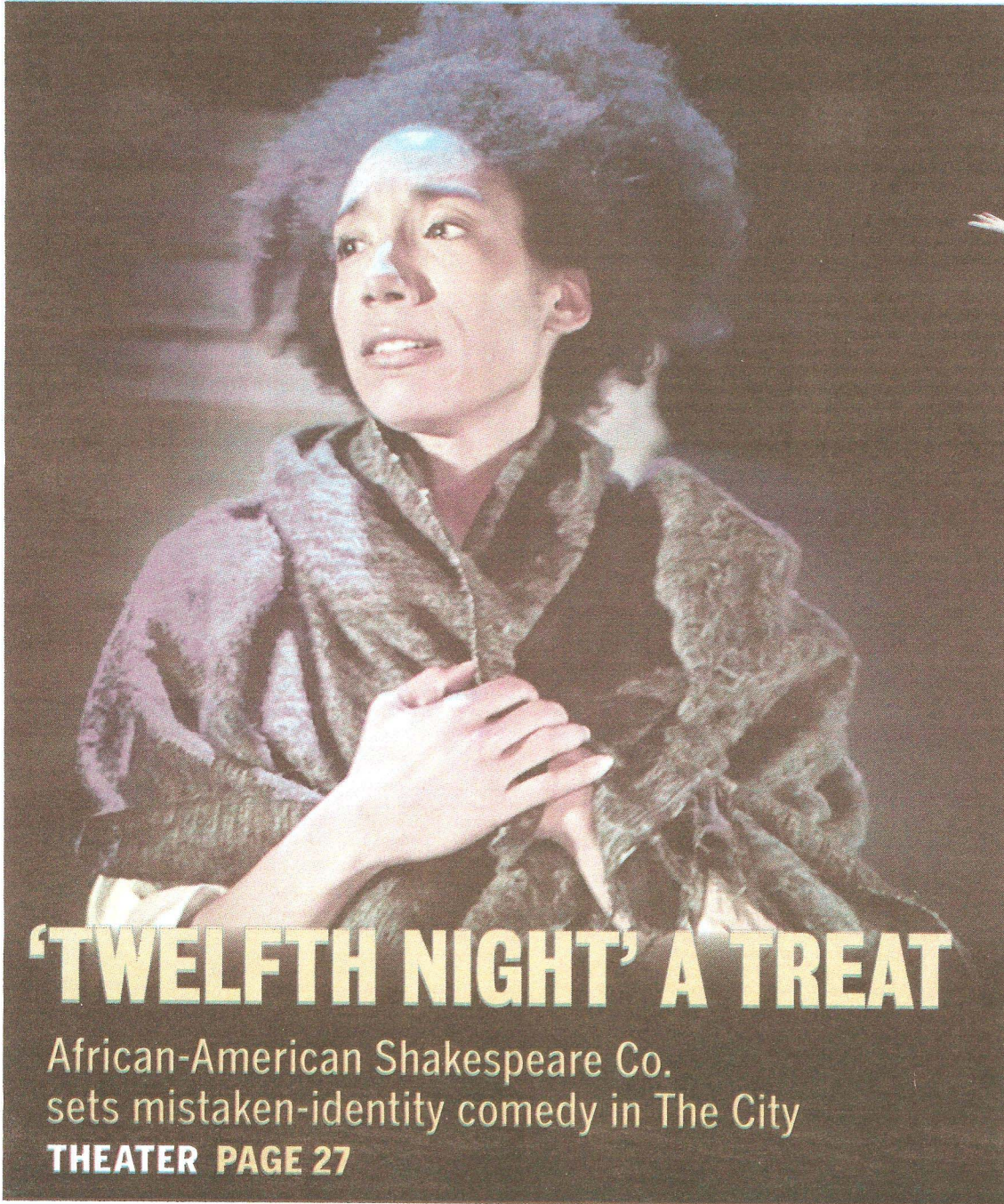


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THURSDAY, APRIL 7, 2011



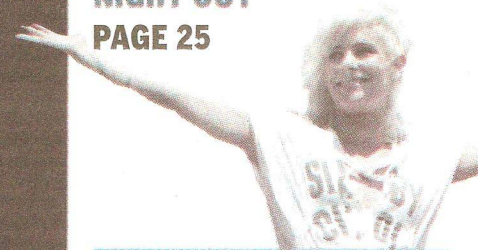
'TWELFTH NIGHT' A TREAT

African-American Shakespeare Co.
sets mistaken-identity comedy in The City
THEATER PAGE 27

