

N E W S

PCS STUDIO SEASON OPENS WITH HILARITY IN STEVE MARTIN'S *THE UNDERPANTS*

While Steve Martin does NOT appear in the show, his adaptation of this 1911 German sex farce will leave the audience in stitches!

September 27, 2007 - PORTLAND Following up on the opening of a deep and sultry *Cabaret* on the Main Stage, Portland Center Stage opens the 2007-2008 Studio season with a hilarious and light-hearted comedy set in pre-WWI Germany, *The Underpants*. The original play (*Die Hosen*) was written by **Carl Sternheim** as the first in his series of six *Comedies from the Heroic Life of the Middle Class* and was banned by both the Imperial and Nazi authorities. When introduced to the play by **Barry Edelstein**, Martin is reported to have remarked, "I like the title." He re-worked the entire play, infusing it with his own brand of comic lunacy, slightly re-centering the message and, in his own words, "uncork(ing) the genie that Sternheim placed in the bottle—the genie that makes the play relevant to our age."

Just prior to the top of the play, **Louise Maske**, the mournfully sex-deprived wife of a boorish German bureaucrat, has accidentally dropped her bloomers, not just in public, but as the king is passing by during a parade! The action ensues as a series of titillated suitors, drawn like moths to a flame, compete to rent the room the Maskes are subletting in order to "make ends meet." These would-be suitors are ever so single-minded, each in his own way making only the scarcest pretense of his efforts to tempt the heretofore devoted wife into adulterous liaisons. **Steve Martin's** trademark physical humor and double entendre abound, and these very antics and the subtly crafted dialogue betray an unexpected three-dimensionality in each character by the close of the play. Once an entertaining yet thinly veiled disparagement of the bourgeoisie, *The Underpants* has been transformed by Mr. Martin into a no-holds-barred salute to an age of gender-indifferent sexual liberty and its undeniably humorous, part and parcel complications.

The Underpants previews in the **Gerding Theater Studio** 128 NW 11th Avenue at Davis, **Tuesday, October 16 - Thursday, October 18**; opens **Friday, October 19** and closes with the 7:30pm performance on **Sunday, December 2**. All evening performances take place at 7:30 PM while **Noon Thursday** and **2 PM Saturday** and **Sunday matinee** dates are also available. **Tickets On Sale Now: \$16.50, 18 & under, \$21.50, Students, \$26.50 - \$43.50, others; Box Office: 503-445-3700; information: www.pcs.org.** The first production in PCS' 2007-2008 Studio season, *The Underpants* is sponsored by **Rob and Marni Goodman** with additional support from the **Regional Arts and Culture Council** and **Work for Art**, the **Oregon Arts Commission** and the **National Endowment for the Arts**, a federal agency. Order tickets online at www.pcs.org, by phone at 503-445-3700 or in person at 128 NW 11th Ave in the Pearl District.

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The Playwright of the Original Work

Carl Sternheim (April 1, 1878 – November 3, 1942)

Carl Sternheim was born in Leipzig and grew up in Hanover and Berlin. He studied philosophy, psychology and jurisprudence in college but never earned a degree. In addition to writing his sextet, *Comedies on the Heroic Life of the Middle Class*, Sternheim was co-founder of the literary journal, *Hyperion*, where Franz Kafka's writing was first introduced to the masses. Because of his Jewish descent and the biting satirical nature of his work, Sternheim's voice was silenced in Nazi Germany. He died in Brussels during World War II.

The Adaptor

Steve Martin

His name conjures up a variety of memorable images, most of them sophomoric, many of them from *Saturday Night Live*. The truth is that Steve Martin is a modern day Renaissance Man. Not only has he appeared in 43 films, he is a screenwriter and a producer. He is the author of seven books, six plays, and numerous essays and short stories which have appeared in *The New Yorker*. He is an avid collector of modern American art and serves on the Board of Trustees of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. He is also a magician, a juggler and, of course, one of American's favorite stand-up comedians. For more information – and a good time – visit the official Steve Martin Website at www.stevemartin.com.

The Director

Rose Riordan

Born and raised in Alaska, Rose began her career in theater before she had acquired a lexicon for describing the work. Prior to the age of ten, she wrote, directed and produced plays, most of them backyard productions for family, friends and neighbors. A theater gypsy, she has been an actress, writer, producer and director and has directed plays in Alaska, Seattle, Miami, New York – finally landing in Portland, which she officially calls home. Rose has an extensive background in writing, directing and new play development. For five years she worked at GeVa Theatre (Rochester, NY). In 1999 she founded Portland Center Stage's annual JAW: A Playwrights Festival, which will be celebrating its 10th anniversary next summer. JAW has been instrumental in developing new work for the PCS repertory: *Outrage*, *Flesh and Blood*, *Another Fine Mess*, *O Lovely Glowworm*, *Celebrity Row* and last season's *Act A Lady* and *The Thugs*. She directed staged readings for plays at three of the JAW festivals – *The Thugs* (2005), *Telethon* (2006) and *A Story about a Girl* (2007). Last season Rose directed *The Pillowman* on the Gerding Theater Main Stage and *The Thugs* in the Studio. Later this season she will direct the Pulitzer Prize-winning, *Doubt, A Parable* by John Patrick Shanley.

