



Tears of a Clown

Holcombe Waller croons country.

UNDER NORMAL circumstances, homeless, boozed-up clowns are, at best, a sad (nay, creepy) excuse for entertainment. But coulrophobics should swallow their fears and see *Patty Heart Townes*, an original performance arranged and delivered by Portland singer-songwriter (by way of San Francisco) Holcombe Waller, who has left impressions on local audiences with bold stagings at the TBA Festival and elsewhere. This moody musical revolves around the songs of the late troubadour Townes Van Zandt ("Pancho and Lefty" was his biggest hit, recorded by Willie Nelson and Merle Haggard) in the first act, and those of lyrical minstrel Patty Griffin in the second. Complemented by a three-piece ensemble (playing cello, violin, banjo and glockenspiel), *Patty Heart Townes* features Waller as Mihael Sagalovesky—an emotionally shredded clown with a voice as full of longing and soulfulness as the lyrics he sings. Beyond interpreting folk music, "The character is there to inhabit the space of the song, to put the stories they're telling up on a pedestal," Waller says. "There's a certain magical realism going on."

—Kathryn O'Shea-Evans

PATTY HEART TOWNES

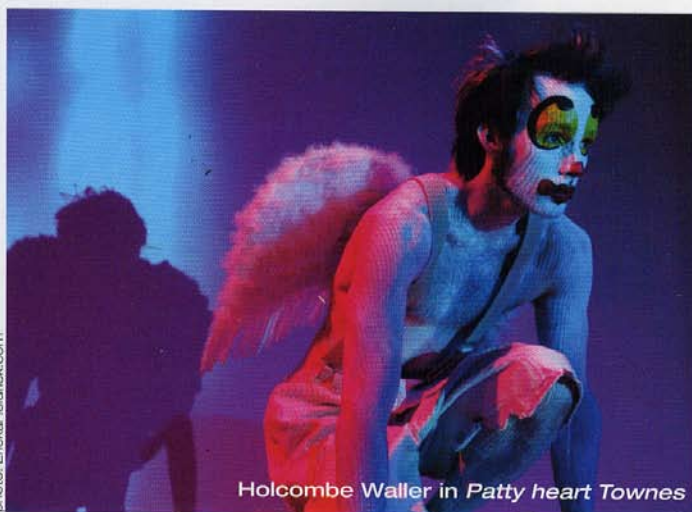
Jan 26 at 9:30, Jan 27 at 3:30

\$10 *Holocene, 1001 SE Morrison*

503-239-7639 www.holcombewaller.com

Upcoming Performing Arts Events

by Hollyanna McCollom



Holcombe Waller in *Patty heart Townes*

photo: Ericka Hedrick.com

Patty heart Townes

Holocene

January 26, 9:30pm & January 27, 3:30pm

When Holcombe Waller moved from San Francisco to Portland, he found a music scene that was eager to gobble him up; his third album, *Troubled Times*, which was released in 2005, met with critical acclaim. Waller was also readily embraced by the theatrical community when he was featured in Insight Out's original production of *One: The Musical* and Scott Kelman's *Tao Soup*, as well as part of PICA's TBA Festival last September. With his remarkable range as a performer and a hauntingly unfettered voice, it's easy to see why Portland loves this indie star in the making. Waller's newest endeavor is a musical love letter wrapped in a tribute: *Patty heart Townes* is an incorporation of movement, singing, costume and video projections to the music of Townes Van Zandt and Patty Griffin. Accompanied by a string ensemble, Waller performs the carefully arranged songs to tell the tale of Mihael Sagalovesky, a "down-and-out clown seemingly doomed to living out legends of the songs he sings." Waller's short-run performance promises to deliver a story that is all at once heartbreaking and hopeful.