

The Arts as Communication

by Richard Hunt

Imagine early humans discovering rudimentary painting and music as ways to preserve communal events and understandings as well as express themselves and their experiences. From these early roots in human communication, the arts have only become more expressive and diverse, becoming an often unnoticed daily part of all of our lives. From prints, photos, and figures we use to decorate our homes, to songs we sing to our children, television and film drama, and the CD playing softly in the background, the arts are important, inspiring influences in each of our lives. Throughout time and across cultures, the arts are key methods not only of self-expression, but also communication. This theme forms a connection between two recent Center ARTES events.

On May 30, the ARTSmobile's maiden voyage carried ART4U (our robot) and a wide load of props to Kelly School in Carlsbad, where Mindy Donner and Iain Gunn staged a performance called "A.R.T.4U and

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the Time Machine." In this madcap adventure, Professor Hoonose (Who knows?) and his assistant Eunice Communication (Miss Communication) set out with the simple desire to sit together and share a lunch. First, however, the Professor must find a translator for Miss Communication's native Zelkolandian dialect in order to ask her some important questions. Meanwhile the mischievous robot A.R.T.4U has left his time machine lying around... Dr. Hoonose, in his usual state of intellectual distractedness, accidentally steps on and activates the time machine, and in a great blast of white fog, they vanish from

the stage. In their places appear pre-historic puppets who demonstrate how early cave art communicated important aspects of everyday life. Another great blast of fog takes them to meet The Bard himself for a puppet version of *Romeo and Juliet*. This segment, a favorite at the June 2 performance at Grant Middle School, embodied the timeless challenges of parent-teen relationships and gave students a

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Coming to a freeway near you

It's a bus...it's a van...it's the ARTSmobile! Official dedication ceremonies for the latest educational vehicle (literally!) of Center ARTES took place on March 24 on the CSUSM campus. The ceremony was attended by CSUSM president Karen Haynes, Luann comic strip creator Greg Evans, Center ARTES board member Ruth Mangrum, Rick from Ken Grody Ford, and approximately 180 local middle school students. Attendees were treated to a story by Mindy Donner of the Spinning Wheel Players with percussion accompaniment by Center ARTES staffer Richard Hunt and a handful of Grant student volunteers.

"The founding idea for the ARTSmobile was to bring art to children, since so many children do not have access to the arts in schools and field trips have been severely limited because of budget cuts," says Dr. Merryl Goldberg, Center ARTES founder. Building on the long-established networks and arts education professionals of Center ARTES and partner SUAVE (Socios Unidos para Artes via Educacion, or United Community for Arts Education), the ARTSmobile has already begun its journeys throughout San Diego County, offering students numerous programs and activities, including visual art, dance, and puppetry.

The ARTSmobile would never have been realized if not for the generous donations of its sponsors. An extra special thanks to Bob and Ruth Mangrum whose \$15,000 donation made the van purchase a reality. The exterior wrap that covers the van with colorful images of the Center ARTES robot and advertises the van's purpose was designed free of charge by Greg Evans. Jack Custeau of Custeau Signs and Graphics provided a 10% discount on the manufacture and installation of the wrap. Ken Grody Ford offered the vehicle for a price \$2,000 below Kelley Blue Book. Many thanks to these generous companies and individuals.

Arts Education— Pencil It In

Although the No Child Left Behind Act and the California Content Standards for visual and performing arts require instruction in the arts, in many cases teachers are required to teach these subjects with minimal training.

Local educators recognized the need to create an arts advocacy resource for teachers who may not have received formal arts education training. The resulting Arts Advocacy Calendar was produced as a joint effort by Dr. Merryl Goldberg, founder of Center ARTES, Anne Fennell, music specialist at Vista Unified School District, and Nicole Vitalich Nelson, art specialist at Del Mar Unified School District, with additional writing and editing by Richard Hunt, Center ARTES coordinator and staff writer.

The 12-month calendar offers monthly "advocacy action steps" on how to incorporate art into the daily classroom curriculum, as well as step-by-step instructions on ways to heighten awareness of arts education through different means, such as presentations to local PTAs and school boards. The calendar also provides links to various art and music Web sites that offer current information and ideas for bringing art into the classroom.

