

OLY ARTS

Issue No. 14 | August 2018

SPECIAL EDITION:
2018-19
ARTS
PREVIEW



FALL SEASON HIGHLIGHTS



SHOSHANA BEAN
SPECTRUM: SOULFUL STANDARDS

OCT 4 AT 7:30 PM
A: \$47, B: \$37, C: \$27

Shoshana Bean's powerhouse vocals are visceral and heartfelt, and have earned her numerous Broadway credits, including Elphaba in *Wicked*, and Fanny Brice in *Funny Girl*.

KEB' MO' SOLO
SPECIAL VIP EXPERIENCE

OCT 11 AT 7:30 PM
A: \$62, B: \$52, C: \$39

Singer-songwriter and guitarist Keb' Mo' has cultivated a reputation as a modern master of American roots music through the understated excellence of his performances. His 14 albums have garnered him 11 GRAMMY nominations and 4 GRAMMY Awards, including the 2017 award for Best Contemporary Blues Album.

Amplify your night with the Keb' Mo' VIP Experience. A meet and greet, photo op, and autographed gift are all included in this VIP package!

This event is only open to Keb' Mo' Solo ticket-holders. Limit 8 per customer. Season discounts do not apply.

VIP Experience ticket: \$105



NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC LIVE!

WHERE THE WILD THINGS LIVE: PHOTOGRAPHER VINCENT J. MUSI

OCT 16 AT 7:30 PM
A: \$39, B: \$32, C: \$22

With his trademark witty sense of humor, Musi taps into his inner Dr. Dolittle as he shares stories from his encounters with some extraordinary animals.

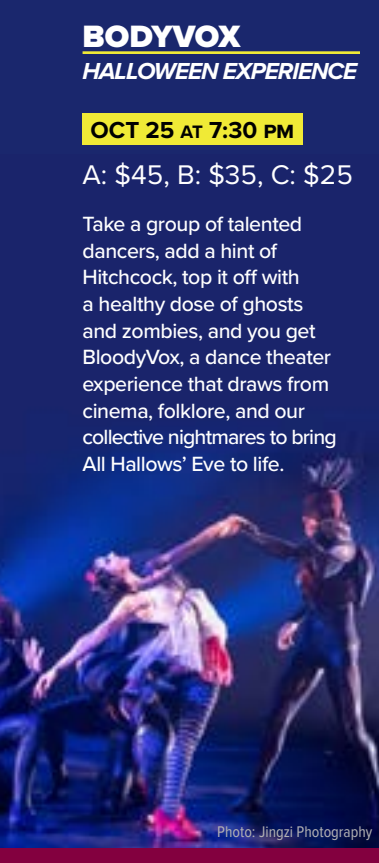
Photo: Vincent Musi



BODYVOX
HALLOWEEN EXPERIENCE

OCT 25 AT 7:30 PM
A: \$45, B: \$35, C: \$25

Take a group of talented dancers, add a hint of Hitchcock, top it off with a healthy dose of ghosts and zombies, and you get BloodyVox, a dance theater experience that draws from cinema, folklore, and our collective nightmares to bring All Hallows' Eve to life.



PUDDLES PITTY PARTY
COMEDIC CROONER

OCT 27 AT 7:30 PM
A: \$52, B: \$42, C: \$32

The 'Sad Clown with the Golden Voice' is here with a suitcase full of all new emotional anthems and plenty of Kleenex! Puddles' set is peppered with a brilliant sense of the absurd, mixing humor with awkward, yet tender moments.



CAPITOL STEPS
ELECTION SPECIAL

NOV 3 AT 7:30 PM
A: \$52, B: \$45, C: \$35

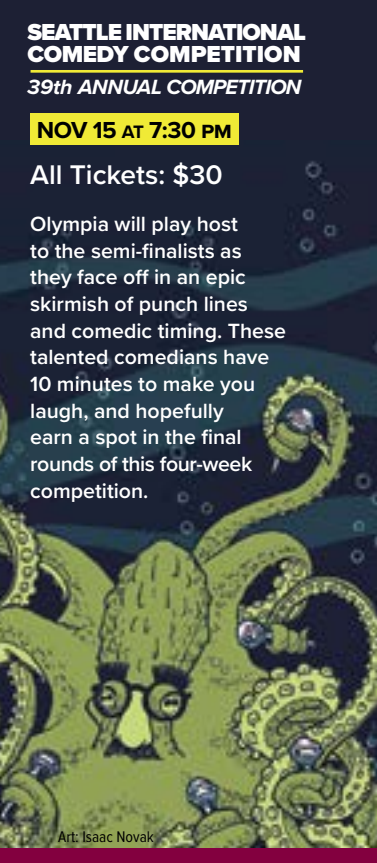
Enjoy a hilarious evening of political satire as the nationally-acclaimed Capitol Steps sets out to put the "mock" in democracy! Digging into the headlines of the day, they create song parodies and skits which convey a special brand of satirical humor.



SEATTLE INTERNATIONAL COMEDY COMPETITION
39th ANNUAL COMPETITION

NOV 15 AT 7:30 PM
All Tickets: \$30

Olympia will play host to the semi-finalists as they face off in an epic skirmish of punch lines and comedic timing. These talented comedians have 10 minutes to make you laugh, and hopefully earn a spot in the final rounds of this four-week competition.



OLY ARTS

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Harbor Days

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Harlequin Productions
Olympia Family Theater
Lakewood Playhouse
High School Theater
The Washington Center for the Performing Arts

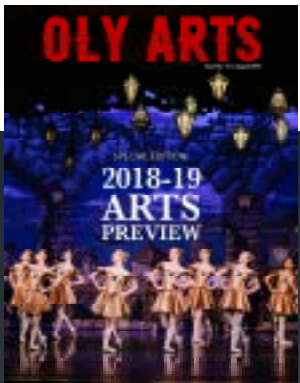
DANCE

13 - 14
Studio West Dance Academy & Theatre
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Emerald City Music
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OLYARTS ISSUE No. 14
SEASON PREVIEW SPECIAL EDITION
AUGUST 2018

OLY ARTS

The Leading Guide to Arts and Culture in the
South Sound
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**Student Orchestras of
Greater Olympia
Olympia Chamber
Orchestra**

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Everything Is Full of Gods

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Percival Restaurant

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Cruise Into Olympia Harbor Days

By Billy Thomas

An annual tradition returns to Olympia this Labor Day weekend, offering family fun and a unique maritime experience. It's the award-winning Olympia Harbor Days, host to the world's largest vintage-tugboat races and the Squaxin Island Tribe's Salish Seaport. Festival highlights include a mini-tug tug o' war, two stages for live bands including America's First Corps Jazz Combo, over 200 arts, crafts, commercial and food booths, sand-sculpting events, children's activities including a Lego building station, marine and maritime science and art activities and a floating World War II museum aboard retired Coast Guard cutter tug Comanche. The festival opens August 31.

"What I love most about Olympia Harbor Days," says executive director Carol Riley, "is that it provides opportunity to bring our broad and diverse community together in such a beautiful place, the Olympia waterfront, with something for everyone. For 45 years this festival has offered families the ability to build lasting memories. Many families make it an annual tradition to attend."

