

CSUEB Musical Causes ‘Buzz’ on Campus

New Class to ‘Focus’ on Building Bridges

By Daniel Schutz
Staff Writer

Faculty, staff and students are buzzing about “Beehive,” a 90-minute musical presented by the Cal State East Bay Theatre and Dance department at the University Theatre.

The show, which features actresses wearing the popular yet typical housewife garb along with “beehive” wigs, chronicles the life of women during the turbulent 1960s.

Director Darryl V. Jones, a professor with the CSUEB Theatre and Dance Department, chose a musical that showed commitment to the ethnic diversity of the community.

“The original performers of the songs in the musical were of all different backgrounds,” Jones said. “I wanted to put on a show that is appealing to students and is accessible to them.”

As the musical progresses, the women slowly gain empowerment and let their hair down, both literally and figuratively.

As the times changed, so did the music. The musical is carried by the huge assortment of songs that are

performed.

Of the nearly 38 songs performed, many include notable hits such as “My Boyfriend’s Back,” “Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow,” “Big Girls Don’t Cry,” “The Beat Goes On,” “Respect” and “Me and Bobby McGee.”

Jones was very pleased that the musical afforded a chance for the theatre and dance departments to collaborate, saying the amount of people assisting is daunting, but essential.

Jones said if people felt the production staff looked large, the cast was even more impressive.

“(There were) 11 singers and dancers and five people who are strictly dancers,” Jones said.

Although having 16 people on stage is no easy feat, Jones was proud of how everything came together.

“The stage is absolutely packed with performers; it really looks great,” Jones said.

Although the performers were also optimistic about the musical, they were not without their own concerns. Monica Santiago said she was nervous that her wig might come off

during a performance.

“It feels like it might pop off at any moment,” Santiago said.

Despite such concerns, Santiago was confident that everything would work out.

“I really think this is my favorite show that I’ve been involved in,” Santiago said.

Cast member Felicia Lilienthal was quick to note that musicals are fun, but not always easy.

“We each go through five to seven costume changes over the course of the musical,” Lilienthal said.

Monica Flores, who sings “It’s My Party,” said she did not have many concerns, but simply wanted to “rock the house!”

Jones gratefully acknowledged the help of choreographer Laura E. Ellis, musical director Marianna Wolff, Richard Olmsted, who was in charge of set design, lights and projections, and Ulises Alcalá, who was in charge of costumes.

The cast of Beehive perform on Friday and Saturday at 8 p.m., with a matinee on Sunday at 2 p.m. General admission for adults is \$14, youth and seniors is \$10 and CSUEB students is \$8.

By Michael Chung
Staff Writer

Classical guitarist David Russell once said: “The hardest thing in life is to know which bridge to cross and which to burn.”

Eric Kupers, a professor in the Cal State East Bay Theatre and Dance Department, hopes his “Dance and the Camera” class, which debuts in the spring quarter, will build a bridge with the communication department, as well as other departments on campus.

“My vision is for this class to bring (students) together ... so that they can cross-fertilize training and skills,” Kupers said. “I think the departments have many intersections and can learn a lot from each other.”

Kupers said that after receiving the go-ahead to teach the class, he met with communications professor James Forsher and his students to invite them to join.

“Forsher was very helpful and mentioned that it could be a perfect opportunity for communication students to fulfill their field of concentration requirements,” Kupers said. “My knowledge of video editing is still in its early stages, so I asked some of the senior communication students to guide the theater and dance students in learning how to shoot and edit videos.”

Kupers plans to also work with experimental videographer Christian Bruno, from San Francisco, to give students more options and ideas for the possibilities of dance and theater made for the camera.

Kupers came up with the idea for this class after creating dances for his dance company, “Dandelion Dance Theater,” that were made for the camera over the past five years.

“It allows for whole new dimen-

sions of storytelling, perspective and choreography,” Kupers said. “Many dance and theater companies that represent the cutting edges of the field incorporate video into their work. It’s an area that is growing very quickly, and therefore is at an exciting stage of experimentation. I believe it is helping modern dance and theater, forms that are often misunderstood, to become more accessible and relevant to larger audiences.”

Kupers said CSUEB theater and dance students should be familiar with the possibilities of incorporating video into their work, even if they choose not to pursue them in professional contexts.

“Video students should have a working knowledge of how to capture diverse movement languages,” Kupers said. “This class will allow everyone involved to stretch beyond familiar ways of creating.”

Kupers said the class will be “project centered,” which will make it unique.

“Rather than spending a lot of time doing exercises to improve technique, students will be asked early on to learn by ‘doing’ — making original dance and video works throughout the quarter,” Kupers said. “We will not be limited by the classroom, and instead will venture out across the rest of campus, as well as into nearby

areas to utilize both the natural and urban sites available to us in the East Bay as settings for the dances to be filmed.”

Kupers added that students will have the opportunity to make videos about things that they feel passionate about, with dance as a potent tool for emotional, political, cultural and intuitive expression.

Thomas Hird, chair of the CSUEB Theatre and Dance Department, said one important factor in performance is the space where the audience and performers meet.

“The screen changes all the rules of live performance,” Hird said. “Actors are probably more aware of the differences, but to dancers, the camera remains largely a means of archiving their work. Our class will seek to teach dancers more about making screen art versus works for the stage.”

Kupers said the CSUEB Jewish Cultural Series will feature Ellen Bromberg from the University of Utah, who is “one of the national leaders in dance and video collaboration.”

“(Bromberg) will work with the students in the ‘Dance and the Camera’ class, but anyone from the community is welcome to observe,” Kupers said.

Kupers added that no experience in dance or video is necessary to sign up for the class.

San Ramon Residents To Get a Taste of Dixie

By Nicole Johnson
Staff Writer

The San Ramon Band will perform a free show on Friday at the San Ramon Community Center on the corner of Bollinger Canyon and Alcosta Boulevard.

The band is scheduled to play a variety of music, from classical to showtunes.

“We have an energetic, positive and safe environment that is good for

families or even enjoying the music solo,” said Dennis Morrissey, director of Public Relations. “We are even going to play a Dixieland piece that we think audiences will really enjoy.”

The band has existed for nearly 20 years and consists mostly of locals. Although there are a few professional musicians sprinkled throughout the ensemble, the group is made up of people who play for fun.

“We are all just your normal everyday people who enjoy playing for

all types of audiences,” said Chuck Taber, band director.

The show begins at 8 p.m. at the community center. Dress is casual and the atmosphere is family oriented, Morrissey said.

“Every year I take my family to see this performance because it is a good, upbeat show and is an indicator to my family that spring is finally on its way,” said Cove Corey, 60, of Danville.

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