



WELCOME TO ARROYO'S



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REVIEWS

THEATER REVIEW

‘WELCOME TO ARROYO’S’ HAS ITS MOMENTS

Kristoffer Diaz’s play at Old Globe is sharp, well-acted, but feels like it needs a story

JAMES HEBERT • U-T

As a peek inside the fertile mind of a rising young playwright, the Old Globe’s “Welcome to Arroyo’s” scores big. As a piece of theater, not quite so much.

Kristoffer Diaz’s rap-edged play has crisp performances, innovative staging, some sharply funny dialogue and plenty of brash attitude. But the show also can feel like a collection of high concepts in search of a story.

It seems odd to call this an early work by Diaz, a 2010 Pulitzer finalist for “The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity.” After all, the man is barely past 30.

But Diaz began work on “Arroyo’s” a decade ago. Considering the playful strain of academic pretension threaded through the piece (at one point a character nails some personal theses to a door and makes a joking proclamation about “reformation”), it might not be a surprise to learn the play started out as Diaz’s own college thesis work.

But the playwright also takes his studies to the street: The show (which features frequent dropping of f-bombs) is set in a struggling Lower East Side nightspot and features a pair of comically cocky hip-hop artists, Trip (Wade Allain-Marcus) and Nelson (the one-named GQ).

These two act as emcees, rappers and ever-commenting chorus as well as characters in the play (the lines between those roles often get blurred). Their beat-dropping and ad-libbing give the show its best moments, so it’s disappointing that Diaz and director Jaime Castañeda don’t cut them loose a little more.

The main action of the play centers on the Arroyo siblings, Alejandro (Andres Munar) and Amalia (Amirah Vann), who are coping with the recent death of their mom while trying to keep the family bodega alive.

Alejandro, a compulsive worker (“He gets the

Details

“Welcome to Arroyo’s”

Where: The Old Globe’s White Theatre, 1393 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park

When: Tuesdays-Wednesdays, 7 p.m. (plus 2 p.m. Oct. 13); Thursdays-Fridays, 8 p.m.; Saturdays, 2 and 8 p.m.; Sundays, 2 and 7 p.m., through Oct. 31. Additional performances at Lincoln High School, Nov. 6, 8 p.m., and Nov. 7, 6 p.m.

Tickets: \$29-\$67 (Globe); \$10-\$15 (Lincoln)

Phone: (619) 234-5623

Online: theoldglobe.org

place cleaner than a Justin Bieber CD,” Trip and Nelson crack), receives a mysterious visit from a former neighborhood girl, Lelly (Tala Ashe), who’s re-searching hip-hop history as part of a desperate effort to reclaim her Puerto Rican heritage. She thinks the Arroyos’ mother secretly may have played a key role in that history.

Neither sibling gives that idea much credence at first. Amalia is a graffiti tagger too consumed with her art (captured in Aaron Rhyne’s eye-catching projections on Takeshi Kata’s urban-raw set). She’s also consumed with her fraught attraction to a cop named Derek Jeter (Byron Bronson) — a one-note gag that goes on too long.

There are some inspired set pieces, including a sequence where Trip and Nelson have other characters “rewind” their scenes like DVD highlights, and Diaz scratches at the surface of provocative ideas about the ownership of cultural legacies.

“Arroyo’s” proves not nearly so hard-hitting as last year’s “Kingdom,” the previous show connected to the Globe’s visionary Southeast San Diego Residency Project (which includes performances at Lincoln High). It has its moments, though, from a playwright whose own moment seems to be arriving just now.

Night & Day

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Play review: Globe's hip-hop show skips a few beats

BY JAMES HEBERT

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2010 AT 6:37 P.M.

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The main action of the play centers on the Arroyo siblings, Alejandro (Andres Munar) and Amalia (Amirah Vann), who are coping with the recent death of their mom while trying to keep the family bodega-turned-lounge alive.

Alejandro, a compulsive worker ("He gets the place cleaner than a Justin Bieber CD," Trip and Nelson crack), receives a mysterious visit from a former neighborhood girl, Lilly (Tala Ashe), who's researching hip-hop history as part of a desperate effort to reclaim her Puerto Rican heritage. She thinks the Arroyos' mother secretly may have played a key role in that history.

Neither sibling gives that idea much credence at first. Amalia is a graffiti tagger too consumed with her art (captured in Aaron Rhyne's eye-catching projections on Takeshi Kata's urban-raw set). She's also consumed with her fraught attraction to a cop named Derek Jeter (Byron Bronson) — a one-note gag that goes on too long.

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/ HENRY DIROCCO

GQ and Wade Allain-Marcus in "Welcome to Arroyo's."

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10/4/2010 2:32 PM

THEATER REVIEW

Straddling language and genre

Kristoffer Diaz's 'Arroyo's' blends hip-hop and the story of grieving siblings.

CHARLOTTE STOUT
FROM SAN DIEGO

More party than play, Kristoffer Diaz's "Welcome to Arroyo's" is a sweet, loose-limbed shout-out to Manhattan's Lower East Side, now at the Old Globe. With a Greek chorus of DJs who "mix" the play right in front of us, "Welcome" shows that hip-hop can still goose mainstream theater instead of merely filling the diversity slot.

Just the sight of designer Takeshi Kata's sleek bar setting in the intimate, in-the-round Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre makes you feel like ordering a cocktail instead of reading the program. The show's exuberant vibe becomes so infectious, it's easy to forget this is a story about two siblings recovering from the recent death of their only parent. The real event on stage is a young writer trying out his game, weaving in and out of storytelling strategies to find the ones that feel true to him.

But back to our story. On the site of his late mother's old bodega, the introspective Alejandro Arroyo (Andres Munar) opens the best lounge in the hood. It just doesn't have any customers — a minor problem pointed out by Trip (Wade Allain-Marcus) and Nelson (GQ), two mix masters in search of a gig. Meanwhile, Alejan-

dro's brash sister, Amalia Arroyo (Amirah Vann), can't be bothered with a job: She's a budding graffiti artist, which leads to a meet cute with a beat cop, Officer Derek (Byron Bronson).

Enter suburban college girl Lelly (Tala Ashe), who thinks the Arroyos' mother might have been the mysterious Reina Rey, purported to be one of hip-hop's originators. Lelly tracks down Alejandro for some fact checking, but her interest in the family quickly becomes more than scholarly.

These budding romances and fragile alliances are the subject of frequent commentary by the DJs, who at one point "rewind" an encounter between Alejandro and Derek to review the details of their conversation. Treating a scene like a DVD commentary demonstrates the kind of offhand irreverence that makes this writer so appealing.

Diaz, who burst on the scene with the Pulitzer-nominated "Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity," is telling an origin story here — hip-hop's and his own, an emerging playwright straddling class and language. That makes for some great and tiresome moments.

Do we really need beatboxing explained to us? Who is Alejandro and what does he want? And what exactly is Lelly doing in this play? Television will come calling for Diaz: Let's hope he uses a great cable show to hone his sense of structure, character development and narrative focus.

In the meantime, enjoy the writer's sharp ear for idioms ("His jaw scraped the



HENRY DIROCCO

UNFOLDING STORY: DJs Nelson (GQ), left, and Trip (Wade Allain-Marcus) "mix" the play.

ground like a cheap muffler") and his light dance with pop culture. (Check out the DJs doing a Steve Irwin handshake.) Some of the jokes feel instantly dated — "He got the place cleaner than a Justin Bieber CD" — but the younger members of

the audience didn't mind. Actually, neither did the older members.

Under Jaime Castañeda's deft direction, the performances feel fresh and immediate. Vann impresses as the fiery Amalia, hilariously unapologetic; her mono-

'Welcome to Arroyo's'

Where: Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, the Old Globe, San Diego

When: 7 p.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 8 p.m. Fridays, 2 and 8 p.m. Saturdays (no matinee Oct. 16), 2 and 7 p.m. Sundays. Ends Oct. 31.

Tickets: \$29 to \$67

Information: (619) 234-5623 or www.theoldglobe.org

Running time: 90 minutes

logue about how her family resolves conflict is one of the play's strongest. Ashe does her best with a pile of cultural studies jargon, the show's most awkward element.

Allain-Marcus and GQ, with their droll play-by-play observations punctuated by music and sound effects, have a terrific rapport with each other and the audience. (Matthew Richards' percussive lighting and Aaron Rhyne's projections also help maintain the play's rhythms.)

Alejandro hopes his lounge will become "a community center for adults, with alcohol," and by the end of the story, Diaz grants the young man's wish. In "Welcome to Arroyo's," the playwright creates a space for all audiences, young or old, of any color, to kick back and play. Now that we've all been stamped, let's stay and see what this fresh prince does next.

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Theater review: 'Welcome to Arroyo's' at the Old Globe

October 4, 2010 | 12:01 pm



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--Charlotte Stoudt

"Welcome to Arroyo's." Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, the Old Globe, 1363 Old Globe Way, San Diego. 7 p.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays; 8 p.m. Fridays; 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. Saturdays (no matinee Oct. 16); 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. Sundays. Ends Oct. 31. \$29-\$67. Contact: (619) 234-5623 or www.theoldglobe.org. Running time: 90 minutes.

Photo: Amirah Vann, left, GQ and Wade Allain-Marcus. Credit: Henry DiRocco.



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THEATER REVIEW

Globe's 'Arroyo's is slight but amusing

BY PAM KRAGEN

pkragen@nctimes.com

The plot's contrived and the characters are paper-thin, but you won't care that much, because Kristoffer Diaz's "Welcome to Arroyo's" is such a fun and amiable little play.

Making its West Coast premiere at the Old Globe, "Arroyo's" is the first full-length play Diaz ever wrote (back in college in 2001). It still feels like a work in progress, but it bears all the stylistic hallmarks that Diaz would one day turn into theatrical gold with his 2010 Pulitzer Prize nominee "The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity" — a

gift for language, fluid pacing, electric energy and audience interaction.

Set in Manhattan's Lower East Side in 2004, it's the story of young adult siblings Alejandro and Amalia "Molly" Arroyo, whose Puerto Rican single mom has just died. Alejandro has turned his late mother's bodega (small market) into an upscale bar, but so far, the customers have stayed away. Molly is dealing with her grief by spray-painting her name all over the neighborhood, including on the back wall of the police station, where

See 'Arroyo's,' 19

'Arroyo's'

Continued from Page 18

she's apprehended by the instantly smitten Officer Derek. Meanwhile, college student Lelly Santiago has returned to the community after a lifetime away in the suburbs, hoping to make a name for herself with her recent discovery — a local Puerto Rican woman may have helped launch the hip-hop music genre decades before, and that woman may just have been the Arroyos' mom.

All these plot threads come together in Arroyo's bar under the watchful eye of Trip Goldstein and Nelson Cardenal, a pair of wise-cracking DJs who serve as narrators, a Greek chorus, bar entertainment and as audience warm-up. And it's these two characters who bring the most to the show. Whether they're rapping their self-referential bits, dancing or breaking the fourth wall to talk to the audience, they bring the vitality and realism that the other plot lines and characters are missing. (Rapper GQ, the lone cast holdover from "Arroyo's" world premiere last spring in Chicago, is hilarious and charming as Nelson.)

The character of Officer Derek is underwritten, and the love matches between Alejandro and Lelly, and Molly and Officer Derek strain credulity. But the actors are all likable — particularly Andres Munar as the earnest Alejandro and Tala Ashe as Lelly.

Director Jaime Castaneda keeps the 95-minute play's energy cruising, the laughs steady and the visual interest high, thanks to multimedia elements such as audio sampling and video projections. He also moves the actors smartly around the Sheryl and Harvey White arena stage, so there's not a bad seat in the house.

The past couple of Globe seasons have been woefully short on hip material for



GQ and Wade Allain-Marcus are hip-hop DJs in "Welcome to Arroyo's." Henry DiRocco photo

younger audiences, so "Arroyo's" is a breath of fresh air. But playgoers offended by strong language should be warned. Although there's hip-hop music, break-dancing and topical references that may be missed by audiences over the age of 45, "Arroyo's" will appeal to all ages for its humor and its heart.

"Welcome to Arroyo's"

WHEN 8 p.m. Thursdays-Saturdays; 2 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays; 7 p.m. Sundays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays

WHERE White Theatre, Old Globe complex, Balboa Park, San Diego

TICKETS \$29-\$67

INFO 619-234-5623
www.theoldglobe.org

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THEATER REVIEW: Script is slight, but 'Arroyo's is fun, entertaining

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THEATER REVIEW: Script is slight, but 'Arroyo's is fun, entertaining

By PAM KRAGEN - pkragen@nctimes.com North County Times - Californian | Posted: Wednesday, October 6, 2010 8:54 am | No Comments
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[Buy this photo](#) GQ as Nelson Cardenal and Wade Allain-Marcus as Trip Goldstein in the West Coast Premiere of Welcome to Arroyo's by Kristoffer Diaz, at The Old Globe Sept. 25 - Oct. 31, 2010. Photo by Henry DiRocco.



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"Welcome to Arroyo's"

When: 8 p.m. Thursdays-Saturdays; 2 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays; 7 p.m. Sundays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays; through Oct. 31

Where: Sheryl & Harvey White Theatre, Old Globe complex, Balboa Park, San Diego

Tickets: \$29-\$67; play contains strong language

Info: 619-234-5623

Web: theoldglobe.org

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WELCOME TO ARROYO'S at the Old Globe

The Pulitzer nod was no fluke

By Bill Eadie

Posted on Thu, Sep 30th, 2010

Last updated Fri, Oct 1st, 2010

Playwright Kristoffer Diaz loves language and the great variety of ways people express themselves. That much was clear when his play about professional wrestling, *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity* was named a finalist for the 2009 Pulitzer Prize. *Chad Deity* was only Mr. Diaz's second full-length play, and its success has prompted the Old Globe to bring his first, *Welcome to Arroyo's*, both to its subscription audiences and to San Diego high school students through its Southeastern San Diego Residency Project. The Old Globe's production provides ample evidence that Mr. Diaz's recognition by the Pulitzer committee was no fluke.

First completed in 2000 as a thesis project at New York University, *Welcome to Arroyo's* was the play that Mr. Diaz kept taking out of his drawer, working on it for a while, and then putting it back in the drawer. This process sometimes results in sucking the life out a piece of work, but *Arroyo's* is as loose-limbed as the hip-hop culture it celebrates.



GQ and Wade Allain-Marcus as the DJs
Photo by Henry DiRocco

Set in a newly-opened bar on the Lower East Side of Manhattan, *Welcome to Arroyo's* profiles a group of mostly 20-somethings who are trying to find life's meaning on their own terms. There's Alex, more formally Alejandro (Andres Munar), who has opened Arroyo's Lounge on the site of the bodega his mother owned and operated until her death; his sister, Molly, aka Amalia (Amirah Vann), who's struggling to express herself through street art until she meets up with Officer Derek (Byron Bronson), a newbie beat cop who wants to do the right thing for the neighborhood; and a graduate student named Lelly Santiago (Tala Ashe), who is documenting the beginnings of hip-hop culture and who may have information to share with Alex and Molly about their mother. Overseeing the proceedings is a Greek chorus of DJs (Wade Allain-Marcus and GQ) who mess around, comment on the story, perform from time to time, and get all the best lines.

Mr. Diaz's writing dazzles with his ability to make hip-hop jive, casual talk among young friends, and academic jargon all sound like his first language, and everything about his play seems natural and unforced. He even adds some clever touches, such as characters' ability to "rewind" scenes and play them again. "Natural and unforced" is an excellent way to describe director

Jaime Castañeda's production as well, from the easy-going style of the acting to Takeshi Kata and Charlotte Devaux's simple but effective set and costume designs, respectively, to Shammy Dee's hip-hop "soundscapes" to Aaron Rhyne's helpful projections.

The cast exhibits a friendly ensemble quality that feels just right for the material. All of the performances are strong, but I particularly loved Mr. Munar's body language when he discovered that Ms. Ashe might have more than an academic interest in him, the fisticuffs between Ms. Vann and Mr. Bronson, and just about any time that the two DJs took the spotlight. This isn't Neil Simon, one of the DJs remarked, and they're right. By comparison, the plays next door feel just a bit on the stuffy side.

SanDiego.com doesn't designate Critic's Choices or Best Bets, but if it did, *Welcome to Arroyo's* would get one of those designations from me. See it, if only to be able to say that you were around when Kristoffer Diaz was getting his start.

[DOWNLOAD CAST AND CREDITS HERE \(http://static.sandiego.com/articlefiles/d9f65723-df6e-461d-8a2d-a045bff59776/Welcome%20to%20Arroyo%27s.pdf\)](http://static.sandiego.com/articlefiles/d9f65723-df6e-461d-8a2d-a045bff59776/Welcome%20to%20Arroyo%27s.pdf)

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SAN DIEGO CITY BEAT

October 13, 2010

THEATER

Keepin' it real?

AMIRAH VANN STANDS
OUT IN GLOBE'S WILDLY
UNEVEN ARROYO'S

BY MARTIN JONES WESTLIN

At 24, Alejandro Arroyo has this thing for his mom, or at least for her memory. He's vowed to make newly opened Arroyo's Lounge the nicest watering hole in Manhattan's Lower East Side in the wake of her death, and he thinks that 18-year-old Molly, his loudmouth sister and an armchair graffiti artist, oughta be pulling her weight. But Molly's busy alternately slugging and kissing the cop who's doing his damndest not to arrest her for vandalism amid his crush on her—and while brother and sister spar about Molly's conduct, their mom may soon “reappear” as a figure in the history of hip-hop culture.

There's a lot going on in *Welcome to Arroyo's*, a current Old Globe Theatre production about a collection of under-30s with vastly different ideas about the way life should be lived. And a lot of it is ensemble-oriented fun, just like the hip-hop phenomenon it embraces. But as the characters are wildly disparate, so too are the performances, with two falling short and two others the product of playwright Kristoffer Diaz's ignorance. This is a lively piece, but that liveliness is downright ingratiating, with the outcome heavy on spectacle and thin on the reasons behind it.

Over the objections of employees and itinerant DJs Trip and Nelson (Wade Allain Marcus and GQ), Alejandro (Andres Munar) declares the bar will remain a bar—and a very cool one at that. Diaz's dialogue encourages good interplay among the three, just as it does in the scenes with Molly (Amirah Vann) and Officer Derek (Byron Bronson). The young do-gooder cop has Molly's attention like no man before him, and Vann positively sparkles amid Molly's confusion over her newfound smittenness.

But soon enough, Trip and Nelson's rambunctious spinning becomes a smokescreen for questions that Diaz never answers. We never do find out whether Arroyo's becomes successful, as Alejandro promised his mom it would; neither does the pivotal character Lilly



Molly (Amirah Vann) doesn't know what to make of her feelings for Officer Derek (Byron Bronson), and vice versa.

Santiago (Tala Ashe) fit in the scheme of things. She's doing a project on the evolution of hip-hop and breathlessly discovers that Alejandro's mom might have been a big-time hip-hop DJ—but she's a *grad student*, of all things, and she doesn't have the look and feel of the neighborhood's ethnicity. Surely, her discovery (relatively inconsequential in any event) is better effected at street level by a savvy lifelong resident.

Ashe and Bronson never really give in to the material here, something director Jaime Castañeda could have remedied with more coaching. And while Marcus and GQ have a ball razzing the proceedings, please understand that fun and perspective are different things. In spite of the trappings to the contrary (including Writerz Blok's way-cool urban art), the latter is seriously lacking here. **CB**

This review is based on the opening-night production of Sept. 30. Welcome to Arroyo's runs through Oct. 31 at The Old Globe Theatre's Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park. \$29-\$67. oldglobe.org. Write to marty@sdcitybeat.com and editor@sdcitybeat.com.



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Keepin' it real?

Amirah Vann stands out in The Old Globe's wildly uneven Welcome to Arroyo's

By Martin Jones Westlin



Molly (Amirah Vann) doesn't know what to make of her feelings for Officer Derek (Byron Bronson), and vice versa.

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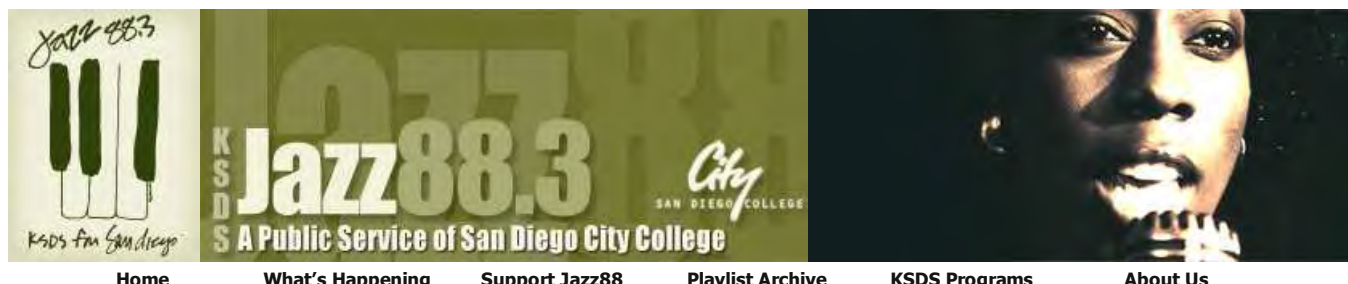
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"Brighton Beach Memories," "Broadway Bound" and "Welcome to Arroyo's" The Old Globe

That sound you hear wafting through the air in Balboa Park is unbridled laughter. The Old Globe is presenting a triple-header of comedies: two by Neil Simon and one by Pulitzer Prize finalist Kristoffer Diaz.

Simon wrote his semi-autobiographical "BB Trilogy" in the late 1980s. "Brighton Beach Memoirs" came first, then "Biloxi Blues," and finally, "Broadway Bound." The Globe has brought back the two bookends, running them in repertory on the same wonderful, split-level set, sharing most of the same cast. It's a great gambit – and it pays off, big-time.

In "Brighton Beach," a working-class oceanside Brooklyn neighborhood, circa 1937, we meet Eugene, Simon's alter ego, who's at the center of all three plays. At first, he's a 15 year-old, smart-alecky wannabe writer who narrates the action as it's happening.

Accomplished actor Austyn Myers, also 15, is terrific as young Eugene, and Brandon Uranowitz is spectacular as a wiser, but still wisecracking Gene at age 27, on the cusp of his comic writing career, in "Broadway Bound." David Bishins and Tony-winner Karen Ziemba are outstanding as their put-upon parents, and Joseph Parks is excellent as Gene's fretful, hyper-emotional brother, Stan.

"Brighton Beach Memoirs" is filled with Simonesque one-liners. "Broadway Bound" is more bittersweet, as it deals with the dissolution of the parents' marriage. Under the direction of Scott Schwartz, everything is just about perfect in both plays -- except those pesky New York accents. To my frustrated, native-New York ear, those vowels just aren't right. But the New York attitude, pace, rhythm and sensibility are there in spades, and you'd be a fool to miss this dynamic pairing, a comical peek at what young Neil Simon and his life just might've been like.

For a more hip and hip hop family saga, check out "Welcome to Arroyo's," set in another part of the City, the Lower East Side, where Simon's Jewish immigrant family probably started out. Now it's a diverse, heavily Latino neighborhood, where the Arroyo sibs live. Alejandro has taken over the family bodega, after his mother died a month ago. He's trying to make it into a cool nightspot, with the help of two hilarious sidekicks – played by Wade Allain-Marcus and GQ – who serve as guides, Greek chorus, DJs, rappers and resident downers. They're terrific.

Meanwhile, Alex's angry, aggressive sister, Molly, wants no part of the lounge idea. She's an aspiring artist, of the graffiti variety. When she tags the local police station, she has an eventful run-in with a sensitive rookie cop.

There isn't much depth or gravitas in "Arroyo's," but there are plenty of laughs, coupled with a glimpse of barrio life, family commitment and keeping history and memory alive.

That's what all these plays are cooking up: equal parts heart and humor, simmered into a light, tasty theatrical dish.

"Welcome to Arroyo's" runs through October 31, at the Old Globe, where "Brighton Beach Memoirs" and "Broadway Bound" continue in repertory through November 7.

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"Notes from Underground" – La Jolla Playhouse, "Jack Goes Boating" – ion theatre & "Into the Woods" – New Village Arts

This is a tripartite story about being lost – down the bleak, labyrinthine passageways of a twisted mind, or in real or metaphorical woods. It's all about unrealistic expectations – of life, love and what constitutes happiness. Each of these shows is dark in its own way –comically, musically or psychologically.

"Notes from Underground" is the most unnerving and unsettling of the three. This new adaptation of Dostoevsky's 1864 novella about guilt, shame and recrimination, was created by acclaimed director Robert Woodruff and stellar

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actor Bill Camp. The hyper-intense, 110-minute one-act premiered last year at Yale Repertory Theatre. And perhaps a college campus is the best place for it, a place where, presumably, they still read Dostoevsky. The stunning production is now at the La Jolla Playhouse, at UCSD. It's snowing inside the seedy, squalid, St. Petersburg flat. The unnamed Underground Man speaks into a camera, so we watch Camp's malleable face in reality and projected in supersize, perfect for his outsized emotional reactions to real and perceived slights. A provocative soundscape, played live onstage, underscores the action, which is not for the faint of heart. This is a grim study of despair, alienation and cruelty, fueled by self-loathing, self-delusion and self-sabotage. In his diary entry, the Man recounts a youthful humiliation; he promptly turns his degradation into gut-wrenching sexual aggression. This singular presentation is disturbing. If you can take it, it's something to see.

The production and performances are what should draw you to ion theatre's "Jack Goes Boating," too. The black comedy, by former San Diegan Bob Glaudini, currently in movie theaters, is somewhat unsatisfying, a choppy, episodic series of scenes that chronicle the ascent of one relationship and the dissolution of another. Four blue-collar denizens of New York do a lot of drugs and don't know what they want or where they're going. Under Claudio Raygoza's finely calibrated direction, a splendid cast, headed by the ever-expanding talents of Brian Mackey and Steven Lone, brings considerable vitality to these generally unlikable, indecisive, unproductive characters. But their interactions and climactic moments positively sizzle.

Now if you expect the musical offering of these three shows to be the lighthearted one, think again. It's Stephen Sondheim, after all. "Into the Woods" may seem to be a jocular take on familiar fairy tales, blending the stories of Cinderella, Rapunzel, Little Red Riding Hood and Jack and the Beanstalk with a lesser-known one about a childless baker and his wife. There's a witch, of course, and a vengeful giant. But the focus is on what happens after "happily ever after," and the somewhat muddled second act has a hard edge and a dark tone. New Village Arts, in its tenth season and first musical, has marshaled a wonderful director, James Vasquez and a high-octane cast, to mine all the musicality and melancholy of the piece.

So gird your theatrical loins. Take the plunge into some dark dramatic waters.

"Jack Goes Boating" through October 9, at ion's Black Box Theatre in University Heights.

"Notes from Underground" runs through October 17, at the La Jolla Playhouse.

"Into the Woods" continues through October 31 at New Village Arts in Carlsbad.

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"The Norman Conquests" – Cygnet Theatre

Meet the English theater's master puzzlemaker – in triplicate. Sir Alan Ayckbourn loves to play with plays. Of his 73 full-length creations, one has 16 possible endings, one is two plays taking place simultaneously on two different stages. And then there's "The Norman Conquests." No, it has nothing to do with the Battle of Hastings or William the Conqueror.

It's about zhlubby Norman, the almost-conqueror. The 1973 trilogy takes three perspectives on one wacky weekend. We view the proceedings from three different locations: the living room, dining room and garden. Actions overlap across plays, and aren't presented sequentially. So all the puzzling out and putting together has to be done by the audience. Each of the plays can stand alone, but it's especially juicy to see them all – either on consecutive nights, or as I did, in one 6-hour marathon, with breaks for lunch and dinner in between.

It's a gutsy structure, tackled by a fearless group. Cygnet Theatre Company is launching its 8th season with a 16-week rotating repertory run of "The Norman Conquests." If you see 'em all on one day, you can even get a t-shirt that says "I Conquered Norman."

Norman is a scruffy, oversexed assistant librarian, who uncontrollably loves the ladies – even if he's related to them by marriage. On this particular weekend, he's arranged for a tryst with his wife's sister. But when that goes awry, he makes a play for his other sister-in-law. He winds up rolling on the floor with each of them, and even seducing his hard-edged wife. All he wants to do is make people happy, he says. And all that results is chaos and commotion.

It would be pretty hard to make this miserable lot happy anyway. Each is staggeringly self-involved and discontent, mired in the monotony of their marriage and/or other relationships. When they all get together at the family's big, old run-down Victorian country house, sparks fly, egos are bruised and tempers ignite. Just another weekend with the extended family, a neurotic collection of weak, ineffectual men and brittle, shrewish women. Ayckbourn has never taken a particularly positive view of marriage, and this assemblage scrapes the bottom of the matrimonial barrel.

Sounds pretty serious, doesn't it? But it's really ripping good fun. The six-members of the crackerjack ensemble are superb, under the hair-trigger-timed direction of Sean Murray and Francis Gercke. The set transforms wonderfully, and the sound, lighting and costumes are delightful. Do I have a favorite? Well, "Round and Round the Garden" has the first and last scenes of the weekend; "Table Manners" clarifies the relationships best. But I think I laughed the most in "Living Together."

See them in any order, but see them -- if you want to get some acid-laced guffaws.

The three installments of "The Norman Conquests" run in repertory through November 7, at Cygnet Theatre in Old Town.

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Nnenna Freelon
Nov 9th

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THEATER REVIEW: "Welcome to Arroyo's" is a hip-hop treat

JEAN LOWERISON - SDGLN THEATER CRITIC
October 5th, 2010

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SAN DIEGO -- A mystery about the hip-hop phenomenon? Who'd have thought?

The Old Globe Theatre presents the West Coast premiere of Kristoffer Diaz's "Welcome To Arroyo's" through Oct. 31. Jaime Castañeda directs.

On the lower east side of Manhattan (aka LES), Arroyo's Lounge is celebrating its one-month anniversary in the space occupied by his mother's bodega until her recent death.

Unfortunately, it's a small party: nobody's there except owner Alejandro (Andres Munar), DJs Nelson Cardenal (GQ) and Trip Goldstein (Wade Allain-Marcus) and Alejandro's sister Molly (Amirah Vann).

Molly is a hip-hop style "artist" – a mouthy tagger who improves walls and public buildings with her stylings. When we meet her, she is about to be arrested by a local cop, Officer Derek Jeter (yes, you read it right, and he's wonderfully played by Byron Bronson) for tagging the police station wall. But in an absolutely charming scene, their eyes lock, time stops and they stand in a suddenly-red light.

It's hard to resist the emotional truth of that scene, and the youthful energy and joy on display throughout this piece. And the way Castañeda has his cast play to the audience is immediately engaging ... and a good move, because the vulgar language is likely to present a bit of a barrier for older patrons.

The plot gets going when researcher (aka "skank ass white girl") Lelly Santiago (Tala Ashe) comes to the lounge in search of information about Alejandro's mother. It seems she has uncovered evidence of a woman hip-hop DJ who disappeared suddenly from her South Bronx neighborhood in 1980. She thinks that woman – Reina Rey – not only settled on the LES but was Alejandro and Molly's mother.