Olympia Harbor Days has once again teamed with historic steamship Virginia V to offer a three-day, two-night cruise adventure. The trip includes round-trip transportation from Tacoma's Foss Waterway Seaport dock to the historic port of Olympia, with overnight accommodations downtown. The 125-passenger ship will make the four-hour trip from Tacoma to participate in the festival. Its itinerary includes a tour of the Foss Waterway Seaport Maritime Museum in Tacoma before heading south. Les Eldridge, local novelist and author of Maritime Olympia, is expected to join the cruise. "The South Puget Sound shorelines are filled with the sites of memorable, maritime moments," he says, "from Captain George Vancouver and Rear Admiral Sir Peter Puget to the wild and woolly captains of the Mosquito Fleet."

Upon arrival in Olympia, Virginia V will moor at the Port of Olympia's Port Plaza docks, joining tall ships Hawaiian Chieftain and Lady Washington. The Port Plaza offers an easy dock stroll south to Percival Landing, where a fleet of vintage tugboats will be available for touring

on Saturday as they ready for the annual Sunday races. On Sunday afternoon, after the races, travelers will return to Tacoma on a sunset cruise aboard the Virginia V. The weekend-cruise getaway was first offered in 2017 and is back by popular demand. It's the only cruise of its kind in the South Puget Sound and is expected again in coming years. It was made possible by a lodging-tax grant from the City of Olympia. 0

WHAT

Olympia Harbor Days

WHEN

5 - 8 p.m. Friday, Aug. 31;
10 a.m. - 7 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 1;
10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 2

WHERE

Percival Landing and Port Plaza,
Olympia

HOW MUCH

Free

LEARN MORE

harbordays.com
360-556-0498

Harlequin Productions

Season 2019 launches with new leadership from artistic director Aaron Lamb.

By Tom Simpson and Ned Hayes

Early in 2018, the Harlequin Productions ship hit the shoals of the #MeToo movement. Alleged sexual harassment of actors and staff led to rapid changes in staff and policies (further details at olyarts.com/harlequin). On June 1, at the company's annual season-announcement gala, Harlequin set a new course for the coming year. "We have an opportunity to right the ship and grow with more velocity," says new associate artistic director Aaron Lamb. "I am excited about the season that we've planned."

Harlequin emerged from its near shipwreck with a new vision for stellar, local theater. Its 2019 season includes more laughs and melody, as four comedies and two musicals have been programmed. A Neil Simon play and classic Henrik Ibsen drama will grace the stage, as will a powerful piece by feminist playwright Caryl Churchill, known for her focus on sexual politics.

The new season begins in December with a new Stardust installment helmed by Linda Whitney. *The Stardust Christmas Groove* will be set in 1962 and continues Harlequin's annual celebration of American pop music for the holidays. This is the 23rd season for this alternative holiday series.

In January, the Simon comedy *I Ought to Be in Pictures* focuses on a Hollywood scenewriter unexpectedly confronted by his teenage daughter. The original play ran on Broadway for 324 performances, and the film version starred Walter Matthau and Ann-Margret.

The Women, by renowned American author, playwright and politician Clare Booth Luce, will be staged in February. Focusing on Manhattan socialites, the play turns on backbiting, gossip and wicked humor. The most-recent film version starred Annette Bening, Eva Mendes, Jada Pinkett Smith and Meg Ryan in 2008.

Harlequin patrons will remember Lamb's striking, modern version of Ibsen's *Hedda Gabler* in 2016. In May 2019, Lamb will return to Ibsen by directing *A Doll's House* at Harlequin. This story of a woman's repression, crime, blackmail and marriage should be riveting.

Man of La Mancha was last staged in Olympia in 2007. This classic musical tells the story of the "mad" knight, Don Quixote. The classic musical will get an update next June, as Lamb plans to create orchestrations in Latinx banda style.

After the humor of *La Mancha*, Harlequin will turn in August to *Blackbird*, a mature drama about a woman who confronts her abuser after 15 years. In 2016, *Blackbird* won a Tony Award for "Best Revival of a Play."

The season finishes in October with Churchill's challenging drama *Love and Information*, which touches on the abuse of power, information overload and human empathy. *Love* is an unusual play composed of seven sections and a number of short scenes, with over 100 characters played by few actors. 0

WHAT

The Stardust Christmas Groove

WHERE

Harlequin Productions' State Theater,
202 Fourth Ave. E, Olympia

WHEN

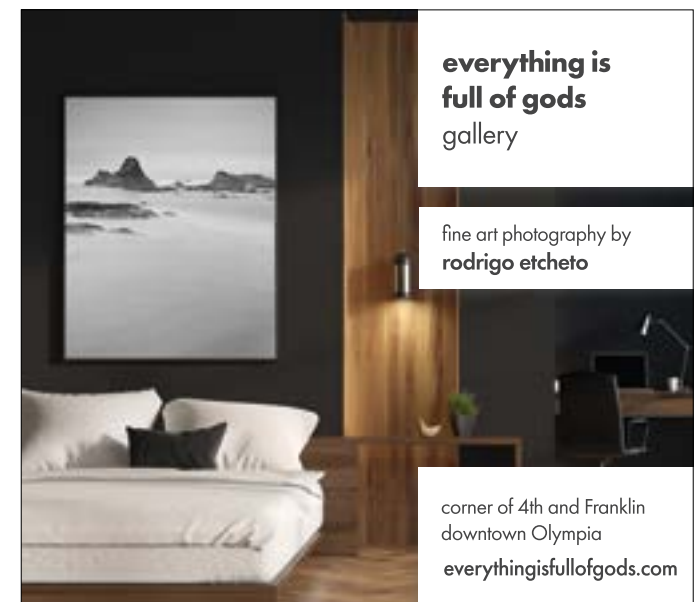
8 p.m. Thursdays - Saturdays, 2 p.m. Sundays,
Nov. 29 - Dec. 31

HOW MUCH

\$25-\$49

LEARN MORE

harlequinproductions.org
360-786-0151



Olympia Family Theatre Season

By Yvonne Joyce

“All of the shows next year are based on books. We are excited to connect kids to literature!” This is the introduction Olympia Family Theater artistic director Jen Ryle provides for the theater’s just-announced 12th season. These six literary productions should appeal to diverse but youthful audiences.

Based on the classic book by Don Freeman, *Corduroy* is the story of a rogue teddy bear who delightfully deconstructs a department store in search of a missing button. “I saw the world premiere of this play at Minneapolis Children’s Theater,” explains Ryle. “I’m very enthusiastic about bringing this production to Olympia.”



WHAT
Corduroy

WHERE
Olympia Family Theater, 612 Fourth Ave. E, Olympia

WHEN
7 p.m. Thursdays and Fridays, 2 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays, Sept. 28 - Oct. 21

OFT is enthusiastic about nurturing local playwrights and, to that end, will again host its short-play festival, *Tales Told in Ten*, in early November.

In December, *Tiny Tim’s Christmas Carol*, a child-oriented adaptation of Charles Dickens’ *A Christmas Carol*, brings the perspective of Bob Cratchit’s youngest offspring. Tiny Tim is determined to get his father home for Christmas despite Ebenezer Scrooge’s stingy ways.

Last year, Kate DiCamillo’s *Edward Tulane* was a hit on the OFT stage, and Ryle hopes to replicate that success with a new play based on another DiCamillo novel. *Flora & Ulysses* will be brought to life in a new play. This story of a squirrel who turns into a superhero is full of quirky characters and wacky incidents.

In March, classic novel *The Hundred Dresses* by Mary Hall Surface will come to life. It’s a poignant story of bullies and bystanders. Directed by OFT cofounder Samantha Chandler, the play version evokes powerful themes and is recommended for children aged seven and up.

