

THE THEATER OFFENSIVE PRESENTS OUT ON THE EDGE:
14TH ANNUAL FESTIVAL OF QUEER (lesbian, gay, bisexual & transgender) THEATER
OCTOBER 13 - NOVEMBER 13 2005
AT THE BOSTON CENTER FOR THE ARTS

PAUL BONIN-RODRIGUEZ, JACKIE HOFFMAN, AND VARLA JEAN MERMAN
HEADLINE
MAINSTAGE PERFORMANCES

Plays At Work Features Three Local Playwrights

Since its inception in 1992, The Theater Offensive's OUT ON THE EDGE Festival of Queer Theater (www.thetheateroffensive.org) has become one of the premiere queer theater festivals in the world and the only one in New England. The 14th Annual OUT ON THE EDGE Festival, running October 13 - November 13, 2005 at the Boston Center for the Arts, will feature writer, performer and dancer **Paul Bonin-Rodriguez** in *Fringe and Fringe Ability* (Thursday, October 13 - Sunday, October 16), Broadway's "Hairspray," film and cabaret star **Jackie Hoffman** in *The Kvetching Continues* (Wednesday, October 19 - Sunday, October 23), and the "tour de force" performer **Varla Jean Merman** in the recently expanded *Girl With A Pearl Necklace: An Act Of Love* (Tuesday, October 25 - Saturday, October 29). Dedicated to developing new works by local LGBT artists, the next two weekends will feature The Theater Offensive's Plays At Work staged readings (November 5 - 13).

Works to be presented include **David Valdes Greenwood's** *Constant*, **Letta Neely's** *Shackles and Sugar* and **Melissa Li's** *Surviving The Nian*. Go to www.thetheateroffensive.org for more information.

This year's OUT ON THE EDGE festival will open Thursday, October 13 through Sunday, October 16 with Paul Bonin-Rodriguez's *Fringe and Fringe Ability* (www.paulbonin-rodriguez.com). Bonin-Rodriguez's story of John Roy Hobson has been considered a unique voice, a "gay Huck Finn" has provided comic relief for a conservative age. In *Fringe and Fringe Ability*, Bonin-Rodriguez continues with the fourth play of this sprawling and hilarious "Texas Trinity" saga. Taking place in the wake of the 2004 elections, *Fringe* finds Johnny reunited with favorite characters of past shows and meeting new ones and all of them working together to put the "down low" on the uptight citizens of the President's home state. Performances are Thursday, October 13 at 7pm (press night), Friday, October 14 at 8pm, Saturday, October 15 at 8pm and Sunday, October 16 at 3pm at the Boston Center for the Arts Plaza Theater, 539 Tremont Street, South End, Boston. Tickets are \$35, \$30, and \$25. For reserved tickets call 617.933.8600 or visit www.bostontheatrescene.com.

Next up is the longest running show in the history of New York's celebrated Joe's Pub/Public Theater, *The Kvetching Continues* starring Broadway and film actress **Jackie Hoffman** (October 19 through 23). This gay-themed Jewish cabaret act is explosively funny, endearingly bitter and elevates complaining to an art form. Mixing original songs and humorous monologues, Jackie skewers backstage Broadway and "goes there" on every taboo subject in the book. How provocative is this show? Even John Waters told her to tone it down! Performances are Wednesday, October 19 at 7pm (press night), Thursday, October 20 at 8pm, Friday, October 21 at 8pm, Saturday, October 22 at 8pm and Sunday, October 23 at 3pm at the Boston Center for the Arts Plaza Theater, 539 Tremont Street, South End, Boston. Tickets are \$35, \$30, and \$25. For reserved tickets call 617.933.8600 or visit www.bostontheatrescene.com.

