

Arts & ENTERTAINMENT

When a Soldier Comes Home

Playwright tackles friendships, guilt and staying alive

How long does the battle continue after a soldier returns home? Artists Repertory Theatre presents Oregon playwright Andrea Stolowitz's challenging new play, *Ithaka*, now showing through June 30 on the Morrison Stage, 1515 S.W. Morrison.

With this newly commissioned play, Stolowitz examines the issues involved with coming home from war, for both soldiers and their families.

Marine Captain Elaine Edwards has just returned from her latest tour in Afghanistan but this time things are different – home doesn't feel right and nothing makes sense. After a blow-up fight with her husband propels her to skip town, she undertakes an Odyssean journey through the American landscape battling her demons, trying to find her way home.

Ithaka is "about the intensity of human connections in a war zone and at home," says Stolowitz. Her



Oregon playwright Andrea Stolowitz examines the issues involved with coming home from war, for both soldiers and their families, in the Artists Repertory Theater play *'Ithaka,'* now showing on the Morrison Stage, 1515 S.W. Morrison.

work draws from interviews with more than 20 veterans and their families.

"It took Homer's Odysseus 10 years of wandering to make it to his beloved home, Ithaka, after the Trojan War," says Gemma Whelan, the play's director. "Lanie, a Marine Captain in Andrea Stolowitz's *Ithaka* has returned home from Afghanistan, but hasn't been able to leave the war behind; she still carries the conflict inside of her. This play is set

on a large canvas against a backdrop of war, the desert, and even a hyper-coaster, but it is ultimately a very personal journey of how to begin to make peace with the past."

For tickets, call the box office at 503-241-1278 or visit artistsrep.org.

Play on Marriage Equality

'Proposition 8' chronicles historic trial

The group Basic Rights Oregon will present a staged reading of "Proposition 8," a play chronicling the historic trial challenging California's Proposition 8, on four nights, Thursday, June 6 through Sunday June 9 at Artists Repertory Theater, 1515 S.W. Morrison St.

Written by Academy Award-winning screenwriter Dustin Lance Black, "8" is an unprecedented account of the trial to overturn a voter's initiative which stripped gay and lesbian Californians of the freedom to marry.

"As a lifelong Oregonian, married to another woman, marriage equality is personal for me," says producer and Basic Rights Oregon

board member CM Hall. "It's a freedom every Oregonian deserves—to be recognized equally for who we fall in love with."

Hall said the play is even timelier knowing that the Supreme Court is expected to rule on Prop 8 this month, and that Oregon will face a ballot measure in 2014 to repeal Oregon's constitutional amendment against gay marriage.

Black, who penned the Academy Award-winning feature film *Milk* and the film *J. Edgar*, based "8" on the actual words of the trial transcripts, first-hand observations of the courtroom drama and interviews with the plaintiffs and their families.

All performances will be followed by a talkback where cast and audience members can discuss the issues presented. Tickets are \$10 and can be purchased by visiting BasicRightsOregon.org and search events.



Star Trek Inspired Improv

Portland's improvisational theater company the *Unscriptables* kicks-off its new season with 28 hours of *Star Trek*-inspired improv and then a full run of *USS Improvise The Next Generation: The Musical*. The *Trek-a-Thon* performances will take place every two hours starting Friday, June 7 at 8 p.m. and ending Saturday, June 8 at 10 p.m. at the Funhouse Lounge, 2432 S.E. 11th St. The shows are "pay what you want." *USS Improvise The Next Generation: The Musical* opens June 15. Other shows planned for the upcoming season are *Murder Mystery Machine* (*Scooby Doo* meets *Saw*), *Big Brother League*, (improvised episodes of *Big Brother*, but with Superheroes), and *Absolutely Fab*.

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