

A Fee To Pee in "Urinetown" Production

By Sophia Tong
A&E Editor

The award-winning musical "Urinetown," a satirical comedy where people are forced to pay to pee due to a water shortage, is Cal State East Bay's production for this school year.

"When I was asked to direct the musical this year at CSUEB I knew I wanted to do this show," said Marc Jacobs, an assistant professor in the department of theatre & dance. "I knew the actors here would love the sense of satire and all the theatrical holy grails that the show lampoons."

"The show is very self-aware that it is a musical, and has fun with musical styles from very well known shows such as West Side Story, Fiddler on the Roof and Les Miserables," said Marianna Wolff, the music director at CSUEB. Wolff works closely with the cast to ensure that the audience is able to understand all the words.

"It's really rewarding to hear the change over time as the cast learns their music, learns how to match vowel sounds with each other, matches their diction and adds musical details such as dynamics to bring the music to life."

"Choreographing this musical has been an effortless process because of the talent of the director Marc Jacobs and my co-choreographer Angela Demmel," said Eric Kupers, an assistant professor in the department of theatre and dance. "This is a wonderfully whimsical production and so it is a lot of fun to choreograph. I think the audiences will enjoy its combination of humor and complex political understandings."

Urinetown is set in a future where private bathrooms are outlawed due to the scarcity of water. Water consumption is controlled by a private corporation called Urine Good Company (UGC). When people refuse to use the public toilets that are sanctioned

by UGC, they are taken to Urinetown, a place where people go and never return.

The musical was a hit in 1999 at the Fringe Festival in New York and from there eventually made its way to Broadway where it won three Tony Awards in 2002 for Best Director of a Musical, Best Book of a Musical and Best Original Score Written for the Theatre.

"Urinetown is a brilliantly written, witty musical, with surprisingly wonderful melodies and lyrics," said Kara

over, I was fortunate to have been cast in the part.

Caitlin O'Leary who is working on her third show at CSUEB is one of the leading ladies who will play the character Penelope Pennywise, the manager of the filthiest urinal in town.

"At first glance, the story of Urinetown seems very odd. I get people all the time asking me if that is the real title," said O'Leary. "The script however, is genius. It is so funny, and the parody and satire is weaved in so delicately. The music is also amazing. The song that I sing, 'Privilege to Pee' is quite a task. The lyrics are funny, the instrumentals are engaging, and the songs really have a wonderful 'edgy' sense that fits well with the musical."

O'Leary was recently in Los Angeles for the Irene Ryan scholarship competition at the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival. She was nominated for her role last winter in the musical "The Wiz."

"This has been, by far, the best show I've been involved in and that is due to the amazing cast and crew. Not only are they all incredibly talented, but they are just fun people to be around," said O'Leary. "After a stressful day at school, I look forward to going to rehearsal and laughing for four hours. The show is coming along so well because everyone enjoys being there, and that shows in their work."

"Urinetown is always a real crowd pleaser, and with our cast and with the visions of the director and the designers I think this will be the best version of Urinetown our audience has ever seen," said Tim Davis, the stage manager, who is a senior at CSUEB.

Urinetown will open Feb. 29 at 8 p.m. at the Studio Theatre on the northeast side of campus. Shows dates include March 1, 7, 8 at 8 p.m. and March 9 at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$14 for general admission and \$8 for youth, senior and students.



Urinetown—A Place Where People Go and Never Return: Katherine McDermott as Hope and Richard Tabor as Caulwell B. Caldwell.

Photo/Seth Thygeson

Penrose, who plays the character Little Sally, a precocious child that struggles with not having enough money to use the restroom.

Penrose recently transferred from Diablo Valley College and was excited to hear that Urinetown was on the list of musicals that CSUEB was preparing for.

"I had already seen two productions of the show and I knew that it was a show I wanted to perform. So, I made sure I was prepared to audition...I was excited to be called back for the role that I wanted. After the process was

Yoshi's with their own band."

Wallman and guest artist Ralph Alessi were colleagues at City University of New York and still are good friends.

"He (Alessi) is a very accomplished musician and is incredible when working with students," said Wallman about his colleague and friend.

Alessi has taught at Five Towns College and the Eastman School of Music. He is also the founder of the School for Improvisational Music (schoolforimprov.org), a non-profit entity currently holding music workshops in Brooklyn.

To add to this musician's resume, Alessi's family is also musically talented and well known. His brother, Joseph Alessi, Jr., is a principal trombonist and his father, Joseph Alessi Sr., is an original designer of the Alessi-Vicchiano mute and the Jo-Ral series of mutes.

Talent like this coming to the Bay Area is exactly why all

proceeds will support the Cal State East Bay Music Department Scholarship and Special Events Fund to support hard working students.