Though Reina Rey is a fictional character, the story is charming on its own merits, and Diaz posits the likelihood that one or more women were important in the hip-hop movement in the South Bronx in the '70s. And this cast makes the slight story come alive.

Munar and Allain-Marcus make a great DJ team; Vann gives us a Molly to be reckoned, not trifled with, and Ashe plays the somewhat socially challenged researcher Lelly with humor and compassion.

Will Arroyo's ever get any customers? Was Reina Rey Alejandro and Molly's mother? Will Molly and Derek get together?

You'll have to see the show to find out.

"Welcome to Arroyo's" is part of the Globe's Southeastern San Diego Residency Project and will be presented at Lincoln High School following its Globe run. It's a natural for young adult audiences – short, peppy and charming – and there's even a message. Just know that the dialogue contains less-than-standard English peppered with lots of F-bombs and mother-F-bombs.

The details

"Welcome to Arroyo's" plays through Oct. 31 at the Old Globe's Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre in Balboa Park.

Sunday, Tuesday and Wednesday at 7 p.m.; Thursday through Saturday at 8 p.m.; matinees Saturday and Sunday at 2 p.m.

For tickets, call (619) 234-5623 or visit www.theoldglobe.org.

To read more reviews by SDGLN Theater Critic Jean Lowerison, click [HERE](#).

ENLARGE



Photo credit: Henry DiRocco

Amirah Vann as Amalia Arroyo and Andres Munar as Alejandro Arroyo in "Welcome to Arroyo's."



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SAN DIEGO: Welcome to Arroyo's tonight

Posted by: SDTheatreBill 01:28 am EDT 10/01/10

Welcome to Arroyo's is Kristoffer Diaz's first full length play. His second, *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity* was a finalist for last season's Pulitzer Prize and received rapturous reviews wherever it was performed. Even though *Arroyo's* has been around since 2000 (it was Mr. Diaz's thesis play at NYU) and received its world premiere production only last April in Chicago, it shows that the Pulitzer nod was no fluke.

Mr. Diaz is a budding major voice, and his career has already taken off, with commissions in progress for the Center Theatre Group, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, and Chicago's Goodman Theatre. But, *Welcome to Arroyo's* is not your typical first play and the ten years Mr. Diaz has spent taking it out of the drawer and working on it some more have resulted in a mature work that celebrates Puerto Rican and hip-hop culture with a simple but funny story about 20-somethings trying to get a bar going on the site of an old bodega on the Lower East Side of Manhattan.

The Old Globe has imported Jaime Castañeda, who directed the Chicago production, to stage its West Coast premiere. Good move. The production is light on its feet, and the young cast performs with relaxed conviction and great good humor.

Welcome to Arroyo's runs through October 31 in the Old Globe's White Theatre. By comparison (and the cast does make the comparison) the Neil Simon repertory running next door seems stuffy and old-fashioned.

Highly recommended.

Bill, in San Diego

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The cast of *Welcome to Arroyo's*: Byron Bronson, GQ, Wade Allain-Marcus, Andres Munar, Tala Ashe and Amirah Vann / Henry DiRocco.

Move on up

Few frequent the bar in Kristoffer Diaz's *Welcome to Arroyo's*, now receiving its West Coast premiere at the Old Globe (through October 31). That will change. The place – and the play – are a meeting ground where old values and new ideas can make the most of each other. And, most importantly, everyone can have the time of their lives.

Director Jaime Castañeda matches Diaz' vision with a staging so tight and effective that it achieves the feel of loose spontaneity. His cast of six touches all the bases – comedy, drama, pain, romance, music, and a sense of fun that packs Diaz' dialogue to the point of bursting.

Clearly designed for a new generation of theatergoers who might be drawn to a play that celebrates the traditions of Hip Hop culture – which, it reminds us, is entering its fourth decade – it is just as exciting for those seeking encouragement about theater's future. Although the pre-show music may be just the kind of repetitive pounding that requires open containers and dance floors, all the music in the show is uplifting, whether it's sampling current artists or past figures like Marsalis and Mayfield.

Diaz weaves several story strands together with admirable economy. Arroyo (Andres Munar) has opened a bar on the ground floor of the building he and his sister Amalia, "Molly," (Amirah Vann) inherited from their recently deceased mother. Molly is an 18-year-old with a fearsome temper and a chip on her shoulder apparently made of flint and ready to ignite at the slightest scratch. She is a born artist whose canvas is the city's buildings.

Mrs. Arroyo's deli, or *bodega*, on New York's Lower East Side made her a beloved neighborhood figure. That spirit inspired Alejandro to create a "community center for adults, with alcohol." The two locals he hired to help make renovations stayed on to provide Hip Hop entertainment for the patrons and a comic Greek chorus for the play. Nelson "Nellie Nell" Cardenal (GQ) and Trip Goldstein (Wade Allain-Marcus) have ambitions to rock the Hip Hop world as The Trip and Nell Cartel.

The play begins with the appearance of the first of two outsiders. Lelly Santiago (Tala Ashe) is a Hip Hop acolyte out to make a name for herself by elevating the role of women in the art form. She has a photograph of Hip Hop's one pioneering woman, who disappeared after achieving local fame 30 years before. She believes "Reina Rae" was Alejandro's mother.

The other stranger is Officer Derek (Byron Bronson), who experiences a powerful mutual attraction with Molly when he apprehends her for tagging. While he strives to be a good cop who provides a valuable community service, he longs to pick up a camera again and pursue his photography.

This mix of optimism and desire to strive gives *Arroyo's* its lift, while the realities and rejection all the characters experience gives it tension. Castaneda's excellent cast – as comfortable and generous in their roles as actors in a successful road company of *Rent* – keep things both energized. The arena-configured Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre facilitates the play's mission to break the fourth wall by not having any of the other three. Walls between scenes, characters, styles and time periods are also ignored, especially by Trip and Nell, but also by Lelly, who is the character we follow into the play.

Takeshi Kata's set, Charlotte Devaux's costumes, Matthew Richards' lights, and Aaron Rhyne's projections of urban art by Writerrz Bloc create a simple but colorful physical space that gets added dimension from Shammmy Dee's music and Paul Peterson's sound cues.

WELCOME TO ARROYO'S

by KRISTOFFER DIAZ
directed by JAIME CASTANEDA

OLD GLOBE THEATRE

September 25-October 31, 2010
(Opened 9/30, Rev'd 10/2m)

CAST Wade Allain-Marcus, GQ, Tala Ashe,
Andres Munar, Amirah Vann, Byron Bronson;
u/s Bayardo De Murguia, Xochitl Romero

PRODUCTION Takeshi Kata, set; Charlotte
Devaux, costumes; Matthew Richards, lights;
Paul Peterson, sound; Aaron Rhyne,
projections; Writerrz Bloc, urban art; Shammmy
Dee, music director; Elizabeth Lohr, stage
management



Q, Allain-Marcus / DiRocco

HISTORY Developed at South Coast Repertory, Lark Play Development Center's Playwrights Week, and BareBones at the Lark, in partnership with Hip-Hop Theatre Festival; premiered at American Theatre Company (Chicago) **West Coast Premiere**

If there's any fault to Diaz' structure, it's that every character has artistic talent and appreciation and strives to greatness with youthful exuberance. However, Diaz' playfulness allows a fable aspect. And, the play, like its characters is so full of talent, appreciation and youthful exuberance, that it provides exciting evidence that theater is going somewhere. And, with Diaz' second play achieveing a "Pulitzer Prize nomination," we'll surely be meeting up with him again soon.

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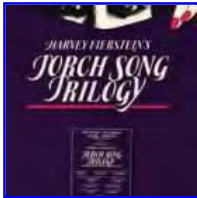
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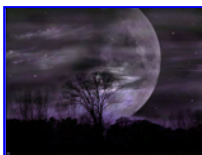
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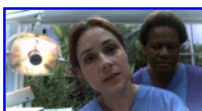
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‘Welcome to Arroyo’s’ Takes Over the Old Globe

by [Derek Smith](#) October 12, 2010
[San Diego Theater](#)

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*“We rock the mic right
 This the Lower East Side
 You ain’t ‘In the Heights’”*



When you enter the intimate Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, (1363 Old Globe Way, San Diego, California 92101 619-234-5623) you’re not entering a theater at all- you’re actually stepping into the less-than popular Lower East Side nightclub *Arroyo*’s. With hip-hop music blasting through the space, you notice Trip (Wade Allain-Marcus) and Nelson ([GQ](#)), who act as narrating Greek chorus members of the story about to be told- running the turn table and chattin with random audience members. The circular stage surrounded by the audience is set with the bar in the center- an

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from the incoming crowd during the pre-show. Once the clock strikes curtain the lights lower as Trip and Nelson approach the turntable.

The show starts with an intense pounce of energy by Trip and Nelson setting the scene with a semi-freestyle rap ([click here for a youtube preview](#)), including a call-and-response where they also shout out to a few audience members they chatted with during the pre-show (they said my name!). Within the quick exposition we find out that the night Alejandro Arroyo's (Andres Munar) mother died, he opened the lounge where his mother had previously owned and ran a deli for twenty years.

The show begins a month from that date with Lelly excitedly telling the audience about her thesis project- uncovering the mysterious disappearance of the possibly revolutionary 1980's disc jockey, Reina Rey. With the proof of Reina Rey's existence, Lelly could potentially prove that a Puerto-Rican female could have played a major role in the creation of hip-hop music, changing the cultural perspective of hip-hop forever. Lelly and Alejandro's story converge when she divulges that Reina Rey could have been Alejandro Arroyo's mother. [Playwright Kristoffer Diaz's](#) story begins to unfold when we meet Alejandro, who stubbornly keep his "upscale lounge" unsuccessfully running for the now gentrified Lower East Side; all the while keeping tabs on his cop-dodging, graffiti artist younger sister, Molly.

Director Jaime Castañeda's staging for this story allows the story to move forward with a fast pace to match the infectious beats created by the beat boxing narrators. He utilizes not only two direct stage portals, but also allows Lelly to make entrances through the house, which allows for her story to become more conversational with the audience.

This aspect of the show, going in and out of a direct meta-narrative was heavily dependent on Matthew Richard's lighting design, which also heavily assisted in the shifting of focus between stories around different parts of the set. Takeshi Kata's simple, fragmentary set design (described earlier) was smartly done with the challenge of a multi-location story being told in a very small space. My favorite part of her design was the location and transition points of Molly's graffiti, which surrounds the audience through surprising and beautiful projections (designed by Aaron Rhyne) on every wall of the theater.



According to their program bios, the whole cast has very impressive credits that you'd think they had these roles written for them. More importantly, they all bring a palpable sincerity to these characters, a devastating connection to one another and the story that colors the stage with a vital life force and need for this story to be told. GQ (Nelson) and Wade Allain-Marcus (Trip) keep the story moving hilariously with a truly welcoming tone. Munar plays Alejandro appropriately calm with a storm brewing under the skin: tirelessly working to honor his mother while refusing to grieve her death. One more notable performance was Tala Ashe as Lelly Santiago who plays this role daringly, unafraid to fully separate this character from her own culture. Her character's connection to the audience is important and she relates to them comfortably and passionately.

The only trouble with this play, other than a few plot transitions that lacked pace and quality writing, was the lack of a solid ending. Diaz leaves us guessing what happens, suggesting that the results do not matter; hoping the message of the story will be enough. They also express hope that the audience will research on our own to learn more about the history of hip hop culture. After attempting their suggested research online, I reread the program notes and found that the research they'd suggested was on fictitious people and places.

While I understand the idea of both those rationalizations, for ending the play how they did, the main story was still unresolved. I'm assuming both ending possibilities would have needed superfluous explanation, dragging the show out. Still, this criticism is on a production that is meant to be somewhat of an educational show for high school audiences and in that respect, their ending may be best suited for the genre of age-specific, educational theater.

Welcome to Arroyo's is a part of The Globe's Southeastern San Diego Residency Project. Executive Producer Lou Spitso explains as a program that finds "socially conscious writers with talent and a unique voice that will reach our community." In the program he further explains that this production will travel to Lincoln High School after its run at the Globe, which will give students the opportunity to see the production alongside adult audiences.

Pulitzer Prize Finalist playwright (for *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity*) Kristoffer Diaz certainly deserves high praise for writing an honest story that raises discussion about cultural authenticity, participation and exclusivity. While dropping winks to seasoned theatergoers (the chorus casually raps about [French existential philosopher and playwright Jean-Paul Sartre](#)), he keeps both young and senior audience members happily "raising the roof" while asking really important cultural questions. What is it that keeps us bound to those in our culture? Are we only a part of our heritage, or bound and defined by it? When do these boundaries blur?

Absolutely an important message that deserves such a wonderful show to deliver.

Welcome to Arroyo's runs through October 31st at the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre at The Old Globe then continues at the Lincoln High School Center for the Arts November 6th and 7th. CAST: Wade Allain-Marcus (Trip Goldstein), Tala Ashe (Lelly Santiago), Byron Bronson (Officer Derek), Andres Munar (Alejandro Arroyo), GQ (Nelson Cardenal) and Amirah Vann (Amalia Arroyo). CREW: Takeshi Kata (Scenic Design), Charlotte Devaux (Costume Design), Matthew Ricahrds (Lighting Design), Paul Peterson (Sound Design), Shammy Dee (Musical Direction), Aaron Rhyne (Projection Design) and Elizabeth Lohr (Stage Manager).



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Playwright's first stab a flawed, yet entertaining production



(l to r) Byron Bronson as Officer Derek, GQ as Nelson Cardenal, Wade Allain-Marcus as Trip Goldstein, Andres Munar as Alejandro Arroyo, Tala Ashe as Lelly Santiago and Amirah Vann as Amalia Arroyo in The Old Globe's production of "Welcome to Arroyo's." (Courtesy Henry DiRocco)

By Cuauhtémoc Kish|Theatre critic

Even though Latino playwright Kristopher Diaz was nominated for the 2010 Pulitzer Prize for Drama for "The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity," he says he just can't walk away from his first full-length work titled "Welcome to Arroyo's," currently playing at the Old Globe's White Theatre. As Diaz said in a recent interview, "There's something about your first play; you never want to let it go."

"Welcome to Arroyo's" is an urban comedy Diaz penned in college about 10 years ago. If I were his professor, I might have indicated that the play is self-indulgent, lacks pace and meanders all over the lower east side landscape. It also includes three sub-plots that hijack the poorly supported main plot from moving

forward. But, I would also add that the script is entertaining, has good energy, and is a very fine first effort.

Brother and sister Alejandro (Andres Munar) and Amalia (Amirah Vann) Arroyo have recently lost their mother. After her death, Alejandro has worked night and day to transform mom's bodega into a bar (sorry, lounge), while Amalia remains steadfastly focused on (obsessed with) her graffiti art. Lelly (Tala Ashe) enters their lives with a mysterious visit, in an attempt to identify Reina Rey, the only female to be tagged as a possible hip-hop founder from South Bronx, who may be Alejandro and Amalia's mother. Unfortunately, Lelly spends most of her time talking to the audience.

Many of the conversations are far too brief, as if Diaz didn't

have enough to say, while some of the conversations seemed too abstract, segueing into the meta-physical. In the end, the story seems compartmentalized and incomplete.

The six-actor cast—which does consistently fine work—includes a pair of energized "DJ" hip-hoppers (Trip/Wade Allain-Marcus and Nelson/GQ) who bounce around the stage, adding commentary and one-liners, like a mildly strung-out Greek chorus. They do a meet-and-greet with the audience, and continue the audience interaction throughout the intermission-less production. The play is overly peppered with f-words, not only from the rapper chorus, but also from Amalia, who has no fear when it comes to getting into someone's face.

Competing the cast is a dutiful cop named Officer Derek (Byron Bronson) who is nothing more than a foil for a running gag that gets very old, very fast.

Director Jaime Castaneda kept everything lighthearted, especially the hilarious "re-wind" segments, and interaction with Amalia and the cop. He also took advantage of Aaron Rhyne's very effective video projections that circled Takeshi Kata's compact stage design and extended the set.

"Welcome to Arroyo's" is funkily entertaining. This first effort by Diaz might benefit from yet another remix, though it also may be time to let this one go, and move on to newer projects like "The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity."

.....

WELCOME TO ARROYO'S

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The Old Globe's White Theatre

theoldglobe.org

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(l to r) GQ as Nelson Cardenal and Wade Allain-Marcus as Trip Goldstein in The Old Globe's production of "Welcome to Arroyo's." (Courtesy Henry DiRocco)

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[Welcome to Arroyo's, San Diego \(/index.php?view=article&catid=7%3Atheater&id=372%3Awelcome-to-arroyos-san-diego&tmpl=component&link=aHR0cDovL3d3dy5jdWx0dXJldnVsdHVyZS5uZXQvaW5kZXgucGhwP29wdGlvbj1jb21format=pdf&print=1&layout=default&option=com_content&page=&Itemid=10\)](/index.php?view=article&catid=7%3Atheater&id=372%3Awelcome-to-arroyos-san-diego&tmpl=component&link=aHR0cDovL3d3dy5jdWx0dXJldnVsdHVyZS5uZXQvaW5kZXgucGhwP29wdGlvbj1jb21format=pdf&print=1&layout=default&option=com_content&page=&Itemid=10)

Welcome to Arroyo's

By Kristoffer Diaz
 Directed by Jaime Castañeda
 Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre
 The Old Globe
 San Diego (West Coast premiere)

Sept. 25-Oct. 31, 2010

www.TheOldGlobe.org (<http://www.theoldglobe.org/tickets/production.aspx?PID=8414>)

Welcome to Arroyo's, a new Lower East Side lounge ran by Alejandro. The tale is presented to us by a Greek chorus of two comical hip-hop DJs. With their help, we discover that Alejandro is struggling to build a clientele, while grieving the recent loss of his mother. Adding to these challenges is a defiant sister, Molly, who hopes to gain notoriety as a graffiti artist. The list of conflicts grows when Alejandro also has to contend with an enigmatic and mesmerizing visitor who might hold a family secret that could change the history of hip-hop music.

The DJ duo, Trip Goldstein and Nelson Cardenal, is played by multi-talented artists Wade Allain-Marcus and GQ. They provide the matrix for the drama at hand. From DJing to beat boxing, break dancing and character impersonations, they do it all. And, oh yeah, they're great comedians, too. Amirah Vann gives a remarkable performance as 18-year-old Amalia (Molly) Arroyo and Andres Munar is her older brother Alejandro. Munar does a great job at painting a complex portrait for this grieving character. Lelly Santiago, a charming intellectual hip-hop research enthusiast, is played by Tala Ashe, and Byron Bronson is Officer Derek, a rookie cop who has a soft spot for rebellious Molly.

"Welcome to Arroyo's" first premiered at American Theater Company in Chicago this past spring, but for the first time, it is presented in the round in this West Coast premiere. The new state-of-the-art space at the Old Globe (the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre) is the perfect venue for the happening work by Kristoffer Diaz. It provides an exclusive intimacy between the spectators and the artists. Indeed, while witnessing the going-ons in "Welcome to Arroyo's," the audience can forget about the fourth wall, or any wall at all for that matter. They all fall down, not only between the audience and the characters, but between the characters themselves. Different theatrical realms overlap each other, and the hip-hop narrators, to the delight of the public, enjoy playing and manipulating the scenes to illustrate their point. They can rewind the action, replay it, pause it, comment on it and participate in it.

This production is wonderfully directed by Jaime Castañeda, who has been working on the "Arroyo's" project since 2003. Castañeda and playwright Diaz (2010 Pulitzer Prize finalist for "The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity") have been working together for some time and their partnership is producing great results. The rest of the creative team includes Shammy Dee as proficient music director, skilled Takeshi Kata as scenic designer, Charlotte Devaux for costumes, Matthew Richards for lights and Paul Peterson as sound designer. The urban art is by Writerz Blok and projection design by Aaron Rhyne.

As part of the growing Old Globe Southeastern San Diego Residency Project, an important program that aims to build a deeper neighborhood connection, "Welcome to Arroyo's" hits its mark as a brilliant multicultural and cross-generational theater piece. Audiences across the board will enjoy and relate to the story.

Patricia Humeau

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Going to the mat for art

Wrestling fan Kristoffer Diaz draws on pop-culture sources for his plays.

DAVID ROONEY
REPORTING FROM NEW YORK

It takes an unabashed pop-culture geek to explain his concept of storytelling by invoking professional wrestling, "The Wire" and a youth spent glued to "Yo! MTV Raps." But for playwright Kristoffer Diaz, those influences have been as instrumental in shaping his voice as the plays and musicals that ignited his interest in theater.

Whether his characters are the exaggerated stereotypes of the wrestling ring, hungry club-scene upstarts or a drug-binging necrophiliac brandishing a severed zombie penis, the aggressive rhythms of hip-hop power his language. And for Diaz, the gritty mosaic of the defunct HBO series has correlations in the multi-strand saga of World Wrestling Entertainment.

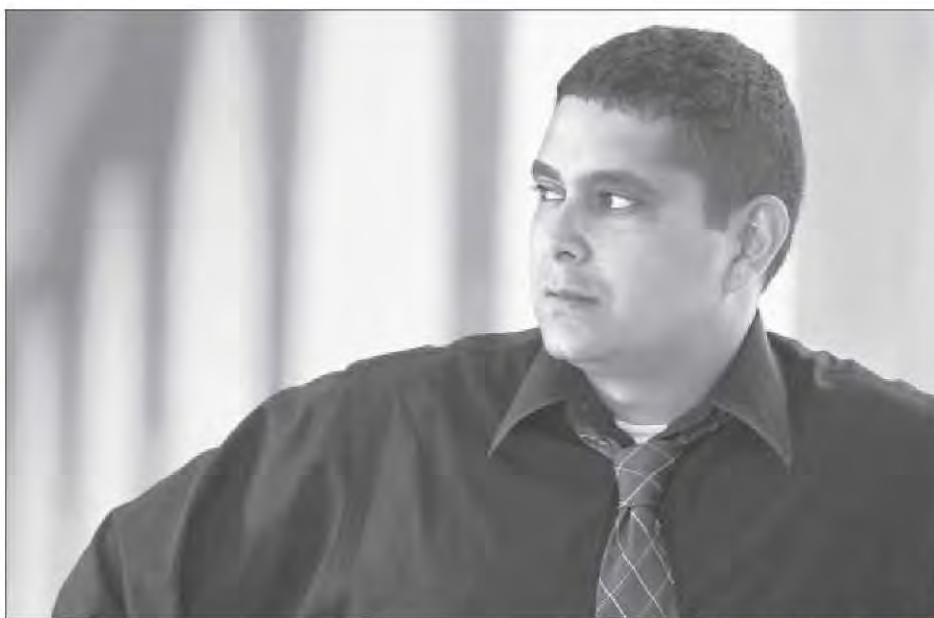
"What I see wrestling doing is masterfully telling 10 or 12 stories at any time," said Diaz over cheeseburgers. "Any one event that's happening is impacting all these other stories. That's the thing 'The Wire' did so remarkably. You're following the story of one guy, but everything he does triggers a million other things."

That layering of narrative is evident in Diaz's breakout play, "The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity," which bounced from its Chicago premiere last fall to off-Broadway, landing ecstatic reviews and a spot on the Pulitzer shortlist. The play is a flamboyant satire on the ways in which America digests its racial stereotypes, viewed through the prism of pro wrestling's extravagantly self-styled personalities.

The same dense texture is there in more embryonic form in his earlier play, "Welcome to Arroyo's," which opens Sept. 25 at San Diego's Old Globe. The production is part of the South-eastern San Diego Residency Project, aimed at cultivating voices that can reach a younger, more diverse audience. "When I read 'Chad Deity,' I thought Kris was fiercely political, and uncompromisingly so, but he had a heart and was not cynical," said Lou Spisto, executive producer at the Old Globe. "He's very strong, very masculine in his writing, but he also understands at the end of the day that he has to reach an audience."

Spisto said that though "Chad Deity" first sparked his interest in Diaz, "Arroyo's" was a better fit for the program, allowing the playwright to do further developmental tinkering based on what he had learned from the play's Chicago debut in April. It moves after the Globe to a secondary run at Lincoln High School for the Performing Arts.

Written seven years before "Chad Deity," while Diaz was completing an MFA at New York University's Department of Dramatic Writ-



DON BARTLETT/Los Angeles Times

NEW VOICE: "Welcome to Arroyo's" was a "life-or-death" play for Diaz.



JEFFREY WEISER/The Old Globe

'ARROYO'S': Wade Allain-Marcus, left, GQ and music director Shammy Dee rehearse at Old Globe.

ing, "Arroyo's" reflects where he was at that time and what was happening to Manhattan's Lower East Side.

The play tracks Alejandro Arroyo's efforts to turn the club built out of his deceased mother's bodega into a *Loisaida* hot spot; his angry sister Amalia's need to be recognized as an artist, choosing the walls of the local police station as her graffiti canvas; and a scholar's quest to reconnect with her roots via a Puerto Rican woman she believes was the progenitor of hip-hop, who may have been Alejandro and Amalia's mother.

"My family was from the city, but I grew up in the suburbs in Yonkers and Westchester," said Diaz. "I was a suburban kid who loved hip-hop, and then I went to NYU and came back to that part of the city right as it was starting to gentrify again. It raised a bunch of questions for me about authority. Was I part of the Lower East Side or part of the people coming in and changing it?"

"The big thing I learned writing 'Welcome to Arroyo's' is that I could use plays to work out stuff I didn't understand about myself," he added. Though Diaz, 33, strongly identifies as a Latino man of Puerto Rican descent, he acknowledges that labels can be tricky. "I wouldn't call myself a Puerto Rican playwright because I've been to Puerto Rico four times in my life," he explained. "I'm not even Nuyorican in the way that Nuyoricans are. I'm suburban. Third generation."

Questions of identity fuel Diaz's plays, but perhaps more than content it's the brash theatricality and kinetic energy of the writing that has turned heads. He wants to shake audiences out of their complacency,

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Among plays that awakened his ideas about fluid, filmic theatricality punctuated by meaty monologues, he cites "Six Degrees of Separation," "Angels in America," "M. Butterfly" and "Zoot Suit." He describes seeing John Leguizamo's solo piece, "Spic-o-Rama," in his late teens as transformative. Musicals were another prime motivator, with the 1992 Gershwin anthology "Crazy for You" on top of the list.

The breadth of influences contributing to Diaz's work, in addition to his theater grounding, has made Jordan Roth, president of New York's Jujamcyn Theaters, a vocal fan, prompting

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"Kris is a languagemeister," added Carole Rothman, artistic director of Second Stage, where "Chad Deity" had its New York premiere. "He can manipulate language in a way that most writers don't because he hears a rhythm in his head, and the rhythm is often a hip-hop rhythm."

The first full-length play Diaz completed since his sudden success, "...Vigwan," was given a staged reading in New York in August as part of Atlantic Theater Company's Latino Mixfest.

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"I have a really hard time focusing small," he confessed. "I feel like if I keep trying to compress myself, I'm forcing it."

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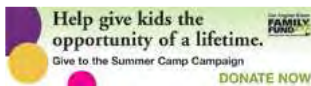


Kristoffer Diaz is going to the mat for art

Wrestling fan Kristoffer Diaz draws on pop-culture sources for his plays.



Kristoffer Diaz is an up-and-coming playwright who was a Pulitzer finalist this year. (Don Bartletti, Los Angeles Times / September 1, 2010)



David Rooney
Special to Los Angeles Times
September 19, 2010

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Reporting from New York -- It takes an unabashed pop-culture geek to explain his concept of storytelling by invoking professional wrestling, "The Wire" and a youth spent glued to "Yo! MTV Raps." But for playwright Kristoffer Diaz, those

influences have been as instrumental in shaping his voice as the plays and musicals that ignited his interest in theater.

Whether his characters are the exaggerated stereotypes of the wrestling ring, hungry club-scene upstarts or a drug-binging necrophiliac brandishing a severed zombie penis, the aggressive rhythms of hip-hop power his language. And for Diaz, the gritty mosaic of the defunct HBO series has correlations in the multi-strand saga of World Wrestling Entertainment.

"What I see wrestling doing is masterfully telling 10 or 12 stories at any time," said Diaz over

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cheeseburgers. "Any one event that's happening is impacting all these other stories. That's the thing 'The Wire' did so remarkably. You're following the story of one guy, but everything he does triggers a million other things."

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That layering of narrative is evident in Diaz's breakout play, "The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity," which bounced from its Chicago premiere last fall to off-Broadway, landing ecstatic reviews and a spot on the Pulitzer shortlist. The play is a flamboyant satire on the ways in which America digests its racial stereotypes, viewed through the prism of pro wrestling's extravagantly self-styled personalities.

The same dense texture is there in more embryonic form in his earlier play, "Welcome to Arroyo's," which opens Sept. 25 at San Diego's Old Globe. The production is part of the Southeastern San Diego Residency Project, aimed at cultivating voices that can reach a younger, more diverse audience.

"When I read 'Chad Deity,' I thought Kris was fiercely political, and uncompromisingly so, but he had a heart and was not cynical," said Lou Spisto, executive producer at the Old Globe. "He's very strong, very masculine in his writing, but he also understands at the end of the day that he has to reach an audience."

Spisto said that though "Chad Deity" first sparked his interest in Diaz, "Arroyo's" was a better fit for the program, allowing the playwright to do further developmental tinkering based on what he had learned from the play's Chicago debut in April. It moves after the Globe to a secondary run at Lincoln High School for the Performing Arts.

Written seven years before "Chad Deity," while Diaz was completing an MFA at New York University's Department of Dramatic Writing, "Arroyo's" reflects where he was at that time and what was happening to Manhattan's Lower East Side.

The play tracks Alejandro Arroyo's efforts to turn the club built out of his deceased mother's bodega into a Loïsaida hot spot; his angry sister Amalia's need to be recognized as an artist, choosing the walls of the local police station as her graffiti canvas; and a scholar's quest to reconnect with her roots via a Puerto Rican woman she believes was the progenitor of hip-hop, who may have been Alejandro and Amalia's mother.

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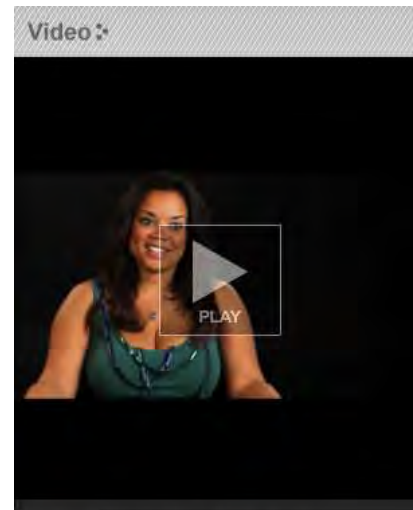
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Around the Globe Winter season opens with Simon's 'Brighton'/ 'Broadway' and Diaz's 'Welcome to Arroyo's'

JAMES HEBERT • U-T

The Old Globe opens its winter season with a one-two punch this week. (Or would that be one-three?) The Neil Simon duet of "Brighton Beach Memoirs" and "Broadway Bound" is already up and running. On Saturday, the hip-hop piece "Welcome to Arroyo's," by 2010 Pulitzer finalist Kristoffer Diaz ("The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity") begins previews. Here, a snapshot of the Simon shows (look for reviews of both plays in the *U-T* this weekend), and a Q-and-A with the rising Diaz.

