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- · Participate in a mixed-media open mic night each Monday at the Back-to-Back Café (614E. Burnside).
- · The Thorn City Improv, featuring members of Oldominion, Quivah, The Chosen and The Black Notes, perform at Conan's (3862 S.E. Hawthome) every Tuesday at 10 p.m.
- · Celebrate Hump Day at The Red Sea (381 S.W. 3rd Ave) after work on Wednesdays, from 5 to 9 p.m.
- Inch toward the weekend at the Candlelight Room (2032 S.W. Fifth Ave) with the Black Notes, performing each Thursday.
- · Celebrate Friday with Mel Brown, who plays jazzat Salty's on the Columbia every Friday and Saturday, and Jimmy Mak's on Tuesdays and Thursdays.
- · Round off your week with live Reggae on Fridays and Saturdays at Montego Bay, (1239 S.W. Jefferson).

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# Focus

# 'I Am My Own Wife' at Portland Center Stage

## Historic Armory becomes theater

### showcase

BY SARAH BLOUNT THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Portland Center Stage celebrates its 2006-2007 season in its new home at the freshly renovated, 1891 First Regiment Armory along the brewery blocks of northwest Portland. The 115-year-old building is enjoying the renaissance of a \$36 million transformation thanks to the Portland Development Commission and the interest of city leaders.

In the past, the armory has served as housing for troops during the Spanish-American War, presidential visits, venues for professional wrestling, tennis and boxing matches, and now as Portland Center Stage's Gerding Theater.

Saved from demolition a few years ago, the renovated perfortheater venues - the 599-seat main experience of the 20th century. stage and orchestra pit for larger

spectacular light-

ing displays, live

nativity scene and

family entertain-

ment. Donations

requested for

Snow-CAP, of

canned goods or

Playwright Pre-

sents 'Mutt' -- A

local playwright is

challenging racial

issues with levity

and bravery in her

world premiere of

"Mutt" at North

Portland's Inter-

state Firehouse

Cultural Center,

5340 N. Interstate

Ave. Lava Alapai

tells the story of a

bi-racial young

Saturday, Dec. 30. Tickets are \$12.

New Year's Eve-The Wonder Ball-

room, 128 N. Russell St., hosts a

New Year's Eve party featuring 3

Leg Torso, the MarchFourth

Marching Band and Heroes & Vil-

lains. In all, more than 45 musicians

and performers will take the stage

beginning at 9 p.m. on Sunday,

Dec. 31. This is a 21 and over show. Tickets are \$15 in advance at the

ballroom box office and at

New Year's Celebration - Satur-

day, Jan. 13, the Japanese Garden

Society, 611 SW Kingston Dr., will

from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Visit japanesegarden.com.

ticketmaster.com.

dry baby foods.

"Festival of Lights" -- The Grotto "Festival of

Lights", Northeast 85th Avenue and Sandy Boule-

vard, continue this week through Saturday, Dec. 30 from

5 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., featuring hourly holiday music concerts

adult's mistaken Caucasian self-identity. Shows extended through

host the Oshogatsu (New Year) Celebration in the Garden's Pavilion



Wade McCollum plays Charlotte von Mahlsdorf, and several other characters in the one-man show "I Am My Own Wife" at Portland Center Stage.

but "West Side Story," and this spring's production of "Fences," mance house actually contains two chronicling the African American intimate performances.

In the basement, the Armory productions, like the venue's de-houses the 200-seat Black Box Stu-"I Am My Own Wife," a true story 59.50. Also visit www.pcs.org.

dio Theater, with an adjustable stage and flexible seating for more

The smaller studio currently fea-

of the relationship between an American playwrights and an East German transvestite who not only survived the Nazi regime, but Communist rule as well.

The relationship between these two principal characters - playwright Doug Wright and the sweet but controversial Charlotte von Mahlsdorf - develops over the course of years, as we learn how she survived the brutality of her own father, Nazi thugs, the Stasi (East German police) and eventually the relentless ploys of worldwide media who sought to defame herimage.

Hop-scotching between America and Germany, Wright becomes so fascinated with Mahlsdorf that the entire second act highlights his tortured conflict between what may be the ugly truth about his subject and what he wants badly to believe.

Performances continue through Sunday, Dec. 31 at Portland Center Stage at the Armory, 128 N.W. 11th Ave. Shows are at 7:30 p.m., Thursday at noon, and Saturday and tures the one-man performance of Sunday at 2 p.m. Ticket are \$16.50-

> Hip-hop Dance Classes -- Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation is hosting family friendly hip-hop dance classes for ages 5 to 18. Various lessons teach rhythm, technique, coordination, agility, combinations and

teamwork through urban dance moves. For more information, call 360-696-8236.

Oregon Zoo Lights --The walk-through winter wonderland Oregon Zoo Lights comes to life each night through Sunday, Dec. 31. The festival includes a lighted zoo train, choral and ensemble music, puppet shows, and a model train display.

Trippin' through Town -- Take a trip through time to find

the hottest poetry, hip-hop and soul influencing Portland on Wednesdays at the Ohm. \$7 cover. 31 N.W. First Ave.

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



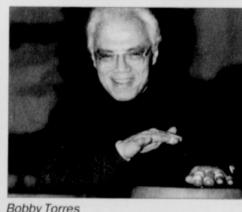
Jazz for the Holidays --Friday, Dec. 29 thru Monday, Jan. 1, the Oregon

Coast Council for the Arts

will host Newport's Jazz for the Holidays, a massive New Years Eve Party, spread out over 4 days and headlined by some of Portland's jazz icons, including the Bobby Torres Ensemble and singer Nancy King, at the Newport Performing Arts Center. Visit jazzatnewport.orgorcall 888-701-7123.



**Bobby Torres** 





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