

PRESS RELEASE

Contact: Anise Delorca / POW WOW NOW 503-238-2038
Email: anisepromo@mac.com / More info at www.holcombewaller.com

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February 22 2007

**JOE'S PUB WELCOMES PORTLAND, OREGON SINGER-SONGWRITER
HOLCOMBE WALLER'S NYC DEBUT OF THEATRICAL CABARET PERFORMANCE**

**"MIHAEL SAGALOVESKY
AND THE TRAGIC TORMENTS OF
PATTY HEART TOWNES:
SONGS OF PATTY GRIFFIN AND TOWNES VAN ZANDT"**

March 18th marks the NYC debut of **Portland, Oregon artist Holcombe Waller's** original two-act performance based entirely on the songs of Patty Griffin and Townes Van Zandt. Joe's Pub has long championed Holcombe's work as an indie singer-songwriter, and the venue's support continues with this special Sunday 9:30pm slot, falling between two of Holcombe's biggest heroes and influences, **Laurie Anderson** at 7pm and **Kiki and Herb** at 11:30pm.

"Patty Heart Townes," loosely described by Holcombe as a "folk operetta," is a culmination of the artist's forays into theater and performance art since moving to Portland, Oregon two years ago from his native San Francisco. Holcombe cut his teeth as an actor working closely with performance art guru **Scott Kelman** and musical-theater ingenue **Wade McCollum**, and in 2006 Holcombe was invited by **Mark Russell** to participate in Portland's world-renowned **Time-Based Arts festival** as a headlining artist at "The Works," sharing the stage with such performers as **Julie Atlas Muz, Taylor Mac, Scout Niblet** and **Kiki & Herb**. The audience at Holcombe's recent January 8th music set at Joe's Pub looked like a who's who of the downtown performance scene, and Holcombe is currently planning a number of performances with downtown impresario and "**Weimar New York**" producer **Earl Dax**.

What: "Holcombe Waller Presents Mihael Sagalovesky and the Tragic Torments of Patty ♥ Townes"

Abbreviated title: "Patty ♥ Townes" or "Patty Heart Townes"

When: Sunday, March 18 2007, 9PM door, 9:30PM show

Where: Joe's Pub, 425 Lafayette

Tickets: \$12, available in advance at joespub.com, or by calling 212-967-7555

About "Patty Heart Townes:" A music performance at its core, "Patty Heart Townes" incorporates movement, singing, costume, video projections, and a live string ensemble following the travails of Mihael Sagalovesky, a down-and-out Polish, displaced-from-the-1920s clown endeavoring to entertain you with pathos-filled, visually illuminated deliveries of tough-luck folk songs. In two acts comprised of artfully arranged **Townes Van Zandt** and **Patty Griffin** songs, Mihael transforms from disgruntled business man to a drunken, homeless and perhaps post-mortem minstrel, searching in vain for the direction up. "Patty Heart Townes" is the first in a series of future Mihael Sagalovesky shows, slated to feature songs from such writers as Jacques Brel, Buffy Sainte-Marie, Leonard Cohen, Gillian Welch, and possibly Holcombe Waller. March 18th will feature long-time Holcombe-collaborator Ben Landsverk on viola, banjo and glockenspiel, as well as Portland artists Kelly Meyer (viola) and Tony Rogers (cello).

Artist's Bio: After studying Visual Art at Yale, Holcombe went on to release three albums on his own label, which have won the acclaim of LA Times pop critic **Ann Powers**, LA Weekly music editor **Kate Sullivan**, and publications such as **Spin** and **Paste Magazines**, **TimeOut Chicago and New York**, and much love from press in his native Pacific Northwest and Bay Area. This past year he has shared bills with Feist, Bob Mould, The National, Nicolai Dunger, Clem Snide, Laura Veirs, Mike Jorgensen (of Wilco), Mia Doi Todd, Kenny Melman, Neil Medlyn, and many others. Holcombe's song writing combines personal introspection with political commentary and allegory, an understated reflection on the American political condition.

To view live youtube bootlegs or download high res files of these images, visit:
www.holcombewaller.com/pattytownes.cfm



January 26th performance (backstage and Act One) photos by Chris Lee



January 26th performance (Act Two) photos by Ericka Heidrick

Willamette Week

Patty “Heart” Townes Friday & Saturday, Jan. 26-27

January 24th, 2007

by Jeff Rosenberg

[OFFBEAT TRIBUTE] To the accompaniment of a lone banjo player—whose shadow on the backdrop starts sprouting serpents—a clown dressed as what indie-folkie Holcombe Waller calls “this rattlesnake-charmer voodoo business guy” steps out. As viola and cello join in, said guy (who goes by Mihael Sagalovesky) then begins to sing a sly request laden with Southern gothic gloom: “Won’t you lend your lungs to me/ Mine are collapsing.” The song is doomed Texas bard Townes Van Zandt’s classic, “Lungs,” but clearly, this is not your ordinary Americana songwriter tribute. Even the concert’s full title telegraphs that: “Holcombe Waller presents Mihael Sagalovesky and the Tragic Torments of Patty ‘Heart’ Townes.”

That this gifted vocalist has undertaken a theatrical, multimedia presentation of other songwriters’ work—even two as renowned as Patty Griffin and Van Zandt—is surprising at such an early point in his career, especially given the intricate lyrics and indelible melodies of his own songs. Waller moved here from San Francisco in 2004 with longtime musical comrade Ben Landsverk (the banjoist above) and recorded a brilliant, insular album, 2005’s *Troubled Times*. And the material he’s composed since promises another compelling collection in the works.

But while Waller was preparing *Times*’ follow-up, his creative path led him instead to the theatrical stage: First, he took a prominent supporting role in Wade McCollum’s acclaimed *One*, which was followed by a brief flirtation with agit-drag troupe *Sissyboy* and an appearance in meta-movement theater piece *Tao Soup*, directed by performance guru Scott Kellman. Those experiences have given Waller newfound magnetism onstage. Add a recent fascination with string arrangement, a painful breakup steeped in Griffin’s desperate songs and the inspiration to call upon skills acquired during past artistic pursuits in video installation, and you have this weekend’s daring performance.

Following the first act’s half-dozen Van Zandt songs, Waller’s clown Sagalovesky returns as a drunken, winged angel to perform six Griffin heartbreakers against more haunting projections, including a backdrop of sunlight filtering through an underwater scene and the closing image of a full moon. The latter image envelops Waller’s body as his tender bell’s-peal voice sings Griffin’s “Top of the World,” its melody repeatedly ascending while never quite transcending earthbound sadness. Such transcendence should occur, instead, in the hearts and minds of Waller’s sure-to-be-enraptured audience.

Holcombe Waller’s Mihael Sagalovesky and the Tragic Torments of Patty “Heart” Townes takes place at 9 pm Friday and 3 pm Saturday, Jan. 26-27, at Holocene. \$10. 21+.