Simon squared

Eugene, meet Eugene. Stanley, Stanley. Not often does a stage performer get to tag-team a role with another actor, but that's how it is for a quartet of performers in "Brighton Beach Memoirs" and "Broadway Bound," running in repertory on the Globe's main stage. The in-demand local actor Austyn Myers plays prime character Eugene in "Brighton," and Brandon Uranowitz portrays him in "Broadway," set eight years later. University of San Diego alum Sloan Grenz is Eugene's brother, Stanley, in the earlier play; Joseph Parks takes on the role in the later one.

Watching another actor play your character could seem distracting at the very least, but Uranowitz calls it "totally informative." Myers says the actors worked together closely to pick up mannerisms and "find some things we had in common." Scott Schwartz directs the works, based loosely on the writer's own upbringing.



Sloan Grenz (left) as Stanley Jerome and Austyn Myers as Eugene Jerome in Neil Simon's "Brighton Beach Memoirs." HENRY DIROCCO

"Brighton Beach Memoirs" / "Broadway Bound"

Where: The Old Globe main stage. 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park
When: Tuesdays, 7 p.m.; Thursdays-Fridays, 8 p.m.; Saturdays, 2 and 8 p.m.; Wednesdays and Sundays, 1 and 7 p.m., through Nov. 7.
Tickets: \$29-\$85
Phone: (619) 234-5623
Online: theoldglobe.org



Playwright Kristoffer Lopez. EMILI PANIAN

Rap in the round

"Welcome to Arroyo's," about two siblings dealing with the legacy of a family bodega, goes up in the Globe's arena-style White Theatre under Jaime Castañeda's direction. It's an early work by Diaz, whose

"Welcome to Arroyo's"

Where: The Old Globe's White Theatre
When: Tuesdays-Wednesdays, 7 p.m.; Thursdays-Fridays, 8 p.m.; Saturdays, 2 and 8 p.m.; Sundays, 2 and 7 p.m. (no matinee this Sunday) through Oct. 31. Plus, at Lincoln High School, Nov. 6, 8 p.m.; Nov. 7, 6 p.m.
Tickets: \$29-\$67 (Globe); \$10-\$15 (Lincoln)
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Pulitzer-feted "Chad Deity" focused on pro wrestling. A chat with the playwright:

Q: How does it feel to return to this work from such a different time in your life?
A: It's great to come back to it. (As a be-

ginning playwright), you're young, you don't know any better, you want to take on the world. To come back to this years later, it's a challenge for sure to figure out how to keep that spirit.

Q: How do you categorize the play?
A: I come out of the hip-hop theater movement. That's sort of the easiest way to label it, is hip-hop theater. But it's a musical in a lot of ways. There's maybe more music in this play than in some musicals. There are two DJs onstage almost the entire play, spinning records. Language can only do so much. The old adage is that in a musical, characters talk until the emotions get too big; then they sing. In this play, they spin a record.

Q: Do you find that theater audiences are coming along for the ride?
A: That's sort of the million-dollar question. There are two sides to that. The first side is when people read or hear about a play like this, they can get turned off at the beginning. It can be scary. ... It's hip-hop and graffiti and it's loud and all that. I think it's a scary hurdle to get over. At the same time, we get great feedback. One of my favorite things to hear is from a typical subscriber, 50 years or older, who says: "I thought I was going to hate this. Then, 10 or 15 minutes in, I found there was a story there, and I was with you the rest of the way."

(Look for more of the Diaz interview at uniontrib.com/theater/.)



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Double the drama: Globe opens Simon, Diaz plays

BY JAMES HEBERT

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2010 AT 10:18 A.M.

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The Neil Simon duet of "Brighton Beach Memoirs" and "Broadway Bound" is already up and running. On Saturday, the hip-hop piece "Welcome to Arroyo's," by 2010 Pulitzer Prize finalist Kristoffer Diaz ("The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity,") begins previews.

Here, a snapshot of the Simon shows (look for reviews of both plays in the U-T Friday and Sunday), and a Q-and-A with the rising Diaz.

SIMON SQUARED

Eugene, meet Eugene. Stanley, Stanley.

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Watching another actor play your character could seem distracting at the very least, but Uranowitz calls it "totally informative." Myers says the actors worked together closely to pick up mannerisms and "find some things we had in common."



Scott Schwartz directs the works, based loosely on the writer's own upbringing. (The cast includes Tony-winner and Globe returnee Karen Ziemba, and the dazzling, Broadway-seasoned young performer Allie Trimm of Escondido.) The same works were to open on Broadway last fall as a pair, until poor ticket sales deep-sixed the idea.

But "they're so great together," Uranowitz says. "(So) I'm glad someone's giving them a life."

RAP IN THE ROUND

"Welcome to Arroyo's," about a pair of siblings trying to keep the family bodega alive, is an early work by the still-young Diaz, whose Pulitzer-feted "Chad Deity" focused on pro wrestling. A chat with the playwright:

Q: How does it feel to return to this work from such a different time in your life?

A: It's great to come back to it. (As a beginning playwright), you're young, you don't know any better, you want to take on the world. To come back to this years later, it's a challenge for sure to figure out how to keep that spirit.

Q: How do you categorize the play — would you call it a musical?

I come out of the hip-hop theater movement. That's sort of the easiest way to label it, is hip-hop theater. But it's a musical in a lot of ways. There's maybe more music in this play than in some musicals. There are two DJ's onstage almost the entire play, spinning records. Sometimes those records are directly commenting on the action, sometimes underscoring. And there's rapping and all that stuff going on.

Language can only do so much. The old adage is that in a musical, characters talk until the emotions get too big; then they sing. In this play, they spin a record.

Q: In terms of hip-hop theater, do you feel that audiences are coming along for the ride?

That's sort of the million-dollar question. There are two sides to that. The first side is when people read or hear about a play like this, they get turned off at the beginning. It can be scary. It's hip-hop and graffiti and it's loud and all that. I think it's a scary hurdle to get over.

At the same time, we get great feedback. One of my favorite things to hear is from a typical subscriber, 50 years or older, who says, 'I thought I was going to hate this. Then, 10 or 15 minutes in, I found there was a story there, and I was with you the rest of the way.'

We always talk about, 'You don't have to be a Danish prince to get Hamlet.' Not to equate things, but you don't have to be a Puerto Rican from the Lower East Side who loves hip-hop, to get that this is a story about a brother and sister dealing with the death of their mother.

Q: What were your feelings on "Chad Deity" being named a Pulitzer finalist, and the situation surrounding that? (The Pulitzer board bypassed the three finalists chosen by the drama jury -- "Chad Deity," Sarah Ruhl's "In the Next Room or the vibrator play" and Rajiv Joseph's "Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo" -- to award the prize to the musical "Next to Normal.")

A: I was definitely glad to be nominated. And I was definitely glad to be nominated alongside two of the best writers we have, and just two of the nicest people we have. We all exchanged phone calls and emails immediately that day. Rajiv and Sarah are just tremendous. It would have been nice for any of us to get it. (But) I'd be lying if I didn't say I thought we all deserved it.

Q: Even given the rise of hip-hop theater and the success of shows such as the Tony-winning "In the Heights," do you think there's still a lot of work to be done in terms of cultural and theatrical diversity in mainstream theater?

A: I always get to the last question before getting into trouble. (Laughs.)

It's interesting. Things are certainly changing. There's really good work out there being supported and doing well. I'm really thrilled at 'In the Heights' and 'Ruined,' two really terrific works.

Then you look at what's being produced in this coming season in New York, and in a lot of cities, and at a lot of big regionals. It's not reflective of the world I know, and it's not reflective of the artistic world I know. There are some really great writers out there who just don't seem to be getting done. And there are some great actors who I think are not getting work, because the roles aren't there or they're not being considered for those roles.

Look at the upcoming New York season, what the numbers are. It's not particularly diverse. There are a million reasons for it, I think. Things are definitely changing, and people are more aware of it. But we've got room to grow.

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The elaborate entrance of playwright Kristoffer Diaz

September 18, 2010 | 10:30 am

Kristoffer Diaz explained some of the influences on his playwriting to David Rooney during a recent interview over cheeseburgers in New York City: professional wrestling and the HBO series "The Wire."

"What I see wrestling doing is masterfully telling 10 or 12 stories at any time," said Diaz. "Any one event that's happening is impacting all these other stories."

"That's the thing 'The Wire' did so remarkably,"

Diaz continued. "You're following the story of one guy, but everything he does triggers a million other things."

Rooney says that kind of layered narrative is evident in Diaz's breakout play, "The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity," which premiered in Chicago last fall and moved to off-Broadway, where it drew enthusiastic reviews and a spot on the Pulitzer short list. And it can be seen in an earlier play, "Welcome to Arroyo's," which opens Sept. 25 at San Diego's Old Globe.



Old Globe executive producer Lou Spisto told Rooney: "When I read 'Chad Deity,' I thought Kris was fiercely political, and uncompromisingly so, but he had a heart and was not cynical. He's very strong, very masculine in his writing, but he also understands at the end of the day that he has to reach an audience."

Find out [more about Diaz](#) in Sunday's Arts and Books section.

--Kelly Scott

Above: Diaz at the Old Globe. Credit: Don Bartletti/Los Angeles Times.

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Globe goes hip-hop with 'Welcome to Arroyo's'

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Globe goes hip-hop with 'Welcome to Arroyo's'

By PAM KRAGEN - pkragen@nctimes.com North County Times - Californian | Posted:
Wednesday, September 22, 2010 9:55 am | 1 Comment | Print

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[Buy this photo](#) The Welcome to Arroyo's creative team: music director Shammy Dee, playwright Krisoffer Diaz and director Jaime Castaneda. At The Old Globe Sept. 25 - Oct. 31, 2010. Photo courtesy of The Old Globe.





Last spring, Kristoffer Diaz became one of America's hottest playwrights when his offbeat wrestling-themed drama, "The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity," was named a finalist for the 2010 Pulitzer Prize for Drama.

"Chad Deity" was the New York native's third full-length play. His first, "Welcome to Arroyo's," will have its San Diego premiere this week at the Old Globe. The play had its world premiere last spring at Chicago's American Theatre Co.. This is the play's second production, and it is being produced through the Globe's Southeastern San Diego Residency Project. After its run in the Globe's Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, it will move to Lincoln High School for a week of workshops and student performances.

Diaz, 33, wrote "Welcome to Arroyo's" while he was a grad student at New York University nine years ago, and while he admits his writing skills have come a long way since then, he's immensely proud of the hip-hop-infused drama.

Diaz recently talked about the play in a phone interview.

Question: What's the history of "Welcome to Arroyo's"?

Answer: I've been workshopping it off and on ever since I started it in 2001. Any other play I would've put down a long time ago, but I love this play and Jaime (Castaneda, the director) and I'm still working hard on it. I think the reason I keep coming back to it is that it was my first play, and because it says a lot about who I was and where I was when I wrote it.

Q: "Welcome to Arroyo's" got mixed reviews in its premiere last spring. Will Globe audiences see the same play or have you been doing some rewrites?

A: When you get a play up on its feet, you see the kind of mistakes you make when you're writing your first play. I tried a lot of things and introduced a lot of characters, and there was some self-referential stuff that I saw. I'm trying to make it work a little better the second time around.

Q: What's the play about?

A: It's the story of a brother and sister who are dealing with the recent death of their mother. Alejandro is in his early 20s and Molly is 18. Their mother had run a bodega in the Lower East Side of New York. The older brother takes over the bodega and turns it into a nightclub, and

throws himself into as a means of dealing with his mom not being around. Molly throws herself into her art, which is writing graffiti in increasingly dangerous places, like the back of a police station. Then one day an outsider returns to the Lower East Side to go to college, and she brings with her information about a mysterious woman who may have been one of the founders of hip-hop culture ---- and that woman may just have been Alejandro and Molly's mother.

Q: I understand the play is a real multimedia experience.

A: Yes, there are two DJs who act as a Greek chorus, characters and narrators. They spin records from the stage, they make live beats with their mouths and they use different kinds of mechanicals and gadgets. There's a lot of direct address to the audience, and they will be rapping as the audience enters. We've also got projections of a lot of graffiti and a couple of other surprises.

Q: Is the character of Alejandro autobiographical?

A: In some ways. I was 24 when I started writing it, and Alejandro's 24. And we're both Puerto Rican. But I really feel closest to the character of Lelly, the outsider. I had family in the Lower East Side, but I grew up in the suburbs and then went to college at NYU back in that neighborhood. I was that someone who had family there but didn't live there. Back then, I was trying to figure out my relationship to the neighborhood and my relationship to hip-hop. It's more about seeing yourself as an outsider. You always feel like you've got something to prove. It's like having that chip on your shoulder, being young and wanting to prove you're authentic.

Q: Both this play and "Chad Deity" deal with issues of racial identity. Is that an important theme in your plays?

A: It's there in each of the characters; race and ethnicity are very complicated subjects. In this play, the DJs are our hip-hop experts. They're Jewish and Filipino characters, and we have two mixed-race actors playing them. They're black and white and Middle Eastern and Asian all mixed up, and they definitely explore the old questions of race and ethnicity

Q: This play has rapping, hip-hop music and a very young cast. Did you draw a younger audience in Chicago, and do you hope to do that here?

A: The audience is always older in theater. We've been trying to reach out and get younger folks and more diverse audiences, but it's an uphill battle. But older people can still appreciate this play. It's ultimately about family. Some of the best responses we got from audiences in Chicago were from older people. I thought they'd hate the rap music and leave at intermission, but they got invested in the story.

Q: What other projects are you working on?

A: Thanks to the success of "Chad Deity," I've been able to spend the last year just being a writer. I haven't had a full-time teaching job, and that's been really nice. I spend a good deal of my time in airports, traveling four or five times a month to work on new play development, commissions and productions. I've got three or four new projects I'm working on now.

Q: Do you feel a lot of pressure to produce because of "Chad Deity," or has it freed you?

A: It's been tremendous for my career, but it does create a different kind of pressure, particularly here in New York. When you've had this kind of success and you're the flavor of the month, New York audiences like to fold their arms and say, 'Show us what you've got.' But it's fun. I like being the underdog.

Q: So it takes a lot of guts to follow up a Pulitzer Prize nominee with your very first play.

A: We wanted this to be the follow-up to "Chad Deity" and we expected it to be judged harshly, but we were prepared for it. I thought it was important to go back to "Arroyo's," because it came out of that early first urge and there's nothing like that. There's no way to re-create that first burst of creativity that needs to come out of you. I started writing this play because I had something I desperately needed to get off my chest. And here it is, 10 years later, and I am still refining it. I'm so proud of it and I'm happy to have the opportunity to continue the journey to get it out there.

"Welcome to Arroyo's"

When: Opens Saturday and runs through Oct. 31; showtimes, 8 p.m. Thursdays-Saturdays; 2 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays; 7 p.m. Sundays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays

Where: Sheryl & Harvey White Theatre, Old Globe complex, Balboa Park, San Diego

Tickets: \$29-\$67; play contains strong language

Info: 619-234-5623

Web: theoldglobe.org

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NORTH COUNTY TIMES

September 23, 2010

PREVIEW SECTION



“ARROYO’S”

The Old Globe presents a hip-hop drama by Pulitzer Prize nominee Kristoffer Diaz, “Welcome to Arroyo’s.”

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THEATER

Old Globe goes hip-hop with ‘Welcome to Arroyo’s’

BY PAM KRAGEN
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The creative team for “Welcome to Arroyo’s,” music director Shammy Dee, above left, playwright Kristoffer Diaz and director Jaime Castaneda. At right, the cast of “Welcome to Arroyo’s” relaxes in Balboa Park. Photos courtesy of the Old Globe

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Globe

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Q: Is ethnicity an important dramatic theme for you?

A: It’s there in each of the characters; race and ethnicity are very complicated subjects. In this play, the DJs are our hip-hop experts. They’re Jewish and Filipino characters, and we have two mixed-race actors playing them. They’re black and white and Middle Eastern and Asian all mixed up, and they definitely explore the old questions of race and ethnicity

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Q: It takes guts to follow up a Pulitzer Prize nominee with your very first play.

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High-energy hip-hop musical boasts drama, comedy

BY DIANA SAENGER
Contributor

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Directed by Jaime Castañeda and written by Kristoffer Diaz, a couple of DJs spin and scratch a story from strong family emotions spurred by a death — an inkling that hip-hop's origins may be mistaken and just what it takes to heal a broken heart.

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There are some surprising feminist elements to this play for significant reasons.

If you go

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"Reina Rey was a DJ in the 1970s, and described in the play as the person who shut up the sexist talk in hip hop back in her day," said Castañeda. "In a male-dominated art form, she was one of the founders of hip-hop. It's through Lilly (Tala Ashe), a young woman who returns to town that this scenario enters the story."

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Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity," is making a name for himself. His plays have been produced at numerous theaters across the country. He's a playwright-in-residence at Teatro Vista, a recipient of the Jerome Fellowship, the Future Aesthetics Artist Grant and the Van Lier Fellowship (New Dramatists).

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Music Director Shammy Dee, Playwright Kristoffer Diaz and Director Jaime Castañeda are part of 'Welcome to Arroyo's' creative team opening at The Old Globe on Sept. 25.

COURTESY

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LA JOLLA LIGHT

Enlightening La Jolla Since 1913

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Photo by: Courtesy



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Diana Saenger is a freelance writer for the La Jolla Light. To make comments about articles, contact talkback@lajollalight.com.



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The Theatrical Hip-Hop Revolution

Published by Guest Writer on October 21, 2010 in Urban, News, Features

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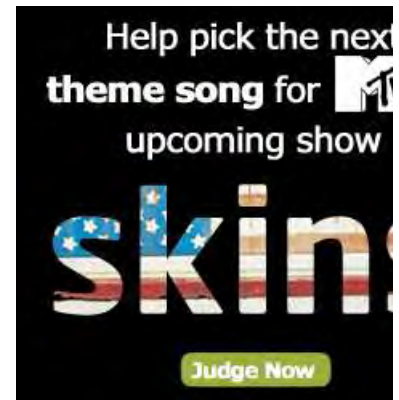
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When *The Seven*, Harlem-born rap actor and playwright Will Power's hip hop version of Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes* premiered on the West Coast two years ago, one critic—a self-proclaimed “old, middle-class white guy”—argued that hip hop is too vernacular a style to have any connection to the theater. Another critic said it was audacious and inventive and called it “...part theatrical graffiti-tagging...that blows potent life into the ancient story.”

Successful examples of revered classic theatre influencing modern American theater are evident in Puccini's *La Bohème*, which provided story line for Jonathan Larson's 1994 Lower East Side rock opera, *Rent*; and Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* setting the stage for *West Side Story*—which has been infused with more current Spanish vernacular by Lin-Manuel Miranda and Stephen Sondheim for its current revival. The potent Broadway success of Miranda's 2008 musical, *In the Heights*, further heightened interest in musicals that either incorporate hip hop or utilize the genre as it's vehicle for story-telling. Just recently Londoner's met up with a West End phenom, hip hop dance troupe ZooNation's Sondheim take, titled *Into the Hoods –An Urban Fairy Tale* with music by Gorillaz, Massive Attack, Basement Jaxx, Kanye West, Jay-Z, Dr. Dre and Black Eyed Peas, among many others. Just two weeks ago an a cappella musical, *In Transit*, opened at 59 E59 Street Theatres. The only accompaniment is a beat box.



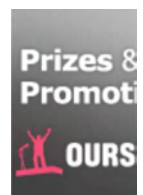
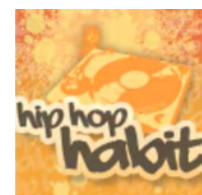
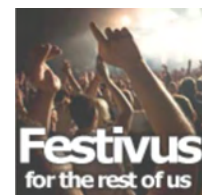
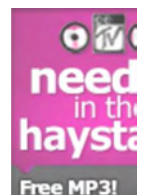
The revolution is everywhere. In the past decade left coast audiences entered the hip hop woods with pieces like Will Power's *The Seven*, *self (the remix)*, written and performed by Robert Farid Karimi with live soundscapes by DJ D Double; and, still playing before slack-jawed audiences at the staid Old Globe in San Diego, known mostly for Broadway transfers and the classics, is Kristoffer Diaz' Lower East Side play, *Welcome to Arroyo's*, which employs two onstage DJs, hip hop, graffiti and a whole lot of uncommon “language.” Thousands of San Diego kids will see *Arroyo's* before it closes in November thanks to a three-year James Irvine Foundation grant that supports a three-year Globe residence project in Southeast San Diego. Last year's production was Aaron Jafferis and Ian Williams' hip hop/rock musical, *Kingdom*, which incorporated true stories of young men caught up in a cycle of



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violence.



Photo by Henry DiRocco. GQ as Nelson Cardenal and Wade Allain-Marcus as Trip Goldstein in "Welcome to Arroyo's" by Kristoffer Diaz, at The Old Globe San Diego.

Regional theaters, play- and musical-development festivals and producers nationwide are jostling for discovery and development of the Next Big Thing, and hip hop is right there, contending for dominance, even though grand opera lags behind. Perhaps a young composer will be inspired by MTV's ground-breaking 2001 telecast of *Carmen: A Hip Hopera*, based on Bizet's opera, set in Philly and LA, with Beyoncé Knowles and Mekhi Phifer.

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Hoch's fear is that hip hop art at not-for-profit venues will become highbrow and distant from its intended audience and that theaters will hoard the grant money without really serving the community. "What happens when hip hop moves into the opera house, and we still don't own the opera house?" he further asks. Just as gentrification changes the hoods that birthed hip hop, it's inevitable that the assimilation of hip hop into mainstream theater will change hip-hop. Nothing will stem the tide of revolution and cultural elitists might stop denigrating hip hop, which will become an accepted art form, sadly in a slightly different form.

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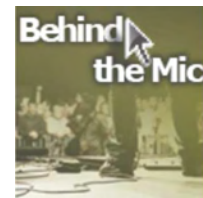
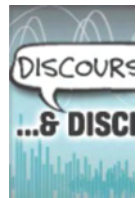
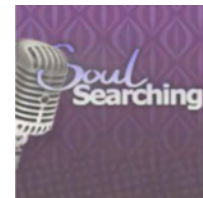
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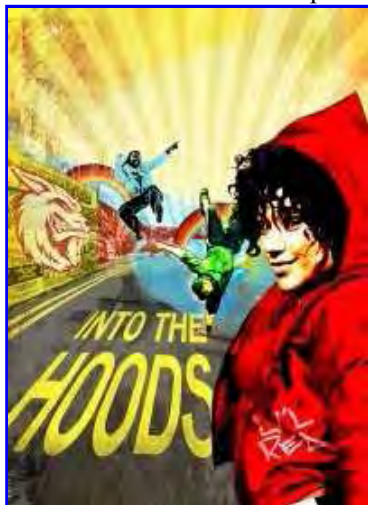
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References

1. ^ [signs](#) (www.ourstage.com)
2. ^ [2002 declaration](#) (www.nytimes.com)
3. ^ [Into the Hoods](#) (www.youtube.com)
4. ^ [=](#) (www.youtube.com)
5. ^ [An Urban Fairy Tale](#) (www.youtube.com)
6. ^ [Hip-Hop Theater Festival](#) (www.hhtf.org)
7. ^ [Danny Hoch](#) (www.dannyhoch.com)
8. ^ [Charlene Baldridge](#) (www.ourstage.com)

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Old Globe Opens Welcome to Arroyo at Lincoln Performing Arts Center

2010-11-04 · By admin

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Repeating its success of last season, the Old Globe Theatre opens "Welcome to Arroyo" next week as the second year of the theater's Southeastern San Diego Residency Project kicks off.

The play, which runs at Lincoln Nov. 4-7, gives students and the community the opportunity to see first-rate theater without going to Balboa Park. In addition, the Globe will be holding workshops on campus for students and

hip-hop artists all week. They'll also have a reading of "Emancipated" on Nov. 7 in the school's Black Box Theater.

In addition to two free student matinees and two weekend public performances of Welcome to Arroyo's at Lincoln High School Center for the Arts, specially trained Old Globe Teaching Artists will work in the classroom to explore the art and story of the play and its social history. Prior to seeing the performance, Lincoln High School students will explore elements of playwrighting, hip-hop poetry, monologues and scenes using activities and information found in The Old Globe's Study Guide which is provided to all teachers.

Playwright Kristoffer Diaz, director Jaime Castañeda and members of the cast and creative team will also visit the San Diego School for Creative and Performing Arts to discuss the play and its creation.

We salute this very creative partnership between one of our civic jewels, the Old Globe, and Lincoln High School. For more information and tickets, go to the [Old Globe website](#).

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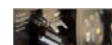
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Curtain Calls

Week Ending December 25, 2010

By Charlene Baldrige and Brenda

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Commendations off the beaten path:

Bonnie Wright for the amazing Fresh Sound series she curates at Sushi Visual and Performance Gallery

John Stubbs for the Luscious Noise series he curates and conducts at Anthology

Kate Hatmaker and **Demarre McGill** for Art of Elan, the sellout, eclectic classical music series they conceived and present in the Hibben Gallery at San Diego Museum of Art

Glenn Paris and **Claudio Raygoza** of ion theatre for the inaugural HUMAN ACTION FESTIVAL, presented recently at the Hillcrest BLKBOX Theatre

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[Most Memorable of 2010](#)

BOOM! at San Diego Repertory Theatre; [Whisper House](#), Old Globe; [Lost in Yonkers](#), Old Globe; **Susan Denaker** as Florence Foster Jenkins in [GLORIOUS!](#) at North Coast Repertory; [Aurelia's Oratorio](#), La Jolla Playhouse; **Kandis Chappell** as Mrs. Armfeldt in [A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC](#), Lyric at the Birch; Howard Bickle as the twins and Fran Gercke as the gigolo in [RING ROUND THE MOON](#), directed by **Jason Heil**; **Steven Lone** and **John Padilla** in Elliott, A Soldier's Story at ion theatre; the ensemble of [BACK OF THROAT](#), ion theatre; **Sean Murray** in the title role, **Tom Zohar**, **Deborah Smyth**, **Kurt Norby**, respectively, as Toby, Mrs. Lovett and Pirelli - plus the ensemble of [SWEENEY TODD](#), Cygnet Theatre; **Richard Baird** and **Rosina Reynolds** in GHOSTS at North Coast Repertory, where artistic director **David Ellenstein** outdid himself all year long; **Ronald McCants** for Oyster during UCSD's [Baldwin New Play Festival](#); **Jeffrey Jones** and **DeAnna Driscoll** in [FRANKIE AND JOHNNY IN THE CLAIR DE LUNE](#), directed by **Claudio Raygoza** at ion theatre; Intrepid Theatre for their outstanding [KING JOHN](#); Moxie for their astonishing EURYDICE; **Steve Gunderson** and **Peter Van Norden** in [HAIRSPRAY](#), San Diego Repertory Theatre; **Sean Murray** and **Frances Gercke** for their co-direction of THE NORMAN CONQUESTS, which also takes the cake for ensemble and the engaging, bang-on performance of **Albert Dayan** as the pathetic lothario named Norman; **Matthew Alexander** and **Robin Christ** in SONG OF EXTINCTION at ion theatre; the ensemble of JACK GOES BOATING, ion theatre; Welcome

to Arroyo's, Old Globe; [Jekyll and Hyde](#), ion theatre; the ensemble of Dennis Haskell's [The Glory Man](#), directed by **Robert Smyth** at Lamb's Player's Theatre.

Absent from the above selections--made by a committee comprising Brenda and Charlene alone--are most the obvious award-winners that are bound to appear on anyone's year's best lists. These would include RUINED, CHAPLIN and NOTES FROM UNDERGROUND at the Playhouse.

Most memorable out of town:

Dallas, April 2010: Jake Heggie's opera MOBY-DICK, just picked one of the best operas of the 21st century by OPERA NEWS

Los Angeles: Rajiv Joseph's BENGAL TIGER AT THE BAGHDAD ZOO, Center Theatre Group

Remembering those who made an exit this year:



Actor Sandra Ellis-Troy

Playwright/translator/literary manager and friend Raul Moncada

Iconic and dearly beloved theatre leader/director Craig Noel, former artistic director of the Old Globe Theatre

Esteemed actor Robert Ellenstein, father of David Ellenstein

Photographer Randy Rovang (left)



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Absent from the above selections—made by a committee comprising Brenda and Charlene alone—are most the obvious award-winners that are bound to appear on anyone's year's best lists. These would include RUINED, CHAPLIN and NOTES FROM UNDERGROUND at the Playhouse.

Most memorable out of town:

Dallas, April 2010: Jake Heggie's opera MOBY-DICK, just picked one of the best operas of the 21st century by OPERA NEWS

Los Angeles: Rajiv Joseph's BENGAL TIGER AT THE BAGHDAD ZOO, Center Theatre Group

Remembering those who made an exit this year:



Actor Sandra Ellis-Troy

Playwright/translator/literary manager and friend Raul Moncada

Iconic and dearly beloved theatre leader/director Craig Noel, former artistic director of the Old Globe Theatre

Esteemed actor Robert Ellenstein, father of David Ellenstein

Photographer Randy Rovang (left)

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An Annual Tradition

Kristoffer Diaz's *Welcome To Arroyo's* Opens Sept. 30 in Old Globe ProductionBy *Thomas Peter*
30 Sep 2010GQ and Wade Allain-Marcus
Photo by Henry DiRocco

Welcome To Arroyo's, Pulitzer Prize finalist Kristoffer Diaz's hip-hop-tinged play about a motherless brother and sister struggling to find their way, makes its West Coast premiere Sept. 30 at the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre at The Old Globe in San Diego.

Previews began Sept. 25. The Globe will host the production through Oct. 31, and will then take the work to Lincoln High School Center for the Arts Nov. 6 and 7 as part of the Globe's Southeastern San Diego Residency Project.

According to Old Globe notes, "a Greek chorus of two hip hop DJs spin the tale of a brother and sister's search for their respective places in the world after the death of their mother. Alejandro is desperate to make Arroyo's the hottest lounge in New York to honor the memory of his mother, while Molly's desire to make her 'mark' as a talented graffiti artist is at odds with her new infatuation with a rookie cop. Their struggle to move forward is made even more uncertain as they discover what might be a secret about their mother that could change the very foundation of their lives and, possibly, the history of hip hop music."

Jaime Castañeda directs a cast including Wade Allain-Marcus, Tala Ashe, Byron Bronson, Andres Munar, GQ and Amirah Vann.

The creative team features Takeshi Kata (scenic design), Charlotte Devaux (costume design), Matthew Richards (lighting design), Paul Peterson (sound design), Shammy Dee (musical direction) and Aaron Rhyne (projection design).

As part of the Southeastern San Diego Residency Project, Lincoln High School will offer two free student matinees and two public performances, and Old Globe teaching artists will explore the play's story and themes with students in classrooms.

Diaz was a Pulitzer Prize finalist for *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Diety*. He was one of the creators of *Brink!*, the apprentice anthology seen in the 2009 Humana Festival at Actors Theatre of Louisville. He is a playwright-in-residence at Teatro Vista, a

co-founder of The Unit Collective, and a member of the Ars Nova Play Group.

