

CURTAIN CALL



Juanita Snyder

There's no shortage of rousing musicals, side-splitting comedies, and thought-provoking dramas at these coastal playhouses.

STORY BY **EMILY KOLKEMO**

THE LATE ACTOR Sir Laurence Olivier once said, "I believe that in a great city, or even in a small city or a village, a great theater is the outward and visible sign of an inward and probable culture." If that statement is correct, then the Oregon Coast is a bastion of flourishing communities, based on the number of theaters that inhabit the many towns and cities along the coastline. The coast is home to more than a dozen playhouses, thanks in part to the volunteers, contributors, and theater-goers that support them.

Broadway productions, musicals, original plays, and classic tales all make their way to the coast. Some annual productions,

like North Bend's Little Theater on the Bay's *Little Ole Opry* and *Country Christmas*, celebrate the season with music, dance, and comedy while others, like the Astor Street Opry Company's *Shanghaied in Astoria*, portray Oregon Coast history.

"Theater allows us to see ourselves in each other. Telling stories allows us to remember who we are," says Nancy Montgomery from Astoria's River Theater. "Theater isn't something that's separate from reality. On the contrary, it mirrors reality back to us so we can rage, laugh, cry, identify with ourselves, with each other."

Theater is the expression of these individual communities, and they offer it with true artistic style that is pure entertainment.