"An indisputable force of nature who displays the dazzling force of a cyclone touching down in a sequin factory," says the *The Los Angeles Times*. Newly expanded and boasting a sold-out engagement at the Sydney Opera House, Varla Jean Merman's *Girl With A Pearl Necklace: An Act Of Love* now comes to Boston Tuesday, October 25 through Saturday, October 29. Varla's biological clock is ticking and she is desperate to get married. Will Varla be institutionalized in a state of matrimony or installed in a state institution? Will the girl with a pearl necklace find that special someone who will get under her skin and see through the Vermeer? Performances are

Tuesday, October 25 at 8pm (press night), Wednesday, October 26 at 8pm, Thursday, October 27 at 8pm, Friday, October 28 at 8pm and Saturday, October 29 at 8pm and 10:30pm at the Boston Center for the Arts Plaza Theater, 539 Tremont Street, South End, Boston. Tickets are \$35, \$30, and \$25. For reserved tickets call 617.933.8600 or visit www.bostontheatrescene.com.

In *Constant* by David Valdes Greenwood, when Fernando proposes to his boyfriend Aubrey, he pops more than the question, the specter of legal marriage bursts the whole bubble of their ten-year relationship. The big bang reverberates throughout their close-knit circle of family, friends and lovers, colliding through time and space, with the fate of their union hanging -- impossibly -- on astrophysics. David Valdes Greenwood's plays have been seen in 15 states and include *Wonderland* (2004 Portland Stage Little Festival of the Unexpected), *Brave Navigator* (published by Baker's Plays), *Paradise of Earthworms* (commissioned by Ensemble Studio Theatre/Sloan Project), *Day Eight: Snow Globe* (anthologized by Baker's Plays) and previous Heideman finalist *Office Masaai*. Readings will be held Saturday, November 5 at 5pm and Sunday, November 6 at 7pm in Hall A at the BCA in the Calderwood Pavilion, 527 Tremont Street, South End, Boston. General Admission: \$10 suggested donation

Shackles & Sugar by Letta Neely depicts the love between two Black women, both field hands on a plantation, as they live their lives branded as slaves. How far will they go to get freedom--all kinds of it? Fast forward to present day. How does the 150-year-old story of these women echo in the life of a modern-day Black businesswoman? Letta Neely is a New England area activist and award winning poet and playwright. Readings will be held Saturday, November 5 at 8pm and Sunday, November 6 at 3pm in Hall A at the BCA in the Calderwood Pavilion, 539 Tremont Street, South End, Boston. General Admission: \$10 suggested donation

Melissa Li's musical *Surviving the Nian* follows Kaylin Woo when she returns home to Hong Kong for Chinese New Year with her Black lover in tow. Dashing family expectations, Kaylin reveals she is NOT a business professional, but a jazz performer---and a lesbian, to boot! After dashing her family's expectations and betraying her lover's trust, Kaylin scrambles to salvage her relationships. Melissa Li is a Boston-based professional folk musician, film artist and emerging playwright. Performances will be held Saturday, November 12 at 8pm and Sunday, November 13 at 3pm in Hall A at the BCA in the Calderwood Pavilion. General Admission: \$10 suggested donation.

This year's OUT ON THE EDGE festival is made possible by The Theater Offensive's beloved community of supporters including: Astraea Lesbian Fund for Justice, Boston Cultural Council, The Boston Foundation, Haymarket People's Fund, LEF Foundation, Massachusetts Cultural Council (a state agency which also receives funding from the National Endowment for the Arts) and Out Fund of The Funding Exchange.

This presentation of Paul Bonin-Rodriguez's *Fringe and Fringe Ability* is one of a series of programs designed by the National Performance Network (NPN). NPN is an independent organization begun by Dance Theater Workshop and is comprised of arts organizations in 42 cities and 27 states. NPN is made possible through major funding from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, Ford Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts (a federal agency). For further information, visit the NPN website at www.npnweb.org or write: National Performance Network, 1712 Baronne Street, Ste. 1712, New Orleans, LA 70112.

The Theater Offensive is a resident company of the Boston Center for the Arts.

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