Castañeda directed the world premiere of *Arroyo's* at Chicago's American Theater Company in April.

The Old Globe is located at 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park, San Diego. Tickets can be purchased by phone at (619) 23-GLOBE or online at theoldglobe.org.

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The cast of *Welcome to Arroyo's*
photo by Henry DiRocco

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Executive Producer [Lou Spisto](#) today announced the cast and creative team for the West Coast Premiere of [Kristoffer Diaz](#)'s *Welcome to Arroyo's*. Directed by Jaime Castañeda, the hip hop-infused play will run in the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre Sept. 25 - Oct. 31. Previews run Sept. 25 - Sept. 29. Opening night is Thursday, Sept. 30 at 7:00 p.m. *Welcome to Arroyo's* will also be performed at Lincoln High School Center for the Arts Nov. 6 and 7 as part of the Globe's Southeastern San Diego Residency Project. Tickets can be purchased online at www.TheOldGlobe.org, by phone at (619) 23-GLOBE or by visiting the Box Office.

In *Welcome to Arroyo's*, a Greek chorus of two hip hop DJs spin the tale of a brother and sister's search for their respective places in the world after the death of their mother. Alejandro is desperate to make Arroyo's the hottest lounge in New York to honor the memory of his mother, while Molly's desire to make her "mark" as a talented graffiti artist is at odds with her new infatuation with a rookie cop. Their struggle to move forward is made even more uncertain as they discover what might be a secret about their mother that could change the very foundation of their lives and, possibly, the history of hip hop music.

The cast of *Welcome to Arroyo's* features Wade Allain-Marcus (Trip Goldstein), Tala Ashe (Lelly Santiago), [Byron Bronson](#) (Officer Derek), [Andres Munar](#) (Alejandro Arroyo), GQ (Nelson Cardenal) and [Amirah Vann](#) (Amalia Arroyo).

The creative team includes [Takeshi Kata](#) (Scenic Design), Charlotte Devaux (Costume Design), [Matthew Richards](#) (Lighting Design), [Paul Peterson](#) (Sound Design), Shammmy Dee (Musical Direction), [Aaron Rhyne](#) (Projection Design) and Elizabeth Lohr (Stage Manager).

Welcome to Arroyo's is part of the Globe's second year of artistic programs in southeastern San Diego supported by a three-year grant from the James Irvine Foundation's Artistic Innovation Fund. The grant enabled the Globe to initiate its Southeastern San Diego Residency Project in 2009 with a production of the hip-hop musical, *Kingdom*, presented at Lincoln High School Center for the Arts with a limited run at [The Old Globe](#), in addition to a weeklong series of workshops in classrooms and in the community for students and hip-hop artists.

"Finding socially conscious writers with talent and a unique voice that will reach our community is central to the mission of our Southeastern San Diego Residency Project," said Executive Producer [Lou Spisto](#). "[Kristoffer Diaz](#) is an important new playwright who is achieving great success reaching audiences of all ages and backgrounds."

"This year, we have turned things around and will present *Welcome to Arroyo's* at the Globe before the production travels to Lincoln High School. Between both venues, thousands of high school students will experience the show alongside our adult audiences. It is my greatest wish that our collective shared experience with this play will in some way connect us with each other."

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In addition to two free student matinees and two weekend public performances of Welcome to Arroyo's at Lincoln High School Center for the Arts, specially trained Old Globe Teaching Artists will work in the classroom to explore the art and story of the play and its social history. Prior to seeing the performance, Lincoln High School students will explore elements of playwrighting, hip-hop poetry, monologues and scenes using activities and information found in [The Old Globe's](#) Study Guide which is provided to all teachers. Playwright [Kristoffer Diaz](#), director Jaime Castañeda and members of the cast and creative team will also visit the San Diego High School for the Performing Arts to discuss the play and its creation. Two performances of Welcome to Arroyo's will also be performed at the Globe as part of the theater's Free Student Matinee program.

[The Old Globe](#) has also received local support for its programming efforts in southeast San Diego through grants from The Legler Benbough Foundation, The City of San Diego Community Development Block Grant Program, and The San Diego Foundation through a grant made possible by the Colonel Frank C. Wood Memorial Fund, Ariel W. Coggeshall Fund, Kanot-Lebow-Stroud Memorial Fund, and Mary E. Hield and Robert R. Hield Endowment Fund.

[Kristoffer Diaz](#)'s full-length plays include The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity (2010 Pulitzer Prize finalist) and Welcome to Arroyo's. His plays have been produced and developed at [Second Stage](#), Victory Gardens, InterAct, Mixed Blood, American Theatre Company, [Williamstown Theatre Festival](#), The Atlantic, Teatro Vista, The Orchard Project, the Hip-Hop Theater Festival, The Lark, the Summer Play Festival, the [Donmar Warehouse](#) (London), and [South Coast Repertory](#). Diaz was one of the creators of Brink!, the apprentice anthology show at the 2009 Humana Festival of New American Plays. He is a playwright-in-residence at Teatro Vista, a recipient of the Jerome Fellowship, the Future Aesthetics Artist Regrant and the Van Lier Fellowship ([New Dramatists](#)), a co-founder of The Unit Collective, and a member of the [Ars Nova](#) Play Group. Diaz is currently working on commissions for [Center Theatre Group](#), Oregon Shakespeare Festival, and Teatro Vista/The [Goodman Theatre](#).

Jaime Castañeda directed the world premiere of Welcome to Arroyo's at Chicago's American Theatre Company where he is also an ensemble member. His other credits include Red Light Winter (Perseverance Theatre), Biggest A**hole Ever Born (INTAR Theatre), Long Way Go Down (Hotink Festival, [Harold Clurman](#) Theatre Company), One for the Road (DirectorFest), Crave, Closer, Blue/Orange, Nocturne, Sonnets for an Old Century and Tapas (FireStarter Productions), Miracle Day (45 Bleecker Theatre), This is How it Goes (Amphibian Stage Productions), and Lincolnesque, A Very Merry Unauthorized Children's Scientology Pageant and Art (Circle Theatre). He has also assistant directed productions at the [Atlantic Theater Company](#), [Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park](#), [Center Theatre Group](#) and the recent revival of Speed the Plow on Broadway. Castañeda is the recipient of a Drama League fall fellowship, a Princess Grace Award, and a TCG New Generations grant.

TICKETS to Welcome to Arroyo's can be purchased online at www.TheOldGlobe.org, by phone at (619) 23-GLOBE or by visiting the box office at 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park. Performances at the [Old Globe Theatre](#) begin on Sept. 25 and continue through Oct. 31. Ticket prices range from \$29 to \$67. Performance times: Previews: Saturday Sept 25 at 8:00 p.m., Sunday, Sept. 26 at 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, Sept. 28 at 7:00 p.m., Wednesday, Sept. 29 at 7:00 p.m. Regular Performances: Tuesday and Wednesday evenings at 7:00 p.m., Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings at 8:00 p.m., Saturday and Sunday matinees at 2:00 p.m., and Sunday evenings at 7:00 p.m. There is a Wednesday matinee on Oct. 13 at 2:00 p.m. Discounts are available for full-time students, patrons 29 years of age and under, seniors and groups of 10 or more.

Welcome to Arroyo's will be performed at Lincoln High School Center for the Arts on Saturday Nov. 6 at 8:00 p.m. and Sunday, Nov. 7 at 6:00 p.m. Ticket prices are \$15 for adults and \$10 for students. Admission for High School students is free with membership in the Globe's 75 Years / 7,500 Tickets program (visit www.TheOldGlobe/7500 for additional information).

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Curtain Calls

Week ending October 7, 2010

by Charlene Baldridge

This week was super eclectic, ranging from hip hop to grand opera and affording the opportunity to see two great women of the theatre perform, **Kandis Chappell** in *The Road to Mecca* and in **Karen Ziemba** in *Broadway Bound*. These women make me proud to be a woman. These playwrights, Athol Fugard and Neil Simon -- two of towering geniuses of tumultuous turn-of-the century times -- have their fingers on the complicated pulse of humankind.

Explication of *Broadway Bound* to a friend who thinks he doesn't like Simon plays led to a revelation about European Jewry vis-à-vis Eastern European Jewry -- I guess you're never too old for deeper understanding.

Wednesday in Hillcrest it rained and rained, but it cleared off in time to see New Village Arts' *As You Like It*, playing at 8 pm at Moonlight Theatre through Sunday night. If you get this in time, dress warmly and I guarantee the rewards are great. Brief review below.

The Forest in Vista holds lovely performances

With a promise of barbecue dinner, I dragged the kicking and screaming Brenda McGoo up to Vista to see New Village Arts/Moonlight Cultural Foundation production of *As You Like It* at Moonlight Amphitheatre. Hear tell the weather Tuesday was miserable, and it was dank here in Hillcrest, but I am Taurus. I wore my huge lined coat that I bought for upper New York last Christmas, took the flannel lined quilt my daughter's friend Shari made for me, put a cap into my pocket, and off we went.



Justin Lang and Karson St. John Photo: Daren Scott

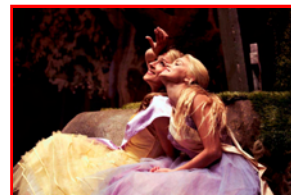
The production is set in South Louisiana in 1969. Direction by **Liz Shipman** is absolutely brilliant! There were so many times when I inwardly exclaimed delightedly, *how did she ever come up with that?* A member of the core faculty of the Old Globe/USD MFA program, Shipman has extensive directing and choreography credits and that may partly account for the excellent clowning and dancing as we skip through the Forest of Arden with **Karson St. John's** fabulously voiced and deeply convincing Rosalind. You must hear her Shakespeare with a southern drawl. Rosalind's friend Celia is played and sung by newcomer **Summer Rae Spiro**, who is petite, pert and a grand, lively presence who speaks trippingly and writes the country and Cajun music for the entire proceedings.

Samuel Zetumer, an amazing physical clown, plays the country bumpkin Silvius, who longs for a maid who lusts for Rosalind (in male attire, Ganymede). Zetumer understands the sadness and pathos underlying Shakespeare's clowns. It's a performance to remember and on top of that he manages a credible Cajun accent! **Calandra Crane** is a fidgety ball of desire as Phebe. **Justin Lang** captures Orlando's steady male bravado as well as its underlying befuddlement. **Eddie Yaroch** well nigh steals the show as Touchstone, the court clown who accompanies the Rosalind and Celia into exile. **Brian Alexander** is a most touching Jaques. One can feel his ache of loneliness and dissatisfaction. Multitasking most exquisitely, **David Macy-Beckwith** is fight director and dialect coach and also provides presence as Corin, the Shepard and wise clown. **Michael Ahmad** takes three roles but takes the cake with his portrayal of Audrey, the country girl in love with Yaroch's Touchstone. They are hysterically funny together, cross-gender aside.

Karson St. John and Summer Rae Spiro Photo: Adam Brick

The scenic, lighting and sound elements are absolutely fine, with **Chris Luessman's** sound amplifying invisibly and just enough. **Roz Lehman** and **Renetta Lloyd's** costumes are a wonder. I am so impressed with what NVA and Shipman can do given the support of **Moonlight Cultural Foundation**. All are to be applauded.

If this were to run a while, it would be a Best Bet.



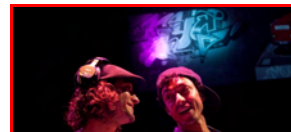
The queen of hip-hop

THE SHOW is **Kristoffer Diaz'** first play, *Welcome to Arroyo's*, directed in its West Coast premiere by **Jaime Castañeda** at the Sheryl and Harvey White at the Old Globe through October 31. Part of the Globe's Southeastern San Diego Residency Project, it will be produced November 6-7 at Lincoln High School.

THE STORY: Alejandro and Amalia (**Andres Munar** and **Amirah Vann**) Arroyo are the adult children of a single mother who recently died. Mom ran the neighborhood bodega for 20 years, and now Alejandro has converted the store into Arroyo's, a neighborhood lounge to which no one comes. He believes that if you build it right and run it right, the people will come. Alejandro's employees are Trip Goldstein (**Wade Allain-Marcus**) and Nelson Cardenal (**DJ GQ**), who are a self-proclaimed chorus, commenting on events in hip-hop rhythms and moving the plot along. Amalia spends her days tagging buildings and up till her mother's death used code to identify herself. Now she creates vivid graffiti in broad daylight, using her own name, "Molly," on the New York Police Department's neighborhood station. That's how she meets and falls in love with a tall, dark and handsome rookie patrolman who calls himself Officer Derek (**Byron Bronson**) for a reason. His last name is Jeter and he is tired of the jokes and references to the Yankees' shortstop. Of course it is Officer Jeter's duty to arrest Molly, even though he admires her and her artwork. He goes to Arroyo's to discuss the matter with Alejandro, who lives upstairs with Molly.

GQ and Wade Allain-Marcus Photo: Henry DiRocco

Former neighborhood resident Lelly Santiago (**Tala Ashe**) has gone to college, dropped her Puerto Rican accent and anglicized her name. She returns an investigator, fascinated by the possibility that the woman who sold her candy as a child might have been the legendary Reina Rey, an early hip-hop performer who shaped the art form. She returns to the hood



clutching a photo of the young Reina, defiant and in handcuffs, and promptly falls in love with Alejandro.

The 90-minute play's fast-moving scenario involves these questions: Was mamacita really Reina Rey? Will Arroyo's ever attract clientele? And how will the two romances turn out?

THE PERFORMERS: One can't imagine a more appealing ensemble to portray these denizens of the Lower East Side. They work exceptionally hard and given the content, they sell the piece and ingratiate themselves, providing a highly entertaining evening that raises a lot of historical and cultural questions about the connection between graffiti and hip-hop, which developed side by side, then culturally defiant art forms disdained by the intelligentsia, that is, until the swells realized what significant expressions they are.



The adorable Vann presents a darling, tomboyish Amalia, determined to express herself and make beauty wherever there is an ugly unused surface. She and her gentle, equally determined brother argue heatedly, expressing unspoken feelings in the arguing. Their standoff is even more poignant as they grieve. Munar expresses Alejandro's righteousness, determination and frustration beautifully. The character wants to melt the moment Lelly appears, but he is too conflicted. Lelly proves both truth teller and healer in the play. She may be after a story, but she winds up back in the hood, among friends.



Amirah Vann and Andres Munar Photo: Henry DiRocco

GQ and Allain-Marcus build lively bridges, revealing, Greek chorus style, the underlying emotions of the characters. They dance and play gloriously, and this viewer wanted even more hip-hop moves, though they were constrained by the space. As the insecure cop, Bronson is certainly appealing.

There are no surprises. The morning after, the viewer is free to ponder whether these characters and their situation are an extension in microcosm of those introduced in Lin Manuel-Miranda's hit musical *In the Heights*. Also a thought to explore: Did Alejandro anticipate the gentrification of the neighborhood when he built Arroyo's? Did Molly get a gallery?

THE PRODUCTION: Takesha Kata's set is most efficient, presenting Arroyo's, a beautifully done rectangular bar and accoutrements in the center, with the upstairs apartment represented by a table and appliances in one corner, and the DJs placed on the opposite side of the playing area. **Matthew Richards'** lighting scheme is clever and effective, giving romantic scenes narrated by the guys a romantic glow. **Paul Peterson's** sound design is as always a miracle. Graffiti are projected on the walls behind the audience, courtesy of **Writerz Blok** and **Shammy Dee** is credited as music director. **Charlotte Devaux's** costumes indicate character. For instance, Amalia wears the same grungy jeans all the way through.

Set in 2004, the play is fascinating as much for what it accomplishes as well as what it could be. There is no doubt that Diaz bears watching. His language is finely used and the play is full of humor. He creates inexpressive characters that are fathoms deep, not an easy feat. There is much more to be discovered here, and meanwhile he's working on commissions from the Goodman, Center Theatre Group, Teatro Vista and the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. In addition, an existing play, *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity*, had its off-Broadway premiere this year and was a Pulitzer Prize contender.

THE LOCATION: 7 pm Tuesdays-Wednesdays; 8 pm Thursdays-Saturdays; 7 pm Sundays; 2 pm Saturdays-Sundays through October 31, Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, Old Globe, 1361 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park, followed by performances at 8 pm Saturday, Nov. 6 and 6 pm Sunday, Nov. 7 at Lincoln High School Center for the Arts, www.theoldglobe.org or (619) 23-GLOBE.

NOTE: Although Reina Rey is fictional, Diaz says in the program note that someone like her could have existed. WELCOME TO ARROYO'S is part of the Globe's second year of a three-year grant from the James Irvine Foundation's Artistic Innovation Fund, which enabled the Globe to establish its Southeastern San Diego Residency Project in 2009. The first production was the hip-hop musical *Kingdom* in 2009.

BOTTOM LINE: Worth a try

Nicolas Reveles' operatic *Sextet*

THE SHOW: September 30-October 4, Diversionary Theatre presented the world premiere of Nicolas Reveles' (lyrics and music) *Sextet, an Exploration of Gay Male Desire...Set to Music*. Cynthia Stokes directed.


THE STORY: There are six stories in what the composer calls "a queer opera...for six singing actors, nearly completely sung throughout in a style that I would call 'American eclectic.'" Of varying lengths, content and make up, the parts are, in order, *Dinner Party*, *The Vulcan*, *The Ugly Duckling*, *Walt's Boy* (with text from Walt Whitman's *Calamus Poems*), *Quartet: Before and After*, and *The Cruise*.

Some **PERFORMERS** are known from appearances with La Jolla Symphony and Chorus (LJS&C), Lyric at the Birch, and San Diego Opera. Others have been seen on additional local stages, but were new to me. The singers are baritone **Abdiel Gonzalez**, extraordinary in last June's *War Requiem* with LJS&C; young singer/actor **Noah Longton**; wondrously expressive comic, singer and actor **David McBean**; impressive bass-baritone **Will Earl Spanheimer**, who was a young artist in residence at San Diego Opera 2008-09; handsome, new-to-me tenor **Matthew Starkey**; and tenor **Enrique Torál**, who created the title role in Reveles' *Rumpelstiltskin* at Lyric in 2009.



(top left clockwise) Enrique Torál, Abdiel Gonzalez, Matthew Starkey and David McBean Photo: Courtesy Diversionary Theatre

THE PRODUCTION indeed is mainly a collage of American musical styles with a few older operatic styles humorously referenced in Torál's baroque ornamentation in *The Ugly Duckling*, timely indeed in an era where folks talk of destroying fertilized ova in order to deselect those that may produce a homosexual fetus. Mama Duck is surprised at her ungainly offspring, whose rejection story is seriously sung in an extended text while the company, choreographed by **Peter J. Kalivas**, make like swans on chairs behind a scrim. The punch line is one of the evening's funniest; in fact, Reveles' wicked sense of humor shines through even in *The Vulcan*, a seemingly gratuitous revelation of what goes on in the gay bath house, as Ramon (Gonzalez) explores the territory for the first time. Even

 though this section contains some devastatingly funny one-liners, the wandering, the partial nudity and the simulated sex go on way too long. A gay friend who attended *Sextet* said that he, too, found *Vulcan* gratuitous and suggested the section may have educational value, providing an inside look for someone not familiar with the bathhouse. I learned nothing new, having been on the receiving end of many extended descriptions of the scene. Though Michael (Starkey) tells Ramon this is not the place to find true love, one of my life's best friends and his late lover met at the Vulcan, married and spent many happy years together until separated by death.

Spanheimer and McBean portray a long-together couple in *The Cruise*, in which Calvin and Tripp pack for a weeklong 20th anniversary cruise, squabbling over what the Nellie Tripp can take. Calvin opines that the longevity of their relationship is in knowing how to treat the other -- and evidently in sharing good things, including that cabana boy ten years earlier.

The most beautiful and touching piece musically belongs to Spanheimer in *Walt's Boy*, performed while Whitman bathes the tacit Boy (Starkey) in preparation for battle. The text comes from Whitman's erotically charged poems. Costume designer **Corey Johnston**'s costumes are super throughout, but in this section the distressed period underwear is an unexpected fine detail.

The opening opus is *Dinner Party*, at which the entire company gathers for the first Thanksgiving dinner since their companion Ed died. The Biblical Jesus (Gonzalez) is the unexpected guest, delivering news of the End Times. Indeed, the guests gather at the window to watch "raptured" neighbors ascend to the heavens, then remark, *wait a minute, those are all heterosexuals*. Thus homosexuals are now in charge of fixing everything. At which point Jesus delivers a new commandment, one that every suicidal young person needs to hear.

Though my friend thought it too like musical comedy, I liked *Quartet* very much. Torál and Gonzales portray a couple that is breaking up, while their younger selves, sung by Starkey and McBean, are just uniting. Nice harmonies and grand acting.

Director **Cynthia Stokes** drew the best from all these men, capitalizing on their strengths, which are considerable. The piece was imaginatively staged upon an all-white set created by **Robin Sanford Roberts**. Reveles was at the piano, acting as conductor as well. His entire orchestra comprised cellist **Cliff Thrasher** ad violin/viola **Lee Wolfe**. The arrangement is splendid and most affecting and they played their hearts out to great effect.

So, what is *Sextet*? Musically it's a song cycle. Thematically it celebrates camaraderie, community and love. It also touches lightly upon human emotional needs and the longing for acceptance. Reveles is every bit as good a librettist as he is a composer.

THE LOCATION: The production completed its run October 4.

NOTE: *Sextet* was supported in part by an Artistic Creativity grant from the **James Irvine Foundation**, which is "dedicated to expanding opportunity for the people of California to participate in a vibrant, successful and inclusive society."

[Continuing Simon's saga](#)

THE SHOW: Neil Simon's *Broadway Bound*, directed by **Scott Schwartz** at the Old Globe Theatre, playing in alternating repertory with Simon's *Brighton Beach Memoirs* through November 7

THE STORY is set in 1949, 12 years after *Brighton Beach Memoirs* ends. In *Bloxi Blues* (not performed at the Globe currently) the Jerome brothers, Eugene and Stanley, did basic training in Mississippi just before WWII came to an end. Now they have returned to the family home in Brighton Beach (Brooklyn, NY) and are about to begin their professional comedy-writing careers. Stan has gotten them an "audition" at CBS and drops the news on Eugene just as Eugene was leaving to court the unseen Josie. Despite goings-on in the household, the young men manage to turn out a sketch, albeit a few days late, and win a place writing for CBS radio. The family, including Kate, their mother; Jack, their father; and Ben Epstein, their socialist grandfather, gathers around the recalcitrant radio to listen. The family thinks all the characters are based on them. Other Jewish families see themselves in the situations. Promoted to writing for Abe Burrows, Eugene and Stan move to New York City as the family falls apart around them.

In the play's most affecting scene, Eugene dances with Kate after she tells him, one last time, about the time she danced with George Raft at the Primrose ballroom.

THE PERFORMERS: This installment of Simon's semi-autobiographical trilogy belongs to Kate. Tony Award-winning New York actor **Karen Ziemba**, seen here in *The First Wives Club*, *Six Degrees of Separation*, and also as Kate in *Brighton Beach Memoirs*, is marvelous in the role, not as martyred as in the earlier play, but ultimately and heartbreakingly hopeless, rendered so by her father's seeming disapproval, her husband's infidelity and her sons' departures. Unlike today's empty nesters, Kate is of another time, when women devoted themselves exclusively to family and had no other life, no fulfillment or purpose other than that celebrated ideal of womanhood.

Karen Ziemba and Joseph Parks in *Broadway Bound* Photo: Henry DiRocco

In *Broadway Bound* the older Eugene is played by **Brandon Uranowitz** and his older brother, Stan, by **Joseph Parks**. Though the part of Jack is smaller than in *Brighton Beach*, **David Bishins** shines in the role of patriarchal prevaricator. Jack's denial of the actual situation and his continuing lies disgust Kate, who would appreciate the truth, and his sons. Grandfather Ben Epstein is in the capable hands of **Howard Green**, whose character finally unbends as he bids his grandsons goodbye. **Bonnie Black** is much more effective in *Broadway Bound* as Kate's sister Blanche, mousy in *Brighton Beach*, and unapologetically wealthy by marriage now. What a difference a few years, a wealthy, loving husband and a bit of self-esteem can make.



BROADWAY BOUND is darker than *Brighton Beach*, which is so enlivened by the younger Eugene, portrayed by the amazing **Austyn Myers**. Though on the brink of success as a writer, the elder Gene is not so funny in his family commentary. It's like any writing: once you get paid for it, it turns into serious business even if the business is being funny. Perhaps Simon intended this; perhaps the play is simply darker because it portends the end of the extended family that some of us oldsters recall from childhood. That realization and Schwartz's marvelous poetic bookends cause unbidden tears. For those who never knew such warmth, so sorry. As for me, who did, it's nostalgia pure and simple.

THE PRODUCTION team is the same as that described in my review of *Brighton Beach Memoirs* two weeks ago. See both plays on the same day if possible.

THE LOCATION: *Broadway Bound* and *Brighton Beach Memoirs* play in repertory though November 7, at 7 pm Tuesdays-Wednesdays and Sundays; 8 pm Thursdays-Saturdays; and 2 pm Saturdays-Sundays, see schedule at www.theoldglobe.org or phone (619) 23-GLOBE.

BOTTOM LINE: Best Bet

Another play concerning darkness and light and fulfillment

THE SHOW: Athol Fugard's *The Road to Mecca*, staged by Associate Artistic Director **Todd Salovey** at San Diego Repertory Theatre through October 17

THE STORY: Miss Helen, who lives in Nieu Bethesda, South Africa, is a reclusive Afrikaner artist, shunned by her neighbors and visited infrequently by Elsa Barlow, a young Johannesburg schoolteacher, and more frequently by Marius Byleveld, pastor of the Dutch Reformist Church that Miss Helen attended years before, when her husband was still alive.

It's not that Miss Helen intended to miss church that Sunday soon after she was widowed. It's that she had a vision of the holy city of Mecca the night before. In her vision she was appointed to an artistic apprenticeship that compelled her to create creatures that she describes as "miracles of light and color," representative of her revelations. Many facing east, these creatures presented themselves to her whole, and she had to make them manifest before their form and color were forgotten. Since church would cause her to forget, she never went back, and now, after 15 years of widowhood and creative expression, her yard is filled with owls, camels, turbaned pilgrims and others made of wire, earth and crushed glass. She and her Mecca are feared and maligned. Thanks to Marius, the stoning stopped.

Lately, the visions have stopped. Miss Helen's eyesight is failing and her hands have become arthritic. Despondent and suicidal, she has sent a cry for help to her young friend Elsa, who understands her and her need to create. When the action starts, Elsa arrives to talk with the elderly woman. Miss Helen explains her need for light and candles, color and glitter, saying that darkness has entered her, a darkness that no candle can banish. The same evening, Marius is due to arrive so Helen can sign papers that will commit her to a life in one room of a church-run home for the elderly. Helen does not wish to leave her Mecca, but Marius is very persuasive.



Armin Shimerman as Marius Photo: Ken Jacques

THE PERFORMERS: **Chappell**, an associate artist of the Old Globe, captures Miss Helen thoroughly, playing the woman's emotions, which range from terror to exultation, and sending waves of empathy coursing through onlookers' bodies. Vibrant, concerned and facing her own doubts and insecurities, Elsa is likewise fully conveyed by luminous **Amanda Sifton**, who is remembered for her award-winning performance of the young nun in the Rep's production of *DOUBT* last year. She and Chappell are as vibrant in these roles as viola and cello, having performed *Collected Stories* together at North Coast Repertory. **Armin Shimerman**, most recently seen here in his award-winning performance in *The Seafarer* is splendid as Marius, whose motives and self-denial are repressed and exposed in defeat.

In this poetic tone poem, which took inspiration from the life of the artist, Fugard explores the need for self-determination, the elusive quality of creativity, and the huge, sometimes illogical fear, despair and powerlessness that occasionally accompany old age as infirmities set in. The quality of the playwright's language and the depth and nuance he gives these characters is awesome.

Kandis Chappell and Amanda Sifton Photo: Ken Jacques

THE PRODUCTION: The sagging orange sweater with hand-crocheted, appliquéd pockets so indicates character one wants to worship costume designer **Mary Larson**. Scenic designer **Giulio Cesare Perrone** is a great artist whose recreation of Mecca sculptures give us some idea of Miss Helen's manifest visions and the vastness of the karoo beyond her backyard. The interior of the home, vividly painted in red and blue, also indicates the woman's penchant for imbuing the walls with ground glass soon after painting. All is beautifully lit by **Ross Glanc**, with music by **Bruno Louchouart** and sound by **Tom Jones**. **Todd Salovey** directs with a fine and sensitive understanding of Fugard's text.



THE LOCATION: through October 17, at 7 pm Wednesdays, 8 pm Thursdays-Saturdays, and 2 pm Sundays, in the Lyceum Space, San Diego Repertory Theatre, 79 Horton Plaza, San Diego, www.sdrep.org or (619) 544-1000.

NOTE: What terrified Miss Helen's Dutch Reform neighbors is now called Owl House, a national landmark visited by more than 130,000 people each year. Miss Helen Martins lived from 1898-1976.

BOTTOM LINE: Best Bet

CHUCKIE'S BEST BETS



The Norman Conquests, through November 7 at Cygnet Theatre's Old Town Stage, www.cygnettheatre.com or (619) 337-1525

Ion theatre's *Jack Goes Boating* through October 9 at ion theatre company BLKBOX@ 6th & Penn, Hillcrest, www.iontheatre.com



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San Diego Rep production of *The Road to Mecca* through October 17, in the Lyceum Space, San Diego Repertory Theatre, Horton Plaza, www.sdrep.org or (619) 544-1000

La Jolla Playhouse production of *Limelight, the Story of Charlie Chaplin* through October 17, Mandell Weiss Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, 2910 La Jolla Village Drive, La Jolla, www.lajollaplayhouse.org or (858) 550-1010

New Village Arts production of *Into the Woods* through October 31, New Village Arts Theatre, 2787 State Street, Carlsbad Village, www.newvillagearts.org or (760) 433-3245

Old Globe productions of *Brighton Beach Memoirs* and *Broadway Bound* through November 7, Old Globe Theatre, Balboa Park, www.theoldglobe.org or (619) 239-2255

Lamb's Players Theatre's *MiXtape* through November 21 (hiatus, week of October 25) at Horton Grand Theatre, 444 4th Avenue, San Diego, www.lampsplayers.org or (619) 437-6000

Brenda in THE BASEMENT

Travels with the Old Lady

The Old Lady I live inside was standing at the curb waiting for her ride home after attending the opening of WELCOME TO ARROYO'S at the Old Globe Thursday, Sept. 30. While her friend walked across the bridge for his car, she'd had no one for company other than the unemployed veteran flag seller.

A nice looking Older Man approached from the direction of the Globe and remarked on the noise coming from farther east in the park. She said she thought it must be a hip-hop opening night party. "Oh, you saw that show?" he asked, obviously having pegged the Old Lady as a Neil Simon type. "How did you like it?"

She replied she had enjoyed the show very much. "Not too much 'language' for you?" he asked. No, she allowed, she was an experienced theatergoer and theater is about language and the human condition. Some "language" indicates the human condition. He was surprised. What other kind of "language" should one expect in a play about people who live in Manhattan's Lower East Side?

