

# FOCUS



Queen Latifah is the voice of Ellie (left), a confused mammoth in *Ice Age: The Meltdown* opening Friday in theaters nationwide.

## ANIMATED FILM DEBUT FOR QUEEN LATIFAH

### Ice Age: The Meltdown opens Friday

Academy Award nominee Queen Latifah continues to expand and amaze us with her boundless creative talents. Now she is making her animated feature film debut as the voice Ellie's a confused mammoth in *Ice Age: The Meltdown*, scheduled for release on Friday from 20th Century Fox Pictures.

Latifah joins returning sub-zero heroes from "Ice Age" -- Manny the woolly mammoth, Sid the sloth, Diego the saber-toothed tiger, and the hapless prehistoric squirrel/rat

known as Scrat. In the new film, from director Carlos Saldanha and the Academy Award winning creators of "Ice Age" and "Robots," the Ice Age is coming to an end, and the animals are delighting in the melting paradise that is their new world.

Ray Romano, John Leguizamo and Denis Leary return to voice our three heroes: Manny, Sid, and Diego. In addition to Latifah, other new voices include Seann William Scott, late night talk show king Jay Leno, Will Arnett and Josh Peck.

In *Ice Age: The Meltdown*, our trio is still together and enjoying the perks of their now melting world. Manny may be ready to start a family, but nobody has seen another mammoth for a long time;

Manny thinks he may be the last one. That is, until he miraculously finds Ellie, the only female mammoth left in the world. Their only problems: They can't stand each other -- and Ellie somehow thinks she's a possum!

In casting Ellie, the filmmakers searched for a voice that was rich with personality -- not just an actress with a big personality.

"Ellie is just the sweetest, lovable lump that you've ever seen," Latifah said. "But she's...well...she's a little strange. A little aloof. And a little confused about her identity. You see, Ellie thinks she's a possum. But she's really a woolly mammoth. That's real confusion!"



Rose Gilmore (from left), Quinten Brundage, Winter Wagner, Malika Smith and Chamden Henzler-Lhasawa rehearse at the Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center for the current tour of the Portland Theatre Brigade.

## Portland Theatre Brigade on Tour

The Portland Theatre Brigade is on its seventh season creating multicultural folk theatre by and for young people.

The 18 members, ranging in age from 7-15 have been training together since September, perfecting voice, speech, improvisation and acting skills. Free performances for schools and community organizations started March 1 and will con-

tinue through June 20.

This season's performances include "The First Story," an Ananzi tale from Ghana which includes live traditional African drumming; "Tengu and the Magic Nose Fan," a tale from Japan highlighting the importance of taking responsibility for your own actions; "Wish Fish," a play about the surprising friendship between

a bear and a fish; "The Rabbi and the Too Small House," a story about a delightful Jewish couple as they try all kinds of advice with a twisted sense of humor; and "The Flute," a classic fairy tale steeped in traditional Mayan and Guatemalan cultures.

For reservations call 503-317-4833 or email director@theatrebrigade.org.

### On NE ALBERTA ST Street

Etchings and woodblocks by Portland artist Jeff Phegley will be on display during an artists reception from 6 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. at the Flight 64 Printmaking Studio during Alberta's Street's Last Thursday on March 30.

Flight 64, a non-profit cooperative dedicated to providing its members with a studio environment for the practice of printmaking, is located at Northeast 30th and Alberta, behind Bella Faccia.

Phegley will be exhibiting two new bodies of work both completed and in progress. The first, a series of woodcuts and etchings, deals with various emotional states as well as thoughts of escape via flying machines. Grotesque photos of soccer hooliganism inspire the second body of work, in which facial expressions are explored through etching and aquatinting.

Phegley has recently shown works at the Oregon College of Art and Craft Biennial and the Indianapolis Art Museum Alliance Gallery. He



'Jaded,' a linocut drawing by Jeff Phegley.

holds a Bachelor of Arts and a Master of Arts from Ball State University, Indiana, and has shown his work extensively in both Indiana and Oregon.

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