The season is rounded out with the madcap adventures of *Go, Dog. Go!* Based on the classic picture book by P. D. Eastman, it last appeared on the OFT stage in 2012. Back for a repeat run, it’s a musical full of extraordinary antics and whimsical stagecraft.

OFT continues to grow in prestige. The Washington Center for the Performing Arts honors local arts leaders with its annual Center Awards, and at the center’s gala in July, Chandler and Ryle will be honored with an “Excellence in the Arts” Award for co-creating OFT. This 2018-2019 season marks the company’s 12th anniversary.

“We are thrilled to be honored,” says Ryle. “It is very nice for our work to be recognized, especially since there is so much great theater in this town. It’s wonderful to see what happens when your dreams take flight.”

HOW MUCH
\$15-\$20

LEARN MORE
olyft.org
360-570-1638

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OLYMPIA HARBOR DAYS

LABOR DAY WEEKEND | AUG 31, SEPT 1 & 2, 2018

From Port Plaza to Percival Landing | Friday 5pm-8pm | Saturday 10am-7pm | Sunday 10am-6pm

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HarborDays.com



OLYMPIA HARBOR DAYS

Net proceeds from Olympia Harbor Days benefit local children and families.

High School Drama

By Christian Carvajal



In addition to the varied schedules of theater offered by professional, semi-professional, collegiate and community troupes, the South Sound offers students and other audience members show after show of engaging drama from high school companies. Often, teen performers share the boards with more experienced actors under the guidance of skilled, passionate educators. The following offerings have been announced already for the upcoming academic year.

WHAT Capital High School, directed by Kristina Cummins	WHAT Olympia High School, directed by Dallas Myers	career already and know what it is to honor legacy, so I'm also weighing that in my decision."	HOW MUCH \$6-\$10
WHERE 2707 Conger Ave. NW, Olympia	WHERE 1302 North St. SE, Olympia		LEARN MORE 360-412-4860 nthurston.k12.wa.us
WHEN The Crucible: 7:30 p.m. Thursday - Saturday, October 11-13 and 18- 20 DRAMAFEST – Student- Directed One-Act Festival: 7 p.m. Thursday - Saturday, November 15-17 The Importance of Being Earnest: 7:30 p.m. Thursday - Saturday, January 17-19 and 24-26 The Theory of Relativity: 7:30 p.m. Thursday - Saturday, May 2-4 and 9-11	WHEN Fall play, TBD: 7 p.m. Thursday - Saturday, Nov. 2, 3, 8-10 Winter Shakespeare, TBD: 7 p.m. Thursday - Saturday, Feb. 15, 16, 21-23 DRAMAFest (a night of student-directed, one-act plays): March or April, TBD Spring musical, TBD: 7 p.m. Thursday - Saturday, May 3, 4 and 9-11, with possible matinee May 4 or 11 Myers, taking over Olympia High's drama program after Kathy Dorgan's retirement, adds, "I haven't nailed down the shows for the season yet because I am waiting to get to know the kids a bit more. ... I have taken over two large programs in my		
HOW MUCH \$8-\$10			
LEARN MORE 360-596-8000 capital.osd.wednet.edu/ extracurricular/drama			
		WHAT Timberline High School, directed by Robin Tuckett	WHAT Tumwater High School, directed by Harrison Fry
		WHERE 6120 Mullen Rd. SE, Lacey	WHERE 700 Israel Rd. SW, Tumwater
		WHEN Radium Girls: 7 p.m. Thursday - Saturday, Nov. 2, 3, 8-10 Blithe Spirit: 7 p.m. Thursday - Saturday, Jan. 25, 26, 31; Feb. 1 and 2 Jekyll & Hyde: 7 p.m. Thursday - Saturday May 10, 11, 16-18	WHEN A Midsummer Night's Dream: time TBD, Friday - Sunday, October 26-28 and November 2-4 Show and time TBD, Friday - Sunday, February 1-3 and 8-10 Show and time TBD, Friday - Sunday, May 3-5 and 10-12
			HOW MUCH \$7
			LEARN MORE 360-709-7600 facebook.com/ tumwatertheatre/

OLY ARTS

THEATRE

WHAT
Shoshana Bean - Spectrum: Soulful Standards

WHEN
7:30 p.m. Thursday, October 4

WHERE
512 Washington St. SE Olympia, WA 98501

HOW MUCH
\$27 - \$47

LEARN MORE
washingtoncenter.org
360-753-8586



The Washington Center for the Performing Arts

By Tom Simpson

The Washington Center for the Performing Arts' 2018-2019 season is already a success. The first show of the new season of national touring acts – Stephen Stills & Judy Collins – sold out in August in two weeks flat. Next up are a variety of recognized names in entertainment, from Shoshana Bean to Keb' Mo', BodyVox, Six Appeal and Taimane Gardner.

Three big, national touring musicals will grace the stage, from *Wizard of Oz* to *Kinky Boots* to *The Mikado*. More comedy acts are coming and more family-friendly arts education acts have also been added.

Returning favorites continue to be part of the artistic season. Perennial favorite *Capitol Steps* returns in November, just in time for the elections, followed by the *Seattle International Comedy Competition*. Golden Dragon Acrobats will be back in Olympia, along with *God Is A Scottish Drag Queen 2: The Second Coming*. Concerts with the Might Andy Crow Wurlitzer Organ will be back, as well as silent movies and the jaw-dropping wonder of *National Geographic Live* features. *Black Box Jazz* will return, as well as *Comedy in the Box*.

Last year, the Center also surprised patrons with new shows by special guests such as Lyle Lovett and Melissa Etheridge. "We're doing exciting things, and we love to give more to our patrons," says Jill Barnes, executive director of The Washington Center. "Whenever our team can add more, we'll be happy to slip in a few special surprise guests."

The new season already has unique, experiential jewels tucked into the packed programming schedule. *The Choir of Man* is a late addition, while in March *This American Life* co-founder and journalist Ira Glass will provide an intimate evening of conversation.

"The Washington Center is here to support the arts you love," says Barnes. "There is nothing quite like the experience of a live performance. It touches your heart and mind and energizes the soul. Our staff, crew and volunteers are ready to make your experience at the Center memorable." 0

EMERALD CITY MUSIC



Four Seasons The Minnaert Center

Sept 15 (7:30 PM) Tickets \$10 - \$43

EMERALDCITYMUSIC.ORG

Lakewood Playhouse

By Christian Carvajal

Now in his eighth year as managing artistic director of Lakewood Playhouse, John Munn has worked to diversify the types of shows audiences can expect from this community theater with big-city aspirations. The troupe's 80th season therefore boasts everything from light, family entertainment to a six-hour-plus epic about America's response to the AIDS crisis. "Our goal this year," says Munn, "was to find seven plays we've never done in our history."

First is Neil Simon's *Brighton Beach*, opening September 7. If that show is financially successful, says Munn, the playhouse will produce two additional, biographical plays by Simon in its upcoming seasons. Associate artistic director James Venturini chooses the scripts for each fall's live performance of vintage radio stories. This October, as he did in 2013 and will continue to produce every half-decade, he'll stage Orson Welles' disquieting adaptation of *The War of the Worlds*.

In collaboration with its youth-theater program, the playhouse presents a beloved children's yarn, *The Velveteen Rabbit* by Margery Williams, October 25. Munn likens it to *Toy Story 2*, adding, "Everybody has a childhood stuffed buddy that you loved and treasure. When you pick it back



up, you remember all the memories." Then comes the endearing Yuletide chestnut *Yes, Virginia, There Is a Santa Claus*, opening — as holiday shows often do — the weekend after Thanksgiving. January 11 brings the raucous, parodic musical *Forbidden Broadway*, heckling theatrical "war horses"

from *Hello, Dolly!* to *Wicked*.