Little Girl recalls the extended family

The little girl inside Old Lady recalls childhood's extended family. We did not, as the Jeromes, live together, but we did care for one another. After he was widowed, my paternal grandfather lived in a huge Rogers Park flat with my dad's sister Margaret and her husband, Gilbert. My mother had brothers and sisters scattered all over the Chicago area, and since dad was the Packard dealer and we had the only car, it fell to us to run around at Thanksgiving and then again at Christmas, to feast with and to deliver gifts and family members from one enclave to another. The boards of feast groaned. The al-together-now conversation - engaged in by all the maiden aunts, widowed aunts, grandparents and married uncles and aunts - was boisterous. When it grew too much for me, the youngest child of the extended family, grandpa put me in his den, which was filled with textbooks. He had been an educator. Not many pictures, and perhaps responsible for my non-fiction foundation. Uncle Gilbert had been a reporter with one of the big wire services and always encouraged my later writing. Theater, opera and music I had to find. And I did.

Sunday afternoon, the **Fanfaire Foundation** allowed laypeople to discover how opera is made with composer **Jake Heggie** and mezzo-soprano **Suzanna Guzmán**. Heggie's latest opera, *Moby-Dick*, premiered last April at Dallas, which will be produced by San Diego Opera in 2012. Details will be announced this week.

An Announcement


Announcing the formation of the new Encore Vocal Ensemble to be devoted to Broadway style music, director Chris Allen is holding auditions Tuesdays October 19 and 26. He hopes to attract a diverse group of male and female singers. Although the group will not copycat "Glee" in nature, there will be movement as applies to the staging of numbers. Reading music is of course a plus. Send an email to Christopher_allen92103@yahoo.com with your contact information.

That's it for this week, kids.

Charlene Bakridge, member of San Diego Theatre Critics Circle, freelance arts writer, and critic for sdtheatrescene.com


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THEATER NEWS

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Wade Allain-Marcus, Andres Muna, Amirah Vann, et al. Set for Old Globe's *Welcome to Arroyo's*

By: **Andy Propst** · Sep 8, 2010 · San Diego

The **Old Globe Theatre** has announced full casting for Kristoffer Diaz's *Welcome to Arroyo's*, to run September 25-October 31. Jaime Castañeda will direct the production.

In the hip hop-infused play, a brother and sister search for their respective places in the world after the death of their mother.

The company will feature Wade Allain-Marcus (Trip Goldstein), Tala Ashe (Lelly Santiago), Byron Bronson (Officer Derek), Andres Munar (Alejandro Arroyo), GQ (Nelson Cardenal) and Amirah Vann (Amalia Arroyo).

The creative team will include Takeshi Kata (scenic design), Charlotte Devaux (costume design), Matthew Richards (lighting design), Paul Peterson (sound design), Shammmy Dee (musical direction), and Aaron Rhyme (projection design).

The Old Globe is offering the production as part of its Southeastern San Diego Residency Project and will also present the piece at Lincoln High School Center for the Arts November 6-7.



Andres Muna

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The award-winning composer and pianist discusses his upcoming all-star concert at Symphony Space, Reprise's *They're Playing Our Song*, and *Glee*.
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Photo Flash: The Old Globe Presents WELCOME TO ARROYO's

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Welcome to Arroyo's is by [Kristoffer Diaz](#) and Directed by Jaime Castañeda

September 25, 2010 - October 31, 2010 / Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre
November 6 - 7, 2010 / Lincoln High School Center for the Arts

2010 Pulitzer Prize-finalist [Kristoffer Diaz](#)'s Welcome to Arroyo's is a heartwarming story about a brother and sister finding their respective places in the world after the death of their mother. Alejandro is desperate to make Arroyo's the hottest lounge in New York to honor the memory of his mother, while Molly's desire to make her mark as a talented graffiti artist is at odds with her new infatuation with a rookie cop. Their struggle to move forward is made even more uncertain as they discover what might be a secret about their mother that could change the very foundation of their lives and, possibly, the history of hip hop music. Contains Strong Language.

Photo by Henry DiRocco.



Tala Ashe and Alejandro Arroyo



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Welcome to Arroyo's

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September 30, 2010, 3:29 am

by Tre

Hopefully you're having a great week! Just wanted to share this with you. I was invited the other day to check out a stage play at the Old Globe Theater in Balboa Park called "Welcome to Arroyo's." Have to say, "I was impressed!" Hopefully you too when we get you the chance to check this out for yourself when we start giving out tickets! If you've never seen a stage play before, open up your mind for a second and try something new. Better yet, try to tell your friends or family to see this! Took some pictures from that night in Balboa Park and with the cast also. Oh! Check out my video blog below. Definitely good times!



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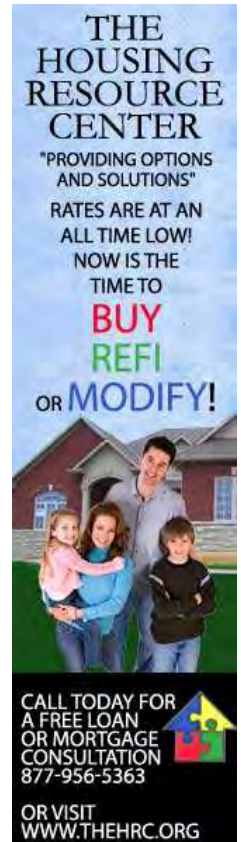
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by Tre

Happy Wednesday to ya! I want Friday and the weekend to get here NOW! =) So much to do before that though. Boo! Anyhoot, just wanted to remind ya about Welcome to Arroyo's the stage play that is showing at the Old Globe theatre in Balboa Park and is running through the month of October. Again, wasn't sure what I was going to expect once I got the chance to see this myself, but was very impressed with the show and overall performance. This is a definite must see if you're in your twenty or thirty something! I really would encourage you to try something different that your normal weekend outing at the movie theatre. Try this stage play with your boyfriend, girlfriend, husband, wife, and maybe just friends! Open up your mind to the arts. Honestly, I would be contradicting myself if I hadn't gotten invited to one many years ago by and ex girlfriend who helped me expand my mind a bit to a bunch of stage plays. I personally like checking these out now! Hopefully you get a chance to check out Welcome to Arroyos! Oh! Check out my first blog about this a couple days back!

www.theoldglobe.org

Tags: [Welcome to Arroyo's](#)



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CAST



[Wade Allain-Marcus](#) as Trip Goldstein

Wade was born and raised in Los Angeles, California, where he attended Harvard-Westlake School before heading to New York University's Tisch School of the Arts. Upon receiving an early BFA, he immediately landed roles in *Friends With Money* and *Waist Deep*. In 2006, he debuted with Lin Manuel-Miranda's *Freestyle Love Supreme* at the Just For Laughs Comedy Festival in Montreal and still performs regularly with them. He guest starred on "Gossip Girl" and "Burn Notice," and co-starred in the MTV musical *The American Mall*. Also, he showcased his abilities as a singer/guitarist in the Off Broadway musical *Post No Bills* at the Rattlestick Playwrights Theater, where he originated the role of Eddie Harper. Most recently, Mr. Allain-Marcus participated in the Sundance Theater Lab at Governor's Island, in the New York International Fringe Festival hit *When Last We Flew* (best play, best performance) and co-stars alongside Ethan Hawke in Antoine Fuqua's *Brooklyn's Finest*. Look for him in *Kids in America* with Topher Grace and Anna Faris set to hit theatres in March 2011.



[Tala Ashe](#) as Lelly Santiago

Tala is making her Old Globe debut in *Welcome to Arroyo's*. Her regional and New York credits include *Urge for Going* (Ojai Playwright's Conference and Public Theater's New Works Now), *Aftermath* (Guggenheim Works and Progress with New York Theatre Workshop), *Again and Against* (Labyrinth Theatre Intensive), *Autophagy* (Drama League) and *Love's Labour's Lost* (Huntington Theatre Company). Her television and film credits include "Covert Affairs," "30 Rock," "Law & Order," "As the World Turns," "All My Children," *Circumstances*

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(Sundance Institute Film Lab) and Waiting in Beijing. She is a proud member of the Barefoot Theatre Company. Ms. Ashe received her BFA in Acting from Boston University's School of Theatre and also trained in London at LAMDA.



[Byron Bronson](#) as Officer Derek

Byron graduated from Rutgers University in 2008 where he received a BFA in Acting. At Rutgers, he was in such plays as Romeo and Juliet, A Winter's Tale, Stop Kiss and The Exonerated. He was recently a part of the Pulitzer Prize winning production of Ruined. His television credits include "All My Children." He is proud to be making his theatrical west coast debut.



[GQ \(official website\)](#) as Nelson Cardenal

GQ co-created, co-directed and starred in the award-winning, internationally-acclaimed, Funk it Up About Nothin' — a musical, hip-hop "ad-RAP-tation" of Shakespeare's classic, Much Ado About Nothing. The Off Broadway smash hit The Bomb-itty of Errors, which GQ co-created and starred in, has since toured around the world. Along with his brother and the other Bomb-itty guys, GQ wrote and starred in a hip-hop/sketch comedy TV show "Scratch and Burn" (MTV). GQ's screen credits include the movies Drumline, Taxi, I Think I Love My Wife and Werner Herzog's Rescue Dawn. He wrote, directed and starred in the film Just Another Story (Showtime), has had prominent roles in "Boston Public" (Fox), "Numb3rs" (CBS) and co-starred in the one-hour drama "Johnny Zero" (Fox). He recently guest starred in John Herzfeld's pilot, "S.I.S" (Sony). Together with his brother JQ, he recorded The Feel Good Album of the Year. GQ is a member of the comic rap group known as The Retar Crew. Originally from Chicago, he received his BFA from the Experimental Theatre Wing of Tisch School of the Arts at NYU. www.gqtheman.com



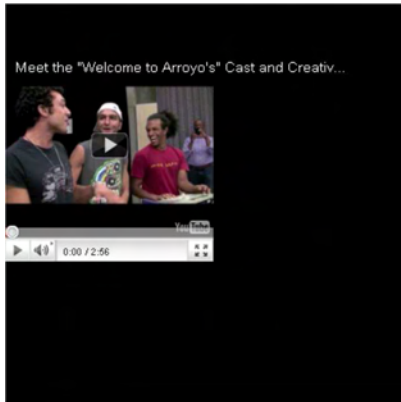
[Andres Munar](#) as Alejandro Arroyo

Andres recently completed a Fox Foundation/TCG Fellowship at Cornerstone Theater Company with his performance in Naomi Iizuka's Three Truths. He is a longtime collaborator of Michael John Garces both at Cornerstone Theatre Company (Los Illegals) as well as at INTAR Theatre, New York Theatre Workshop, Ensemble Studio Theatre, Rattlestick Playwrights Theater, HERE Arts Center, The Shalimar, The 24 Hour Plays and Mile Square Theater. Also at INTAR Theatre, Eduardo Machado's Kissing Fidel and Jorge Ignacio Cortiñas' Tight Embrace. Other credits include American Jornalero by Ed Cardona (Working Theater), Rock, Paper, Scissors by Ben Snyder (Hip Hop Theater Festival), Decomposition by Alfonso Carcamo (Lark Play Development Center), translated by Mariana Carreno, Rajiv Joseph's Huck and Holden (Cherry Lane Theatre), Kingdom (New York Music Theatre Festival), The Dispute (The National Asian-American Theatre Company) and Life is a Dream (Edge Theatre Company). Mr. Munar is a recipient of the Bowden Award from New Dramatists and will be seen next year in Woolly Mammoth's production of Oedipus Rey, written by Luis Alfaro. He has guest starred on a couple of TV shows and made his feature film debut in Steven Soderbergh's Che. His second feature, Entre Nos, was presented at the Tribeca Film Festival.



[Amirah Vann](#) as Amalia (Molly) Arroyo
 Theatre: Kingdom (The Old Globe), Kingdom workshop (The Public Theater/QTIP), The Arden Project (Old Vic New Voices), Follow Me To Nellie's (Eugene O'Neill Theater Center), Pericles (Continuum Co.-Florence, Italy), Dream a Little Dream based on A Midsummer Night's Dream (Continuum Co.-NYC Parks/Florence, Italy), Blueprint (Theatre Row Studios, Summer Play Festival), The Brother/Sister Plays workshop (McCarter Theatre Center/The Public Theater), Laughing Pictures (Flea Theater), The Making of Eugenie Doe (Ohio Theater). TV/Film: the independent film Once More with Feeling, "Guiding Light." Training: MFA-NYU Graduate Acting Program; BA-Fordham University. Ms. Vann is also a recipient of the Princess Grace award in Acting.

VIDEO



CALENDAR

September 2010

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
					NoShw 8:00p	NoShw 7:00p
27	28	29	30			
	7:00p	NoShw 7:00p				

[See full calendar](#)





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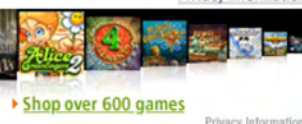
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Broadway To Vegas



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MORMONS AND FOOTBALL NEW FAVE TOPICS FOR THEATRICAL PRODUCTIONS -- CHURCHILL STARRING EDMUND L. SHAFF -- TONY CURTIS IMPRESSIVE AS ARTIST AND ACTOR -- ME AND JULIET HAS EUROPEAN PREMIERE -- I LOVED LUCY PREMIERE -- RADIO PROGRAMS FOR THE BLIND ARE AXED -- KATHARINE HEPBURN: DRESSED FOR STAGE AND SCREEN -- TINA FEY TO RECEIVE MARK TWAIN AWARD -- DONATE ...
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Copyright: October 3, 2010

By: Laura Deni

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MORMONS AND FOOTBALL NEW FAVE TOPICS FOR THEATRICAL PRODUCTIONS

Cancer, AIDS, coming out as gay, Vietnam and women crashing through the glass ceiling - may have reached their saturation point, no longer the hot button - you can take it to the bank - words which *automatically* sell tickets, merely because the plotline centers around that topic.

Taking over the spotlight are Mormons and football.

To save your soul, nobody can rattle off ten feature films - much less any in the Top 100 Films of all time - that had a Mormon theme.



That makes the religion an enticing topic. *The Blind Side* which brought home the Oscar for Sandra Bullock, depicts the remarkable true story of All-American football star Michael Oher. That means *football* can sell tickets to events held other than on a football field.

The Mormon tinged *Angels in America* took Broadway by storm in 1996 and the HBO movie version was the most watched made-for-cable movie in 2003.

Now the production has spread its wings off-Broadway to the Signature Theatre Company whose 20th anniversary 2010-11 season, is devoted to the work of Tony Kushner, including this first New York City revival of the Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award-winning epic.

The production at the Signature Theatre Company directed by Michael Greif and starring Robin Bartlett, Christian Borle, Bill Heck, Zoe Kazan, Billy Porter, Zachary Quinto, Robin Weigert and Frank Wood, has been extended through February 20, 2011.

Set in late 1985 and early 1986, the play's two parts, *Millennium Approaches* and *Perestroika*, bring together a young gay man with AIDS and his frightened, unfaithful lover; a closeted Mormon lawyer and his valium-addicted wife; the infamous New York lawyer Roy Cohn; an African-American male nurse; a Mormon housewife from Utah; and a steel-winged, prophecy-bearing angel; as well as the ghost of Ethel Rosenberg, an ancient rabbi, the world's oldest living Bolshevik and a Reagan administration functionary, among many others - all played by a company of eight actors.



Matt Stone and Trey Parker

From the opening of the original Broadway production *Angels in America* generated conversation. Michael Evenden's analysis of *Angels in America* as published in *Sunstone* had the author complaining that Kushner represented Mormonism "as an irrelevant joke, a sinkhole of dead values." Other words Evenden used to describe Kushner's work as related to Mormons were "unsympathetic reading" of the faith, an "elaborate, obscene burlesque," "comic blasphemy," and "mockery."

If that's the case then hang onto your prayer book - because *South Park* creators Trey Parker and Matt Stone along with Robert Lopez, the creator and composer of *Avenue Q*, have penned a musical *The Book of Mormon*. ([See Broadway To Vegas column of April 25, 2010](#))

Directed by Casey Nicholaw and Trey Parker, the plotline centers around two young Mormon missionaries who are sent off to spread the word in a dangerous part of Uganda. Their tale is told in parallel with the story of Joseph Smith, the founder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Calling it "a dream come true for us," Parker and Stone said in a joint statement: "Growing up in Colorado, a lot of our friends were Mormons and we always thought their book would make a great musical."

The show is being produced by Scott Rudin and Anne Garefino, an executive producer of the *South Park* television series. Previews will begin on February 24, 2011 at the Eugene O'Neill Theatre in NYC.

Even the small screen is getting into the act. *Sister Wives* a new reality television show introduces you to Kody Brown - along with his three wives: Meri, Janelle and Christine and their combined 13 children. The seven-part series premiered last Sunday on the TLC channel.

When *Sports Illustrated*, ESPN.com, PackersNews.com and *Sports Business Daily* start to cover Broadway, the stars are in a new alignment. When the National Football League announces they are producing a Broadway show, they have either been hit in the head too many times, or they think they've going to score a touchdown on The Great White Way playing field.

When producers Tony Ponturo and Fran Kirmser announced last April that they had partnered with The National Football League as a producing and marketing partner, it marked the first time the NFL or any major sports organization has ever paired with Broadway for a live theatrical event



When word broke that the NFL was "investing" most assumed it was the green stuff. Actually, they are investing their marketing skills in wooing women - the breed of human that attends most Broadway shows. According to the Broadway League that would be 66 per cent. It's also the sex which may look at the game as their rival, something that keeps husbands from attending to those - honey-do lists.

Written by Academy Award-winning screenwriter and Steppenwolf Theatre Company member Eric Simonson, *Lombardi* is based on the

best-selling biography *When Pride Still Mattered: A Life of Vince Lombardi*, by Pulitzer Prize-winning author David Maraniss.

Dan Lauria stars as Lombardi, even using nail polish to help construct the perfect Lombardi front tooth gap. Two-time Emmy Award-winner Judith Light portrays his long suffering ("Shut up, Marie!") wife. The cast also includes Bill Dawes, Robert Christopher Riley, and Chris Sullivan

Vincent Lombardi (1913-1970) is arguably the greatest football coach of all time, and is on the short list of history's greatest coaches, regardless of sport. His ability to teach, motivate and inspire players helped turn the Green Bay Packers into the most dominating NFL team in the 1960s.

Although he made his career as a football coach, his fame and influence spread far beyond the gridiron. He is renowned for his uncompromising character, his steadfast leadership and his ability to inspire others to excel, no matter what the field of endeavor.

A beloved national icon, Lombardi was inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 1970, and was honored by the NFL by having his name adorn the trophy awarded to the Super Bowl champion each year.

Lombardi is billed as a play which "introduces the people and relationships that shaped Vince Lombardi's life off the field, from his wife, Marie, to some of the key players whose careers and characters were molded by his inimitable leadership."

"If you like powerful family drama that tells an inspiring story about real-life characters, you will love *Lombardi*," they promise.



Vince Lombardi

In other words they don't want the word *football* to turn off women.

Even the Circle in the Square lobby - in collaboration with the National Football League - has been transformed into a museum-quality installation featuring Vince Lombardi and Green Bay Packer memorabilia. In addition to photographs chronicling Coach Lombardi's personal and professional life and some of his unforgettable quotations, theatergoers will see an array of priceless collectors' items from the Pro Football Hall of Fame, including footballs from the 1965 World Championship and Super Bowl I, both signed by the Green Bay Packers; jerseys worn by legendary Packers fullback Jim Taylor, linebacker Ray Nitschke and quarterback Bart Starr and a bench from the famed Ice Bowl, Lombardi's last game at Lambeau Field on December 31, 1967.

It will be interesting to see how many ticket holders - especially women - who walked past the collection entering the theatre, will stop to study the exhibit upon leaving.



Robert DeNiro

The out-of-town tryout took place July 22-28 at The Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center in Great Barrington. Currently in previews, the production officially opens on October 21, 2010 at the Circle In The Square in New York City.

Not to be confined to the stage there are two upcoming screen ventures including an HBO documentary starring Vince Lombardi as himself.

The other has none other than Robert De Niro signing on to play the Green Bay Packers head coach. *Lombardi* will be written by Eric Roth, who wrote the De Niro-directed *The Good Shepherd*.

De Niro and his Tribeca Productions partner Jane Rosenthal will produce alongside ESPN Films, the National Football League and Andell Entertainment.

Expected release date is January, 2012.

Some of Lombardi's famous quotes include:

"If it doesn't matter who wins or loses, then why do they keep score?"

"Once you learn to quit, it becomes a habit."

"Show me a good loser, and I'll show you a loser."

"Winning isn't everything, it's the only thing."

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ART AND ABOUT

KATHARINE HEPBURN: DRESSED FOR STAGE AND SCREEN an exhibition at Kent State University opened October 2.

The exhibition of the screen legend's personal collection of performance clothes spans her 60 year career and features costumes from stage, screen and television. The exhibition runs to September 4, 2011.

Katharine Hepburn is universally recognized among the greatest actresses of all time. She was nominated by the Motion Picture Academy a record 12 times in the best leading actress category and won four Oscars – for *Morning Glory* (1933), *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* (1967), *The Lion In Winter* (1968), and *On Golden Pond* (1981). This record has never been equaled.

"Katharine Hepburn has had a profound impact on American popular culture and fashion, and has influenced generations of women," said Jean Druessedow director of the KSU Museum and curator of the exhibit.

"On screen and off, she epitomized the modern American woman – smart, independent, active, honest, feisty, and outspoken. In terms of fashion, Katharine Hepburn blazed trails by popularizing slacks for women, wearing or adapting men's suits as women's apparel, and helping internationalize what is now called 'The American Style.'"

The museum acquired Miss Hepburn's performance clothes in 2008 from the star's estate. Before her death (2003), she had made clear her collection of performance clothes should be given to an educational institution instead of being sold at auction. The Kent State University Museum is accredited by the American Association of Museums, and is known internationally for its costume and fashion collections. The result is a perfect fit.

"Katharine Hepburn's costumes were designed or overseen by some of the greatest 20th century designers for fashion, stage and film," said Ms. Druessedow, "Valentina, Adrian, Irene, Muriel King, Cecil Beaton, Coco Chanel, Walter Plunkett, Edith Head, Patricia Zipprodt, Jane Greenwood, Noel Taylor – it's an 'A' List all the way."

As the title of the exhibition suggests, the costumes will be presented according to genre, with "screen" including film and television. A series of Miss Hepburn's iconic beige trousers, linen vests, and tailored jackets will be placed as guideposts through the exhibit. Highlights include:

Stage costumes from *The Philadelphia Story* and *Without Love*, as well as later Broadway shows *Coco*, *West Side Waltz*, and *A Matter of Gravity*.

Film costumes and publicity clothes include those from *The Little Minister*, *Adam's Rib*, *The Iron Petticoat*, *Long Day's Journey Into Night*, *A Delicate Balance*, *Guess Who's Coming To Dinner*, and *The Lion In Winter*.

Costumes worn in many of her later television movies, including her Emmy-nominated performance as the title character in *Mrs. Delafield Wants to Marry* as well as her Emmy-winning performance in *Love Among the Ruins*.

2010-11 marks the Kent State Museum's 25th anniversary year. Opened to the public in October 1985, the Kent State University Museum was founded with an initial contribution from New York dress manufacturers Jerry Silverman and Shannon Rodgers. Their gift included 4,000 costumes and accessories, nearly 1,000 pieces of decorative art and a 5,000-volume reference library. Today the Museum's collections total more than 40,000 pieces and it holds one of the most comprehensive teaching collections of fashionable design from the 18th century to the present. Its eight galleries feature changing exhibitions



Dresses from *Long Day's Journey* . . . , *Without Love*, and *Adam's Rib*.
Photography by Herbert Ascherman/Jeanette Palsa.
Courtesy of the Kent State University Museum.

of work by many of the world's great designers, and an extensive collection of American glass, fine furniture, textiles, paintings and other decorative arts combine to give context to the study of design.

VAN GOGH, GAUGUIN, CEZANNE AND BEYOND: POST-IMPRESSIONIST MASTERPIECES FROM THE MUSEE



Left: Vincent van Gogh (1853–1890), *Bedroom at Arles*, 1889. Right: Paul Gauguin (1848–1903) *Self-Portrait with Yellow Christ* (1890–1891) © RMN (Musée d'Orsay)/Hervé Lewandowski

d'ORSAY exhibition has opened at the de Young Museum in San Francisco.

120 remarkable paintings by the likes of Pierre Bonnard, Paul Cézanne, Paul Gauguin, Claude Monet, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Henri Rousseau, Georges Seurat, Paul Signac, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, Vincent van Gogh, and Edouard Vuillard, among others, are on display.

The second of two exhibitions from the Musée d'Orsay's permanent collection, *Van Gogh, Gauguin, Cézanne, and Beyond: Post-Impressionist Masterpieces from the Musée d'Orsay* follows on

the heels of the first with a selection of the most famous late-Impressionist paintings by Claude Monet and Auguste Renoir, as well as works representing the individualist styles of the early modern masters, including Vincent van Gogh, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, Paul Gauguin, and the Nabis Pierre Bonnard and Édouard Vuillard.

It is here where the Orsay's collection shines brightest with masterpieces such as Van Gogh's *Starry Night over the Rhone*, a haunting *Portrait of the Artist*, and *Bedroom at Arles*.

The exhibition includes a superior collection of paintings from the Pont-Aven school, including Gauguin's masterpiece *Self-Portrait with The Yellow Christ*. The exhibition concludes with the Orsay's spectacular collection of pointillist paintings, represented by the masters Georges Seurat and Paul Signac.

The Musée d'Orsay is lending works from their treasured collections while it undergoes a partial closure for refurbishment and reinstallation in anticipation of the museum's 25th anniversary in 2011. The de Young is the only museum in North America to host this exhibition and the only museum in the world to host both of the Musée d'Orsay's masterpiece exhibitions. This particular combination of paintings will never travel again.

Notable works in this exhibition include:

- A Dance in the Country by Pierre-Auguste Renoir (1883)
- Self Portrait by Vincent van Gogh (1887)
- Starry Night over the Rhone by Vincent van Gogh (1888)
- The Artist's Bedroom at Arles by Vincent van Gogh (1889)
- Portrait of the Artist with the Yellow Christ by Paul Gauguin (1889)
- Tahitian Women, On the Beach by Paul Gauguin (1891)
- The Plaid Blouse by Pierre Bonnard (1892)
- Still Life with Onions by Paul Cézanne (1895)
- The Snake Charmer by Henri Rousseau (1907)

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SWEET CHARITY

1 VOICE - AN EVENING OF MONOLOGUES, MUSIC AND MEMORIES is a celebrity-packed evening to raise industry and community awareness and protest the announcement made by The Board of Directors of the Motion Picture & Television Fund (MPTF) that they intend to close the entertainment community's historic nursing home and hospital in Woodland Hills, CA. The impending closure displaces Hollywood's most frail and vulnerable residents from their campus home in the Long Term

Care facility.

Neo Ensemble Theatre, a Los Angeles based non-profit theater company, is producing *I Voice, an Evening of Monologues, Music and Memories*, on Tuesday, October 5, 2010 at the Renberg Theater at the Village in Hollywood, CA.

The evening will include scheduled performances and appearances by Richard Dreyfuss, John Schneider, Lorenzo Lamas, Kathryn Joosten, Gloria Loring, Esai Morales, Oscar winner George Chakiris, Dawn Wells, and Renee Taylor & Joseph Bologna.

Also appearing are Shirley Jones & Marty Ingels, Bill Smitrovitch, Connie Stevens, Lou Ferrigno, Jerry Douglas and Kate Linder of Young & the Restless, James Intveld, Ben Henry (Survivor Nicaragua), George Barris, Nic Novicki, cast members of NBC's *The Event*, *Young and the Restless*, *Bold & The Beautiful*, and members of the Neo Ensemble Theatre.

VARIETY CLUB HONORS NEIL SEDAKA with their highest accolade The Silver Heart Award, which will be bestowed upon the legendary singer/songwriter for his outstanding services to the music industry and his charitable work.

The very first Variety Club Showbiz Awards was held back in 1952 when Jean Carson was awarded Best Musical Comedy Star. Over the years, there has been an impressive and glittering parade of the best that is showbiz from film to comedy, from music to theatre and television and from best newcomer to lifetime achievement.



Neil Sedaka

Over the last few years, Al Pacino, Ricky Gervais, Katherine Jenkins, Keira Knightley, Spandau Ballet and Sir Ian McKellen have accepted the organization's Silver Hearts.

The Black Tie event takes place Friday, October 8, 2010 at the Palace Hotel in Manchester, England.

Variety Club exists to enhance the lives of sick, disabled and disadvantaged children.

6th ANNUAL ROCK SHOW FOR CHARITY to benefit the American Red Cross of Great New York takes place October 9, 2010 at the American Red Cross Headquarters in New York City.

Performing will be various soap opera stars including: From *Guiding Light* - Kim Zimmer, Robert Newman, Mandy Bruno and Karla Mosley. From *One Life To Live* - Saundra Santiago, Kristen Alderson, Brittney Underwood and David Gregory. From the recently departed *As The World Turns* - Michael Park and Trent Dawson.

The event will be hosted by Gina Tognoni of *One Life To Live* fame and feature the Bradley Cole Band.

BROADWAY TONIGHT! in celebration of its tenth anniversary, weSPARK, the cancer support center founded by actress Wendie Jo Sperber and serving the greater Los Angeles area with free services for cancer patients and their families, presents *Broadway Tonight!* an Evening of Broadway Song and Dance directed by Barbara Epstein with Musical Direction by Gerald Sternbach. Appearing will be; Nancy Allen, Yancey Arias, Stephanie J. Block, Alonzo Bodden, Wayne Brady, David Burnham, Marc Cherry, Michael Chiklis, Jason Graae, Teri Hatcher, Megan Hilty, Randy Jackson, Christine Lakin, Sylvia MacCalla, Camryn Manheim, Lesli Margherita, Marc McClure, Eric McCormack, Matthew Morrison, Adam Pascal, Valerie Perri, Valerie Pettiford, Kelli Provart, Mindy Sterling, Tracie Thoms, John Lloyd Young and Leslie Zemeckis.

Academy Award winning Director Robert Zemeckis, Academy Award nominated Screenwriter and Producer Bob Gale and Fox Broadcasting Senior Vice President Missy Halperin will be honored.

CABARET GALA the New York-Presbyterian Hospital/Weill Cornell Medical Center's annual fundraiser will featured Tony Award winner Idina Menzel. Katie Couric will host.

The back tie benefit - cocktails, dinner and entertainment - takes place October 13 at the Park Avenue Armory, NYC.

Co-chairs are Helen and Bob Appel, Charlotte Ford, Kim and Jeff Greenberg, and Margaret and Ian Smith.

Tickets start at \$2,000 each.



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SPREADING THE WORD

MICHAEL FEINSTEIN'S AMERICAN SONGBOOK a three-part series that explores the history of American popular music, will air on PBS, on October 6, 13, and 20. The show will feature on-stage and backstage footage that will include performance excerpts, and Feinstein's personal stories about the songwriters and entertainers he's known and worked with over three decades.

