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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Michele Abba
Cal Poly Music Department
(805) 756-2406

**Cal Poly to Present Purcell's Opera 'Dido and Aeneas'**

SAN LUIS OBISPO -- Cal Poly music students will give four performances of Henry Purcell's mysterious and brooding opera, "Dido and Aeneas" at 7:30 and 9 p.m. Friday and Saturday, March 31-April 1, in Cal Poly's Spanos Theatre.

The opera has double casts and understudies to allow more students to participate, said Jacalyn Kreitzer, the opera's producer and a Cal Poly voice, performance and diction teacher.

The opera is the story of Aeneas, a survivor of the fall of Troy, who falls in love with Dido, the Queen of Carthage, after being shipwrecked on the North Coast of Africa. "The gods and witches and sorceresses conspire to prevent their union, as Aeneas is destined to go on to found the new Troy, later becoming Rome," Kreitzer said.

The cast includes students Lauren Groff and Jessica Reed in the star role as Dido; Eddie Hora and Gabe Bondoc play the hero Aeneas; Rachael Beckner and Chloe Gill sing the soprano role of Belinda; Amanda Tredger and Laura Zapata will perform as the handmaiden; Carolyn Jorstad and Holly Nelson are the sorceresses; Patrick Little and Andrew Olson, the sailors; Stephanie Davies, Michelle Schwartz, Corrie Stallings and Kristen Choi, the witches; and Karlie Saenz and Hannah Juul-Borré are the spirits who tell Aeneas to leave Dido and search for the new Troy.

The opera will be fully staged with costumes, a chorus and orchestra. Ross Halper of the San Francisco and Metropolitan operas will direct, assisted by music major Kimberly Nicola. Kreitzer will produce, and both music faculty member Katherine Arthur and music staff member Patrick Christians will oversee musical preparation.

The orchestra will be conducted by music faculty member David Arrivée, and music professor Thomas Davies will direct the baroque chorus. Moon Ja Minn Suhr of the Theatre and Dance Department will direct the dance and choreography. Music staff member Paul Woodring will play harpsichord, and student Lauren Harvey will play the cello in continuo accompaniment. Cynthia Vest is the costumer.

Tickets are $6 for students and senior citizens and $10 for the public. They are on sale at the Performing Arts Ticket Office 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays and 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. weekends. To order by phone, call SLO-ARTS (756-2787); to order by fax, dial 756-6088.

Patrons who buy season tickets to four Music Department events through the Performing Arts Ticket office will receive a 10 percent discount; a 15 percent discount is given to those who buy tickets to five or more events.

The performances are sponsored by the Cal Poly Music Department and College of Liberal Arts and supported in part by local donors. Call the Music Department at 756-2406 for more information.

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