

Cal State East Bay Department of Theater and Dance Preparing for a Big Fall Season

By Anne Cunningham
Staff Writer

Cal State East Bay department of Theatre and Dance will start the season off in a big way with a workshop on how to audition, a fall social, and auditions for several productions.

After a summer of local and international successes, the installation of a state-of-the-art electronic music lab and a fresh infusion of talent in the form of three new theatre and dance faculty, CSUEB's department of Theatre and Dance is in high gear to entertain and stretch the artistic limits of expressive possibilities.

"Theatre and dance are amazing vehicles for self-discovery, personal expression, teamwork, communication and physical fitness," said Nina Haft, newly hired professor of dance. "We invite all students to come build their resume while having fun and making new friends."

Haft began her formal training at American Ballet Theatre School and the 92nd Street Y in New York City, and her choreography has been seen all over the world.

"Our Music Theater and new dance ensemble will be touring extensively off campus this year," said Haft. "It's a great time to join our program. Be sure to check out our exciting classes, auditions, workshops and performances."

Haft says the department wants to reach out and invite the entire community to get involved in the exciting productions planned for this season; it is not only for theatre or dance majors. In an effort to encourage greater participation, the department is offering a workshop to first teach people how to audition.

"How to Audition: a Workshop," is being held Sept. 29 at 6 p.m. in the Studio Theatre.

Everyone is encouraged to put their best foot forward to learn audition techniques, monologue selection and preparation, resume formatting and other tricks of the trade.

Dr. Melissa Hillman, founding member and current artistic director for the Impact Theatre in Berkeley – as well as a CSUEB theatre arts undergraduate – is conducting the workshop and is enthusiastic to share her expertise.

"After over ten years in local professional theatre, I'm happy to give aspiring actors the benefit of my experience as a director," said Hillman. "I've seen literally thousands of audi-

tions, and I'm excited about helping young actors learn how to make the most of their auditions."

Hillman said that anyone who has an interest in acting professionally or even just as a hobby will benefit greatly from this workshop.

The skills learned at the workshop can be utilized in actual auditions for production options including 'Angels in America,' 'A Christmas Carol,' and 'The Wiz.'

Auditions are being held Sept. 28 at 7 p.m. in the University Theatre for the play "Angels in America, Part 1, Millennium Approaches," written by Tony Kushner and directed by Marc Jacobs.

"Angels" is considered one of the great plays of the American theater. It's moving, very funny and highly theatrical," said Jacobs. "The play mixes comedy with very dramatic situations and the range of characters goes from liberated gay men, to closeted conservatives, to the venomous Roy Cohn, to a Mormon mother, to an actual Angel."

Jacobs is looking for actors with a wide emotional range who can be witty, passionate, and willing to take risks.

As this audition is actually before the "how to audition workshop," Jacobs advises people to prepare a short monologue from one of the characters in the play. It is suggested that interested parties either read the play or watch the DVD of the excellent HBO production first.

Auditioning for 'Angels' might also lead to thoughts of other seasonal holidays such as 'A Christmas Carol,' written by Charles Dickens, and directed by Professor Ann Fajilan, for which auditions are being held on Oct. 3 and 5 from 4-7 p.m. in Theatre 194.

Fajilan, a newly hired multicultural and children's theatre professor — who specializes in Asian American theatre — is a recipient of the Kennedy Center's Excellence in Education Award. In addition to 'A Christmas Carol,' she is also directing the 'Festival of American Playwrights of Color 7' at City College of San Francisco in November.

"I am looking for all types/colors/genders of folks to people the world of Dickens' Christmas Carol," said Fajilan. "I hope to reflect CSUEB's student and staff diversity by casting all kinds of characters. Please come and be a part of this

all-inclusive holiday classic."

Angels and Christmas can get a bit surreal. Going with that dream-like theme is a uniquely redesigned interpretation of "The Wiz," written by William Brown and directed by Darryl Jones, for which auditions will be held on Oct. 24-6 from 6 to 8 p.m. in the University Theatre.

"The production will employ multi-racial, color blind casting, while at the same time embracing the cultural diversity of CSUEB," said Jones. "Dorothy's journey through Oz will reflect communities and ethnicities of the East Bay, and the Emerald City will bear a strong resemblance to San Francisco."

For singers who act, and actors who sing, auditions are Oct. 24 from 6-8 p.m. For dancers who sing, auditions are Oct. 25 from 6-7 p.m. For dancers who only want to dance, auditions are Oct. 25 at 7:15 p.m. For singers who act, auditions are Oct. 26 from 6-7 p.m.; For actors and dancers who sing, auditions are Oct. 26 from 7:10-8 p.m. and for dancers who only want to dance, auditions are Oct. 26 at 8 p.m.

A fall social, open to all, will be hosted on Oct. 10, which will include a pot luck barbeque from 4-6 p.m. on the theatre patio, followed by general theatre auditions from 6-8 p.m. in the University Theatre and general dance auditions are from 8-9:30 p.m. in the Dance Studio, PE 140.

The Department of Theatre and Dance at CSUEB look forward to an exciting season.

For Elegant

By Mathew Duckworth
Staff Writer

Surrounded by large oak trees and strongly resembling a large cabin located in a remote section of San Ramon is Mudd's Restaurant, a local favorite known for its relaxing ambiance, and its home-grown spices, fruits and vegetables.

The modern interior is a craftsman style, with a sleek curved wood slatted ceiling. The rustic decor is complimented by white table clothes, and a harpist strumming in the background. Large windows surround the perimeter, making for a bright lunch experience along with a pleasant view from just

Chinese Food Sans Grease but with Class

By Erin Parkins
Staff Writer

In a community where most Chinese food is either served through a window or kept warm by a heat lamp, the upscale Chef's Experience China Bistro truly stands out as a restaurant that provides fresh food, unbeatable prices, and incomparable service.