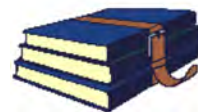
AMERICAN IDIOT is recording the encore performance of every show which is then offered as a free download on the show's website. That's considered a first for a Broadway production.

Green Day's *Good Riddance (Time of Your Life)* is performed by the entire cast, all of them playing guitars. The offer is billed by producers as a special thank-you for seeing the rock musical that reinvents the Green Day punk album. The download is expected to have reached record numbers last week since Green Day frontman Billy Joe Armstrong is playing the role of St. Jimmy. Armstrong's gig ends today.

Green Day opened April 20, 2010 at the St. James Theatre in New York City.

THE KENNEDY CENTER/STEPHEN SONDHEIM INSPIRATIONAL TEACHER AWARDS created in honor of Stephen Sondheim's 80th birthday, are accepting nominations through December 15.

On March 22, 2011 - Stephen Sondheim's birthday - a select number of these teachers will each receive The Kennedy Center/Stephen Sondheim Inspirational Teacher Award - \$10,000 in appreciation for their contributions to the field of teaching. Awardees will also be showcased, along with the people they inspired, on The Kennedy Center/Stephen Sondheim Inspirational Teacher Awards web site.



THE METROPOLITAN OPERA will begin its fifth season of free open dress rehearsals with the Friday, October 8 performance of the company's new production of Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov*, starring bass René Pape in the title role and directed by Stephen Wadsworth. Two thousand free tickets available on October 5 through an online drawing only. *Boris Godunov* opens on October 11 and runs through October 30, before a three performance encore starting March 9, 2011.

JOHN LENNON HONORED by The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum in Cleveland, OH on what would have been his 70th birthday weekend Friday, October 8 through Sunday, October 10.

Visitors will be invited to witness a time capsule dedication of John Lennon's post-Beatles recordings and fan contributions, participate in Spotlight Exhibit tours in the Beatles exhibit and view highlights from the Beatles' and John Lennon's inductions into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

The weekend will culminate with the free Imagine Peace World Festival featuring some of Cleveland's best cultural performers.

COURAGE CAMPAIGN INSTITUTE benefits from the West Coast premiere of Terrence McNally's touching and hilarious play *Some Men* in a one night only reading at the Saban Theatre in Beverly Hills on Monday, October 4. The star-studded cast includes Tony Award winners Alan Cumming and John Glover; Actor and Comedian David Alan Grier; ABC's *Brothers and Sisters* star Luke Macfarlane; Showtime's *Weeds* star Justin Kirk; Grammy Award winner and Academy Award nominee Michael McKean; actors Matt Gould, Jason Ritter and Josh Stamberg; and a special appearance by renowned Emmy, Grammy, and Tony Award winning actress/comedian Lily Tomlin.

Under the direction of Michael Morris, Producer of ABC's *Brothers and Sisters*, the presentation of *Some Men* is being presented by some of the leading women in Hollywood, including: Bonnie Bruckheimer,

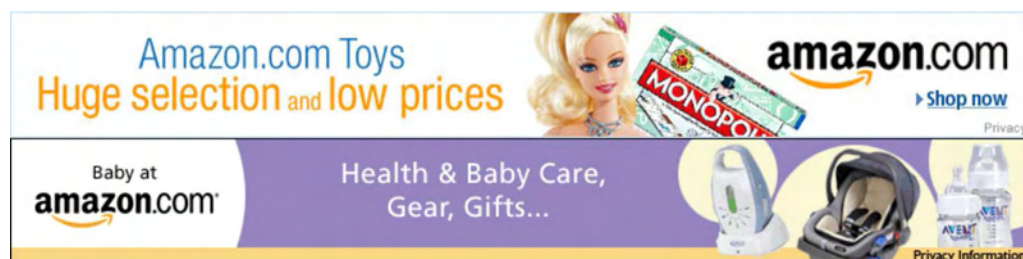


Edie Falco, Sally Field, Calista Flockhart, Cedering Fox, Daveen Fox, Allison Janney, Cherry Jones, Rashida Jones, Lisa Kudrow, Angela Lansbury, Julia Louis-Dreyfus, Jane Lynch, Mary McCormack, Rosie Perez, Christina Ricci, Doris Roberts, Kyra Sedgwick, Alicia Silverstone, Corky Hale Stoller, Marisa Tomei, Linda Wallem and Vanessa Williams.

All proceeds from Monday's "one-night only" performance will benefit the Courage Campaign Institute's Testimony Project - a national public education campaign for LGBT Equality developed by legendary organizer and human rights activist Cleve Jones.

"The tragic LGBT teen suicides of the past week underscore the fact that state-sanctioned discrimination fosters a stigma with life and death consequences. As more Americans learn the truth about LGBT people and the human impact that institutionalized second class citizenship is having on young people, families, workers and our military, we are seeing a dramatic shift in public opinion in support of full LGBT equality," said Courage Campaign Chairman and Founder Rick Jacobs. "Testimony accelerates this process by empowering everyday Americans with the online and offline tools they need to share their stories, destroy the lies at the foundation of prejudice, and engage their communities in the battle to realize our nation's promise of justice and equality under the law."

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OTHER PEOPLE'S MONEY

RADIO PROGRAMS FOR THE BLIND ARE AXED as budget cuts have forced the South Carolina commission for the blind to shut down its radio program - S.C. Educational Radio for the Blind - which was the primary source of news for about 35,000 blind people across South Carolina.



The radio reading program had broadcast local and national news for more than 35 years by a staff of 3 paid employees and 50 volunteers, some of whom had been participating for over 30 years.

The program was aired 24 hours a day, seven days a week and considered the easiest way for blind people to access news and current events because they could turn on their radio at their pleasure.

The radio programming was the only service for the blind which focused on current events.

Many blind people reported that the programming gave them comfort at night when they had trouble sleeping.

The station's final broadcast was Thursday. The three paid employees also lost their jobs.

The commission for the blind was forced to 42 percent of their state budget this year which included money for the radio program.

THE 2010 BC/EFA FLEA MARKET AND AUCTION raised \$476,917, topping the 2009 total of \$403,929.

BARRY DILLER has announced he intends to resign as chairman of Live Nation, a company which has admitted it would miss its profit forecasts. In a matter of the past few months, the share price has dropped 40 per cent. Diller is credited with engineering Live Nation's controversial mega-merger with Ticketmaster, the concert-ticket retailer that Diller owned.

Diller's statement, "I have always said, since the merger of Ticketmaster and Live Nation, that I only planned to stay as chairman through the transition and integration of the two companies. It's been almost a year and I informed the board today that while there was no rush, the board should start the process now to appoint a new chairman."



TINA FEY will be presented with the 13th Annual Mark Twain Prize for American Humor on Tuesday, November 9, at the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC.

The award is named to honor one of America's - and the world's – greatest humorists, Mark Twain.

The evening saluting Tina Fey will feature a lineup of the biggest names in comedy including; Fred Armisen, Steve Carell, Jimmy Fallon, Jon Hamm, Jennifer Hudson, Jane Krakowski, Steve Martin, Seth Meyers, Lorne Michaels, and Betty White.

Guests will be invited to the Pre-Show Dinner at the Center and the Post-Show Reception with the artists immediately following the Presentation.



Tina Fey

The event will be taped for television by WETA, and will be broadcast nationwide on PBS on November 14, 2010.

MacARTHUR FOUNDATION FELLOWSHIP GRANTS commonly known as the Genius Grants announced the 23 recipients each of whom will receive \$500,000 paid quarterly over five years, comes with no strings, allowing winners unfettered freedom to pursue their creativity.

The newly minted "geniuses" related to the arts include: author, screenwriter, and producer David Simon, creator of the HBO television series *The Wire*, theater director David Cromer, jazz pianist and composer Jason Moran, stone cutter and calligrapher Nicholas Benson, Installation Artist Jorge Pardo, sculptor Elizabeth Turk, type designer Matthew Carter, fiction writer Yiyun Li, violist, violinist, and music educator Sebastian Ruth.

RICHARD KIND who has joined the Bay Street Theatre's Board of Directors. Bay Street Theatre is a 299-seat professional regional theatre situated on Long Wharf, in Sag Harbor, NY, and founded in 1991 by Sybil Christopher, Stephen Hamilton and Emma Walton.

MARIAN SELDES will receive the newly created Award of Appreciation at the opening night gala of the New York Cabaret Convention to be held October 7-9 in the Rose Theater at Frederick P. Rose Hall. Angela Lansbury will present the award.

The Thursday Gala Opening Night, with Klea Blackhurst, Carole Bufford, Barbara Carroll, Jeff Harnar, Nicole Henry, Barb Jungr, Amanda King, Sue Mathys, Marilyn Maye, T. Oliver Reid will also see the presentation of The Mabel Mercer Award to "A Very Special Artist."

On Friday it's *If Love Were All*/The Timeless Words & Music of Noel Coward. Special appearance by Elaine Stritch; with Nancy Anderson, Christine Ebersole, Gregg Edelman, Nicolas King, Sidney Myer, Sarah Rice, Steve Ross, Craig Rubano, Jennifer Sheehan, KT Sullivan and presentation of the first annual *Noel Coward Cabaret Award* to Jennifer Sheehan.



I LOVED LUCY By Lee Tannen. Based on the Best-Selling Memoir. Directed by Todd Weeks.

Starring Diana J. Findley as Lucille Ball and Jeffry Denman as Lee.

Few people knew America's comic sweetheart, Lucille Ball, the way Lee did. Though distantly related, and 40 years apart in age, Lucy and Lee became the nearest and dearest of friends during the last decade of her life.

Get a front and center look at Lucy, the personal side of her very public persona from someone who spent the last of her years beside her while out of the spotlight and around a backgammon table. See what it was like to be her friend, and understand how she was so like and unlike her TV alter ego.



Re-live life with Lucy - the stories and shenanigans Lee shared with her - and discover a Lucy like you've never known her before. Billed as "a funny, irreverent, and bitter-sweet portrait that will only add to the love of a great legend."

October 5 – 31, 2010 at the Laguna Playhouse in Laguna, CA.

BEST OF FRIENDS a World Premiere play by Jeff Daniels. PRTC artistic director Guy Sanville will direct Matthew David, Alex Leydenfrost, Michelle Mountain and Rhiannon Ragland.

"Friendship is like treasure: sometimes the best thing is to bury it."

Set in a small Michigan town, this wicked comedy paints a startling, yet familiar picture of two married couples as they navigate the minefield of their friendship until it blows up in their faces.

Stage Manager: Gregory Butka. Set Designer: Vincent Mountain. Properties Designer: Danna Segrest. Costume Designer: Sally Converse-Doucette. Lighting Designer: Dana White. Sound Designer: Quintessa Gallinat

The comedy will be the Purple Rose Theater Company's 39th world premiere, and opens the 20th anniversary season of the company located 60 miles west of Detroit in Chelsea MI. The ten-week engagement will play October 14-December 18. The official opening is October 22. The first Behind-the-Scenes Best of Friends Gala Benefit takes place October 10.

ELLA THE MUSICAL by Jeffrey Hatcher. Directed by Rob Ruggiero who also conceived the musical.

Featuring more than two-dozen hit songs, *Ella The Musical* weaves myth, memory, and music into a stylish and sophisticated journey through the life of Ella Fitzgerald, one of the greatest jazz singers of the 20th-century. It's 1966 and the fabled songstress is preparing for one of the most important concerts of her career. As she jams with the musicians (including famed trumpeter Louis Armstrong) and gets ready to meet the audience, Ella reflects on her life, her secrets and the love of music that made her soar.

Starring Tina Fabrique, the cast also includes George Caldwell (pianist), Harold Dixon (Norman), Rodney Harper (drums), Joilet Harris (Ella cover), Ron Haynes (trumpet) and Cliff Kellam (bass).

Danny Holgate Musical Supervision and Arrangements; Michael Schweikardt Set Designer; Alejo Vietti Costume Designer; John Lasiter Lighting Designer; Michael Miceli Sound Designer; Charles LaPoint Wig Designer.

ME AND JULIET Book and Lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II. Presented by arrangement with Josef Weinberger Limited on behalf of R & H Theatricals of New York.

The European premiere of this Rodgers and Hammerstein musical is being helmed by Thom Southerland.

The cast includes Adam Anderson. John Addison. Gemma Atkins. Terry Doe. Daniella Gibb. Robert Hands. Reeda Harris. Dafydd Gwyn Howells. Jodie Jacobs. Laura Main. Brendan Matthews. Peter Kenworthy. Stephen McGlynn. Tom O' Brien. Olivia O'Shea and Anthony Wise.



Me and Juliet is a love story, a comedy, a show within a show, and a tongue in cheek satire of 'showbusiness', *Me and Juliet* is Rodgers and Hammerstein's valentine to the Theatre. When singer Jeanie and stage manager Larry are secretly married, they arouse the suspicion and jealousy of lighting technician and ex-boyfriend Bob. It's chaos on stage, and unbridled passion back stage, but the show must go on...

Musical Direction by Joseph Atkins. Choreography by Sally Brooks. Designed by Alex Marker. Lighting by Howard Hudson.

Me and Juliet begins performances at London's Finborough Theatre on October 5, prior to an official opening October 7, for a four-week run through October 30.

MY LIFE: TODAY a new musical presented by Rosie O'Donnell will be staged October 5-6 at The Duke in NYC as part of the NY Theatre Festival.

The musical features a pop score by Steven Jamail and Sara Patterson with book by Patterson and co-directors Lisa Danser and Jeff Statile. Additional material is by Zakiyyah Alexander.

Featured in the production are Daniel Estrella, Mary Dunkley, Doug Rosario, Kirra Silver, Celeste Estrella, Kelly Chan, Joshua Ramos, Joshua Maldonado, Aria Lee, Kayla Delacruz, Anthony Santos, Taisha Lavarello, Kirra Silver, Christina Lai, Ajee Haynes and Tony Grunin.

The musical has lighting design by Carl Wiemann, music direction by Jamail, orchestrations and music preparation by Britt Bonney and stage management by Theresa Flanagan.

"In 2003, Rosie O'Donnell and Lori Klinger founded Rosie's Theater Kids (formerly known as Rosie's Broadway Kids)," according to a press release described as "an organization devoted to using musical theatre to enrich the lives of New York City public school children who otherwise have limited exposure to the arts. Seven years later, their stories and experiences have been transformed into an original musical performed by the students themselves."

Performances through October 17 at the Long Wharf Theatre in New Haven, CT.

WELCOME TO ARROYO'S by Pulitzer Prize-finalist Kristoffer Diaz.

Jaime Castañada directs a cast including Wade Allain-Marcus, Tala Ashe, Byron Bronson, Andres Munar, GQ and Amirah Vann.

A heartwarming story about a brother and sister finding their respective places in the world after the death of their mother. Alejandro is desperate to make Arroyo's the hottest lounge in New York to honor the memory of his mother, while Molly's desire to make her "mark" as a talented graffiti artist is at odds with her new infatuation with a rookie cop. Their struggle to move forward is made even more uncertain as they discover what might be a secret about their mother that could change the very foundation of their lives and, possibly, the history of hip hop music.

The West Coast Premiere runs through October 31 at The Old Globe Theatre in San Diego, CA.

CHURCHILL written by Andrew Edlin. Directed by James Horan. Starring Edmund L. Shaff as British Prime Minister Winston Churchill.

The one man play takes place on April 4, 1955. Winston Spencer Churchill, Prime Minister of Great Britain, is in his secret bunker beneath Whitehall in London. At age 80 he is faced with the dilemma of retiring from office and stepping down from a career that has spanned 55 years in Parliament.



Edmund L. Shaff as Winston Churchill

He led England through World War II, inspiring and rallying the British Empire to withstand the tyranny of Hitler and Mussolini. He garnered the Nobel Prize in Literature for his history of The Iron Duke, Marlboro, his forebear. In 1963, US President John F. Kennedy, acting under authorization granted by an Act of Congress, proclaimed him an Honorary Citizen of the United States.

Churchill was a pivotal figure in history of the British Empire. He was a statesman, an orator of tremendous skill, a prolific writer with over 56 volumes of history as well as innumerable newspaper articles, and an impetuous strategist.

Throughout it all he maintained a marvelous wit.

The lighting design is by Derrick McDaniel. The sound design is by Tu Lips Studios.

Performances through November 7 at the Whitmore/Lindley Theatre in North Hollywood, CA.

WHO'S WHERE



4TROOPS are United States combat veterans - three young men and one woman who served on the front lines in Iraq and Afghanistan. While overseas, music played a crucial and very personal role in all of their lives. They would sing at everything from large military events to more intimate settings, where they would jam in their bunk after a long day in the field and try to recall a slice of home. They also used their voices at somber occasions like memorial services, where they would sing to remember those that had been lost. 4TROOPS now come together for a singular purpose: to sing on behalf of all troops, to honor their sacrifices and to create awareness for their needs.

The members of 4TROOPS are Former Cpt. Meredith Melcher 29, daughter of a retired three-star general. Former Sgt. Daniel Jens, 36, was one of the finalists on *America's Got Talent*, Staff Sgt. (Ret.) Ron Henry 41, served in the Army for 20 years and was also the leader of an Army singing group Transportation Express. Former Sgt. David Clemo, 30, toured with Melcher in 2004 with the Army Soldier Show.

4TROOPS is coming to San Diego for one night only, Thursday, October 7 at the historic Balboa Theatre.

RICHARD DOWLING the pianist will perform in a special concert celebrating Music of Old New York and the release of a new CD by the same name, created exclusively for the Museum of NYC. The CD features 24 songs from the turn of the 20th century, 10 of which have never before been available on a modern recording, including *Zeigfeld Follies Rag*, *Subway Glide* and the *Forty Second Street Strut!* The unique musical experience will be followed by refreshments. Monday, October 4, at the Museum of NYC.

JOHN BARROWMAN will play London's Royal Albert Hall October 4 as part of his 2010 U.K. concert tour. The evening will be recorded for a DVD release.

KEVIN DOZIER brings his cabaret act *Take Me To The World* to The Laurie Beechman Theatre at West Bank Café, NYC on Tuesday, October 5, 12, 19 and 26. The evening, directed by Lennie Watts, includes songs by Maltby and Shire, Jones and Schmidt, Irving Berlin, Jerry Herman, Lerner and Loewe, Stephen Sondheim, Noel Coward, Ervin Drake and others. Kevin will be joined by Musical Director Alex Rybeck at the piano.

ROSLYN KIND will perform in concert October 8 and 9 at the Catalina Jazz Club in Hollywood.

JOHN PIZZARELLI AND JESSICA MOLASKEY return to the Cafe Carlyle in New York City with a new program titled *The Heart of a Saturday Night*. It's a five week engagement running October 5-November 6.

LIZA MINNELLI opens a two night stand Friday, October 8, at Meyerson Symphony Center in Dallas.



WEDNESDAY NIGHT AT THE IGUANA with hosts Dana Lorge and Richard Skipper. Bill Zeffiro on keyboard & Saadi Zain on bass. Wednesday's guests include: Rick Anthony, Jane Burbank, Juanita Morgan, *The Guiding Light's* Bradley Cole, and Craig Pomranz. Wednesday, October 6, at the Iguana VIP Lounge in NYC.

THE CANADIAN TENORS on stage Tuesday, October 5, at the Paramount Theatre in Seattle. On Wednesday they perform at another Paramount Theatre, this one in Denver. Friday finds them on stage at Club Nokia in Los Angeles.

JIM BRICKMAN entertains Friday, October 10 at the Performing Arts Center in Vacaville, CA. On Saturday the show is at the PAC in San Ramon, CA.

BRET MICHAELS in the spotlight Tuesday, October 5, at the Grand Opera House in Wilmington, DE.

CELTIC THUNDER brings their tour to the Verizon Wireless Arena in Manchester, NH on Monday, October 4. On Wednesday the show is at Symphony Hall in Springfield, MA. Friday finds them entertaining at the West Point Military Academy in West Point, NY. On Saturday they are on stage at the Wang Theatre in Boston.

RENEE FLEMING in the spotlight Thursday, October 7, at the Ordway Center in Saint Paul, MN. On Saturday she sings at the Folly Theater in Kansas City. MO.

FINAL OVATION

TONY CURTIS long time Las Vegas resident, movie and television star turned painter, died Wednesday, September 29, 2010, at his Las Vegas area home of cardiac arrest. Curtis was 85 and had a long history of health problems.

The Oscar nominated actor, who made more than 120 movies, was born Bernard Schwartz in Hell's Kitchen, New York, on June 3, 1925

Using his GI Bill benefits, Curtis studied acting with Erwin Piscator at the New School for Social Research. Classmates included Walter Matthau and Harry Belafonte. He acted in summer stock theater and on the Borscht Circuit in the Catskills. While appearing in the title role in a small revival of *Golden Boy*, he was seen by a Universal talent scout, who signed him to a \$75-a-week contract.



Tony Curtis. Photo by Laura Deni

In 1958, the Hollywood Foreign Press Association named Curtis "the world's favorite movie actor." It was reported that Elvis Presley dyed his hair black in homage to Curtis, his favorite movie star.

Curtis returned to the stage in 2002 to appear in a musical version of *Some Like It Hot*, as the millionaire playboy Osgood which was the part played by Joe E. Brown in the movie.

In the last years of his life, he concentrated on surrealistic painting rather than moves. ([See Broadway To Vegas column of September 14, 1998](#)) A gifted artist, his work could command more than \$25,000 a canvas. In 2007, his painting *The Red Table* was on display in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City.

The handsome matinee idol had a long list of wives and lovers.

He married actress Janet Leigh in 1951 and they divorced in 1963. That marriage produced two daughters, movie star Jamie Leigh and Kelly. His second wife Christine Kaufman bore him two daughters, Allegra and Alexandra. He then married Leslie Allen by whom he had two sons, Benjamin and Nicholas who died of a heroin overdose on April 2, 1994, at the age of 23. That marriage ended in divorce in 1968. A brief marriage, February 28, 1993 – 1994, followed to Lisa Deutsch. At the time of his death he was married to Jill VandenBerg, whom he married in 1998. In addition to his wife and five living children, he leaves behind six grandchildren.

Funeral services will be Monday, October 4, in Las Vegas.



Next Column: October 10, 2010

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Laura Deni



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Los Angeles Times

ENTERTAINMENT

The Cheat Sheet: Fall 2010 Arts Preview

Roll over the photos for a quick look at the arts and culture events our critics are most looking forward to this season.

Theater



"Welcome to Arroyo's"

Sept. 30: Welcome to Arroyo's

Kristoffer Diaz, whose "The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity" was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize this year, is a playwright on the rise. "Welcome to Arroyo's" is actually an earlier play, written by Diaz when he was still a student. When the work had its world premiere in Chicago this last spring, the word was mixed, yet the affirmation of Diaz's talent was virtually unanimous. A hip-hop tale of two siblings with big cultural dreams, told by competing DJ narrators.

The Old Globe, 1363 Old Globe Way, San Diego, \$29-\$67.

www.theoldglobe.org

-- Charles McNulty, Theater Critic

Photo credit: Don Bartletti / Los Angeles Times

[Orange County Restaurant Week kicks off this weekend 9/26 - 10/2](#)



["LIMELIGHT" at La Jolla Playhouse Brings the House Down](#)

WELCOME TO ARROYOS Hits the Old Globe With Exciting Cast

by [Derek Smith](#) September 29, 2010
[San Diego Theater](#)

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From Pulitzer Prize finalist for his play *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity* comes the highly-praised musical *Welcome to Arroyos* by Kristoffer Diaz.

The show had it's world premier in Chicago at the [American Theater Company](#), also under the direction of Jamie Castaneda. Castaneda says he's combining elements from young urban solo performance artists like [John Leguizamo](#) and [Danny Hoch](#) with the theatrical elements of contemporary plays like *M. Butterfly* and *Zoot Suit*.

The cast features some impressive new talent including Wade-Allain Marcus ("Friends With Money," "Waist Deep"), Tala Ashe, Byron Bronson, Andres Munar, GQ (writer and director of *Funk it Up About Nothin'* and Showtime's "Just Another Story") and Amirah Vann.

Welcome to Arroyos plays September 25th through October 31st at the Sheryl and Harvey White Theater at [The Old Globe](#).

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Monday, September 27, 2010

[Welcome To Arroyo's in Previews at The Old Globe](#)



Amirah Vann and Andres Munar in *Welcome to Arroyo's*
Photo: Henry DiRocco.

Kristoffer Diaz's *Welcome to Arroyo's* has begun previews at The Old Globe in San Diego. The hip hop-infused play is directed by Jaime Castañeda and will have its official opening on October 30. It will also be performed at Lincoln High School Center for the Arts Nov. 6 and 7 as part of the Globe's Southeastern San Diego Residency Project.

In *Welcome to Arroyo's*, a Greek chorus of two hip hop DJs spin the tale of a brother and sister's search for their respective places in the world after their mother's death. Alejandro is desperate to make Arroyo's the hottest lounge in New York to honor the memory of his



mother, while Molly's desire to make her "mark" as a talented graffiti artist is at odds with her new infatuation with a rookie cop. Their struggle to move forward is made even more uncertain as they discover what might be a secret about their mother that could change the very foundation of their lives and, possibly, the history of hip hop music.

The cast of *Welcome to Arroyo's* features **Wade Allain-Marcus** (Trip Goldstein), **Tala Ashe** (Lelly Santiago), **Byron Bronson** (Officer Derek), **Andres Munar** (Alejandro Arroyo), **GQ** (Nelson Cardenal) and **Amirah Vann** (Amalia Arroyo).

Tickets can be purchased online at www.theoldglobe.org/ or by calling (619) 23-GLOBE.

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Wednesday, September 15, 2010

Molly Piece - Welcome to Arroyos

I apologize to anyone who saw my previous post and bought in to it. I actually painted this "Molly" piece for an upcoming play called "Welcome to Arroyo's". They had us do a stop frame animation photography while painting so basically I would paint a few lines then step out of the frame so the could take a photo. I ended up having to do that a few thousand times over the course of painting the piece which was different but if the animation comes out nice it will have been worth the trouble. The piece and the animation are going to be projected on panels in the theatre. In the play the piece gets dissed so as soon as I finished we shot some flicks and they had to throw paint on it. It was hard to watch but as long as I have my flicks that's all that matters. The play runs from Sept 25th-Oct 31st at the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre and from Nov 4th-7th at the Lincoln High School Center for the Arts. Tickets are available at www.theoldglobe.org

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Wednesday, November 3, 2010

"Hip Hop" Piece



The "Welcome to Arroyo's" play is changing locations so they needed a new backdrop which would work with the new stage. So Bean, Geos, Risk and I did a few quick greyscale pieces of words they requested we paint. I did freestyled a "Hip Hop" piece on the bottom middle of the back drop. Bean did a "Roots" piece to the right and Risk did a "Flow" piece to the left. About 15 feet above these Geos did a "Love", "Peace" and then he and Risk both did a "Struggle" piece all while working on a hydraulic lift. The guy who works at the location said the material we were painting on costs \$25,000. I guess it's a special material used to project movies or images and they hadn't been using it so someone decided it would be okay to paint for the play. Crazy...



In progress...



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Finished "Hip Hop" piece. Unfortunately, I didn't take my real camera with me so all of these shots are from my phone. Hopefully I'll get a chance to go back and get some better shots.

Posted by IzzeWST at 7:52 PM 

Reactions: funny (0) interesting (0) cool (0)

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About Me

THE ARTS PREVIEW

THEATER

Horror in the Congo

'Ruined' gives a voice to women who suffered through unspeakable torture

JAMES HEBERT • U-T

Critic's Choice
"Ruined"

La Jolla Playhouse, Nov. 16-Dec. 19. (858) 550-1010, lajollaplayhouse.org

The setting of Lynn Nottage's searing drama — the jungles of equatorial Africa — could hardly seem farther away. But "Ruined" brings the place and the people right into a playgoer's face, with eloquence and raw emotion.

Its story centers on the women who find dubious refuge at Mama Nadi's makeshift bar and brothel in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a nation ripped apart by civil war. (The real-life conflict there has been called the deadliest since World War II.)

The abuse these women have endured and the horrors they've seen might be called unspeakable — and yet gradually, they speak of it, with a courage that is understated but shattering.

Nottage's play, which had a long off-Broadway run last year and won the 2009 Pulitzer Prize for drama, is based partly on interviews with Congolese refugees who were victims of rape and torture. As harrowing as the piece can be, though, it's also a tightly plotted suspense tale, with a surprising sense of uplift and even humor. This is one play that has the power to break your heart and thrill your soul at the same time.

Liesl Tommy directs the Playhouse staging, a co-production with Berkeley Repertory Theatre and Boston's Huntington Theatre Co., where "Ruined" will travel after its La Jolla run.

Other fall offerings
of note

"Brighton Beach
Memoirs"/"Broadway
Bound"

Old Globe Theatre, now through Nov. 7 ("Brighton" opens Wednesday, "Broadway" opens Friday); (619) 234-5623, theoldglobe.org

Two of the plays from Neil Simon's celebrated "Eugene trilogy" go up in repertory, with an ensemble that includes Tony-winner Karen Ziemba and locally bred young pros Austyn Myers and Allie Trimm.

"Notes From Under-
ground"

La Jolla Playhouse, now through Oct. 17 (opens Friday). (858) 550-1010; lajollaplayhouse.org

Bill Camp plays the central role of the caustic, angst-ridden Underground Man in this gritty adaptation of the Dostoevsky no-



The La Jolla Playhouse's production of "Ruined" will run Nov. 16-Dec. 19.

vella; the esteemed Robert Woodruff directs.

"Into the Woods"

New Village Arts Theatre, Sept. 23 to Oct. 31. (760) 433-3245; newvillagearts.org

Local ace James Vasquez directs the fairytale-minded favorite, the first musical in NVA's 10-season history.

"Smokey Joe's Cafe"

San Diego Musical Theatre, Sept. 24 to Oct. 10. (858) 560-5740; sandiego-musicaltheatre.com

The company makes its long-awaited return with a revival of the Lieber & Stoller ode to early rock 'n' roll.

"Romeo and Juliet"

Intrepid Shakespeare Co., Sept. 24 to Oct. 17. (760) 652-5011; intrepidshakespeare.com

The Roundabout Theatre (at San Dieguito Academy in Encinitas) hosts this production by the young, ambitious Intrepid.

"Road to Mecca"

San Diego Repertory Theatre, Sept. 25 to Oct. 17. (619) 544-1000; sdrep.org

Todd Salovey stages the evocative work by the illustrious South African playwright (and Del Mar resident) Athol Fugard.

"Welcome to Arroyo's"

Old Globe Theatre, Sept. 25 to Oct. 31. (619) 234-5623; theoldglobe.org

The hip-hop piece by 2010 Pulitzer Prize finalist Kristoffer Diaz goes up at both the Globe and Lincoln High School.

"The Glory Man"

Oct. 1 to Nov. 14. (619) 437-6000; lambsplayers.org

The world premiere of Dennis Hassell's piece

about Clarence Jordan, who left academia in the 1940s to start a racially integrated community in the Deep South.

"Yellow Face"

Mo'olelo Performing Arts Co., Oct. 7-31. (619) 342-7395; electrictemple.net

The socially conscious theater returns with the play by Tony-winner David Henry Hwang.

