



PRESS CONTACT: Cynthia Kirk
503-925-0184
cynkirk@aol.com

N E W S

O LOVELY GLOWWORM, GLEN BERGER'S WHIMSICAL AND PROFOUND PLAY ABOUT THE MEANINGFUL RANDOMNESS OF LIFE, PREMIERES AT PORTLAND CENTER STAGE

About Glen Berger's work:

"[With] wild concatenations of forgotten historical footnotes, philosophical musings, and rich emotional cravings, ...Glen Berger's work feels like what an entire generation of playwrights has been struggling to write. His characters bubble over with passions that are both compelling and absurd; his stories use the simplest things to launch into enormous conceptual landscapes." -- *The Stranger*

"Whimsically brainy...prismatic...spin[s] cast-off scrap material into theatrical gold." -- *American Theatre*

About *O Lovely Glowworm*:

"It's about how very small in the end we are—that seen in regard to the whole huge universe, we and our struggles are so endearingly pathetic it's laughable...." -- from Glen Berger's journal, July 25, 1994

PORTLAND CENTER STAGE presents the **world premiere** of ***O Lovely Glowworm*** by **Glen Berger**, one of today's most imaginative and distinctive playwrights. Developed at JAW/West 2003, *O Lovely Glowworm* is the fourth play out of PCS' annual playwrights festival to be premiered at the theater. ***O Lovely Glowworm*** previews at the Winningstad Theatre, 1111 SW Broadway at Main, Tuesday, March 22 - Thursday, March 24; opens Friday, March 25 and closes Sunday, April 24. Evening performances take place at 7 PM Tuesday, Wednesday, Sunday (except April 10*) and 8 PM Thursday, Friday, Saturday while Thursday, Saturday and Sunday matinee dates are also available. Tickets: \$15, 30+under, \$20 - \$55, general; box office: 503-274-6588; information: www.pcs.org. *O Lovely Glowworm*, sponsored by **H. Pat and Trudy Ritz and the Ritz Family Foundation** and **M Financial Group**, is part of the Next Stage Series sponsored by **Wells Fargo**.

O Lovely Glowworm is about the history of the world as perceived by a stuffed goat who remembers his life from his perch at the edge of a domestic trash heap behind a derelict cottage in rural Ireland, circa 1918. It's an exploration of consciousness through a lens as myopic as Mr. Magoo's, as slapstick as the Three Stooges, as intelligently raucous as the Marx Brothers, and as lyrical as the yearning Irish tenor of John McCormack. With just six actors, the play takes us on journey through time and place, with flashbacks to childhood, battlefields, hospitals, love affairs, deathbeds, horse races, railroad stations and mermaid-stocked lakes. All suggested in a decidedly hand-made, low tech production by the merest scraps, including soap wrappers, cigarette packages, tram tickets, widget ads and betting slips.

Stuffed with seemingly random historical ephemera and cultural references, Glen Berger's plays cohere into cunning commentaries on the human condition. Glen Berger began his career writing for an all-male comedy troupe in Seattle; he's received Emmy nominations for his work on *Arthur*, a PBS children's

***O Lovely Glowworm*, Portland Center Stage, Page Two**

program, and some of his other plays are about obsessed librarians, claustrophobic lighthouse keepers and obscure 18th century scientists. He finds the universal in the specific and compassion in the ridiculous.

This world premiere reunites director **Randy White** and actors **Jim Iorio** (Halliwell) and **Tim True** (Macmann), all of whom participated in the JAW/West 2003 development process and reading. The cast also includes **Sharonlee McLean** (Mother, Kathleen), in her seventh appearance at PCS; **Christine Calfas** (Philomel), who most recently played Cordelia in last fall's *King Lear*; **Troy West** (Marveaux), fresh from the Off-Broadway success of Tracy Letts' *Bug* and a veteran of Glen Berger's, *Great Men of Science...*; and Portland-based actor and playwright **Ebbe Roe Smith** in the challenging roles of The Goat, Truant Officer, Taxidermist, Old Halliwell, and more. The production's design team has rich experience with new plays and, in the case of lighting designer **Tyler Micoleau** and set designer **Lauren Helpern**, artists who contributed to the off-Broadway success of Berger's 2001 *Underneath the Lintel* (which opens PCS' 05-06 season, September 27 – October 30, 2005). Curtainup.com had this to say about that 2001 collaboration, "[Randy White's] staging is clean and understated, allowing ... the playwright's words to generate the emotional impact of the plot. White's pacing of the drama builds subtly.... Lauren Helpern's set design utilizes the configuration of the theatre's stage while making it feel bare and unsightly, very much like the [character's] world and life. The effective lighting design by Tyler Micoleau is dramatic and appropriate in its simplicity."

GLEN BERGER launched his playwriting career in earnest as a member of Annex Theatre in Seattle. He now lives in New York. His other plays include: *Underneath the Lintel*; *The Wooden Brecks*; the musical *A Night in the Old Marketplace*; *Great Men of Science, Nos. 21 & 22*; and *Bessemer's Spectacles*. He's received many awards and grants for his work. He was a recipient of a Manhattan Theatre Club Sloan Foundation Fellowship, a Children's Theatre of Minneapolis "Playground" Commission and has participated in the A.S.K. Playwrights Retreat. He has also written several episodes for both the PBS children's series *Arthur*, for which he was nominated for an Emmy and a Humanitas Prize, and its spin-off *Postcards from Buster*. Glen is a third-year member of New Dramatists.

