



ADVERTISING

Swiss ski vacation.



NWclassifieds | NWsource | [Subscribe](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Seattle](#)

[Jump to >>](#) [Weather](#) | [Traffic](#) | [Mariners](#) | [Seahawks](#) | [Sonics](#) | [Forum](#)

Arts & Entertainment

NEWS

- [Local](#)
- [Neighborhoods](#)
- [Sports](#)
- [Nation/World](#)
- [Business](#)
- [A&E](#)
 - [Movies](#)
 - [TV & Radio](#)
 - [Dining](#)
 - [Music](#)
 - [Local Bands](#)
 - [Books](#)
 - [Video Games](#)
 - [Theater/Fine Arts](#)
 - [Theater Calendar](#)
 - [Art Shows](#)
 - [Art Museums](#)
 - [Auditions](#)
 - [Class. Calendar](#)
 - [On the Radio](#)
 - [People](#)
 - [Visitors Guide](#)
 - [A&E Wire](#)

- [What's Happening](#)
- [Lifestyle](#)
- [NW Outdoors](#)
- [Photos](#)
- [Special Reports](#)

COMMENTARY

- [Opinion](#)
- [Columnists](#)
- [Letters](#)
- [David Horsey](#)
- [Saturday Spin](#)
- [Forums](#)

COFFEE BREAK

- [Comics & Games](#)
- [Horoscope](#)
- [TV Listings](#)

FIND IT!

NWclassifieds

- [• Jobs](#)
- [• Autos](#)
- [• Real Estate](#)

THEATER/FINE ARTS

Friday, May 6, 2005

'Hypnagogia!' writer and performer knows the word well

By [JOE ADCOCK](#)
SEATTLE POST-INTELLIGENCER THEATER CRITIC

Creative people "dream things up" -- sometimes literally. Perhaps the most famous instance involves the legendary chemist Friedrich August Kekule von Stradonitz, who in 1865 allegedly discovered in a dream the structure of the benzene molecule.

And then there's the case of Seattle writer/performer Josh Knisely. His new show "Hypnagogia!" opens tonight at the Jewelbox Theater. As word freaks will recognize just from the title, the show is about dream imagery.

"Not exactly dream imagery," Knisely says. "The hypnagogic state occupies the area between being awake and sleeping. All kinds of surprising images and ideas arise and disappear. Anal-retentive writer type that I am, I capture some of the material in my hypnagogic states and use it for sketches."

Knisely is a veteran of the now defunct sketch comedy team Some Kind of Cult. "We disbanded, oh, two years ago and went our separate ways," he said during an interview earlier this week. In going his separate way, Knisely was able to mine the "comedy gold" lurking in his notes from hypnagogia.

"When I was working with the company," he recalls, "I'd throw out an idea from my hypnagogic experiences during brainstorming sessions. Everyone would look kinda puzzled. They were not enthusiastic."

Freed from the necessity of recruiting reluctant colleagues, Knisely got to

UW CAL

[Browse ev](#)

[Theater](#)

[All dates](#)

[All areas](#)

[What's H](#)

TOOLS

[Print this](#)

[Most pri](#)

ADV

COMING UP

HYPNAGOGIA!

PLAYWRIGHT: Josh Knisely

WHERE: Jewelbox Theater at the Rendezvous bar, 2322 Second Ave. (21 and older)

WHEN: Opens tonight, runs through May 28

TICKETS: \$10;
www.brownpapertickets.com

INFORMATION:
www.joshknisely.com/shows

- [Rentals](#)
- [Shopping](#)
- [Personals](#)
- [Yellow pages](#)
- [Maps/directions](#)

[Newspaper ads](#)
[P-I Archives](#)
[Photo Reprints](#)
[Obituaries](#)

[P-I ANYWHERE](#)
[E-mail Newsletters](#)
[News Alerts](#)
[PDA](#)
[Cell Phones](#)
[RSS Feeds](#)

ADVERTISING






Vue
Saturn.
People First.