"Gee's Bend"

North Coast Rep, Oct. 13 to Nov. 17. (858) 481-1055; northcoastrep.org

Elizabeth Gregory Wilder's play chronicles the lives of three Alabama women.

"Dr. Jekyll and Mr.
Hyde"

Ion Theatre, Oct. 23 to Nov. 20. (619) 600-5020; iontheatre.com

Kim Strassburger directs the San Diego premiere of Jeffrey Hatcher's "Jekyll" adaptation.

"Disney's Beauty and
the Beast"

Civic Theatre, Oct. 26-31. (619) 570-1100; broadway-

sd.com

The family-minded show (and multiple Tony nominee) includes such tunes as "Be Our Guest."

"Anita Bryant Died
for Your Sins"

Diversionary Theatre, Oct. 28 to Nov. 21. (619) 220-0097; diversionary.org

Shana Wride directs the '70s-set, comedy-laced play.

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FALL ARTS PREVIEW

'Ruined' gives a voice to women who suffered in Congo

BY JAMES HEBERT

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2010 AT NOON

Critic's Choice in fall theater offerings

"Ruined"

La Jolla Playhouse, Nov. 16-Dec. 19.
(858) 550-1010, lajollaplayhouse.org

The setting of Lynn Nottage's searing drama — the jungles of equatorial [Africa](#) — could hardly seem farther away. But "Ruined" brings the place and the people right into a playgoer's face, with eloquence and raw emotion.

Its story centers on the women who find dubious refuge at Mama Nadi's makeshift bar and brothel in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a nation ripped apart by civil war. (The real-life conflict there has been called the deadliest since [World War II](#).)

The abuse these women have endured and the horrors they've seen might be called unspeakable — and yet gradually, they speak of it, with a courage that is understated but shattering.

Nottage's play, which had a long off-Broadway run last year and won the 2009 [Pulitzer Prize](#) for drama, is based partly on interviews with Congolese refugees who were victims of rape and torture. As harrowing as the piece can be, though, it's also a tightly plotted suspense tale, with a surprising sense of uplift and even humor. This is one play that has the power to break your heart and thrill your soul at the same time.



La Jolla Playhouse's 2010 production of "Ruined."

[Liesl Tommy](#) directs the Playhouse staging, a co-production with Berkeley Repertory Theatre and Boston's Huntington Theatre Co., where "Ruined" will travel after its La Jolla run.

Other fall offerings of note

"Brighton Beach Memoirs"/"Broadway Bound"

Old Globe Theatre, now through Nov. 7 ("Brighton" opens Wednesday, "Broadway" opens Friday); (619) 234-5623, theoldglobe.org

Two of the plays from Neil Simon's celebrated "Eugene trilogy" go up in repertory, with an ensemble that includes Tony-winner [Karen Ziemba](#) and locally bred young pros Austyn Myers and Allie Trimm.

"Notes From Underground"

La Jolla Playhouse, now through Oct. 17 (opens Friday). (858) 550-1010; lajollaplayhouse.org

Bill Camp plays the central role of the caustic, angst-ridden Underground Man in this gritty adaptation of the Dostoevsky novella; the esteemed [Robert Woodruff](#) directs.

"Into the Woods"

New Village Arts Theatre, Sept. 23 to Oct. 31. (760) 433-3245; newvillagearts.org

Fall Arts Preview



A season to celebrate

Orchestra is highlight of appealing autumn for music lovers

Jazz saxophonist Konitz defying time

Powerful Compagnie Jant-Bi returns to San Diego

'Ruined' gives a voice to women who suffered in Congo

Exhibit of Japanese woodblock prints includes many treasures

Local ace James Vasquez directs the fairy-tale-minded favorite, the first musical in NVA's 10-season history.

"Smokey Joe's Cafe"

San Diego Musical Theatre, Sept. 24 to Oct. 10. (858) 560-5740; sandiegomusicaltheatre.com

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[Moxie brings raw, worthy scripts to the stage](#) - 3/18/2010

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['Whipping Man' exposes raw nerve of surrender](#) - 5/15/2010

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Welcome to Arroyo's

By [Ray Adair](#) • Oct 28th, 2010 • Category: [Lead Story](#)

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2010 Pulitzer Prize-finalist Kristoffer Diaz's *Welcome to Arroyo's* is a heartwarming story about a brother and sister finding their respective places in the world after the death of their mother. Alejandro is desperate to make Arroyo's the hottest lounge in New York to honor the memory of his mother, while Molly's desire to make her "mark" as a talented graffiti artist is at odds with her new infatuation with a rookie cop. Their struggle to move forward is made even more uncertain as they discover what might be a secret about their mother that could change the very foundation of their lives and, possibly, the history of hip hop music.

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Tagged as: [Arroyo](#), [hip hop](#), [old globe](#), [play](#), [theatre](#)

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Old Globe Opening Second Show at Lincoln Performing Arts Center

Repeating its success of last season, the Old Globe Theatre opens "Welcome to Arroyo" next week as the second year of the theater's Southeastern San Diego Residency Project kicks off.

The play, which runs at Lincoln Nov. 4-7, gives students and the community the opportunity to see first-rate theater without going to Balboa Park. In addition, the Globe will be holding workshops on campus for students and hip-hop artists all week. They'll also have a reading of "Emancipated" on Nov. 7 in the school's Black Box Theater.

In addition to two free student matinees and two weekend public performances of Welcome to Arroyo's at Lincoln High School Center for the Arts, specially trained Old Globe Teaching Artists will work in the classroom to explore the art and story of the play and its social history. Prior to seeing the performance, Lincoln High School students will explore elements of playwrighting, hip-hop poetry, monologues and scenes using activities and information found in The Old Globe's Study Guide which is provided to all teachers.

Playwright Kristoffer Diaz, director Jaime Castañeda and members of the cast and creative team will also visit the San Diego School for Creative and Performing Arts to discuss the play and its creation.

We salute this very creative partnership between one of our civic jewels, the Old Globe, and Lincoln High School. For more information and tickets, go to the Old Globe website.

For more district news, subscribe to the [Superintendent's Friday Notes](#).

AT 6:00 AM

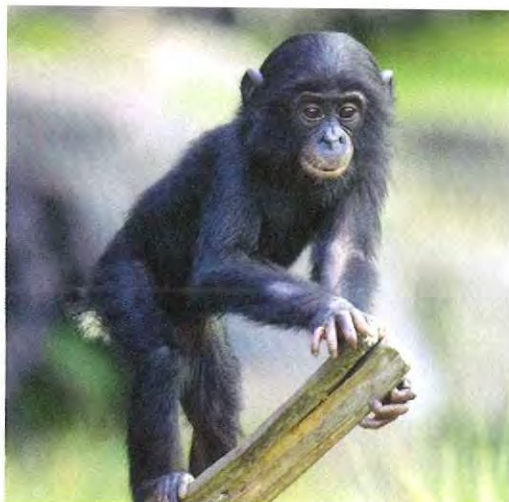
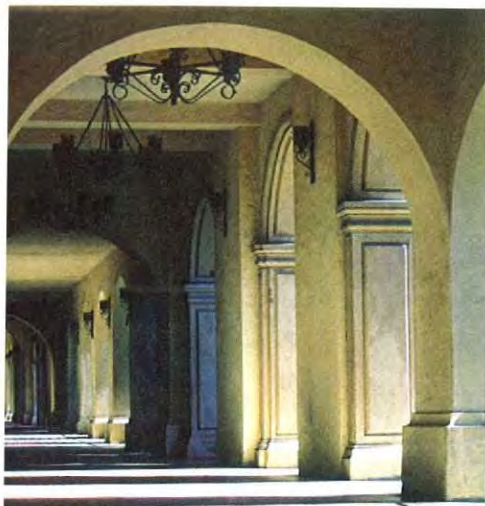
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WHERE MAGAZINE

Fall 2010

EXPLORING

Balboa Park



Left to right: the graceful architecture of the House of Hospitality; a bonobo at play at the San Diego Zoo (located inside the park); the Old Globe Theatre.

Art, music and
performance
bloom year-round.

Spanning 1,200 acres of lush, beautifully landscaped terrain, Balboa Park is known as San Diego's "crown jewel," offering a variety of outdoor recreation options for kids and adults alike, not to mention a verdant respite from the bustle of the city's increasingly metropolitan pace. The park is also the seat of San Diego's thriving cultural scene.

Nestled between palm trees and botanical gardens, ornate Spanish Colonial buildings house many of the park's museums and art exhibits. Several of the buildings were constructed as part of two world fairs: the Panama-California Exposition in 1915-16, and the California-Pacific International Exposition in 1935-36.

It can take more than one day to see and enjoy each museum, garden and attraction. The **Visitors Center** (619.239.0512) in the House of Hospitality offers a Passport to Balboa Park, allowing admission to any of the park's museums for one week. (Keep in mind some museums are closed on Mondays.) Deluxe packages include passes to the neighboring **San Diego Zoo**.

ARTS & CULTURE

Performing arts abound in the park. The **Old Globe Theatre** routinely presents top talent in world-renowned productions; fall features include the world premiere of *Welcome to Arroyo's* (Sept. 25-Oct. 3) and a pair of Neil Simon plays, in addition to *The Winter's Tale* (Nov. 7-14), staged in the intimate White Theatre. The **Marie Hitchcock Puppet Theatre** presents whimsical puppet shows, while **Spreckels Organ Pavilion** houses the world's largest outdoor pipe organ, with some 4,500 pipes. Free concerts are offered Sundays at 2 pm.

The park is also home to groups celebrating culture. The **House of Pacific Relations International Cottages** promotes the heritage of countries around the world by hosting open houses and weekend festivals. Neighboring **WorldBeat Center** uses art, music, dance and education to celebrate African and indigenous cultures, while **Centro Cultural de la Raza** is a multidisciplinary center dedicated to the preservation of Chicano/Latino culture.

The park has a vast array of institutions celebrating the visual arts, past and present. Known for its presentation of eclectic traveling exhibitions, the **San Diego Museum of Art** also has a trove of Renaissance and Baroque works, plus a vast Asian collection; featured through the fall is an exhibition dedicated to lithographic printmaking over the last century. The world-class **Museum of Photographic Arts** showcases compelling photography—including, this fall, rock photos curated by Graham Nash—and also presents films in its

state-of-the-art theater. The **Mingei International Museum** is dedicated to folk art, craft and design from around the world, while the **Timken Museum of Art** is home to the Putnam Foundation's renowned collection of European and Byzantine art.

The San Diego Art Institute's **Museum of the Living Artist** presents exhibitions by contemporary local artists every four to six weeks, and the historic **Spanish Village Art Center** is a collection of 37 studios representing more than 200 artists working in media ranging from sculpture to blown glass; the charming courtyard setting is meant to evoke an Old World town square.

SCIENCE & HISTORY

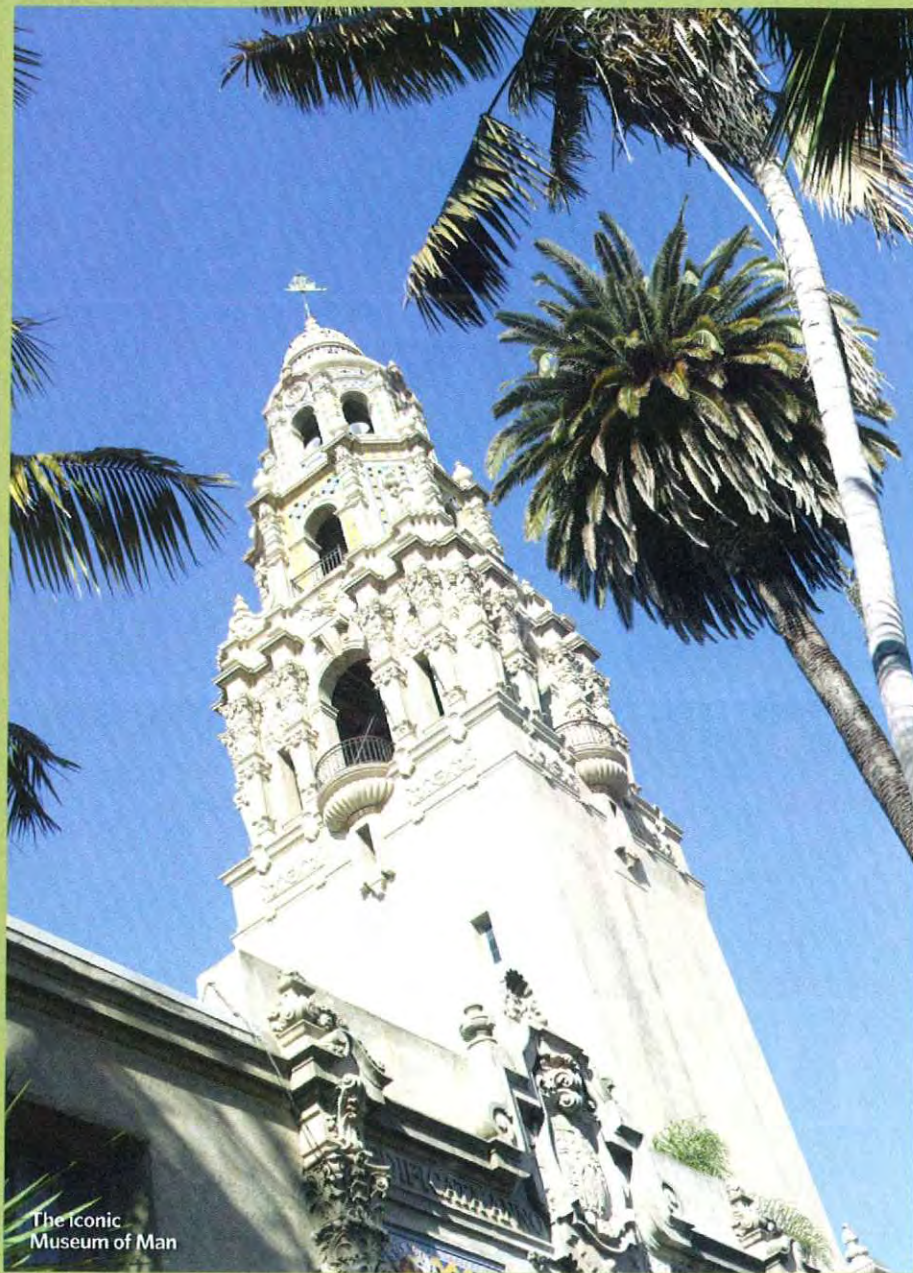
Balboa Park's many non-visual-art museums are, naturally, a huge draw for children, but most distinguish themselves by crafting exhibitions that also appeal to adult sensibilities.

The **San Diego Air and Space Museum** salutes aviation with 68 original, reproduction and model airplanes and spacecraft. The **Reuben H. Fleet Science Center** has interactive science exhibitions and an IMAX Dome theater.

The country's largest multi-sports museum, the **San Diego Hall of Champions** has interactive displays inviting sports fans to test their athletic and broadcasting skills. From antiques to hot rods, the **San Diego Automotive Museum's** collection illustrates the evolution of the automobile.

The **San Diego Natural History Museum's** life-sized T-Rex skeleton, fossil exhibits and new 3-D theater let visitors explore the natural world.

Dedicated to the study of anthropology, the **San Diego Museum of Man** explores



The iconic
Museum of Man



GREAT FIND GAME FACE

When it comes to playing games, Dr. Wayne Saunders isn't. Curator of a new exhibition at the Museum of Man, Saunders has around 1,400 games from around the world in his own collection, from which he selected 100 for **Counter Cultures: The Secret Lives of Games**. From modern-day diversions like Trivial Pursuit to antique chess sets from the 1700s, the show lets visitors engage the games themselves or watch demonstrations of how they were played, and reveals bits of trivia on the way (did you know that gaming goes back 7,000 years, or that Chutes and Ladders has its roots in a Hindu game used by priests to teach students about reincarnation?). Museum of Man, 1350 El Prado, Balboa Park, 619.239.2001

cultures of the world, especially the Americas. The largest of its kind, the **Model Railroad Museum** boasts scale models and interactive features for children. The **Museum of San Diego History** features traveling shows and exhibitions culled from the Historical Society's vast collection. At the **Veteran's Museum & Memorial Center** visitors will find military uniforms from World War I, Vietnam and the Korean War, as well as maritime paintings by local artists and other displays.

The **Marston House**, an Arts & Crafts mansion designed in 1905 by noted architect Irving Gill, is a must for history and architecture buffs; the grounds also feature a carriage house and gardens.

ATTRACTIONS & GARDENS

The park's major attraction is, of course, the **San Diego Zoo** (see p. 53), whose vast new exhibit, Elephant Odyssey, is a 7.5 acre recreation of California circa 12,000 years ago. Live elephants, jaguars and California condors call the habitat home, and a life-size replica of a Pleistocene-era mammoth is also on display.

After visiting the zoo, try your hand at the brass ring game from your perch atop a hand-carved pony on the **Balboa Park Carousel**. Both kids and grown-ups are welcome on the **Balboa Park Miniature Railroad**, which takes a 3-minute, half-mile trip through four acres of the park.

Balboa Park also features a multitude of gardens, a legacy left by the park's founding "mother," botanist Kate Sessions, who first leased park land in 1892 for a nursery. Complete with ornate fountains and colorful tiling, the Spanish-style **Alcazar Garden**, which abuts the Art Institute and Mingei Museum, blooms with a stunning array of 7,000 brilliantly colored annuals. The **Japanese Friendship Garden** features a Zen meditation garden and bonsai exhibit, while the sunken **Zoro Garden** has an interesting history: It was designed as a nudist colony during the 1935 California-Pacific International Exposition but is now a habitat for monarch, sulfur and swallowtail butterflies. Also built for the Expo, the **Old Cactus Garden** has succulents and other exotic plants.

With more than 2,100 orchids, ferns, poinsettias and other plants, the iconic **Botanical Building** is among the world's largest lath structures; along with its gorgeous **Lily Pond**, it's one of the park's most photographed sites.



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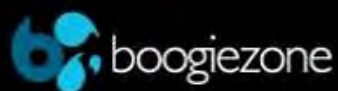
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ERICA SOBOL

CREDITS: COLLIDEDANCE CO.
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■ THE SCHEDULE

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Posted: Tuesday, September 28, 2010 11:00 am | Updated: 1:33 pm, Tue Sep 28, 2010.

Posted on September 28, 2010



by **Kelly Bennett**

The head of a plastic cow bobs and wobbles inside Copley Symphony Hall, in a room you might have never known about: the library that houses the symphony's collection of roughly 1,300 pieces of music.

At the helm is Nancy Fisch, a 66-year-old with an affinity for [bovines and Beethoven](#) whom our writer calls "[the Joan Rivers of symphony librarians](#)." One recent afternoon, she let us peek as she painstakingly copied the instructions to keep all of the violas playing in the synchronized movement characteristic of a professional orchestra.

Jobs like Fisch's don't usually make kindergarteners' lists of what to be when you grow up. But we've found many stories of jobs and workers woven inextricably into local arts institutions, like the woman whose [whispers of "Go!"](#) cue everything that happens on-stage and backstage at San Diego Opera and the guy who [played the Grinch](#) last year at The Old Globe.



Fisch keeps her phone on at night, like a doctor might, so she won't miss a music-related emergency. Delve into the [crucial but hidden domain](#), and learn what makes this salty librarian lower her voice solemnly, "as if discussing something deeply shameful."

In other news:

- I'm intrigued by how many people in San Diego are thinking about the intersections of science and art. For a retired biologist and artist, those intersections are "creativity, elegance and the sublime." He doesn't think many people in the general population [grasp either science art](#).
- What could change that? A school board member in San Diego Unified [commented on that Q&A](#), wondering what the arts community could do (like some science events do to make science accessible) so that San Diego can become more educated on the merits of less accessible art.
- CityBeat's fall arts issue dropped last week, [full of tidbits and previews](#) of the alt-weekly's picks for dance, art, music, film, theater and poetry. Highlights: A mix of fascinating-sounding music previews follows a [feature on the Center for World Music](#); the story of a new art center in mobile [shipping containers](#); and a peek into the challenge of staging a play at UCSD that is "[loopy with heady issues](#)."
- You've got to be prepared to perform in Trolley Dances, the local series where adventurous dances spring up within walking distance of trolley stations. We find out what a 27-year-old dancer packs to the dance site: "sunhat, sunblock, snacks and plenty of water ... knee pads, [tennis shoes with thick sole inserts](#) and gloves," and where her favorite place to take a break was. The dance series continues this weekend. CityBeat's Kinsee Morlan snapped [these photos](#) of the trolley dancers last weekend.
- The public art discussion continues. Gayle Falkenthal commented that she doesn't think [our discussion](#) is about the merits of public art. Rather, she says, we're talking about "the merits of [taxpayer-funded public art](#)."



Join the influential San Diegans who get the week's art news in their inboxes. Get the Behind the Scenes newsletter now.

Elsewhere:

- KPBS's Culture Lust blog rustled up an intriguing videotaped discussion among some established artists to give us a window into [what the artists themselves think](#) about public art. And the La Jolla Village News highlighted a series of [recently painted transformer boxes](#) in University City.
- The U-T profiles the South African playwright laureate Athol Fugard, who has lived in Del Mar for eight years. Fugard and his theatre contemporaries "[braved government harassment](#) and secret-police surveillance" to put on plays in the 1950s, years before the end of apartheid in South Africa. San Diego Repertory Theatre is staging his play *The Road to Mecca*, which opens this week.
- Here's the North County Times' fantastic weekly roundup of [nearly everything that's going on this week](#), from ZZ Top and Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers tonight at Cricket Wireless Amphitheatre, to the ninth annual San Diego Film Festival starting Wednesday, to Diversionary Theatre's world premiere of *Sextet*, a gay opera by Oceanside native and San Diego Opera education director Nicolas Revele
- The playwright of The Old Globe's current production of *Welcome to Arroyo's*, a musical involving rap and hip-hop music, is a hot commodity whose wrestling-themed play was a finalist last year for the Pulitzer Prize for Drama. ([North County Times](#))
- How's this for a [patchwork of jobs and incomes](#) for a performer? Soprano Laura Bueno lives in El Cajon and is singing the title role in Lyric Opera San Diego's production of *Gigi*, which opened last weekend. She also sells Mary Kay cosmetics and teaches cake decorating classes at Michael's, a craft store. The U-T's [positive review](#) of the show attracted a dissenting view in the reader comments about hype and self-promotion in local arts.
- What story does a building tell? The author of a new book on UCSD's architecture (whom [we recently interviewed](#)) talked on KPBS's *These Days* about the stories inherent in architecture: iterations of the "[epic battle between man and nature](#)."

The school's public lecture series, [UCSD By Design](#), kicks off this week.

No telling what kind of epic battle will ensue if some enterprising artist "designs" her own summa cum laude diploma from the esteemed university.

Please contact Kelly Bennett directly at kelly.bennett@voiceofsandiego.org or 619.325.0531 and follow her on Twitter: [@kellyrbennett](https://twitter.com/kellyrbennett).

(Want to recommend this arts newsletter to someone? Share this [sign-up link](#).)

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TOP TEN

1 ANTHONY BOURDAIN

He's the Jack Kerouac of food TV—a cranky, tattered soul with a big vocabulary, wandering through the world eating and commenting on everything in sight. Bourdain's new book, *Medium Raw*, is the best thing he's written since his blockbuster, *Kitchen Confidential*. **Sept. 18.** At the California Center for the Arts. 800.988.4253, artcenter.org.



ON THE ROAD The Kerouac of food TV, Anthony Bourdain.

2 ATHENAEUM ANNUAL GALA

Athenaeum in La Jolla is one of the most underrated, boundary-pushing art hubs in S.D. Their 21st annual gala will celebrate Argentinean culture, including its signature dance, the tango. Plan to see original artwork and stunning costumes. Just remember: Lead left, step right. **Sept. 10.** At *Athenaeum Music & Arts Library*. 858.454.5872, l Athenaeum.org.

3 16TH ANNUAL SAN DIEGO FESTIVAL OF BEER

Ben Franklin once said, "Beer is proof that God loves us." It's a full-blown love-in, then, at the 16th Annual San Diego Festival of Beer. Sip on 150 microbrews, with grub and live blues. It's one of the best block parties of the Indian summer, and proceeds go to cancer research. **Sept. 10.** At *Columbia and B St.*, sdbeerfest.org.

4 MONTE CARLO

MCASD had a banner year, with Tara Donovan's exhibit and the street art bonanza, "Viva la Revolución." Help them keep it going at their annual fundraising bash, the 007-themed "Monte Carlo," with roulette tables, poker faces, hors d'oeuvres and Martinis galore. **Sept. 25.** At *MCASD La Jolla*. 858.454.3541, mcasd.org.

5 MAV FOUNDATION CHARITY FASHION SHOW

MAV Foundation first got gussied up last April. Now the leukemia org is back for their second SoCal fashion show. Expect struts by Hellz Bellz, Made Jewelry and colorful designs by newcomer Michael Manguino and GBShrive. Sushi and flowing sake never hurt, either. **Sept. 25.** At *On Broadway*. 619.231.0011, obec.tv.

6 WELCOME TO ARROYO'S

Kristoffer Diaz—remember the name. The Pulitzer finalist's hip-hop-infused play, *Welcome to Arroyo's*, makes it to the Old

Globe, mixing pop culture with high culture. Director and MC GQ (Gregory Qiayum) spins the live soundtrack. **Sept. 25-Oct. 31.** At *Old Globe Theatre*. 619.234.5623, theoldglobe.org.

7 SAN DIEGO FILM FEST

Movie buffs, rejoice! S.D.'s five-day film fest is back with a vengeance, with nearly 100 breakout films and music videos, insider workshops and glamorous Gaslamp parties—some celebrities, even. **Sept. 29-Oct. 3.** At *Gaslamp Theatre*. 619.582.2368, sdff2010.com.

8 4TROOPS

What do you get when a bunch of talented vets hook up with Sony Music? A runaway country hit. 4Troops' debut album of patriotic ditties landed them on the *Billboard* charts, with a portion of CD sales going to veteran causes. Lee Greenwood is yesterday's "Yay, America!" soundtrack; meet the new guard. **Oct. 7.** At *Balboa Theatre*. 858.570.1100, sandiegotheatres.org.

9 LUX AFTER DARK

ChileCo catering—which specializes in ornate feasts at odd venues—makes this year's Lux After Dark gala a hot ticket. Lux is one of S.D.'s best art houses, and this fundraiser at a swanky Rancho Santa Fe estate is a great night of dancing and art auction action. **Oct. 9.** 760.436.6611, luxartinstitute.org.

10 BURN THE FLOOR

Addicted to *So You Think You Can Dance*? Blame award-winning Latin dancer Jason Gilkison. He's also behind "Burn the Floor," a powerhouse show of standard and Latin dance moves. San Diego highlights: a guest appearance from ballroom champ and TV hit Mary Murphy. **Oct. 12-17.** At *Civic Center Theatre*. 619.615.4000, sandiegotheatres.org.

PACIFIC MAGAZINE

September 2010

calendar^{nine.ten}

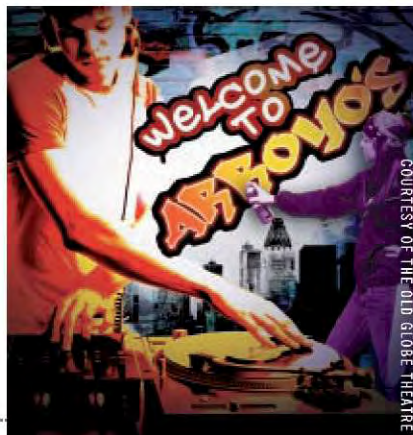
9/25-10/31: Welcome to Arroyo's

Venue: Sheryl & Harvey White Theatre

Tickets: \$29-\$62

Info: theoldglobe.org

Written by Pulitzer Prize finalist Kristoffer Diaz, this play tells the story of Alejandro and Molly, New York siblings who lose their mother and have to find their places in the world. This will be the West Coast premiere of one of the year's most exciting theatrical performances.



GAY & LESBIAN TIMES

September 30, 2010

BEST BET

Tuesday, Oct. 5



**Welcome to Arroyo's. Saturday, September 25 - Sunday, October 31
at the Sheryl & Harvey White Theatre, Old Globe.**

2010 Pulitzer Prize-finalist Kristoffer Diaz's *Welcome to Arroyo's* is a heartwarming story about a brother and sister finding their respective places in the world after the death of their mother. Alejandro is desperate to make Arroyo's the hottest lounge in New York to honor the memory of his mother, while Molly's desire to make her "mark" as a talented graffiti artist is at odds with her new infatuation with a rookie cop. Their struggle to move forward is made even more uncertain as they discover what might be a secret about their mother that could change the very foundation of their lives and, possibly, the history of hip hop music.

For more information contact the box office, Tuesday-Sunday from 12:00 p.m.

(619) 23-GLOBE (234-5623) Fax: (619) 231-6752 Email: tickets@TheOldGlobe.org

EVENTS

Welcome to Arroyo's

Balboa Park | Theater

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Old Globe Theatre

1363 Old Globe Way
San Diego, CA 92101
619-234-5623

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Back in the day, when the original hip-hop DJs "turned it out without a doubt," one of them may have been a *Boricua*, a Puerto Rican woman called "Reina Rey" ("queen king"). A month ago, Allejandro (Andres Munar) and Amalia's (Amirah Vann) mother died. She ran Arroyo's, a popular deli in the Lower East Side. Allejandro wants to commemorate her by turning the deli into a lounge; tough Amalia, who even "hates people she likes" and punches a rookie cop (Byron Bronson) twice, just wants to make art, i.e. graffiti. Lelly Santiago (Tala Ashe), a prolix grad student, theorizes that A&A's mother was Reina Rey, which comes as news to both and complicates their grieving. If Kristoffer Diaz's play were staged just for its bare bones, except for electric dialogue, it wouldn't amount to much. But an engaging theatricality trumps the tale. Two DJs (Wade Allain-Marcus and CQ) comment on the action and sustain a party atmosphere throughout (only persistent problem: the cast often addresses small portions of the audience at the White, leaving the rest to wonder what they said; another: if strong language offends you, steer clear). Directed by Jamie Castaneda, the piece also has a generous spirit; a positive ending's never in doubt, and the answers to some questions are none of your business.

Worth a try.**September 30 through October 31****When:**

Sundays at 2 p.m.
Sundays at 7 p.m.
Tuesdays at 7 p.m.
Wednesdays at 7 p.m.
Thursdays at 8 p.m.
Fridays at 8 p.m.
Saturdays at 2 p.m.
Saturdays at 8 p.m.

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SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE

October 17, 2010

SPOTLIGHT

"Welcome to Arroyo's"

Old Globe's Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre

(619) 234-5623; oldglobe.org

Kristoffer Diaz's inventive, hip-hop-driven play — set in a bar on the Lower East Side — gets its zip (and lip) from two brash onstage DJs. The piece from the writer of the 2010 Pulitzer finalist "The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity" continues through Oct. 31 at the White Theatre, then moves to Lincoln High School Nov. 6-7.