Considered by many to be the standout play of the 1980s, later a well-regarded HBO miniseries, *Angels in America* comes to Lakewood Playhouse starting February 22. Its two massive episodes, *Millennium Approaches* and *Perestroika*, view our nation through a lens of Reagan-era sociopolitics, especially with respect to LGBTQ Americans. This show's aimed squarely at adults, including nudity, abusive behavior and frequent, unprintable language. Its 25th-anniversary run earned three Tony awards including "Best Revival." Munn has already cast and begun directing both installments. "You trot out words like 'masterwork' and 'epic,'" says Munn, "but it is."

Lakewood Playhouse's season concludes in high spirits with a behind-the-curtains comedy, *Inspecting Carol*, opening April 19, and Mel Brooks' irreverent *The Producers* May 31. 0

HOW MUCH
\$10

LEARN MORE
lakewoodplayhouse.org
253-588-0042

WHAT
The Hobbit (multi-generational performance)

WHEN
7 p.m. Friday and Saturday, Aug. 24 and 25;
2 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 25

WHERE
Lakewood Playhouse,
5729 Lakewood Towne Center Blvd., Lakewood



Studio West

By Molly Gilmore

In its 2018-2019 season, Olympia's Studio West Dance Theatre will stick to tradition, with a bit of a twist — a peppermint twist — for the holidays. The company's 10th-annual *The Nutcracker*, with a cast of more than 200 dancers, will be a traditional production and, like all of Studio West's previous productions of the Tchaikovsky classic, will use sets and costumes purchased from the professional Nashville Ballet.

This December, however, one performance will be of *The Nutty Nutcracker*. "It's going to have exciting twists and turns, but we're staying quiet about it," said Stephanie Wood-Ennett, the company's codirector. It's something Wood-Ennett, who's been involved with the winter perennial for most of her life as either dancer or choreographer and producer, has been wanting to do for several years.

This season also includes the company's 11th-annual charity gala, *Dance to Make a Difference*, and *Coppelia*, the spring ballet. *Dance to Make a Difference*, which is part performance and part party, raises money for a different nonprofit organization each year.

Coppelia, which the company last produced in 2013, is less familiar than *The Nutcracker* or *Swan Lake*, but the tale of a toymaker and the life-size doll he creates is a ballet classic and crowd-pleaser, Wood-Ennett said. "It's 150 years old, but it has this fresh, playful feel."

Dance fans don't have to wait till fall to see Studio West's dancers: Students will display their choreography and dance skills in a free showcase August 23. 0



WHAT
The Nutcracker

WHEN
Varying times, Dec. 9-16

WHERE
Kenneth J Minnaert Center for the Arts, SPSCC,
2011 Mottman Rd. SW, Olympia

HOW MUCH
\$27-\$29

LEARN MORE
studiowestdanceacademy.com
360-956-9378

Ballet Northwest

By Alec Clayton

Ballet Northwest, Olympia's premier educational and performing dance company since 1970, announces a diverse, exciting season ahead. It begins with the *Young Choreographers Showcase* August 26, showcasing works by 15 local choreographers with new works in wide-ranging dance and musical styles. The showcase, now in its seventh year, performs at South Puget Sound Community College's Kenneth J Minnaert Center for the Arts.

"We're excited to be presenting such a diverse lineup for Ballet Northwest's 49th anniversary season," says Josie Johnson, co-artistic director. "*The Nutcracker* and *Don Quixote* offer beautiful, classical ballet, stunning sets and costumes and lots of fun for all ages. Plus, the *Young Choreographers Showcase* and *Olympia Dance Festival* will feature an amazing amount of diversity."

Fellow co-artistic director Ken Johnson says, "Ballet Northwest and South Puget Sound Community College are excited to team up to present the world-renowned PHILADANCO, [also known as] The Philadelphia Dance Company. If you like Alvin Ailey, you won't want to miss this athletic and beautiful company."

December 7 through 16, Ballet Northwest presents *The Nutcracker* at The Washington Center for the Performing Arts. It's a holiday classic that features new sets, a score by Tchaikovsky and more than 200 performers.

Saturday, March 2 will be the 10th anniversary of the *Olympia Dance Festival*, featuring over a dozen local dance groups plus guest artists at The Washington Center. This single-performance event features ballet, ballroom, Chinese, contemporary, hip hop, Irish, jazz, Middle Eastern and tap dance.

Then comes PHILADANCO April 25 at SPSCC. PHILADANCO creatively preserves predominantly African-American dance traditions and is recognized for its artistic integrity, superbly trained dancers and electrifying performances. Dance critic Ruslan Sprague called PHILADANCO "an impressive display of raw intensity and serious abandon."

Don Quixote, with leaping toreadors, mysterious gypsies and a young couple in love, will wind up Ballet Northwest's season May 10 through 12 at The Washington Center. Premiered by Ballet Northwest in 2015, this Spanish-themed ballet is fun for the whole family, starring a colorful cast of characters including the knight, Don Quixote. This comic ballet offers beautiful sets and costumes and one of the most famous duets in the world, the Act III wedding pas de deux. 0

WHAT

Young Choreographers Showcase

WHERE

Kenneth J Minnaert Center for the Arts, SPSCC, 2011 Mottman Rd. SW, Olympia

WHEN

7 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 27

HOW MUCH

\$12

LEARN MORE

balletnorthwest.org



Masterworks Choral Ensemble

By Karen Lunde

The Masterworks Choral Ensemble is poised for its 38th season under the leadership of artistic director and conductor Gary Witley, who's helmed the choir since its inception in 1981. This season begins with a concert at The Washington Center on October 13. The concert celebrates the four sacred elements: air, earth, fire and water.

A repertoire committee and the choir's board of directors give input and approval on concert themes, but Witley ultimately chooses the music for each performance. "My rule of thumb is that the music must move me or excite me or make me laugh," he said. "If the music reaches me, then I believe it will reach both the choir and the audience." Rehearsals for the October concert begin at the end of August.

Each season can be thematic, offering a certain perspective. "Ideally," said Witley, "the entire season hangs together as a set. The reality, however, is that this is a big challenge when one considers the span of musical genres we normally cover in a season." MCE follows a yearly pattern: December's concert is always a holiday concert. March brings Harmony Sweepstakes, the regional segment of a national a cappella competition, which MCE hosts annually but in which it does not perform. April's concert tends to be more classically oriented.

"This season, the flame of passion is our umbrella theme," said Witley. The ensemble's slogan this year is "Kindle the flame — Music, like the flame of life, warms the heart." "The flame of passion is an apt metaphor," said Witley. "It's the love of singing that brings all of us together to perform. The musical study, rehearsing the music weekly and the camaraderie associated with that brings us back for more each week."

This season kicks off with a *Sacred Elements* concert, then proceeds to a holiday concert, *Yuletide Celebration*, December 1. Moving into 2019, MCE hosts the *Harmony Sweepstakes* on March 9. Classical concert *Strength and Serenity* will feature John Leavitt's *Missa Festiva* and Gabriel Faure's *Requiem* on April 13. The season wraps with a night of seductive entertainment, the *Torch Songs* concert, June 15. 0

WHAT

Sacred Elements

WHEN

7:30 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 13

WHERE

The Washington Center for the Performing Arts, 512 Washington St. SE, Olympia

HOW MUCH

TBD

LEARN MORE

mce.org

360-491-3305



Emerald City Music

By Adam McKinney



As fall approaches, we see also the arrival of Emerald City Music's third season, which runs through May of 2019. Continuing the company's mission of staging classical and chamber-music performances that appeal to both aficionados and newcomers to the genres, ECM programmed a season brimming with bold and approachable shows. In keeping with ECM's quest for accessibility, this season retains the format of two performances for each show, one in Seattle and one in Olympia.