RANDY WHITE directed the JAW/West 2003 workshop of *O Lovely Glowworm* and the 15-month Off-Broadway run of Glen Berger's *Underneath the Lintel*. He was Associate Director on David Edgar's *Continental Divide* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Berkeley Rep, The Barbican) and assistant on Disney's *The Lion King*. He directed Portland playwright Joe Fisher's *Thunderbird* at New York's Cherry Lane Theatre and has also directed at the Humana Festival for New American Plays, as well as at theaters and universities across the country. He was Resident Director at New Dramatists for two seasons. CultureVulture.net had this to say about his direction of *Underneath the Lintel*, "Whatever the chemistry between him and [the actor] during rehearsals, the result is 90 minutes that fly by with an actor using the stage, the many props, and his personality in such a way that the direction is invisible, which is the highest compliment to be paid to a director."

Christine Calfas	Philomel	Randy White	Director
Jim Iorio	Halliwell	Lauren Helpern	Set Designer
Sharonlee McLean	Mother, Kathleen	Georgia Lee	Costume Designer
Ebbe Roe Smith	Goat	Tyler Micoleau	Lighting Designer
Tim True	Macmann	Jen Raynak	Sound Designer
Troy West	Marveaux	Mead Hunter	Dramaturg
		John Armour	Fight Choreographer
		Demetri Pavlotos	Puppet Maker
		Mark Tynan	Stage Manager

All actors and the stage managers are Equity members.

***O Lovely Glowworm*, Portland Center Stage, Page Three**

PORTLAND CENTER STAGE is a resident company of the Portland Center for the Performing Arts, attracting more than 90,000 theatergoers annually. With five mainstage and two second stage productions each season, PCS produces a blend of classical, contemporary and world premiere works in addition to its annual summer playwrights festival, Just Add Water/West. PCS has embarked upon a \$32.9 million capital campaign to renovate the historic Portland Armory and create a permanent home for the company. The new facility, which will house a 600-seat mainstage and a 200-seat black box theater, is being designed to be the first historic rehabilitation, and hopes to be the first performing arts venue, to achieve a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Platinum rating. To date, more than \$15.2 million has been secured for the project and efforts are underway to open the new Armory Theater in the Fall of 2006. Its 2005 - 2006 season comprises:

- JAW/West, July 16 - 17, 2005
- Glen Berger, *Underneath the Lintel*, September 27 – October 30, 2005
- Jane Austen adapted by Marcus Goodwin, *Pride and Prejudice*, October 25 – November 20, 2005
- Conceived by Mark Setlock and adapted for the stage by Steve Murray, *This Wonderful Life* (working title), November 29 – December 24, 2005 -- **World Premiere**
- Tom Jones and Harvey Schmidt, *The Fantasticks*, January 10 – February 5, 2006
- Rolin Jones, *The Intelligent Design of Jenny Chow*, February 14 – March 5, 2006
- Regina Taylor, *Crowns*, March 14 – April 9, 2006
- Itamar Moses, *Celebrity Row*, March 21 – April 16, 2006 -- **World Premiere**

Glen Berger's *O Lovely Glowworm*: Performances and Special Events

Portland Center Stage • Winningstad Theatre • 1111 SW Broadway • Tickets: \$15 – \$55

Box Office: 503-274-6588 • www.pcs.org

Evenings 7 PM

Tuesdays Mar 22 (P), 29, Apr 5, 12, 19

Wednesdays Mar 23 (P), 30, Apr 6, 13, 20

Sundays Mar 27, Apr 3*, 17, 24 (C)

8 PM

Thursdays Mar 24 (P), 31, Apr 7, 14, 21

Fridays Mar 25 (O), Apr 1, 8, 15, 22

Saturdays Mar 26, Apr 2, 9, 16, 23

Matinées 2 PM

Sundays Mar 27, Apr 3, 10, 17, 24

Saturday Apr 9

Noon

Thursdays Mar 31, Apr 7, 14, 21

(P) = Preview • (O) = Opens • (C) = Closes

N.B. * Please Note: There is no 7 PM performance on Sunday, April 10.

Run time is 2 hours, 45 minutes, with one intermission.

Q&A

Thursdays, March 31, April 7, 14

Noon

Third floor Gallery

Tuesday, April 5, 19

7 PM

Discuss the play in an open dialogue with members of the company, immediately following the performance.

Access Performances

Audio Described

Friday, April 1 8 PM

Sign Interpreted

Thursday, April 7, 21 8 PM

The Newmark is fully accessible for all people with disabilities. Large print programs and assistive listening devices are available from the coatroom, free of charge.

Forum

Sunday, April 3 2 PM

Third floor Gallery

Join special guests in a discussion of *O Lovely Glowworm*. Immediately following the matinée.