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[Home](#) / [Articles](#) / [Arts](#) / [On Stage](#) / **Another one bites the dust**

Wednesday, Oct 20, 2010

Another one bites the dust

The Theatre Inc. quietly closes its doors

By Martin Jones Westlin



The Theatre, Inc., helmed by Doug Lay (center), staged Orestes earlier this year. - Photo by Paul Savage

It always comes down to money these days, and local theater (with so few of its major companies pulling any kind of profit) knows this all too well. Now comes word of another San Diego group's disbandment amid fiscal constraints: The Theatre, Inc., which opened shop in 2007 at 899 C St., Downtown, as a producer of Greek classics, has quietly closed its doors. That's a far cry from the first days, when the troupe singlehandedly reconditioned its ramshackle space and went on to bring us such gems as *The Phoenician Women* and *The Frogs*. This is the seventh such local closing since 2006 and leaves Downtown San Diego with no theater smaller than a 220-seat capacity. That's important because limitation necessitates creativity—and as The

Theatre's venue seated around 50, it was ideal for just such exploration. Artistic director Douglas Lay and producer Melissa Hamilton were not available for comment. Meanwhile, I, for one, am very sorry to see the place go and wonder when the city, with its marginal attention to local theater's health, will take the hint.

OPENING

Jekyll and Hyde: The genteel Henry Jekyll whips up a potion that turns him into the cantankerous Edward Hyde, and a deadly game of cat and mouse ensues. Produced by Ion Theatre Company, it opens in previews Oct. 20 at BLK BOX @ 6th & Penn in Hillcrest. \$21- \$25. iontheatre.com

A Grand Night for Singing: This Rodgers and Hammerstein revue gives a modern spin to classic musicals like Oklahoma!, The King and I and South Pacific. Opens Oct. 21 at the Experimental Theatre on the SDSU campus. \$14-\$16. theatre.sdsu.edu

The Spitfire Grill: A feisty parolee follows her dreams to a small town in Wisconsin and finds a place for herself working at Hannah's grill, which she raffles off. Opens Oct. 22 at The Poway Performing Arts Company in Poway. \$15- \$17. powpac.org

Bram Stoker's Dracula: The Big Guy finds himself in a frantic search for the human blood that means the difference between life and death. Opens Oct. 22 at The Coronado Playhouse, 1835 Strand Way in Coronado. \$18-\$25. coronadoplayhouse.com

Beauty and the Beast: Belle, whose father is imprisoned by the Beast (really an enchanted prince), offers herself instead and finds the prince inside the Beast. Produced by Broadway/San Diego, it opens Oct. 26 at the Civic Theatre Downtown. \$26.50-\$99.50. broadwaysd.com

Quoth the Raven: This is a staged reading of mystery stories written by Edgar Allen Poe, H.P. Lovecraft, Ray Bradbury and others. Produced by Write Out Loud, it runs through Oct. 26 at the Carlsbad City Library. \$15. writeoutloudsd.com

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NOW PLAYING

Death Takes a Holiday: Death takes three days off from his usual business to see what it's like to be mortal. Through Oct. 24 at Patio Playhouse in Escondido. \$7-\$15. patioplayhouse.com

North Park Playwright Festival: Dozens of writers from San Diego and all over the world peddle their wares at this annual event. Through Oct. 24 at The North Park Vaudeville and Candy Shoppe in North Park. \$14. northparkvaudeville.org

* **Into the Woods:** A group of fabled Brothers Grimm characters find that life isn't necessarily all that happy in their "happily ever after" phase Through Oct . 31 at New Village Arts Theatre in Carlsbad. \$20-\$43. newvillagearts.org

Welcome to Arroyo's: Alejandro and his sister Molly discover what might be a secret about their mother that could change the foundation of their lives and, possibly, the history of hip-hop. Through Oct. 31 at The Old Globe Theatre's Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre in Balboa Park. \$29-\$67. oldglobe.org

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[Slice of heaven](#)

[Library Royale](#)

[Pete Wilson](#)

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[The Theatre Inc. downtown](#)

Yellow Face: An Asian-American playwright gets involved in a flap over the casting of Miss Saigon and writes a play about the experience. Produced by the Mo`olelo Performing Arts Company, it runs through Oct. 31 at The Tenth Avenue Theatre, Downtown. \$15-\$27. moolelo.net

Brighton Beach Memoirs: Fifteen-year-old Eugene can't think about much else except playing for the Yankees—and girls. Through Nov. 7 in repertory with Broadway Bound, its sequel, at the Old Globe Theatre mainstage in Balboa Park. \$29-\$85. oldglobe.org

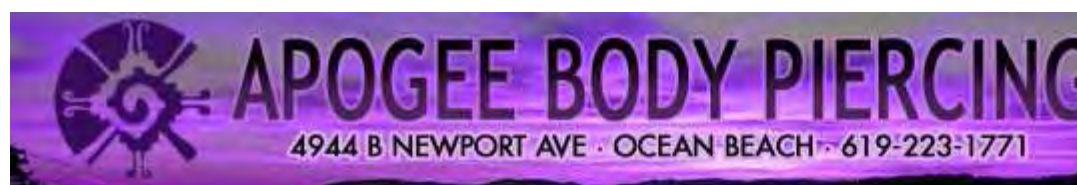
Gee's Bend: Three generations of Alabama women create quilts that double as magnificent works of art. Through Nov. 7 at North Coast Repertory Theatre, 987-D Lomas Santa Fe Drive in Solana Beach. \$30-\$41. ncrep.org

* **The Norman Conquests:** This trilogy of full-length comedies (Table Manners, Round and Round the Garden, Living Together), performed in rotating repertory, focuses on Norman and his oddball in-laws. Produced by Cygnet Theatre Company, the program runs through Nov. 7 at The Old Town Theatre in Old Town. \$24-\$29. cygnettheatre.org

The Glory Man: Clarence Jordan, author of The Cotton Patch Gospels, founds Habitat for Humanity in the Deep South of the 1950s. Produced by Lamb's Players Theatre, it runs through Nov. 14 at The Lone and Paul Harter Stage, 1142 Orange Ave. in Coronado. See our review in this week's CityBeat. \$28-\$58. lambplayers.org

* **miXtape:** Life was just beginning for Generation X in this musical look at the 1980s. Produced by Lamb's Players Theatre, it runs through Nov. 21 at The Horton Grand Theatre, Downtown. \$28- \$58. lambplayers.org

Shotgun Wedding Anniversary: What happens after 25 years in a less-than-blissful marriage? For Basil and Petals, it can mean murder. Through Dec. 24 at Mystery Cafe, inside the Imperial House restaurant in Bankers Hill. \$59.50, including dinner. mysterycafe.net



THE RAGE

October 2010

A-LISTS theatre by lisa lipsey



Welcome to Arroyo's

Arroyo's Lounge is open for business at the Old Globe. Featuring the script of Pulitzer Prize-finalist Kristoffer Diaz, *Welcome to Arroyo's* pulls in a Greek chorus (two hip hop DJs) to literally spin the tale of a brother and sister's search for their respective places in the world after the death of their mother. Their struggle to move forward is made even more uncertain as they discover what might be a secret about their mother that could change the very foundation of their lives and, possibly, the history of hip hop music.

Old Globe Executive Producer Lou Spisto says, "Kristoffer Diaz is an important new playwright who is achieving great success reaching audiences of all ages and backgrounds. We will present *Welcome to Arroyo's* at the Globe and then the production will travel to Lincoln High School. Between both venues, thousands of high school students will experience the show alongside our adult audiences. It is my greatest wish that our collective shared experience with this play will in some way connect us with each other."

Welcome to Arroyo's runs now - October 31 at the Old Globe. For tickets and more information call 619.234.5623.

APPLAUSE

PLAY IT AGAIN

Congo Lines: Pulitzer-winning *Ruined* explores what happens to women during war in the Congo, at La Jolla Playhouse Nov. 16–Dec. 19 (858-550-1010, lajollaplayhouse.org).

All That and Jazz: Mardi Gras comes to the Gaslamp early in the San Diego Rep's lively *Storyville*, Nov. 13–Dec. 12 (619-544-1000, sdrep.org).

Sidekick Schtick: *The Barber of Seville* helps his former boss get the girl in Rossini's famed comic opera, staged by Lyric at the Birch Nov. 12–21 (619-239-8836, lyricoperasandiego.org).

Rotating Stages: *Broadway Bound* and *Brighton Beach Memoirs* take turns on The Globe's main stage through Nov. 7, followed by *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!* Nov. 20–Dec. 26; *Welcome to Arroyo's* plays the White Theatre through Oct. 31, then goes to Lincoln High School Center for the Arts Nov. 4–7 so *The Winter's Tale* can step in, Nov. 7–14 (619-234-5623, theoldglobe.org).

Twice as Wonderful: Cygnet sends an angel flying in Old Town with its fifth annual presentation of *It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play*, Nov. 26–Dec. 31 (619-337-1525, cygnettheatre.com); Welk Resorts Theatre offers its version in Escondido, Nov. 18–Jan. 2 (888-802-SHOW, welktheatresandiego.com).

From Gospel to Nativity to the '80s: In Coronado, Lamb's Players Theatre finishes *The Glory Man* Nov. 14 and dives into its yearly Festival of Christmas, reprising *It's Christmas and It's Live!* Nov. 30–Dec. 30; in the Gaslamp, *miXtape* has been extended (again) through Nov. 21 (619-437-0600, lambplayers.org).

And More Gospel: Stitches in time abound in gospel-laced *Gee's Bend*, at North Coast Repertory Theatre through Nov. 7 (858-481-1055, northcoastrep.org).

Strident Bryant: Diversionary Theatre lands the San Diego premiere of touching, tickling comedy *Anita Bryant Died for Your Sins*, Oct. 28–Nov. 21 (619-220-0097, diversionary.org).

One Last Stand: *The Norman Conquests* occupies Cygnet Theatre through Nov. 7 (619-337-1525, cygnettheatre.com).



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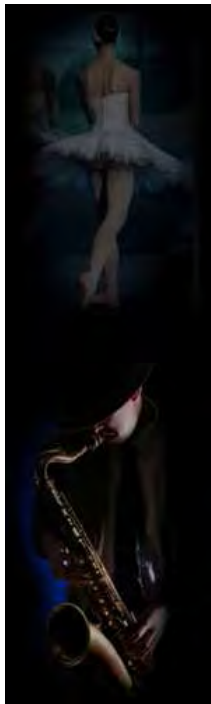
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Center Theatre Group Presents:

Venice
10/7/2010 - 11/14/2010



"Venice" A New Musical Book by Eric Rosen Music by Matt Sax Lyrics by Matt Sax and Eric Rosen
Additional Music by Curtis Moore
Directed by Eric Rosen World Premiere Production Co-produced with Kansas City Repertory Theatre
"Venice" was commissioned by

Center Theatre Group.

Carol Kaufman Segal Presents:

Celebrate Community
10/8/2010



The Young Musicians Foundation (YMF) will celebrate their 56th anniversary Gala Benefit, Oct. 8, 2010, at the International Ballroom of the Beverly Hilton Hotel. The event will honor Deborah Borda, President and Chief Executive Officer of the

Los Angeles Philharmonic Assoc. and the Wells Fargo Corp.

Center Stage Opera Presents:

La Traviata In Concert
10/7/2010 - 10/10/2010



A concert presentation of Verdi's timeless story of sacrifice for the sake of love and the enduring strength of a heroine consumed by tragic illness. Featuring Shira Renee

Thomas as Violetta, Liam McLachlan as Alfredo, and Zachary Gordin as Germont. With the Center Stage Opera Orchestra, conducted by Brian Onderdonk. Performed in Italian, with English translation projected above the stage.

Orchestra Nova San Diego Presents:

Greatest Moments in Opera
10/9/2010

A command-performance sequel to the hit program presented in 2008 featuring the greatest arias and orchestral music from the most famous operas ever written. From Mozart to Puccini and Verdi, we have chosen the greatest and most beautiful moments to satisfy any passionate opera lover or make opera lovers out of everyone else. Hosted by San Diego Opera's Nicolas Reveles

FBCGlendale Presents:

Violist KAREN ELAINE performs BACH at the GLENDALE NOON CONCERTS
10/6/2010



Free Admission GLENDALE NOON CONCERTS Every FIRST & THIRD WEDNESDAY at 12:10-12:40 pm On Wed. OCT 6 at 12:10 pm BACH Transcriptions for Solo Viola

performed by KAREN ELAINE The prize winning violist Karen Elaine was nominated for a Grammy for her CD "Works for Viola; Music of Ernest Bloch". Artist website:

<http://www.violaconcerts.com>

Keshet Chaim Dance Ensemble Presents:

Jerusalem Soul
10/9/2010



Keshet Chaim Dance Ensemble, Israeli superstars Rami Kleinstein & Miri Mesika and the interfaith Agape International Choir present an uplifting evening of new works for dance and song. Designed in the style of ancient Judaic architecture to resemble the gates of Jerusalem, The Ford, is the perfect backdrop to honor the ancient city and all it symbolizes for the future of humanity.

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Long Beach Symphony Orchestra Presents:
Feltsman Rachs!
 10/9/2010

Music Director Enrique Arturo Diemecke and the Long Beach Symphony Orchestra (LBSO) will "Rach" the Terrace Theater in Long Beach when prominent Russian pianist Vladimir Feltsman joins the Orchestra on Saturday, October 9, 2010 for a performance of the most famous Russian piano concerto of all time: Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 2.

The Old Globe Presents:
Welcome to Arroyo's
 9/25/2010 - 10/31/2010



2010 Pulitzer Prize-finalist Kristoffer Diaz's *Welcome to Arroyo's* is a heartwarming story about a brother and sister finding their respective places in the world after the death of their mother.

UCSB Department of Music Presents:
Margo Halsted, Carillon
 10/10/2010



Free carillon recital at UC Santa Barbara.

Chance Theater Presents:
The Goat, or Who is Sylvia?
 9/24/2010 - 10/24/2010



****Pulitzer Prize FINALIST****
****WINNER for BEST PLAY!!**** Tony Award Drama Desk Award New York Drama Critics Circle Outer Critics Circle "Unquestionably one of the wittiest and funniest plays Albee has ever written" – New York Times

RCC Performing Arts Dept. Presents:
RCC Wind Ensemble, RCC Jazz Ensemble & RCC Evening Jazz Ensemble
 10/10/2010



RCC Wind Ensemble, RCC Jazz Ensemble & RCC Evening Jazz Ensemble. Roger Rickson Scholarship Concert & Fundraiser. Kevin A. Mayse and Charlie Richard, conductors. Featuring guest artist Gary Foster, clarinet.

SeaGlass Theatre Presents:
OF GRAPES AND NUTS
 9/18/2010 - 10/24/2010



OF GRAPES AND NUTS, written by Doug Armstrong, Keith Cooper and Tom Willmorth, formerly of Chicago's highly celebrated *Illegitimate Players*, will have its Los Angeles premiere by SeaGlass Theatre September 18 – October 24, 2010 at the Victory Theatre Center's Little Vic Theatre in Burbank, CA. The 6-week engagement marks the 20th anniversary of this award-winning comedy.

Fallbrook Music Society Presents:
REDLANDS SYMPHONY WITH JONAH KIM, Cello

Virtuoso

10/10/2010



Jonah Kim, a gifted 23- year-old cello virtuoso, will perform as a guest artist with the 80-member Redlands Orchestra at Fallbrook Music Society's Season Opening concert. An extraordinary cellist, Mr. Kim virtually "brought the house down" last year with his eloquence and intensity. He'll perform his fiery cello artistry in Elgar's Cello Concerto.

Program also includes Wagner's magnificent Die Meistersinger Overture and Tchaikovsky's well-loved, well-known Symphony No. 5.

Matt Patton/Magic Castle Presents: Sharon McNight as Sophie Tucker in RED HOT MAMA

10/10/2010 - 10/11/2010



"Not just a mimic, McNight becomes Sophie Tucker," said the Chicago Sun-Times. While the New York Times declared "McNight absolutely keeps Tucker in her era without missing a beat in making her relevant for today's ears and eyes." Now, Sharon McNight brings "RED HOT MAMA" to Cabaret at the Castle.

La Jolla Playhouse Presents: Limelight: The Story of Charlie Chaplin

9/7/2010 - 10/17/2010



From the gritty streets and smoky music halls of London to movie screens across the world, Limelight goes behind the camera to show how Charlie Chaplin found soaring success and later fell from grace. Limelight provides a moving and delightful close-up on the man who changed motion pictures forever.

Bob Cole Conservatory of Music Presents: Concert Jazz Orchestra

10/10/2010



Led by Jeff Jarvis, the CSULB Cole Conservatory Jazz Program is one of the strongest in the country - with multiple national titles under their collective belts. In 2009, the CJO performed in the legendary Monterey Jazz Festival. Unbelievable jazz at an unbeatable price!

The Second City - Los Angeles Presents: The Farley Bros. Radio Hour- (Live Podcast)

9/1/2010 - 10/27/2010



A brutally honest, wickedly funny, viewer-discretion-advised confab on all things Farley. Listen as Kevin & John spin tales of sex, drugs and comedy alongside their hilarious takes on life, love and family. FREE

Breakdown Services, Performing Arts LIVE, and Michael Sterling and Paul Stroili Presents: STATE OF THE ARTS on LATalkRadio.com

8/2/2010 - 5/30/2011



State of the Arts is a live, weekly, 50-minute radio series which had its premiere broadcast Monday May 31, 2010 on LATalkRadio.com. State of the Arts is hosted by theatre professionals Michael Sterling and Paul Stroili. The series broadcasts live from Los Angeles and airs globally between 4:00 and 4:50 pm Pacific Standard Time. See our review inside the listing.

WORDS ARE NOT ENOUGH



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A LOOK AT SAN DIEGO'S STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT

HELP WANTED

Words Are Not Enough is seeking a part-time writer/intern to assist in the weekly review composition and preparation of tabular matter for this site. Applicant **must** have a working knowledge of performance art; I can't stress enough that this trait is equally as important as your training in journalism. A recent college theater grad would be ideal. There's some pay involved, and my rates suck, but so do everybody else's. If you're interested and think you have the skills, please submit a resume and clips to marty@wordsarenotenough.info; if I like your stuff, let's go out for coffee. I'll buy. Thanks!

EDITORIAL

Local theater awards: What's under the pretty face?

BY MARTIN JONES WESTLIN, Publisher
Words Are Not Enough



If you're anticipating the 14th annual Patté Awards for Theatre Excellence ceremony this January, you're in for a disappointment (or a reprieve, depending). Pat Launer, the longtime San Diego theater critic who created the event in 1997, has canceled the installment, citing family health issues in a recent e-mail to her readership. The gala drew 450 to the Westin Gaslamp Quarter last January as Launer presented 30 awards to 16 companies in honor of local theater achievements for 2009.

Me, I've never seen the value in an awards show fueled by only one person's (Launer's) opinions; if the Pattés were, say, the product of input from a panel of judges, Launer might have found a way to hold them this winter, perhaps hosted by a knowledgeable stand-in. But what's done is done—as a result, the local theater community, through no fault of its own, will sit this one out.

That leaves San Diego, which in the recent past had at least three annual theater awards ceremonies, with just one for the time being—the San Diego Theatre Critics Circle fête, held every January by the nine-member group that writes the various play reviews you read in area papers and on area websites. In light of

The shows go on

See 'How They Did' for the dish on ion theatre company's *Jack Goes Boating*. Meanwhile, here are your choices for the weekend and beyond. The absence of an asterisk means Marty either didn't like the show or hasn't seen it yet.

OPENING

Brighton Beach Memoirs: 15-year-old Eugene can't think about much else except playing for the Yankees—and girls. In previews, it opens Sept. 23 and runs in repertory with Broadway Bound, its sequel, at the Old Globe Theatre mainstage in Balboa Park. \$29-\$85. oldglobe.org

Romeo and Juliet: Two crazy Italian kids fall in love and pay for it with their lives in the middle of a family feud. Produced by Intrepid Shakespeare Company, it opens in previews Sept. 24 at The Roundabout Theatre in Encinitas. \$15-\$25. intrepidshakespeare.com

The Road to Mecca: An eccentric widow is the target of a minister's battle for her future. Produced by San Diego Repertory Theatre, it opens in preview Sept. 25 at The Lyceum Space Downtown. \$35-\$47. sdrep.org

Welcome to Arroyo's: Alejandro and his sister Molly discover what might be a secret about their mother that could change the foundation of their lives and, possibly, the history of hip-hop. Opens in previews Sept. 25 at The Old Globe Theatre's Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre in Balboa Park. \$29-\$67. oldglobe.org

Notes from Underground: Obsessively reopening old wounds, a man begins a slow descent into madness. In previews, it opens Sept. 26 at the Potiker Theatre in La Jolla. \$31-\$66. ajollaplayhouse.org

THE CALIFORNIAN

October 7, 2010

San Diego County Theater

"Welcome to Arroyo's" -- The Old Globe presents the West Coast premiere of Kristoffer Diaz's hip-hop-infused drama about a brother and sister trying to make their mark in the New York art world while grieving for, and learning secrets about, their late mother; 8 p.m. Thursdays-Saturdays; 2 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays; 7 p.m. Sundays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays; through Oct. 31; Sheryl & Harvey White Theatre, Old Globe complex, Balboa Park, San Diego; \$29-\$67; play contains strong language; 619-234-5623 or theoldglobe.org.

drawings for free exhibitor products, gift cards, cash and more. **Del Mar Fairgrounds**, I-5 at Via de la Valle, Del Mar. Through Oct. 24. \$7-\$9. (800) 346-1212. harvestfestival.com.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 23

THE 1960s LIVE!

Gary Puckett, Chris Montez and Bo Donaldson & the Heywords reunite for an exciting evening of musical favorites from the '60s. **Cerritos Center for the Performing Arts**, 12700 Center Court Drive, Cerritos. \$50-\$74. (562) 467-8818. cerritoscenter.com.



SUNDAY, OCTOBER 24

CLASSICS AT THE MERC

Schumann Homage:

Victoria Martino, violin; James Lent, piano. **The Mercantile**, 42051 Main St.,

Temecula. \$11. (866) 653-8696. temeculatheater.org.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 25

MINEFIELDS OF THE HEART

San Diego author Sue Diaz discusses her new book "Minefields of the Heart:

GET THE WORD OUT.

E-mail your calendar of events announcements to **Claire Fadden, cfadden@lifeafter50.com**. Include a brief description, location, date, time, cost, phone and Web site. Submission does not guarantee publication. Deadline for the November issue is October 7.

DIWALI FESTIVAL

The third annual Diwali Festival (Indian Festival of Lights) in Balboa Park



features arts, a cultural program, music, dancing, Indian food, specialty vendors, family activities and the traditional ceremonial lighting of lamps. The event includes an outdoor procession representing India's varied and culturally diverse regions, with a cultural performance in the Spreckels Organ Pavilion culminating in the lighting of 1,008 small lamps. The festival will also feature performances of regional dances and the garba, a dance in which all visitors may participate, as well as varied cuisines of the subcontinent, select Indian goods and henna artists. Mingei International Museum

and The San Diego Museum of Art are located on the Plaza de Panama in the center of Balboa Park. \$10-\$15. (619) 239-0003, ext. 113. mingei.org.

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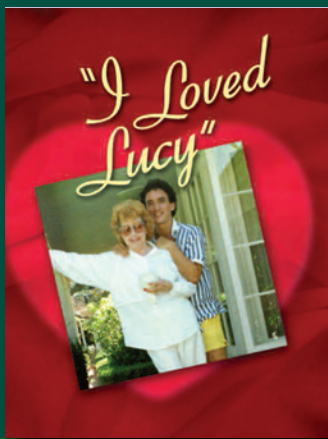
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CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR OCTOBER

FOR ADDITIONAL EVENTS, VISIT LIFEAFTER50.COM

I LOVED LUCY



Get a front-and-center look at the personal life of Lucille Ball from someone who spent the last of her years beside her - out of the spotlight and around a backgammon table. The Laguna Playhouse, Moulton Theatre, 606 Laguna Canyon Road, Laguna Beach. Oct. 10 through Oct. 31. \$30-\$65. (949) 497-2787. lagunaplayhouse.com

ENTERTAINMENT

SUNDAY OCTOBER 10

THE FULL MONTY

Cissy King of "The Lawrence Welk Show" plays Jeannette in this story about an unemployment-ravaged town and its workers' fears, self-consciousness and personal worth. **Welk Resorts Theatre**, 8860 Lawrence Welk Dr., Escondido. Wed.-Sun. through Oct. 17. \$44-58. (888) 802-7469. welktheatre.com.

NOTES FROM THE UNDERGROUND

It's hard to be a righteous man in a corrupt world. **La Jolla Playhouse, UCSD Campus, Mandell Weiss Forum**, 2910 La Jolla Village Dr., La Jolla. Through Oct. 17. \$35-\$45. (858) 550-1010. lajollaplayhouse.org.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 11

EARTHQUAKES IN

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Southern California hosts a number of active faults. Over the last 20 years, our region has become the most seismically active area in the West, with magnitude seven or greater events occurring along the San Andreas fault. Geoscientist Yuri Fialko discusses what we know about earthquakes and the slow tectonic deformation that causes them. **Birch Aquarium at Scripps**, 2300 Expedition Way, La Jolla. \$5-\$8. (858) 534-5771. aquarium.ucsd.edu.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 12

SOUTH PACIFIC

Set on a tropical island during World War II, this musical tells the sweeping romantic story of two couples and how their happiness is threatened by the realities of war and their own prejudices. The beloved songs include "Some Enchanted Evening," "I'm Gonna Wash That Man Right Outa My Hair," "This Nearly Was Mine" and "There is Nothin' Like a Dame." **Orange County Performing Arts Center, Segerstrom Hall**, 600 Town Center Dr., Costa Mesa. Through Oct. 24. \$20-\$85. (714) 556-2787. ocpac.org.

BURN THE FLOOR

Enjoy all the passion, drama and sizzling

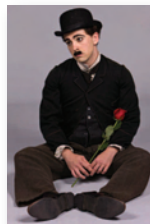


excitement of 20 world champion dancers in a true theatrical experience, a

performance with grace and athleticism. San Diego's own Mary Murphy will appear partnered with ballroom champion Vaidas Skimelis. **San Diego Civic Theatre**, Third and B St., 1100 Third Ave., downtown San Diego. \$20-\$79. Through Oct. 17. (619) 570-1100. broadwaysd.com.

LIMELIGHT: THE STORY OF CHARLIE CHAPLIN

He came to America an unknown. He left amidst scandals and controversy. In between, Charlie Chaplin became one of the best-loved and most famous



entertainers in the world. A fascinating study in talent and turmoil, boldness and vulnerability, Chaplin's life was fueled by an insatiable drive that was both essential to his

artistry and the cause of strife in his personal life. **La Jolla Playhouse, UCSD Campus, Mandell Weiss Forum**, 2910 La Jolla Village Dr., La Jolla. Through Oct. 17. \$44-\$80. (858) 550-1010. lajollaplayhouse.org.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 13

JANE EYRE

Rumor and mystery abound in this epic love story now a musical based on the novel by Charlotte Bronte. **Fullerton Civic Light Opera Music Theatre, Plummer Auditorium, Lemon & Chapman, Fullerton**. Through Oct. 31. \$25-\$68. (714) 879-1732. fclco.com

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 15

BLUE SUEDE SHOE: THE ULTIMATE ELVIS BASH

This tribute to Elvis Presley features highly acclaimed Elvis impressionists Scot Bruce and Mike Albert. Accompanied by the Big E Band, the performers deliver the legend's greatest hits, including "Heartbreak Hotel", "Love Me Tender", "All Shook Up", and "Jailhouse Rock." **Cerritos Center for the Performing Arts**, 12700 Center Court Drive, Cerritos. \$41-\$65. (562) 467-8818. cerritoscenter.com.

JANE EYRE

Three Broadway and national touring stars head a cast of 35 supported by a 20-piece live orchestra as they perform "Maybe Love," "I Need a Missionary Wife," and more. **Plummer Auditorium** 201 E. Chapman Ave., Fullerton. Oct. 15 through 31. Call (714) 879-1732 for ticket prices and availability. fclco.com <<http://fclco.com/>>

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 16

NATURE GUIDE TOURS

Tours begin at the entrance of the Arboretum and usually last one hour, depending on the number of participants and which tour is taken. Bring

comfortable walking shoes, water and a hat if needed, as it can get warm. **The Fullerton Arboretum**, adjacent to CSUF campus, Yorba Linda Blvd. and Associated Road. Also Nov. 20. Free. (657) 278-3407. fullertonarboretum.org.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 20

WELCOME TO ARROYO'S

A brother and sister search for their respective places in the world after the death of their mother. **The Old Globe Theatre, Harvey White Theatre**, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park, San Diego. Through Oct. 31. \$29-\$67. (619) 234-5623. theoldglobe.org.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 21

IRVINE MUSEUM DOCENT TOUR

Weekly tour. The Irvine Museum is dedicated to the preservation and display of California art of the Impressionist Period (1890-1930). **The Irvine Museum**, 18881 Von Karman Ave., Ground Fl., Irvine. Thursdays. Free. (949) 476-2565. irvine-museum.org.

SAN DIEGO ASIAN FILM FESTIVAL

This year the festival features 150 movies from 12 countries over eight days. This is one of the largest exhibitions of Asian international and Asian American cinema in North America. Along with narrative features, it showcases documentaries, short films, animation and films by local high school students. **Hazard Center UltraStar Cinema**, 7450 Hazard Center Dr., San Diego. Through Oct. 28. \$34-\$86. (858) 565-1264. sdaff.org

JAZZ AT THE MERC

Dan Reagan Latin Jazz Quartet. **The Mercantile**, 42051 Main St., Temecula. \$15. (866) 653-8696. temeculatheater.org.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 22

GABRIEL IGLESIAS

Humphrey's Concerts by the Bay, 2241 Shelter Island Dr., San Diego. \$48. (619) 220-8497. humphreysconcerts.com.

DEL MAR HARVEST FESTIVAL

Make-it-and-take-it crafts, gourmet edible art, local entertainment with bands and strolling entertainers. Grab-bag



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CALENDAR

< October, 2010 >

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Coming Soon...

Wednesday, Oct 27

All Day 11th Annual San Diego Asian Film Festival

All Day Reception: Día de los Muertos

07:00 PM Italian Film: La Matassa

Thursday, Oct 28

All Day 11th Annual San Diego Asian Film Festival

01:00 PM The Woodblock Prints of Chikanobu

06:00 PM Tower After Hours: Portugal

06:00 PM Beyond Sugar Skulls!

06:00 PM Sugar Skull Making Workshop

STAGE: WELCOME TO ARROYO'S

The Old Globe Theatre presents Kristoffer Diaz's Pulitzer Prize finalist (for 2010) about a brother and sister who "search for their respective places in the world after the death of their mother." Jaime Castaneda directed.

Location:

Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre (next to the Old Globe)
1363 Old Globe Way
San Diego, CA 92101
[MAP](#)

September 30 through October 31

Dates and Times:

Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Sundays at 7:00 PM
Saturdays & Sundays at 2:00 PM
Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays at 8:00 PM

For more information, please call: (619) 234-5623

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10/28/2010

Starts at 08:00 PM

This event repeats weekly every Thursday Friday Saturday until 10/31/2010

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