"Top-flight musicians from every corner of the globe are making their premiere, including Denmark's The Dreamers' Circus ensemble, New York City-based oboist James Austin Smith and Argentinian bandoneon player JP Jofre, just to name a few," says ECM executive director Andrew Goldstein. The first Olympia show is called *Four Seasons*. "Our opening night features a few really well-known works like Tartini's *Devil's Trill Sonata*, famously composed after Tartini awoke from a dream where he battled the devil with his fiddle — as well as music that

“At our core, Emerald City Music believes that great performances are diverse, beautiful and artistically risky.”



folks might not have discovered themselves, like Paul Wiancko's *American Haiku*, performed by the composer himself."

One of ECM's greatest strengths is its ability to strip away any exclusivity associated with the worlds of chamber and classical music. Take a look at events like October 27's *Café Music*, which affects a warm, casual setting to explore the works of 20th-century American and French composers. Or how about a December 1 performance by the Daedalus Quartet, which incorporates a narrator to help interpret masters like Beethoven and Janáček? There's a relaxed celebration of all corners of musical expression in ECM's season, and that should thrill beginners and experts alike.

"At our core, Emerald City Music believes that great performances are diverse, beautiful and artistically risky," says Goldstein. "As we enter our third season, we're continuing this artistic brand by presenting some of the most timeless and groundbreaking music in a way that truly allows anyone — and

really, truly, anyone, no matter what experience you may or may not have with classical music — to dive right in. It's very rare to see Steve Reich and Johann Sebastian Bach on the same season, with some Danish folk music in between."

ECM's third season includes a residency at The Kenneth J Minnaert Center for the Arts, and it still gives Olympia students free tickets to its shows. 0

WHAT

Four Seasons

WHEN

7:30 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 15

WHERE

Kenneth J Minnaert Center for the Arts, SPSCC, 2011 Mottman Rd. SW, Olympia

HOW MUCH

\$10-\$43

LEARN MORE

emeraldcitymusic.org
206-250-5510

Olympia Symphony Orchestra



By Lucia Volker

The upcoming season is the 66th for Olympia Symphony Orchestra. Last year, the focus was on grand, celebratory symphonies. “The season after a big anniversary year is always tough, when the hoopla is over and bunting taken down,” says music director and conductor Huw Edwards, “but these are great years to really take stock, work the orchestra and hone some expressive subtleties.” Since this is OSO’s 66th season, Route 66 inspired the theme “Highways & Byways.” This season promises a wide range of shorter pieces by a variety of lesser-known and more-famous composers, inspired by explorations off well-traveled roads.

The season opens in October, with pieces by Bernstein, Debussy and Glazunov, and features Route 66 by Daugherty. Many American composers are highlighted throughout the year, and, according to Edwards, more French composers than usual. These selections allow the symphony to elevate its technical game and highlight the music’s expressive qualities. Each concert will offer something different, conceptually and musically, to its audience.

“You can’t really have favorites,” Edwards says. “You must focus a hundred percent on the pieces and program in hand. November is also special, a concert commemorating the centenary of the end of World War I.” Edwards also highlights Sibelius’s Symphony No. 5 in the March concert and, in April, the ballet score *Mother Goose* by Ravel.

Composers from over 10 countries will be featured this year, paired with popular, American classics. The diversity in musical selection parallels the season’s exploratory theme. “We just keep working hard to get better every year,” Edwards notes, adding, in true artistic fashion, “[We] raise the bar a little higher.” 0

WHAT

Olympia Chamber Orchestra’s November concert

WHEN

2:30 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 4

WHERE

St. John’s Episcopal Church,
114 20th Ave. SE, Olympia

HOW MUCH

\$13

LEARN MORE

olympiachamberorchestra.org
360-866-7617

SOGO:

Student Orchestras of Greater Olympia

By Karen Lunde

At the conclusion of the 2017-2018 season, after 18 years with Student Orchestras of Greater Olympia, conductor John Welsh retired. With Welsh’s blessing, Portland native Cameron May has taken up the baton as SOGO’s new conductor and music director. He comes to Olympia by way of Champaign, Illinois, where he’s finishing a graduate degree in orchestra conducting at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He’s music director of the Illini Strings and a graduate teaching assistant in the orchestral conducting department.

“The process to hire Cameron was a year long,” said Krina Allison, SOGO’s executive director. “We had many fine candidates apply, but it was evident [Cameron] would be the best fit for our youth orchestra and the community. We were all delighted when he accepted our invitation, and our retiring music director was completely supportive of our choice.”

“I can’t wait to begin my work,” said May, “and I’m particularly excited about our first concert together.” He explained orchestras around the world are celebrating Leonard Bernstein’s 100th birthday, and SOGO will participate by

performing ‘Mambo’ from *West Side Story* at the end of its first concert in November. “Since our concert is only a week before the 100th Armistice Day,” May adds, “we will also be playing ‘A Shropshire Lad’ by English composer George Butterworth. Butterworth died in the trenches during World War I. This piece was used by conductor Simon Rattle four years ago in a special recording bringing together musicians from England and Germany to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the war’s

inception.” The Conservatory Orchestra’s portion of the November program includes three of Antonin Dvorak’s *Slavonic Dances* and Verdi’s overture to *Nabucco*.

“Throughout the rest of the season,” says May, “we will play important cornerstone pieces by Beethoven, Elgar, Mozart, Sibelius and Tchaikovsky, but also some newer works to ensure that the SOGO students have a varied diet of repertoire over the course of the year.” 0



WHAT

SOGO November concert

WHERE

The Washington Center for the Performing Arts, 512 Washington St. SE, Olympia

WHEN

4 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 4

HOW MUCH

\$9-\$18

LEARN MORE

studentorchestras.org
360-352-1438

Olympia Chamber Orchestra

By Molly Gilmore

In its 2018-2019 season — its first full season under the direction of conductor Nicholas Carlson — the Olympia Chamber Orchestra will go beyond the expected classical repertoire. Small by orchestra standards, the group of 40-odd musicians in their 20s through 80s aims to have a big impact on Olympia’s classical-music scene.

“My goal for the orchestra is for us to make ourselves indispensable to the community,” Carlson said in a recent email interview. “I want the ensemble to remain an important outlet for the players, and I want to continue to expand our audiences and their appreciation for orchestral music. I also want to challenge the orchestra to continue to improve.”

In keeping with that goal, the orchestra will tackle such unexpected pieces as Franz Berwald’s Symphony No. 3, “Singuliere,” which the orchestra will play at its November concert, and Wilhelm Stenhammar’s Piano Concerto No. 2 on the June program. “It is important to widen the audience and the orchestra’s knowledge of the repertoire,” Carlson said. “One of my goals in choosing the repertoire for the orchestra is to choose pieces that are not necessarily in the core repertoire but will still be crowd-pleasers.”

