Drama

Love can be a drama with the Nappy Roots production of "Tangoing with Tornadoes" at the Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center from Jan. 28 through Feb. 5. For more information, call 503-381-9088.

Japanese New Year Fun

Celebrate the Japanese New Year on Jan. 30 at the PCC Sylvania Campus, 12000 S.W. 49th Ave. with performances and storytelling beginning at 1 p.m. Tickets are \$10 general, \$7 for students and \$4 for children. Tickets are available at Safeway TicketsWest outlets or by calling 800-992-8499. For more information, visit www.pcc.edu/pccnews/default.cfm.

Folk Music at the Aladdin

Portland's largest annual folk music event, Winterfolk XVII, is at the Aladdin Theatre at 7 p.m. Feb. 5. This event celebrates Sisters of the Road's 25th year of service to Portland's homeless community. Tickets are \$23 in advance and \$25 at the door, available at Aladdin Box office and Music Millennium.

Wally Gator

Kids can flash a smile and practice their brushing skills on Wall Gator at the Celebration of Smiles on Saturday, Jan. 29 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Portland Children's Museum. For more information, visit www.portlandchildrensmuseum.org.

Father-Daughter Ball

A Father-Daughter Ball is on Feb. 5 from 6:30 to 9 p.m. by the Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation Department. Cost is \$10 per couple and \$3 for each additional daughter. The event is at the Luepke Senior Center, 1009 E. McLoughlin Blvd. For more information, call 360-619-1292.

Time to Jam

Jam Night, Portland's ever-popular comedy/variety show, is free on Jan. 28 at Christian Performing Arts Center, 8131 N. Denver Ave. Shows continue every Friday Night starting at 9 p.m. with dinner by Mondemaj Catering next door to the show at 6:30 and 7:30 p.m. Dinner is \$13 and tickets are \$7 for adults and \$4 for children under 12. For dinner reservations, call 503-286-2590. For information about the show, call 503-735-4184 or visit www.jam-night.com.

Mom-Son Swim in Vancouver

A Mom and Son Valentine Gala Swim at the Marshall Community Center Swimming Pool in Vancouver is on Saturday, Feb. 5 from 6 to 8 p.m. Tickets are \$2.75 for kids and \$3.75 for adults. To register, call 360-696-8236.

Vietnamese New Year

The Vietnamese New Year, celebrating the year of the rooster, is at the Oregon Convention Center on Feb. 5, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. For more information, call 503-335-8700.

Madame Butterfly

Portland Opera presents Puccini's "Madame Butterfly," on stage Feb. 5 through 12. Tickets range from \$35 to \$127. Tickets can be purchased by calling 503-241-1802 or visiting www.ticketmaster.com.

Gypsy Classes

Caravan Studios offers classes in belly dance, African dance and more. Visit www.gypsycaravan.us.

Make Art on Alberta

Make art and enjoy art on Alberta through Portland Community College. A variety of classes from art making to art appreciation are available. For more information, call 503-731-6622.

Reel Music and Cinema

The Reel Music Festival, featuring music cinema, is showing through Feb. 13 at Guild Theatre, 829 S.W. 9 Ave. and Whitsell Auditorium, 1219 S.W. Park. For details, visit www.nwfilm.org.

Have a Ball

Kids will have a ball at OMSI's new Innovation Station by exploring the human side of technology. For more information, visit www.oms.edu.

Write Around Portland

Write Around Portland's free creative writing begins on Feb. 21, at various locations around the city. For more information and locations, visit www.writearound.org or call 503-796-9224.

Amusement At Oaks Park

Celebrating 99 years of fun, Oaks Park in southeast Portland offers rides, picnic grounds, roller-skating and family games in the shade of 100-year-old oak trees on the banks of the Willamette River. Rides and roller-skating are open daily. For information, call 503-233-5777.

Glacier Run

The Oregon Zoo presents Glacier Run, a simulator ride worth bundling up for. For more information, visit www.orgonzoo.org.

Laugh Factory

Comedy returns every second Wednesday of the month at the upscale Bacchus Restaurant, thanks to EEI International. For more information, call 503-223-5236 or visit www.eei-international.com.

On the Radio

Groove to soul and hip hop with Kevin Berry from 7 to 9 p.m. Mondays at 90.7 FM/KBOO. Check out the Community Potpourri talk show from 7 to 8 a.m. Mondays, Wednesday and Fridays at 1480 AM/KBMS. Count your blessings with Melodies from Heaven from 6 to 10 p.m. Mondays through Fridays at 1290 AM/KKSL. Tune in to African American Health Radio on Wednesday nights on 1290 AM/KKSL.

Laughing Through It

A Portland Jam Night plans to heal the community's ills through laughter at the Wave Theatre in north Portland. The live music and clean sketch improv comedy is at 9 p.m. Fridays. Tickets are \$7 for adults and \$4 for kids. For more information, call 503-735-4184 or visit www.jam-night.com.

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