

REVIEWS BY AMOS LASSEN

“PORTLANDIA”, Season One— Living in Portland, Oregon

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“Portlandia”, Season One

Living in Portland, Oregon

Amos Lassen



“Portlandia” is sleeper hit series, a comedy about Portland, Oregon. Basically this is a series of comedy shorts that consist of recurring characters—an organic farmer/cult leader, members of an adult hide and seek league, owners of a feminist book store, a militant biker and a very artsy couple that attach bird cut outs to everything. With characters like this, you know it will be funny. The series is created by and stars Fred

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Armisen and Carrie Brownstein. The shows are aimed at the post-college, post hipster and post punk viewers so some may not feel comfortable with the series.



The show is composed of a series of vignettes and we see Portland as being in another universe. The mayor (Kyle McLachlan) is a bicycling reggae bassist and he really looks like he lives on another planet. The comedy is biting and the jokes really work. What I love is that the satire is sympathetic and never hurts. We are welcomed into the world of Portland where life is a farce and the residents dream of living in the 1990's. It takes on right wing culture and shows us, through humor, the very heart of intolerance and republicanism. The characters are people we know and rarely agree with—those who do for others so that they themselves can talk about how good they are.



The show defines a generation and it is a wonderfully executed definition. The characters poke fun at what we poke fun at; they make fun of what we make fun of without being pretentious or over the top. I do not recall laughing constantly as I did when I watched this. Now even as I praise this show there are others who will hate it and say so and those are the kind of people the show tackles in the skits.



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Archives

January 2012

December 2011

November 2011

October 2011

September 2011

August 2011

July 2011

June 2011

May 2011

April 2011

March 2011

February 2011

Categories

erotica

Film

GLBT documentary

GLBT fiction

GLBT Film

GLBT memoir and/or biography

GLBT non-fiction

GLBT poetry

GLBT short stories

Jewish and Gay— Books

Jewish and Gay— Movies

Judaica

opinion

Uncategorized

Blogroll

Amos at Facebook

Amos at Lambda Literary

Documentation

Literary Pride at Facebook

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