

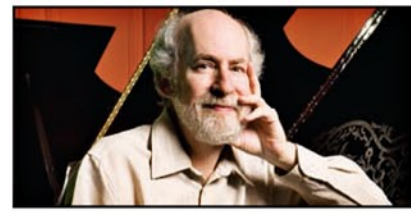


Musical incorporates the unknown

Arts and Leisure, B5

Renowned pianist makes Santa Cruz appearance

Arts and Leisure, B5



Register-Pajaronian

WATSONVILLE PAJARO FREEDOM AROMAS CORRALITOS CASTROVILLE APTOS LA SELVA BEACH ROYAL OAKS ELKHORN MOSS LANDING

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Musical incorporates the unknown



Photo by Steve DiBartolomeo

"The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee" opens Saturday at Cabrillo College.

'The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee' opens Saturday

By ERIK CHALHOUB
OF THE REGISTER-PAJARONIAN

APTOS — Cabrillo College's latest musical is a spelling bee, and members from the audience just might find themselves having to spell in front of the crowd they were once a part of.

"The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee," presented by Cabrillo College's Theater Arts Department, opens Saturday and runs through Nov. 24.

By its very nature, the musical relies heavily on improvisation, said director Kathryn Adkins. During each show, four audience members will be chosen at random to join the cast of characters who are competing in the fictional spelling bee.

It's never known how it will play out, Adkins said. The chosen audience members could

go out early, or they could stay for a good third of the show.

The words themselves are randomized as well.

"Part of the script is commenting on the randomness of life," Adkins said. "In this case, it is the words that come out. Some are very easy, some are unbelievably hard. It will test the audience."

Audience members will also be able to participate via a reporter and camera person from the cast, who will interview and record audience members. The video will be shown in the lobby during subsequent performances.

"The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee," written by William Finn and Rachel Sheinkin, made its Broadway debut in 2005. It received a Tony Award for Best Book of a Musical that same year.

Adkins chose the musical for Cabrillo's fall production because of its "outrageous" qualities, she said.

"I saw a professional performance, and it was the funniest show I have seen in the last 15-20 years," she said. "It is outrageously funny."

Adkins describes the musical as a "very hip" production that was created in the same improvisational spirit as Saturday Night Live.

Because it relies on improvisation, the musical, which features 15 performers, can be a challenge to direct, Adkins said.

"This is the first musical I have had to work on that incorporates the unknown," she said.

Some sections of the script is based off of current events, and those change weekly, Adkins noted.

"The script has a fresh and

new bent each time we do it," she said.

Adkins recommends the play for an audience of 10 and older.

"They can expect to be laughing a lot and being surprised by the heart that is in it," she said.

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"The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee" will be performed Saturday through Nov. 24 at Cabrillo College Crocker Theater, 6500 Soquel Drive, Aptos. Friday and Saturday performances are at 7:30 p.m. with Sunday matinees at 2 p.m. A 10 a.m. performance will take place on Nov. 15.

Admission is \$19 general, \$17 students/seniors, \$12 children under 10, or \$9 with a student activity card. Tickets can be purchased by calling 479-6154 or visiting www.cabrillovapa.com.