He’s most excited about the Stenhammar concerto, with soloist Hannah Cho, and three excerpts from Englebert Humperdinck’s opera *Hansel and Gretel*, also on the June program. Of the former, he said, “The music is lush and romantic and will seem familiar even to those who don’t know the piece.” And he’s even more enthusiastic about the latter. “The *Hansel and Gretel* excerpts contain some of the most beautiful music I have ever heard. Humperdinck’s music brings the fairy tale to life.” 0

WHAT
Olympia Chamber Orchestra’s November concert

WHEN
2:30 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 4

WHERE
St. John’s Episcopal Church,
114 20th Ave. SE, Olympia

HOW MUCH
\$13

LEARN MORE
olympiachamberorchestra.org
360-866-7617



Everything Is Full of Gods:

a new gallery in downtown Olympia

By Jonah Barrett

A new gallery will open its doors to downtown Olympia at August’s end. Pacific Northwest philosopher and photographer Rodrigo Etcheto’s Everything Is Full of Gods will exclusively feature black-and-white landscape work by the artist himself, with a constant rotation of images.

“I’ve been photographing for years and finally decided to take the plunge and open up my own space,” said Etcheto. The space, located on the corner of Fourth and Franklin, had been closed behind a chain-link fence since the Downtown Welcome Center was shuttered in late 2017. Etcheto called the number on the for-lease sign in the window and worked out a deal with the owner.

The gallery’s name is a reference to the beauty of nature, as well as to the epicurean and stoic philosophies

to which Etcheto adheres. “I take mind to be a fundamental aspect of all matter,” he said. “If mind is what makes us divine, then everything that surrounds us is full of gods.”

Pacific Northwest surroundings creep into all of Etcheto’s work. Walking into the space, one quickly bears witness to the awesome power of the coast, forests, lakes and mountains that make up our home. “There is always something new to find,” Etcheto said. “I go out in storms in particular. There’s something about a misty forest that gets me every time. People actually travel here from all over the world to go on photographic expeditions.” The photographer’s chosen medium of black and white draws a deeply gothic mood from the Cascadian environment, and Etcheto’s presentation highlights his best compositions of Washington’s

dramatic, melancholy landscapes. “I’ve noticed that, a lot of times, when you live here,” said Etcheto, “you explore less than people that travel here from far away. So a lot of locals have never been to these unique and gorgeous hidden treasures we have, especially on the peninsula.”

Etcheto hopes his gallery will be the first of many, with artists taking matters into their own hands and presenting work in public spaces. “I think our art scene is going to explode in the next few years and put us on the map,” he said. “We’re a very creative place, and I hope more artists take the risk and help us take Olympia to the next level.”

New pizzeria Wicked Pies will co-present a grand opening of Everything Is Full of Gods on August 31. 0

WHAT
Grand opening

WHEN
5-8 p.m. Friday, Aug. 31;
Gallery open 11 a.m. – 6 p.m. Wednesday-Sunday

WHERE
Everything Is Full of Gods
301 Fourth Ave. E

HOW MUCH
Free

LEARN MORE
everythingisfullofgods.com
425-224-5487



Olympia Film Society

By Adam McKinney



WHAT
20 A.C.

WHEN
7:30 p.m. Monday, Sept. 24

WHERE
Capitol Theater, 206 Fifth Ave. SE, Olympia

HOW MUCH
\$6-\$20

LEARN MORE
olympiafilmsociety.org
360-754-6670

One of Olympia’s most consistent deliverers of fascinating movies and enriching, live events is Olympia Film Society, housed in the historic Capitol Theater. While not all of OFS’ fall events have been announced, more than a few attention-worthy screenings are already on the docket.

“We’re having the 30th anniversary of *All Freakin’ Night*,” says programming director Rob Patrick, “so it’s gonna be incredibly big, and that’s going to be on the 13th of October. Our hosts, Tori and Ian Bracken, have interesting and unique takes on what they do to scare the audience, keep the audience involved and bring lesser-known films, from grindhouse to gore and everything in between.” A beloved Olympia staple, *All Freakin’ Night* delivers on its title’s promise: Get there at night, and don’t stop watching insane movies with fellow revelers until the sun rises.

October provides a veritable flood of content for OFS, including the return of another hallmark of fall. “We’ll be having *Night of the Living Tribute Bands* on October 20th,” says Patrick, “and we’ll be having submissions from bands well before then. We encourage potential participants to really get unique with their ideas and their band selections, and maybe go a little bit more recent or a little deeper – just something fun, funny or engaging.”

October closes with the stage version of *The Rocky Horror Show* from Broadway Olympia Productions, running from October 31 to November 4. If horror – even of the “rocky” kind – isn’t your bag, OFS will hold question-and-answer discussions about two intriguing documentaries: *20 A.C.*, about the 20th anniversary of Nirvana’s album *Nevermind*, and *Rodents of Unusual Size*, about the relationship between Louisiana residents and the 20-pound rodents that have infested that area. Adding an extra layer of interest, the latter film was codirected by The Evergreen State College graduate Quinn Costello.

No matter the season, OFS is there to make Olympia proud by providing transportive art in an offbeat way. 0

CAPITOL THEATER 206 5TH AVE SE OLYMPIA WA – OLYMPIAFILMSOCIETY.ORG UPCOMING MOVIE EVENTS



AUGUST 21 - 30
MORGAN NEVILLE'S
WON'T YOU BE MY NEIGHBOR



AUGUST 22 - 26
ON 35MM:
THREE COLORS: BLUE



AUGUST 31 - SEPT 6
SUSANNA NICCHIARELLI'S
NICO, 1988



SATURDAYS SEPT 1 - 29
OFS KIDS CLUB PRESENTS
THE LAND BEFORE TIME



SEPT 1 - 6
CARLOS LÓPEZ ESTRADA'S
BLINDSPOTTING

UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS



AUGUST 16 - 19
BROADWAY OLYMPIA PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS
LEGALLY BLONDE THE MUSICAL



NOVEMBER 9 - 17:
DON'T MISS THE 35TH ANNUAL
OLYMPIA FILM FESTIVAL





“I want to see stories about different people from different people.”

Olympia Film Collective

By Jonah Barrett

Camera speed. Sound speed. Action! The Olympia Film Collective is set to expand with a torrent of upcoming productions. OFC has been around since 2012 but only recently snagged its official status as a nonprofit. Operating out of Sky Bear Media off Legion Way, OFC holds general meetings once a month, operating as a collective to encourage the creation and production of independent film in Olympia. As a nonprofit, it can receive grants and form a multitude of committees, pursuing education, fundraising, marketing and its latest venture, production.

“I’ve been a little flabbergasted at the way the committee has wanted to hit the ground running,” said founding production committee member Patrick Fifelski. “The committee at this point is focused on versatility and flexibility. We want to be able to promote whatever it is a film project needs.”

OFC content has been in short supply during the past few years, but that’s about to change. With its new production committee, OFC will be able to provide filmmaking

and monetary resources to local filmmakers with projects in mind. “For the longest time it’s been a struggle to have consistent OFC content,” said board member Brandon Cartwright, “because only board members were the ones that were doing things. Now there’s a place where individuals can go and work toward making things happen. This is the next step of the evolution to make things easier.”

Fifelski stated that an important aspect of this committee is diversity and inclusion. “I want to hear more voices,” he said. “I want to see stories about different people from different people.”

For OFC member Cody Castillo, director of *Boogiepop*, the production committee was a no-brainer. “It was always interesting to me that OFC didn’t have something like this already,” he said. Olympia certainly has a large number of filmmakers, but not all consider themselves part of the collective. Castillo hopes to change that. “We have so many unique ideas in this town,” he said. “Now, with this production committee and how

inclusive it is, we can help all these other stories get told.”