The Cast

Theo Maske.....	David Watson*
Louise Maske.....	Elizabeth Rouse*
Gertrude Deuter.....	Sharonlee McLean*
Benjamin Cohen.....	John Steinkamp*
Frank Versati.....	Michael Borrelli*
Klingehoff.....	Michael Fisher-Welsh*
A Late Arrival.....	Danny Bruno

*The actors and stage managers employed in this production are members of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

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Steve Martin's
The Underpants

Adapted from an original play by Carl Sternheim
Performance and Ticket Information

Portland Center Stage * In the Studio * Gerding Theater at the Armory * 128 NW Eleventh Ave.
Adult Tickets \$26.50 - \$43.50 * **Box Office 503-445-3700** * www.pcs.org

EVENINGS 7:30 PM

Tuesdays Oct. 16(P), 23, 30, Nov. 6, 13, 20, 27
Wednesdays Oct. 17(P), 24, 31, Nov. 7, 14, 21, 28
Thursdays Oct. 18(P), 25, Nov. 1, 8, 15, 29
Fridays Oct. 19(O), 26, Nov. 2, 9, 16, 30
Saturdays Oct. 20, 27, Nov. 3, 10, 17, 24, Dec. 1
Sundays Oct. 21, Nov. 4, 18, 25, Dec. 2 (C)

MATINEES

Noon w/ Q&A after show(except 11/29)
Thursdays Oct. 25, Nov. 1, 8, 15, 29
Wednesday Nov. 21
2PM
Saturdays Oct. 27, Nov. 10, 24, Dec. 1
Sundays Oct. 21, 28,
Nov. 4, 11, 18, 25

(P) = Preview • (O) = Opening Night • (C) = Closing

Student/Senior Matinees

Every Thursday Matinee at Noon is programmed especially for our student and senior audiences. Patrons enjoy discounted ticket prices and post-show Q&A sessions with the cast and crew of *The Underpants*.

Access Performances

Audio Described

Friday, October 26 7:30 PM

Sign Interpreted

Thursday, November 1 7:30 PM

The Gerding Theater Studio is fully accessible for patrons with disabilities. Assistive listening devices are available from the coatroom.

Ticket Prices

Preview Evenings	\$21.50
Sunday – Thursday Evenings	\$31.50
Friday & Saturday Evenings	\$43.50
Sunday Matinees	\$41.50
Thursday & Saturday Matinees	\$26.50
Students (excluding Fri./Sat. Evenings)	\$21.50
18 & Under (all performances with I.D.)	\$16.50

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PORTLAND CENTER STAGE inspires our community by bringing stories to life in unexpected ways. Established in 1988 as an off shoot of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, PCS became an independent theater in 1994 and has been under the leadership of Artistic Director Chris Coleman since May 2000. The company presents a blend of classic, contemporary and original productions in a conscious effort to appeal to the eclectic palette of theatergoers in Portland. PCS also offers a variety of education and outreach programs for curious minds from 6 to 106, including the PCS GreenHouse, a school of theater.

THE GERDING THEATER AT THE ARMORY houses a 599-seat Main Stage and a 200-seat black box Studio. It was the first building on the National Register of Historic Places, and the first performing arts venue, to achieve a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Platinum certification. The Gerding Theater at the Armory opened to the public on Oct. 1, 2006. The capital campaign to fund the renovation of this hub of community artistic activity continues.

Portland Center Stage 2007-2008 Season in the Gerding Theater at the Armory

- *Cabaret* Book by Joe Masteroff, based on the play by John Van Druten and stories by Christopher Isherwood, Music by John Kander, Lyrics by Fred Ebb, Directed by Chris Coleman, September 25 – October 21, 2007, On the Main Stage – **EXTENDED THROUGH NOVEMBER 4TH!**
- Steve Martin's *The Underpants*, adapted from an original play by Carl Sternheim, Directed by Rose Riordan, October 16 - December 2, 2007, In the Studio
- *A Christmas Carol* by Mead Hunter, based on the novel by Charles Dickens, Directed by Cliff Fannin Baker, November 27 – December 23, 2007, On the Main Stage
- *The Beard of Avon* by Amy Freed, Directed by Chris Coleman, January 15 - March 9, 2008, On the Main Stage

In Repertory With...

- *Twelfth Night* by William Shakespeare, Directed by Jane Jones, January 22 – March 9, 2008, On the Main Stage
- *A Feminine Ending* by Sarah Treem, Directed by Timothy Douglas, Feb. 5 – March 23, 2008 In the Studio
- *Sometimes a Great Notion* by Aaron Posner, adapted from the novel by Ken Kesey, Directed by Aaron Posner, April 1 - 27, 2008, On the Main Stage
- *The Little Dog Laughed* by Douglas Carter Beane, Directed by Chris Coleman. April 29 – June 15, 2008, In the Studio
- *Doubt, A Parable* by John Patrick Shanley, Directed by Rose Riordan, May 20 – June 15, 2008, On the Main Stage