

Hudson to offer more workshops

HUDSON continued
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solo one is me growing up and coming into my own consciousness. The play is about what comes next. How I come to terms with self-doubt as an artist and self-doubt from the identities people put on those around them. It's my first experience writing a full-length play with multiple actors, voices and screen changes. I let my imagination go crazy."

The development from "do-it-yourself" drag clown to a supported cast at an A-level theater sometimes leaves Hudson feeling like the whole thing is a dream.

"This has been a journey through self-doubt, but also validation," he says. "I think the world and society puts on us that we have to commit to one thing or another."

Why drag?

"Doing drag" as a part of artistic expression isn't a recent phenomenon. Drag had its beginnings in late 1800s British theater, where male actors wore dresses to perform in female roles, according to an article on the website, Them. The actors' petticoats would drag on the floor and so they referred to dressing up as women as "putting on their drags."

By the 1920s, the term "drag" was being used by gay people. One theory is that the term was used as part of a secret code necessary due to the criminalization of homosexuality.

Hudson says he feels that dressing in drag can sometimes reinforce stereotypes of what makes someone a "woman." However, he adds that it can also expose the cracks in sexist views by blurring gender lines.

"Queer drag exposes gender as a performed historical construction – a set of appropriated cues, images or gestures that culturally signify masculine and feminine – rather than as a biological reality."

He prefers the term "drag clown" to "drag queen."

"I'm not trying to mock womanhood or emulate women," Hudson says. "I'm more interested in tearing down gender boxes. The more we can tear those things apart, the more we are able to see people as themselves."

Hudson refers to Rossi as "his coyote" after the stories grandmother Gladys Bolton (Siletz) used to tell, which he says are similar to the clown's objective: saying one thing while doing another.

Hudson also credits his father Ron Hudson (Grand Ronde) as crucial to the understanding of culture and traditions, and encouraging him to be a storyteller as well.

"My dad was a social worker at the Grand Ronde Tribe and I learned how to talk to an audience from him," Hudson says. "I would sit and watch him use PowerPoint slides and he would always make the audience laugh before getting into anything serious. ... My dad is my hero."

Hudson says that he feels that Rossi is more a faceless entity than a particular gender.

"She is like Mr. Potato Head, but trying to be a person," he says. "My foray into drag was a messy fantasy."

In 2015, Hudson decided to take the plunge and perform as himself without makeup.

"I decided I wanted to face my fear," he says. "Carla could be there as an entry point to the story, but

mostly it was me performing without my makeup."

Although Hudson was a self-described "drama geek" at McNary High School in Keizer, he says he never imagined being in theater as a career.

"Drama saved my life in high school," he says. "You sometimes have that one teacher. ... Mine was Ms. (Linda) Baker. I was acting and directing in high school. She came to my first production of 'Tiger Lily' and was beaming."

Baker says she is "honored" to have been even a small part of Hudson's success.

"My job was to create a safe space where students could do what they wanted to (creatively) and be able to enjoy it," she says. "High school is a hard place. You can't be creative enthusiastically without someone slamming you. I wanted my students to leave with a voice."

During high school, Hudson was known in drama circles for his quick wit.

"One time, we had a situation where the school was concerned about us 'flying' kids across the stage, even though we were very careful about it," Baker recalls. "Anthony wrote a satire piece about having to perform 'Richard III' with pompoms instead of swords because of safety concerns. I still have it. ... He cracked me up."

Bakers says Hudson is a dream come true for a drama teacher.

"High school can be really tough," she says. "He left and bought into who he was, and learned to use his voice. Seeing him perform made my heart sing."

The future

Hudson says he is hoping to

reach a broad audience with the play, but what matters most to him is involving youth in the message.

He plans to continue conducting workshops with youth, especially those in Indigenous communities.

"I love doing workshops with kids," Hudson says. "My message is to be open to change and sometimes you can just be. Youth needs to be the focus of my work. I think hope is something hard to find these days and these kids give me so much hope. It's a very thoughtful generation."

Hudson has organized workshops at Dartmouth College, Las Vegas and Portland, and also attended Native American Youth and Family Center's Two Spirit Prom as Rossi.

"It was so much fun," he says. "I love the willingness of youth to engage."

Artists Repertory Theatre representatives hope to include youth workshops as a part of the "Tiger Lily" premiere and bring in other drag artists from Portland and Seattle.

"This play has some heavy stuff in it, especially for confused people, but it's also an acceptance of who you are and that you don't need to have it all figured out," Hudson says. "Kids are smarter than we give them credit for. We coddle kids, but they are already having discussions like this." ■

For more information about "Looking for Tiger Lily," visit www.artistsrep.org. For more information about Anthony Hudson/Carla Rossi, visit www.thecarlarossi.com.

Memorial scheduled for Bud Abbott



Loyd Ernest "Bud" Abbott

Memorial where he recited the poems "Remember Me, America" and "Freedom Is Not Free" from memory.

Abbott was a veteran of the Navy and then the Air Force, retiring in 1976.

He was born on June 8, 1936, in Sheldon Township, Wis., to Verne Ralph and Ethel Irene Abbott. His family moved to Oregon in 1940 and lived near Taft at the coast and then Fort Hill before moving to the Sheridan area.

Abbott was a longtime member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Disabled American Veterans, American Legion and AmVets. He served as past state commander for the VFW and as chaplain for the VFW, DAV, American Legion and AmVets for numerous years.

He was a scout master for Troop 254 for several years and an Oregon Hunter Safety instructor for 40 years.

He was preceded in death by his parents; sister, Sally; daughter, Dorothy; and son, Jim. He is survived by his wife, Barbara; children, Doris, Belinda, Brenda, Verne and John (Connie); 38 grandchildren and numerous great- and great-great-grandchildren. He also is survived by his siblings, John (Jo), Donald, Bill, Lila (Wayne), Verna and Mary (Dan). ■

WILLAMINA – A memorial will be held at 11 a.m. Saturday, Nov. 2, for Grand Ronde Memorial Day ceremony fixture Loyd Ernest "Bud" Abbott, who walked on Oct. 9, 2019, at the age of 83.

Services will be held at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post, 771 N.E. Main St., Willamina.

Abbott, who was a Sheridan-area resident, attended many Memorial Day ceremonies held at the West Valley Veterans



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