NEW WAVE MUSIC MEETS MODELING

Sounds' frontwoman
happily pushes product

NIGHT OUT
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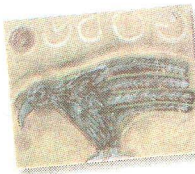
'CEDARS' MOVES TO THE STAGE

TheatreWorks presents
local premiere based on
acclaimed novel

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POTENT PAINTINGS

New works
by Feldsott
on view at Paul Mahder
Gallery **ART PAGE 28**



Jazzy 'Twelfth Night' set in The City

By Georgia Rowe
Special to The Examiner

There was a celebratory mood at opening night of the African-American Shakespeare Co.'s new production of "Twelfth Night" last weekend.

It wasn't just the high spirits radiating from the stage as the company performed Shakespeare's rollicking comedy; there was a lot to celebrate offstage as well.

The company has weathered its share of ups and downs, but now boasts a new artistic director, a handsome new home in the Buriel Clay Theatre at the African-American Art and Culture Complex, a revitalized acting company and a rising profile throughout the Bay Area and beyond.

The combination of these elements is clearly working its magic — and fostering the company's continuing mission of reimagining the classics for contemporary audiences. As artistic director, L. Peter Callender said in his preshow remarks, "African-American Shakespeare Co. is always in the black."

Callender's production, which brings the company's 2010-11 season to an upbeat conclusion, serves that mission in nearly every particular.

The director sets Shakespeare's

comedy of shipwrecks, mistaken identities and blossoming love in 1940s San Francisco.

When the heroine, Viola (the lovely Renée Wilson), and her brother, Sebastian (an agile Romulo Torres), wash ashore, it's to a jazz- and blues-fueled score written and performed by acclaimed composer Marcus Shelby.

Sets by Kemit Amenophis and costumes by Kristen Lowe recall the vibrant heyday of The City's own Fillmore jazz district.

Callender directs at a snappy pace, and the cast is fully committed. Wilson's Viola, who spends most of the play disguised as the page Cesario, weathers the pangs of first love with grace and wit.

Rebecca Frank's Olivia registers her attraction to Cesario with a winning mix of elegance and sensuality. Matt Jones' Orsino is aptly imperious as he delivers his opening speech, "If music be the food of love."

The comedic scenes are broadly played by J. "Darryl" Williams' expansive Toby Belch, Martin Grizzell's foppish Andrew Aguecheek, Charles Branklyn's jive-talking Feste and Chris Dewey's crisply articulate Fabian.

Lauren Spencer adds spice as the mastermind Maria, and Armando McClain brings urgency to the role of Antonio. Erik Banks, Percival Arcebal and Unique Jenkins contribute in

THEATER REVIEW

Twelfth Night

Presented by the African-American Shakespeare Co.

Where: African-American Art and Culture Complex, 762 Fulton St., San Francisco

When: 8 p.m. Saturdays; 3 p.m. most Sundays; closes May 1

Tickets: \$15 to \$30

Contact: (800) 838-3006, www.african-americanshakes.org

supporting roles, and Leslie Ivy joins Shelby in a couple of torchy songs.

If the pivotal scene in which the others entrap the servant Malvolio (Michael Uy Kelly) doesn't quite deliver its customary sting, the play's final moment of reconciliation is cause for jubilation.

And so is African-American Shakespeare Co.'s continued success.

Mistaken identity: Renée Wilson is excellent as Viola — who masquerades as a man — in the African-American Shakespeare Co.'s musical production of "Twelfth Night."