SATURN SEATTLE
It's different in a Saturn.

OUR AFFILIATES

work on "Hypnagogia!" "You know how computer programmers claim that eventually they start dreaming in code?" Knisely ventures. "Well, I think people who work in comedy prime their unconscious to deal with comedy."

According to Knisely, "Hypnagogia!" doesn't really have a story. But it does have characters and incidents. One of the more important characters is Gyzhor, a sort of monster movie robot. "Except that Gyzhor is not your raging powerful monster," Knisely stipulates. "He's more of a sad sack loser. He's divorced. He finds out that the people he thought were his parents are not really his parents. And he gets fired from his job as a kindergarten worker."

Knisely has a bit of experience with the perils of child-care morale. His mother used to provide day care in their West Seattle home. "And I had to share my toys," he says.

In addition to playing Gyzhor, Knisely also portrays an imitation of an imitation of Mark Twain. "I'm not pretending to be Mark Twain," he notes. "I'm pretending to be Hal Holbrook imitating Mark Twain. I've actually used the Twain/Holbrook bit in other shows. Instead of the fake eyebrows and mustache I use whipped cream. It keeps plopping noisily onto the floor. The white suit gets all messed up. But you'd be surprised how easy it is to get white jackets cheap at Value Village."

In addition to creating comedy, Knisely is a fringe theater actor. His work has been seen at Open Circle Theater and Consolidated Works. At Con Works he met Heather Hughes, who is performing in "Hypnagogia!" In the world of sketch comedy he met Cory Nealy, a Flaming Box off Stuff and Up in Your Grill trouper.

"Lordy, I have no idea how many characters we all portray during the course of the show," Knisely says. "For one thing, Heather and Cory play Gyzhor's adoptive parents. And we all get into the musical number in the middle of the show. We play fishing lines that are attached to a bucket."

As for scenery, that is provided by rear projections onto a background screen. "It's on DVD," Knisely says. "A lot of it is animated. We can control it and move it along on cue. It's fluid, which is important. You don't want to have to stop and change scenery when you're trying to

ADVERTISING

north shore ocean plus
 stay for six nights, and we'll give you a 7th night for free*



Turtle Bay Resort
 true hawai'i
 NORTH SHORE, O'AHU
 BENCHMARK HOSPITALITY INTERNATIONAL


* Certain restrictions apply

FAN

Search
 Mov
 Enter City

TIC
 AVA
 N

STAR
 EPIS
 REVENGE
 © Lucasfilm 200



HEADLINE

Midsize thea
fines from st

Two-man pl
the humor ir
obsession

Deaf and he
together in '

Rep director
splashy line

All-male 'Tar
unleashes pl

Mulgrew ret
setting with

The hunt is c

convey the flow of a hypnagogic state."

Bland but ch
Man' has a f

When not either mining his unconscious or writing or performing, Knisely helps coordinate the chaplains' activities at Harborview Hospital.

In June he and his "Hypnagogia!" team take their show to New York to perform at the Upright Citizens Brigade Theater as part of an international sketch comedy festival.

Webtowns

More headlines and info from [Belltown](#).

P-I theater critic Joe Adcock can be reached at 206-448-8369 or joadcock@seattlepi.com.

 [Printer-friendly version](#)

 [E-mail this story](#)

 [Get e-mail news updates](#)

 [Subscribe to the P-I](#)

[Home](#) | [Site Map](#) | [About the P-I](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [P-I Jobs](#) | [Home Delivery](#)

Seattle Post-Intelligencer

101 Elliott Ave. W.
Seattle, WA 98119
(206) 448-8000

Home Delivery: (206) 464-2121 or (800) 542-0820

Send comments to newmedia@seattlepi.com
©1996-2005 Seattle Post-Intelligencer
[Terms of Service/Privacy Policy](#)