As its initial project, the committee will produce its first feature in the summer of 2019. OFC will host weekly open hours on Sundays as part of its new “Destination OFC” program, through which filmmakers can visit Sky Bear Media for education and networking. “People don’t have to feel qualified or underqualified for this,” said Fifelski. “We want everyone here.”

WHAT

Destination OFC open hours

WHERE

Sky Bear Media, 414 ½ Legion Way SE, Olympia

WHEN

2-6 p.m. Sundays starting Sept. 16

HOW MUCH

Free

LEARN MORE

olyfilm.com

Upcoming Events at Browsers Bookshop

By Alec Clayton

Browsers Bookshop has a full schedule of art exhibits, book readings and book-club discussions in its newly remodeled event area upstairs. The art exhibit for August will feature paintings by Olympia’s Brett Rude, a self-taught artist whose work relates to the color-field artists of the mid-20th century.

Browsers hosts, not one, not two, but three book clubs. The regular club meets monthly to discuss mostly fictional books available in paperback. Most recently it discussed *Exit West* by Mohsin Hamid, a love story set partly in an unnamed Middle Eastern country. Next will be Magda Szabo’s *The Door*, one of *The New York Review of Books*’ 10 best books of 2015. Book club members vote on which books to read and discuss. Anybody can join, and anyone can sit in on the discussion without buying the book.

On September 13 at 7 p.m., the present writer will read from his latest novel, *This is Me, Debbi, David*, with a book signing to follow.

Next is Jane Mount. “I am really excited to have Jane Mount of Ideal Bookshelf promoting her new book in September,” Griffith says. “We have sold her notecards, mugs, pins, puzzles, bags and her previous book for years now. She has created an entire career painting book spines.” The book is *Bibliophile: An Illustrated Miscellany*, and the event takes place September 17 at 7 p.m. Browsers Bookshop is even featured in the book. “This will be such a fun evening,” Griffith adds.

Events have only been scheduled through September, but Griffith promises, “We will have a full October and November. I am hoping to have Anne Bogel of *Mrs. Darcy* [a blog and podcast] fame promoting her new book: *Modern Mrs. Darcy*. She’s a big deal among many young-ish women readers. We’re also getting Laurie Frankel, Seattle novelist, on the calendar for either late October or early November. Her latest novel, *This Is How It Always Is*, is in paperback and a hot topic. It’s a loving look at how one family navigates having a transgender child.”



WHAT

Alec Clayton reading and signing

WHERE

Browsers Bookshop, 107 Capitol Way N, Olympia

WHEN

7 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 13, 2018

HOW MUCH

Free to attend, \$12 for the book

LEARN MORE

browsersolympia.com
360-357-7462



StoryOly:

The Best of This Year's StoryOly Best

By Christian Carvajal

As StoryOly completes its third season of raconteurial entertainment, host (and professional storyteller) Elizabeth Lord is busily making plans for 2018's "Grand Slam" finale. Winners from the preceding 11 monthly events compete head to head for the votes of celebrity judges. (Disclosure: This writer was among those monthly winners.) StoryOly is a monthly "story slam" event in which tellers are given a maximum of eight minutes to relate an occurrence from their own lives, usually to humorous or bittersweet effect. It's become one of Rhythm & Rye's most popular

events and generally gets underway at 5:30 p.m. the third Tuesday of each month.

"When we began," Lord recalls, "we might have only six tellers in the night. There wouldn't be that many people signed up." In those days, to pad the bill and calm anxious tellers, a featured speaker served as introductory icebreaker. "Now we have plenty," she adds, "so why use up the time with special guests when we can just have [more] participants?" Each monthly event has an assigned topic, but competitors in the Grand Slam

are free to choose their own subject matter. Those participants are expected to include the winner of the August 21 event, "Courage."

Monthly winners for the past year include former Associated Press reporter Parker Foster, Tamara Fife Fulwyler, Zoe Johnson, agroforester Kirk Hanson, Horizons Elementary art teacher Amada Lang, Meenu Nath from New Delhi, Lauren Peterson, Kell Rowen, Paul Sating, Bruce Smith and Whitney Trotta. Lord says past winners (Jamie Rainwood, for example) unable to attend the Grand Slam

may be replaced by non-winning competitors who scored highly in a number of qualifying slams.

StoryOly has been so successful Lord added a one-time, April 2018 event for alumni of The Evergreen State College who now live in Seattle. "The one expansion that I'm really hoping to get going," she says, "is to get into the high schools ... or maybe the under-21 crowd." She notes younger attendees can be seen joining what was once predominantly middle-aged crowds. Asked how the tone of tellers' stories has shifted, she muses, "I

think perhaps people are taking greater risks, sharing more personal moments in their lives." 0

WHAT

StoryOly Grand Slam

WHEN

8 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 15

WHERE

Rhythm & Rye,
311 Capitol Way N, Olympia

HOW MUCH

\$10-\$20 suggested donation

LEARN MORE

storyoly.com
360-705-0760

Upcoming Events at Orca Books

By Alec Clayton



WHAT
Richard Robbins

WHERE
Orca Books, 509 Fourth Ave. E, Olympia

WHEN
6 p.m. Friday, Sept. 21

HOW MUCH
Free to attend, \$19.95 for the book

LEARN MORE
orcabooks.com
360-352-0123

September promises to be a stellar month for events at Olympia’s Orca Books. Richard Robbins will read from his book *Body Turn to Rain: New & Selected Poems*. Other readings include *Atrophy* by Jackson Burgess, joined by musical guests Jesse Branch and Mortimer, and Craig Holt from his *Hard Dog to Kill*. In addition, Orca hosts monthly reading groups Fireside every first Thursday, Orcapod every second Sunday and Jacobin every second Wednesday.

Shop owner Linda Berentsen says, “We at Orca Books love hosting events. Usually the author reads from their book, answers questions about how they came to write it and then individually signs a copy for anyone who is interested. Sometimes they even provide snacks, slideshows and music. At other times we have events that revolve around artists, musicians and groups of poets. Coming to an Orca Event is a great way to meet a real author-artist.”

Robbins, coming September 21, directed the Good Thunder Reading Series at Minnesota State University Mankato, where he continues to direct the school’s creative writing program. In 2006, he was awarded the Kay Sexton Award for longstanding dedication and outstanding work in fostering books, readings and other literary activity in Minnesota.

Burgess, the September 27 reader, is a nationally touring poet whose writing explores depression, empathy, loneliness, love and substance abuse. Noted poet David St. John, a National Book Award nominee for poetry, says, “Jackson Burgess is the most dazzling, urgently urban and unfailingly inventive young chronicler of lost highways and avenues of broken dreams since the early poems of Denis Johnson and the ballads of Tom Waits.”

Winding up the month, Holt will be the reader September 28. It’s a stop on his tour of Oregon and Washington in celebration of his 2018 gold medal from the Independent Publishers Book Awards. Beth Jusino, author of *Choosing Higher Ground: Working and Living in the Values Economy*, writes, “This darkly comic debut has more plot twists and traps than the Congo River, and memorable characters who lingered in my mind for weeks. It’s smart, relentless, violent and curiously introspective.”

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Shirro’s

East African cuisine in downtown Olympia



By Jennifer Crain

As a child in Kenya, Mercy Kariuki-McGee fed wood into a traditional fireplace while her older siblings cooked. As a helper, she got to taste the base of each dish, usually a combination of meat, onions, spices and other aromatics. It shaped the way she thinks about cooking. “If the base doesn’t taste good, you’re going to really struggle with the rest of the dish,” she says.