"The Yoshi's proceeds are an important source of funds in our overall scholarship program. This support allows our students to spend more time developing their talent in the practice room and less time working nights, making ends meet," said Frank La Rocca, the chair of the university's music department.

This is an event people can bring their family and friends to. It's educational and enjoyable at the same time.

Advance tickets are at \$25 for the 8 p.m. and \$15 for the 10 p.m. show. To reserve tickets, go online to csuebalumni.org or call (510) 885-4089. Tickets at the door are \$30 for the 8 p.m. show and \$20 for the 10 p.m. show. For CSUEB students, admission is \$10 at the door for the 10 p.m. show.

Benefit at Oakland Jazz Club for CSUEB

By Katice Harris
Staff Writer

The head of Cal State East Bay's jazz program, Johannes Wallman, takes charge this year by coordinating the Ninth Annual "Night of Jazz at Yoshi's" music scholarship fundraiser.

The fundraiser will take place Tuesday, Feb. 26 at Yoshi's, 510 Embarcadero West, in Oakland's Jack London Square.

It is Wallman's first year coordinating the show and it has been an experience for him and his students.

"We have been working behind the scenes since the beginning of the year and it has been a lot of fun and pressure," he said. "Having such a big opportunity to play at a well-known jazz spot like Yoshi's, with a talented bay area musician like Ralph Alessi, has made my students more focused. This is great exposure for them. Perhaps one day they will be up there at

salad, tostada chips with house-made salsa and a choice of soups. Although the soups vary by location, most Chili's are likely to have baked potato, broccoli cheese and the chicken enchilada.

"It draws people in," said Chili's server Candace Boehm. "It's like a buffet, even though you never want more."

This bottomless lunch has unlimited refills, and is available until 4 p.m. daily.

As a new policy, Chili's servers are expected to drop the check off with the meal.

"It draws people in. It's like a buffet, even though you never want more."

This ensures that the guest has access to it whenever they are ready to go, not to make the diner feel rushed. Manager Fariba Shahidi at the chain's Pleasanton location said, "the customers feel like they are being taken care of and they appreciate that. Time is money."

Chili's has not only proposed new ideas for lunch but has also added new Smokehouse Bacon Big Mouth Burgers to the existing menu. These include the jalapeno smokehouse, southern

smokehouse and the smokehouse bacon triple-the-cheese.

Each of these burgers come with variations of new extra thick-cut bacon and home-style fries on the side.

"The Southern burger is the best burger on the planet because of the brown sugar bacon," said Josh Mount of Livermore.

In addition to the hot sandwich options, Chili's has added "Big Mouth Bites," which contain four mini-sized burgers served with onion strings. Patrons can have the little sandwiches with home style fries for an additional \$50.

"I like the bites because they are juicy and nice to take home because I can never finish a full burger," said Jacob Turner of San Ramon.

As far as the children's menu goes, healthier side options have been added. These include mandarin oranges and bite-sized pineapple chunks.

Desert is never forgotten at Chili's, where they are famous for their Chocolate Molten Cake. To spice things up a bit, they added a new White Chocolate Molten that sits on fresh raspberry sauce and is topped with vanilla ice cream.

Hairspray: You Can't Stop the Beat

By Larisa Nastac
Staff Writer

It is true when they say that once you've seen a musical live, seeing the movie just can't compare.

Well I haven't seen either of the 'Hairspray' movies, but after seeing this Tony Award-winning musical-comedy Feb. 8 at the Flint Center for the Performing Arts in Cupertino, I really don't have any intention to see them. I know that the movies could never live up to seeing something like that live.

It was a really a memorable experience for me and I would recommend it to anyone who gets a chance to see one.

The musical, directed by Jack O'Brian and choreographed by Jerry Mitchell takes you back to Baltimore in 1962 where teenager Tracy Turnblad (Brooklyn Pulver) is determined to dance her way into TV's most

popular show, The Corny Collins Show, and to win the love of teenage heart throb, Link Larkin (Brad Broman).

The story is filled with big hair, laughter and romance to lighten up the rather serious main storyline that deals with racism and segregation, standing up for what's right and learning to love oneself.

The actor and actresses all did a really wonderful job and put on a great show. I'm sure it's not easy trying to perform choreography, sing and act all at the same time for two hours. The sets were all very eye-catching and bright and the transitions with the stage crew were smooth and didn't distract you from what was going on center-stage.

I really enjoyed all of the colorful characters, which ranged from Amber Von Tussle (Pearl Thomas), your typical self-absorbed, "All-American"

blonde, to her over-controlling, evil stage mother Velma Von Tussle (Kristin Stewart), to a man dressed in drag playing Tracy's mother, Edna Turnblad (Jerry O'Boyle).