For more information or to pick up a calendar, stop by the Center ARTES offices in ARTS 302 or call Richard Hunt at (760)750-4431.



And the winner by a nose...

Congratulations to Cal State VPA faculty member Professor Marcos Martinez, who purchased the winning raffle ticket at Center ARTES' June Soiree for two Del Mar Thoroughbred Club (DMTC) clubhouse season passes.

Thanks to Craig Dado and the DMTC for their generous donation. The raffle raised \$475, which will go into the Center ARTES general fund to be used for arts education programming across the county.

How En-Channing!

This November, Broadway legend Carol Channing will present her one-woman show, *The First 80 Years Are the Hardest*, as a benefit concert for Center ARTES and San Diego County arts education.

Channing, known as the "first lady of musical comedy," has dedicated the next phase of her career to the promotion of arts in education. To that end, she has entered into a partnership with the California State University system to establish a scholarship at each of the 23 campuses located throughout California. Her dream is to establish a support program that ensures that students who show an aptitude for the arts are provided with the means to pursue their talents at the college level.

"Receiving a doctorate honor precipitated a deep interest in projecting that into a meaningful program through which I could elevate the arts in California," says Channing. "Our school children are the ones who will carry on and reinvigorate California's fine and performing arts tradition."

The First 80 Years Are the Hardest will be performed at the California Center for the Arts on Sunday, November 12 at 2 p.m. VIP tickets are \$150 and include an invitation to a post-show reception with Mrs. Channing. Standard tickets are available for \$20-\$55. For more information, visit the Center ARTES Web site at www.csusm.edu/centerartes. To purchase your VIP tickets, contact Richard Hunt at (760) 750-4431 or rhunt@csusm.edu. All other tickets may be purchased by calling the CCAE box office at (800) 988-4253 or by visiting their Web site at <http://artcenter.org>.

All proceeds from the concert will support arts education programs, including the establishment of the *Carol Channing Endowment for Arts Education* at Cal State San Marcos. Sponsorship opportunities are also available, enabling local businesses and community members to partner with Carol Channing and Center ARTES and make a difference in the lives of thousands of San Diego County students. As a special thanks, each sponsorship includes VIP passes to the performance and reception with Ms. Channing. Please contact Richard Hunt at (760)750-4431 for more information.



Luann Comes To Life



Luann: Scenes from a Teen's Life is a new musical based on the nationally syndicated comic strip *Luann*. Written by the strip's creator, Greg Evans, and performed by the talented students from the Rancho Buena Vista High School drama department, the musical explores the joys and angst of being a teen through song, comedy and dance. The production is a direct result of a grant from Center ARTES.

Performances were held Friday, September 15, 16, and 17 at the California Center for the Arts, Escondido, and the production was nothing short of a smash success! Each performance was attended by enthusiastic crowds made up of people of all ages. Audience members described the show as sweet, charming, wonderful (and more), and repeatedly commented on the very high caliber talent of the RBVHS student performers.

Warm congratulations to everyone involved. We hope that these successful performances will be the first installment of many as the musical makes its way towards Broadway!

The Rancho Buena Vista High School drama department has been honored by the Office of Education Theater Association as a California Honor Troupe, one of only five in the state of California.



Approaching the Summit

"...so that arts education moves forward in a significant and systematic manner for all children." ~ Dr. Merryl Goldberg, Center ARTES founder

Center ARTES is working to take arts education to new heights at its inaugural Arts Education Summit on November 11, 2006. The summit will bring together groups within the San Diego County educational community to strategize and create concrete steps to move arts education forward. Invited participants include school board members, county office administrators, art teachers, college professors in education, and superintendents and assistant superintendents.

Education professionals will break into like groups and work across groups to brainstorm new ideas as well as sharing ones that have already been implemented successfully. After this networking session, participants will report back to share their

findings with the entire group. A panel discussion will focus on current research and its implications and challenges. Participants will also enjoy an arts education related performance following lunch.