COURTESY PHOTO

THE LIST

Top pick Fuddy Meers

Through April 24. \$20-\$53. Marin Theatre Co. presents Pulitzer Prize-winner David Lindsay-Abaire's acclaimed absurdist comedy about an amnesiac whose life becomes even more complicated when she is kidnapped by a limping, lisping, half-blind, half-deaf man in a ski mask. [397 Miller Ave., Mill Valley, (415) 388-5208, www.marintheatre.org]



Four Plays

Friday through April 17. Free. The 16th Street Players present four contemporary comedies: "Extra

Curricular Activity" by Jay D. Hanagan, "Three Questions" by Maurice Martin, "The Universal Language" by David Ives and "Graceland" by Ellen Byron. [Notre Dame Senior Plaza, 347 Dolores St., S.F., (415) 864-4467, missiondolores.org/events/upcoming_events.html]

Killing My Lobster Reboots

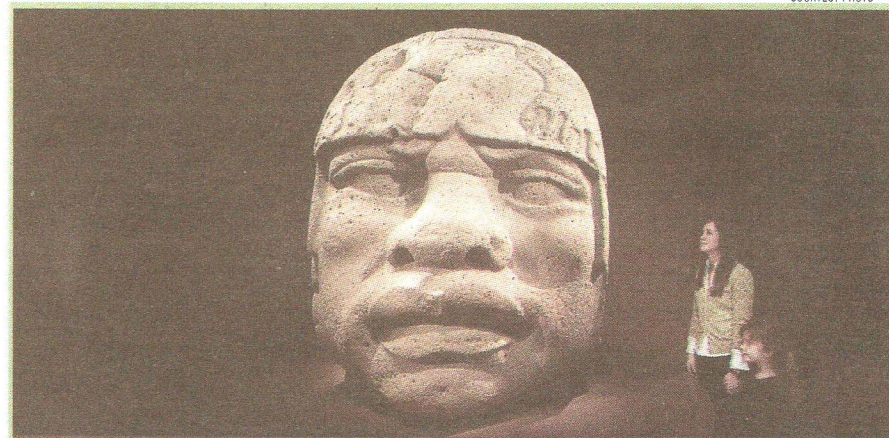
Through April 24. \$10-\$24. Directed by Lia Metz, the sketch-comedy troupe investigates technology and how it affects and changes our lives in pieces involving frequent Facebook posters, smartphones and outdated electronics. [The Jewish Theatre, 470 Florida St., S.F., (800) 838-3006, www.killingmylobster.com]

Secret Identity Crisis

Through May 14. \$10-\$20. Directors Clay Robeson and Melissa Holman examine what lies behind the mask of a hero in this two-hour play presented by Un-Scripted Theater Co. [SF Playhouse, 533 Sutter St., S.F., (415) 869-5384, www.un-scripted.com]

A Streetcar Named Desire

Through May 28. \$26-\$38. Actors Theatre of San Francisco presents Tennessee Williams' classic about a fragile and haunting Southern beauty whose desperate grasp for happiness is viciously destroyed. [Actors Theatre, 855 Bush St., S.F., (415) 345-1287, www.actorstheatrefsf.org]



OLMEC COLOSSAL MASTERWORKS OF ANCIENT MEXICO

THROUGH MAY 8, 2011

America's oldest civilization and Mesoamerica's "mother culture" (1200–400 B.C.), the Olmec are famous for their colossal heads carved from giant boulders. This exhibition of over 100 objects includes massive sculpture in addition to small-scale vessels, figures and masks, many of which have not traveled before.

OLMEC COMMUNITY FRIDAY NIGHTS: Mar 25–May 6, 2011

Every Friday from 5–8:45pm view this exhibition for free.

Permanent collection & other special exhibitions not included.

Funding for the San Francisco production of the exhibition is provided by the Phyllis C. Wattis Fund for Traveling Exhibitions

Image: Colossal Head 5, Mexico, Veracruz, Municipality of Teixistepec, San Lorenzo Tenochtitlán, 1200–900 B.C. Museo de Antropología de Xalapa, Universidad Veracruzana (Reg. 49 P.J. 4026).

HERBST EXHIBITION GALLERIES

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