But the character that made the show for me was Tracy's best friend and side-kick, Penny (Alyssa Malgeri). Her character kept me laughing the whole night. Everything about her was comical, from her loud gum-popping habit to her two right feet. She was just hilarious.

The music, of course, was just like I expected it to be: tuneful and catchy. The song "Good Morning Baltimore" is now stuck in my head forever.

But the song that took the cake for me had to be "You Can't Stop the Beat." It had me and the rest of the crowd on our feet and dancing at the finale and all the way back to our cars.

Brothers Are Doing it For Themselves

By Teresa Vu
Staff Writer

With millions of screaming fans following their every move, The Jonas Brothers, a long-building new pop sensation, are now headlining their own nationwide concert tour.

The Jonas Brothers have teamed up with Live Nation and have started their multi-million, multi-city "When You Look Me in the Eyes" tour. They kick-started their tour in the beginning of February and are still continuing to add additional appearances.

The tour started in Tucson, Arizona and no announcement has been made yet as to when and where their tour will end. The brothers' opening act is also a long known band, Rooney.

Tickets for Jonas Brothers concerts have sold out within a matter of three minutes for multiple shows, resulting in additional appearances being

added at particular locations, such as the group's Feb. 1 date in Los Angeles in which two more shows were added following the initial concert.

Although frequently compared to Hanson, a well-known trio act made up of brothers, the Jonas Brothers have effortlessly set themselves apart—from their style of music to their style of clothing. The music of the Jonas Brothers consists of a variety of sounds, from pop to rock—and even R&B.

Kevin, 20, plays guitar; Joe, 18, sings lead vocals and plays keyboards and tambourine; and Nick, 15, also sings vocals and plays guitar, piano and drums.

Although their first album, "It's About Time," only sold a little over 40,000 records, their second self-titled album was released in 2007 and went platinum.

The third album is set for release in the summer of this year.

The brothers first emerged on the pop scene in 2006, but began gaining notice after they signed

to Hollywood Records and were the opening act for the sold-out Hannah Montana-Miley Cyrus' "Best of Both Worlds" concert tour.

A few weeks after the end of that tour, the brothers set off on their own.

Kevin, Joe and Nick have made appearances on a number of shows and events, such as the Macy's Thanksgiving and Christmas parades. They also were featured on one of Disney's hit television shows, Hannah Montana. The brothers are set to appear in a Disney Channel Original Movie, "Camp Rock," this year, and will appear in their own television series, J.O.N.A.S. (an acronym for Junior Operatives Networking As Spies). J.O.N.A.S. will star the three brothers as detectives posing as rock stars.

Their recently released new single, "When You Look Me in the Eyes," off of their sophomore album is currently in the Top20 on iTunes.

Creative Animation Powers a Complex Autobiographical Story Line



Images Courtesy/Sony Pictures, Inc.

By Casey Scheld
Staff Writer

Animated movies tend to be seen by the mainstream market as childish creations that lack any sort of depth or value. The independent animated film "Persepolis" is here to prove these people wrong.

Based on the popular graphic novels, "Persepolis" is the autobiographical story of author and artist Marjane Satrapi.

Coming of age tales have become slapdash cookie-cutter pieces today, and one would expect this movie to follow suit. Rather, this film stands out in its setting: the Iranian Revolution.

This wrinkle in the formula allows some unique elements to the story. Satrapi is trying to live her life as a 13-year old, but must also cope with the warzone that

Teheran has turned into.

Media and freedom is forbidden by the government, which causes Satrapi to follow her will while the totalitarian system in place surrounds her.

A move to Vienna later in the movie causes Satrapi to see a different part of the world, and how bleak things can be at times. Freedom may be more commonplace in this area, but Satrapi comes to realize that some qualities transcend borders.

The animation in Persepolis is actually used to enhance the storytelling of the movie. Almost the entire film is in black and white, giving the areas of Teheran and Vienna a gritty, dark setting.

Scenes dealing with a major political upheaval are shot with paper dolls in lieu of characters, making a caricature of serious matters.

This movie could have been directed as a live-action piece, but some of the allure would have been taken away.

Characters in Persepolis are multi-faceted creatures capable of expressing emotion.

Young Satrapi gives off an air of innocence that is oblivious to the world around her, while a more mature version of the central character expresses more mature emotions.

The people in the movie are living out their lives, which gives the animated characters more personality than half the actors in Hollywood.

Those willing to brave the \$10 admission price will be treated to one of the best movies of the year. Do not dismiss the movie on its animation alone; the depth in Persepolis rivals that of some of the greatest movies ever made.