"This gathering of educators and administrators from across the arts education spectrum will be a unique opportunity for them to affect policy at the local and county level so that arts education moves forward in a significant and systematic manner for all children," says Dr. Merryl Goldberg, Center ARTES founder.

Plans for future follow up include publishing a list of key recommendations and next steps that came about as a result of the summit.

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chance to understand how art (even 400 year old theater!) can have relevance in their lives.

The show culminates with a celebration of the great American musical and its popularity throughout the world. As A.R.T.4U blares "Singing in the Rain" and attempts to pirouette about on stage, Dr. Hoonose and Miss Communication dance across the set and into the audience, twirling umbrellas and reveling in their raincoats. Happily, as the curtain falls, our protagonists at last find themselves settling in for a pleasant lunch together, satisfied at having touched the audience with their message about the importance of the arts in human societies and communication.

The next event nicely demonstrated how music communicates important ideas and information within communities. On June 27, Ghanaian master drummer and dancer Kwame Degbor presented a professional development workshop for teachers of Oceanside Unified School District. With nearly 30 teachers in attendance, Kwame passed out lyrics to a song from Ghana, and had the room singing unfamiliar words in no time. For the next step, he rounded us all into a circle and taught a popular children's game from back home. It involved syncopated rhythms in a series of hand pats with partners on both our left and right sides. It looked quite simple, but proved tricky, and had all 30 full grown adults smiling and

laughing like kids. He then asked us to couple the song he had taught us with the hand pat game...a feat that few of us could do with only a few minutes practice, but we all tried, all smiled, and occasionally got it right.

Then, handing out several two toned agogo bells, Kwame demonstrated a pattern and let each of us try it. More instruments began entering, including shakaras (gourd shakers) and a variety of drums. One by one, we learned each instrument's pattern and how it fit in with the others. We were starting to make music! During this process, Kwame began to explain that drums and music play key communication roles in Ghanaian communities, from entertaining and passing on history and tradition, to functioning like the nightly news, making the community aware of celebrations, crimes, and more. Many of the rhythms, which are simultaneously both simple and elaborate, are built largely on individual interwoven patterns that repeat, while the lead drum improvises and directs, along with the lead singer, based on what "news" there is to tell. Not a bad deal. How would you like your favorite musicians, singers, and dancers to bring you your news live every night? Kwame rounded out the workshop by giving us each the chance to try the dance that accompanies the rhythm he showed us. Thanks, Kwame!



Soiree we missed you...

If you weren't able to attend this year's Center ARTES soirees, you missed out on two terrific events. Hundreds of guests were treated to great company, delicious hors d'oeuvres, and lively music, as well as important updates on the state of the arts in San Diego County.

The February 4 soiree was held at the Escondido home of Suzanne and Jack Kirkpatrick. "The Kirkpatricks are tireless and enthusiastic supporters of arts education. We are grateful to them for their hospitality and their support of Center ARTES," says Dr. Merryl Goldberg, Center ARTES founder. The Pauma Valley Country Club catered the event with an amazing assortment of appetizers, and guests were treated to a performance by a quartet featuring CSUSM faculty members and musicians Merryl Goldberg, Eduardo Garcia, Bill Bradbury, and Richard Hunt.

The Museum of Making Music hosted the June 4 soiree. Carolyn Grant, Executive Director, spoke about some of the programs the Museum has implemented to benefit local children. Guests enjoyed refreshments while exploring the museum, which is filled with 500 vintage instruments documenting a century of American popular music. "Since providing arts education to our children is the ultimate goal of both our organizations, partnering with The Museum of Making Music is a natural fit," says Goldberg. "We are thrilled to work with Carolyn and her staff and look forward to future opportunities to share our resources and knowledge."

Special thanks to Beverages and More in Oceanside for their partial sponsorship of beverages at the June 4 Soiree. Don't miss out on the next soiree! For tickets or more information, please call Center ARTES at (760) 750-4431.