Tucked away on Foothill Boulevard in Hayward, it's easy to miss when you are driving past, but once you dine there it's hard to resist returning. From beginning to end, your experience at China Bistro will be as delicious and rare as the restaurant's authentic pork buns.

Entering from the rear door, one immediately notices the contrast between China Bistro and ordinary Chinese restaurants. A seating host waits at a podium to your left while on your right stretches a large bar, stocked with bottles of liquor.

A detailed, hand-painted mural extends across an upper wall and toward the front of the restaurant, a massive rock fountain provides tranquil sounds to accompany the soft piano music in the background. Each table is set with linen napkins and small tea lights, which are lit by your hostess upon your seating.

With such a luxurious setting, one might expect the menu to possess similarly luxurious prices. But lunch entrees range from \$7-\$10 and dinners from \$8-\$13. Both cater to healthy California dining preferences by including a choice of white or brown rice.

However, like all Chinese restau-

rants, the bill can add up after ordering several entrees, appetizers, or soups. But at China Bistro, leftovers will feed you for two more meals, and they are packaged by your server with great care: instead of handing out take-out containers, your server brings a tray and boxes your uneaten items right at your table, so you needn't spill chow mein on yourself or wonder what was thrown into your container in the back kitchen.

There are several factors that contribute to the unique quality of the food at China Bistro. Firstly, and arguably most importantly, menu items are not over-fried or too greasy. It may seem hard to believe as we have all become accustomed to a certain class of Chinese food here in Hayward, but the meat is lightly battered and pan-fried, so you actually get more chicken and pork than crunchy, fried who-knows-what.

Also, while China Bistro offers all the classic dishes, there is also an intriguing veggie section which includes asparagus shrimp cooked in black bean sauce and garlic spinach. And although the menu is more limited than those of other Chinese eateries, the probability of loving your dish is much, much higher.

And what about those dishes?

To start with, you simply have to order the pork buns, no questions asked. One usually has to go to a classy Chinese joint in San Francisco to even see them on the menu, but at China Bistro they are both excellent and inexpensive. For under \$4 you get three sweet buns, steamed with

BBO pork inside and served to you hot in a metal steamer.

Or try the pot stickers, pan fried at your table, or the chicken lettuce wraps, which put a Chinese spin on a Californian dish.

For your entrée, take advantage of the frugal prices and order several dishes for your table to taste and share. Among my top choices are General Tso's chicken, cashew shrimp, and peppercorn beef. Although your meal comes with rice, I recommend a plate of chow mein to split as well. I guarantee it is the least-greasy chow mein you have ever had, and is in fact the only one I eat, anywhere.

As if the atmosphere and food weren't enough, the service is absolutely awesome. Being a huge critic of restaurant etiquette, I have been impressed over and over again with the staff at China Bistro. Your soda is always full, your empty plate never sits in front of you for more than a minute, the dishes from one course are cleared before the next arrives, and, my personal favorite, your check doesn't come until your table is clear and your leftovers boxed.

Maybe part of this quality can be attributed to the fact that China Bistro never seems light on staff. There is always someone around to ensure your dining experience is exceptional.

The bar is a weak point, as are the dessert selections. Specialty drinks are weak and slightly pricey. If you desire alcohol before or with your meal, stick to simple drinks with a top shelf liquor or take advantage of the

Tri-Valley Dining, Its Name is Mudds

about every table.

On my last visit, my meal kicked-off with a mixed organic baby leaf salad, tossed with walnuts, bleu cheese and cabernet vinaigrette.

My chicken sandwich consisted of thin strips of white meat dripping with barbeque sauce, and it arrived piping hot.

The French fries were cooked to perfection without a trace of grease.

The chef's garnish presentation was a work of art. It seemed like each lettuce leaf and sliced cherry tomato had been carefully arranged with precision.

The highly efficient server made sure my water glass and ice tea were

never allowed to pass the halfway mark.

According to my waitress, the current popular dish is the organic petaluma chicken breast wrapped in apple wood smoked bacon with an orange pomegranate sauce.

Dessert was a chocolate-lover's dream come true: my chocolate shortcake was topped with fresh peaches, strawberries and whipped cream. Other tempting desserts included a chocolate almond torte with raspberry sauce and whipped cream, or butterscotch crème brûlée.

After my incredible meal, I took a few minutes to walk the short trails that snake through Mudd's garden. The trails offer a little peace and

quiet, and time to enjoy the therapeutic aromas of the fruit trees.

Outside dining is another option for those that enjoy eating close to Mother Nature.

The only area for improvement that I observed was the scheduling of maintenance work: the men's bathroom was having some maintenance done on the sink during the busy lunch hour, posing a minor inconvenience.

If you are looking for a unique East Bay dining experience, don't miss this treasure.

Mudd's, at 10 Boardwalk in San Ramon, serves lunch Monday-Saturday 11:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Dinner is served daily beginning at 5:30 p.m.

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Rec 2400 04 Leisure Self & Society Online Lim, C

Rec 3200 01 Wellness Through Leisure TTH 10am Yates

02 Wellness Through Leisure TTH 12pm Yates

03 Wellness Through Leisure Sat Jan 7, 14, 28, Feb 4, 11

06 Wellness Through Leisure Online Schwartz

07 Wellness Through Leisure Online Hill, B

Rec 3202 91 Women in Leisure - Online Smusz (Hayward students can take)(meets Women's and Cultural Requirement)

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