She puts that principle to practice every day at Shirro’s, the East African restaurant she and her husband opened last summer in downtown Olympia. Staff members have learned to taste the food early. They share the first piece of fry bread every day, a tasty perk of the job but also insurance against a bad batch.

Kariuki-McGee and her husband, Matt McGee, never expected to own a restaurant

and event space in the former Ben Moore’s. They were familiar with the space: Their Afro-fusion band, Mazigazi, played it often. When Ben Moore’s announced it was selling, the McGees and other friends and patrons gathered to say goodbye. They thought that was it. When the sale fell through, however, the former owner surprised them by asking if they’d consider buying. Because the two have a heart for live music and for serving people the food of East Africa, they ended up saying yes.

If diners are familiar with African food, it’s usually Ethiopian, Kariuki-McGee says. The food of her homeland is, by contrast, influenced by Middle Eastern flavors. Meat is used as a seasoning, and there are plenty of plant-based options such as curried mung and moth beans — a vegan favorite. Other common seasonings include coriander, curry powder, pepper, turmeric and lots of fresh cilantro. Papa Joe’s, a spinach and kale stew slow-cooked with cashews, chicken and coconut milk, is one of Shirro’s most popular dishes. Cocktails are also based on East African flavors. Shirro’s version of an old-fashioned is made with bitters, bourbon and garam-masala simple syrup.

In addition to African music, upcoming events reflect the couple’s desire to make Olympia rich in music diversity. Look for alt rock, blues, emo, hip hop, indie, punk and rap. The owners rent the space for private groups to hold community events for up to 200 guests. The front of the restaurant is open to all ages. The bar, dining space and performance area are 21-and-over spaces.

WHAT
Shirro’s Restaurant & Pub

WHEN
6-11 p.m. Wednesdays,
6 p.m. - 1 a.m. Thursdays,
5 p.m. - 1 a.m. Fridays and Saturdays

HOW MUCH
Starters \$5-\$8, entrées \$11-\$14, cocktails, \$8-\$12

WHERE
112 Fourth Ave. W

LEARN MORE
360-357-7527

Moving Hart’s Mesa

By Lucia Volker

Latin-American-inspired brunch spot Hart’s Mesa changed locations in early February 2018. Formerly a Westside classic, the restaurant is now located downtown on Columbia Street. “Spaces have personalities just like people,” says owner Joel Hart, “and I would label our new location as tough but fair, unpredictable and moody.” Location and design make or break restaurants, so changing two elements of an existing restaurant is an enormous challenge. Relocation was a positive choice for Hart’s Mesa.

Joel says many influences prompted the move, but in the end it was about insurance. Instead of spending money and time on major upgrades to climate-control and fire suppression systems at the Rogers Street location to get reasonable insurance rates, Hart decided to relocate to an already-outfitted space. Immediate benefits to customers of the new location include air conditioning, increased seating and improved

ventilation. “The most difficult aspect for us,” says Hart, “is learning how to move in a new space.” Restaurants operate on a series of systems and strict timelines. Being in a new environment disrupts the flow of all those patterns. Changing locations is like opening a new restaurant with the same menu. It’s a process of trial and error, requiring daily adjustments in order to streamline prep and service.

“Our loyal customers have been through a lot with us over the past few months,” Hart adds, “and we appreciate their support so much. We know people will come to love our new location as much as our old one.” Through community support, visibility and increased seating, Hart’s Mesa continues to get busier. Since traffic has increased significantly in the new location, Hart is considering opening seven days a week with the possibility of an eventual dinner menu. 0



WHAT
Hart’s Mesa

WHEN
8 a.m. – 3 p.m. Thursday - Monday

WHERE
111 Columbia Ave. NW, Olympia

HOW MUCH
Dishes \$11-\$14

LEARN MORE
360-878-8490

Percival Restaurant Palate Pleasures

By Ned Hayes

South Puget Sound Community College might seem an unusual place to find a five-course, wine-paired dinner. Yet the SPSCC culinary arts team is determined to turn its Percival Restaurant location into a desired destination for discriminating diners.

In 2017, Scott McLean came on board as new executive chef for the culinary arts program. McLean started at the Culinary Institute of America, opened the Tacoma Dome Hotel and worked as executive chef at Cliffhouse, Coeur d’Alene Resort and most recently Marcus Whitman in Walla Walla, Washington.

With the encouragement of Valerie Sundby-Thorp, dean of social science and business, McLean and his team launched a thrice-annual, five-course, culinary experience not to be missed. Past menus have featured a triple-cream brie; fresh, wild king salmon; pomegranate- key-lime granita; Snake River Farms wagyu striploin and exquisite, hand-made desserts. Each course is paired with such precisely chosen, regional wines as Shea Vineyard’s pinot noir, Truthteller’s viognier and Woodward Canyon’s cabernet sauvignon.

The combination of modern gastronomy techniques, which use refined chemical processes, and classic, mother’s-kitchen-table-inspired sauces gives a spectrum of pleasure for the palate. “The team has put together a fabulous, paired dinner,” says Sundby-Thorp, “that rivaled the major food scenes in Seattle and Portland.”

Despite his expertise, McLean in person is not pretentious – In fact, he has a down-home charm,



which adds a certain peasant-food grounding to the expensive wine pairings and gastronomically precise dinners. “I really enjoy doing this as a showcase for our culinary arts program,” says McLean. “I get great satisfaction from seeing students working at this challenging level and achieving more than they think they are capable of doing.”

McLean works in partnership with Emily Hutson and Melanie Shelton. Hutson used to run the Clipper Café and is now a chef instructor on site. Shelton founded and ran the Bearded Lady in Olympia and is in her fifth year as a pastry chef instructor at SPSCC.

The culinary arts program at SPSCC has graduated many students who went on to successful culinary careers. Carol Rivard, a 1995 graduate, may be the most well-traveled. She worked at McMurdo scientific station in Antarctica as executive sous chef, then moved to New Zealand as a chef and is now food service manager for the University of Hawaii in Honolulu.

Brad Thompson graduated in 2013 and cut his culinary teeth at the South Sound’s best eateries, including The Restaurant at Alderbrook and Lady on the Lake.

He teamed with another graduate of the SPSCC culinary arts program, Marilyn Hartley, to open the well-regarded, farm-to-table restaurant Our Table in Olympia last year.

The Percival Restaurant is open Monday through Thursday for lunch from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. beginning September 26, closed during community-college breaks. Special five-course dinners take place only once each in the fall, winter and spring. 0

WHAT
Five-Course Fall Dinner

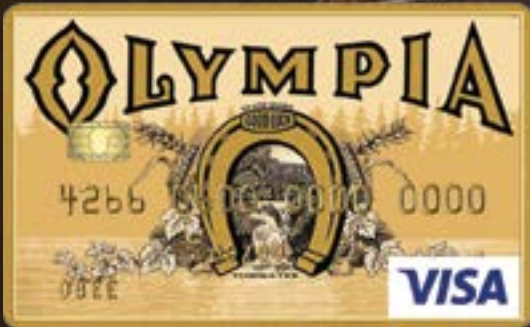
WHEN
6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 25

WHERE
Percival Restaurant, SPSCC,
2011 Mottman Rd. SW, Olympia

HOW MUCH
\$100 (reservation required)

LEARN MORE
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