Music for the Masses

On March 11, hundreds of music lovers braved the rainy weather to attend the third annual low-cost, high-caliber Family Day performance by the San Diego Chamber

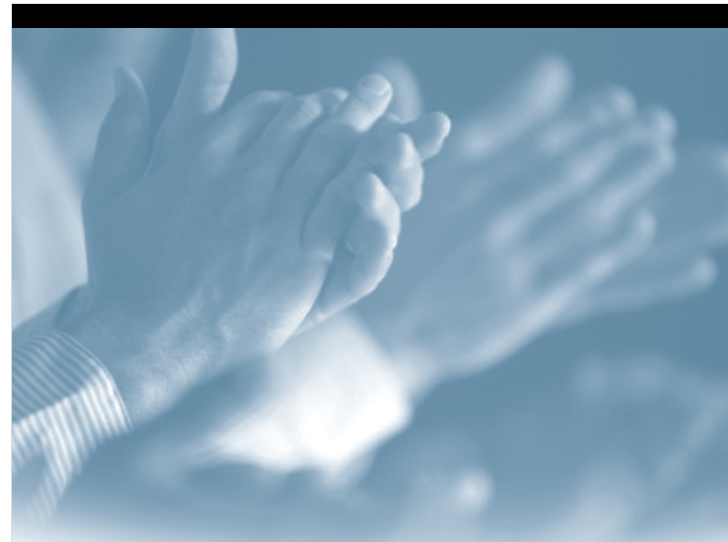
Orchestra (SDCO) at the California Center for the Arts Escondido (CCA).

The Chamber performed Rossini's *Overture from the Barber of Seville* and Beethoven's *Piano Concerto No. 4, Op. 58*.

Before the performance, a workshop held for teachers and student teachers gave participants a sense of what a performer's stage life entails. Workshop attendees took part in a panel discussion with guest conductor Nuvi Mehta and piano soloist Chu-Fang Huang. The discussion, facilitated by Dr. Merryl Goldberg, Center ARTES founder, was designed to "educate the educators" so they would have the resources return to the classroom with the skills necessary to knowledgeably teach aspects of chamber music to their students.

Many of the children in attendance had never before experienced a classical performance. Thanks to the generous donations of community members including County Supervisor Pam Slater Price (\$6,000), Catherine and Bob Goldsmith, George van Baelen, and Joan B. Clark, Center ARTES was able to provide tickets free of charge to local students and children from Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) programs.





Thank You

To Our Most Recent Donors

Without the support of the community, Center ARTES would not have the resources to provide arts education training and performances to teachers and children throughout San Diego County. Our sincere thanks go out to these outstanding organizations:

- THE RANCHO SANTA FE WOMEN'S FUND**
\$15,000 and
- UNION BANK OF CALIFORNIA** \$2,000

These grants will allow the Center ARTES mobile teaching van (otherwise known as the ARTSmobile) to travel to school sites to offer programs and performances to Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) students throughout the county.

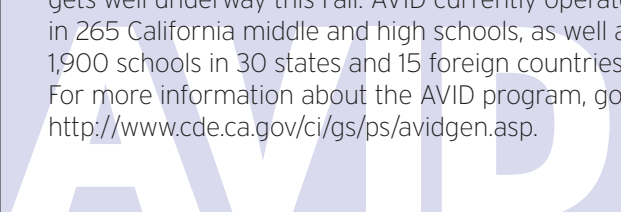
FOX FOUNDATION \$3,500

Thanks to the Samuel I. and John Henry Fox Foundation at Union Bank of California for contributing these funds to support the upcoming Arts Education Summit at Cal State San Marcos on November 11, 2006.



What is AVID?

Center ARTES has recently been developing a close partnership with the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) college preparatory program. AVID enables students from groups who are typically underrepresented in college classrooms to receive supplementary academic support, enter mainstream activities in school, and increase their opportunities to enroll in four-year colleges. AVID has seen steady growth throughout California, nationally, and internationally in the last 25 years. "With approximately 95 percent of AVID kids going on to enroll in college, we know that it is worthwhile to focus our efforts and our funds on this program," says Dr. Merryl Goldberg, founder of Center ARTES. Programming gets well underway this Fall. AVID currently operates in 265 California middle and high schools, as well as in 1,900 schools in 30 states and 15 foreign countries. For more information about the AVID program, go to <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/gs/ps/avidgen.asp>.



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*Denotes Faculty at Cal State San Marcos

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