## scene and herd



BRIAN LEE/SPECIAL TO THE OREGONIAN

Lynne Duddy
Performing "Dark Matter" at Hipbone Studio

## Illuminations pour from 'Dark Matter'

By INARA VERZEMNIEKS

The title of Lynne Duddy's onewoman show is "Dark Matter," and it takes awhile, sitting in the dimness, to realize the full impact of this play on

Duddy, a gentle woman with a whispery voice, is a professional storyteller, and when she invited me to see her show, I wasn't sure what to expect.

Generally, we think of storytelling as something that takes place in the hush of libraries and involves entertaining children

But what I saw at Hipbone Studio, where Duddy performed under the watchful gaze of walls of nude-figure studies, was something entirely different. In fact, the nudes offered a fitting backdrop in that much of what followed was raw, revealing, vulnerable: One woman standing up in front of a room. Holding the attention of all those strangers for an hour with nothing more than her voice.

The best stories always build slowly, let you think you're headed one way but then ultimately deliver you somewhere else entirely.

And at first I am thinking; OK, we're getting a series of sweet stories here. A chance encounter with a stranger in the cemetery that seems to reaffirm our belief in humanity; the discovery of dark matter in the universe by scientist Vera Rubin; a nostalgic recollection of childhood; a weekend drive that's really a funny story about getting lost.

But things turn. They get . . . darker. Heavier. Almost unbearably honest.

And it's interesting to think that all this is taking place in a dark, silent room. A woman sharing things that we tend to treat as secrets.

Secrets are normally left to the dark. We lose things in the dark.

But as you walk out to your car afterward, the stars wheeling overhead in the infinite blackness, you realize that maybe, sometimes, we find things in the dark, too.

Lynne Duddy's "Dark Matter" runs 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday at Hipbone Studio, 1487 E. Burnside; \$12.