

# Stage shows beckon in February, March



## *The Columbian*

Start a conversation about magical kingdoms populated by talking animals or musical spelling bees filled with laughter, and in the long, sunny days of summer, you're sure to get a few odd looks.

But this is late February. Short, cold, rainy days are beginning to take a toll, and Clark County's many theater companies seem to understand the allure of a fantastical escape. At least five local troupes will take to the stage for the last weekend of the month, and two more performances open at the beginning of March.

There's an opportunity for audience participation at "The 25th Annual Putnam

County Spelling Bee," a musical comedy at Clark College. Or you can chew your food at the same time as you chew on plot twists at the dinner theater performances of "The Apple Tree." And "Narnia," adapted from C.S. Lewis' classic children's books, opens March 2 with a journey to a land of talking creatures.

Other shows offer chances to dance with the cast ("Bye Bye Birdie," on Feb. 25 only), support a local playwright ("Happy Anniversary"), say goodbye to an institution ("Greater Tuna," Slocum House Theatre Company's final show), and revisit a classic tale about love and sibling rivalry ("Sense and Sensibility").



**Christian Youth Theatre** will stage an adaptation of "Narnia" March 2-11 at Fort Vancouver High School in Vancouver.

**Left:** Magenta Theater's 10th season kicked off with "Sense and Sensibility," which continues through Feb. 25.

## NOW ON STAGE

### "THE 25TH ANNUAL PUTNAM COUNTY SPELLING BEE"

Six quirky adolescents are vying for the spelling championship of a lifetime in this musical comedy, which invites four members of the audience to compete in the spelling bee along with the six characters.

■ When: 7:30 p.m. Feb. 24-25, March 2-3, 8-10; 2 p.m. March 3.

■ Where: Clark College's Decker Theater, Frost Arts Center, 1933 Fort Vancouver Way, Vancouver.

■ Admission: \$15, \$12 for seniors, \$10 for students.

■ Telephone: 360-992-2815

■ Web: clark.edu.

### "THE APPLE TREE"

Directed by Adele White, this musical is based on three humorous stories about temptation, told in a musical dinner-theater format. The three acts are "The Diary of Adam and Eve," a touching spin on the first couple, "The Lady or the Tiger," a rock and roll fable,

and "Passionella," an offbeat Cinderella story.

■ When: 7 p.m. Feb. 24-25, March 1-3.

■ Where: Vancouver School of Arts and Academics, 3101 Main St., Vancouver.

■ Admission: \$25 for dinner and show, \$200 for a table of eight.

■ Telephone: 360-904-4303.

■ Web: brownpapertickets.com/event/213738

### "BYE BYE BIRDIE"

It's 1958, and popular singer Conrad Birdie is about to be drafted into the Army. His agent-songwriter Albert Peterson comes up with a stunt to release the song "One Last Kiss" before he's sent overseas, with Birdie giving a "last kiss" to a lucky girl on television. But the publicity stunt goes comically wrong for everyone involved. Presented by Christian Youth Theater.

■ When: 7 p.m. Feb. 24-25, March 3; 2 p.m. Feb. 26, March 4; and 3 p.m. March 3. From 5-6:30 p.m. Feb. 25, enjoy a 1950s-style sock hop with the cast, \$10.

■ Where: Washburn Performing Arts Center, 1201 39th St., Washougal.

■ Admission: \$14, \$11 for youth and seniors, \$11 for families on Feb. 25.

■ Telephone: 360-750-8550

■ Web: cytvanport.org.

### "GREATER TUNA"

In Texas' third-smallest town, where the Lions Club is too liberal and Patsy Cline never dies, live an eclectic band of citizens. The men, women, children and even animals of Tuna, Texas, are portrayed by only two performers in this affectionate satire on life in rural America. This is the final production of Slocum House Theatre Company.

■ When: Through March 11; 8 p.m. Thursdays-Saturdays, 2 p.m. Sundays.

■ Where: Slocum House Theatre, 605 Esther St., Vancouver.

■ Admission: Free, reservations recommended. Donations accepted to benefit Share House.

■ Telephone: 360-696-2427

■ Web: slocumhouse.com.

### "SENSE AND SENSIBILITY"

The Dashwood sisters, Elinor and Marianne, are complete opposites:

Elinor is the epitome of self-control while Marianne embodies enthusiasm. When their father dies, their half-brother, John, and his snobbish wife, Fanny, inherit the family home, forcing Elinor, Marianne and younger sister Margaret to leave the estate. Their new life with a distant relative and unusual guests tests the sisters' sense and sensibilities.

■ When: 7:30 p.m. Feb. 24; and 2 p.m. Feb. 25.

■ Where: Magenta Theater, 606 Main St., Vancouver.

■ Admission: \$12-\$15.

■ Telephone: 360-635-4358.

■ Web: magentatheater.com.

## COMING SOON

### "HAPPY ANNIVERSARY"

Written by local playwright Gary Corbin, the story of a couple's relationship post-wedding looks into the effect relationships have on life's possibilities and successes, and how to know when enough is enough. Recommend for those 12 and older.

■ When: March 2-25; 8 p.m. Fridays

and Saturdays, 2 p.m. Sundays, 8 p.m. March 15, ASL interpreters during March 18 matinee.

■ Where: Serendipity Playhouse, 500 Washington St., Vancouver.

■ Admission: \$12, pay what you will March 15.

■ Web: serendipityplayers.org.

### "NARNIA"

C.S. Lewis' classic children's story has been adapted for the stage, as Lucy, her sister Susan and their brothers Peter and Edmund enter a magical kingdom through an old wardrobe. The siblings must save the land of Narnia from the eternal winter of the White Witch. Presented by Christian Youth Theater.

■ When: March 2-11; 7 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays, 2 p.m. Sundays.

■ Where: Fort Vancouver High School, 5700 E. 18th St., Vancouver.

■ Admission: \$12-14, \$9-\$11 for students and seniors, \$9-\$11 during Family Day, March 3 performance.

■ Telephone: 360-750-8550.

■ Web: cytvanport.org.