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## Cal Poly Theatre and Dance to Stage Musical Adaptation of the Classic Book “The Phantom Tollbooth” in May

SAN LUIS OBISPO – Cal Poly’s Theatre and Dance Department will present a stage production of “The Phantom Tollbooth” at 7 p.m. Thursday through Saturday, May 14-16 and Wednesday through Friday, May 20-22. Matinee performances are scheduled for 2 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, May 16 and 17. All performances will be at the Spanos Theatre on campus.

This inventive musical is based on the story from the classic book by Norton Juster. Tony Award-winner Sheldon Harnick wrote the clever lyrics, and Arnold Black composed the buoyant music. It will appeal to audiences of all ages and is recommended for ages 10 and up.

The lead character, Milo, is bored—bored with everything. The Demons of Ignorance are convinced that he will be their next recruit and tell him, “If you get the urge to do anything—don’t.” Then one day a mysterious singing tollbooth and a magical car appear in his room. He is given the choice to continue or cancel the adventure. Bravely, Milo chooses to continue, gets into the car, and drives through the tollbooth into a life-changing adventure. He is given the double mission of reuniting the kingdom, which has been divided between brother kings who rule over the cities of Dictionopolis and Digitopolis, and rescuing the Princesses of Rhyme and Reason from the Castle in the Air. With the help of Tock, the time-keeping dog, and the advice of many extraordinary characters along the way, Milo brings harmony back to the Land of Wisdom. When he returns home, he discovers that it is difficult to be bored in a world where so many things are new and exciting.

For this production, the stage of the Spanos Theatre will be transformed into an intimate playing space with the audience seated on the stage with the actors. Seating will be limited, but every member of the audience will be in the midst of Milo’s adventure. Tim Dugan, Theatre and Dance Department chair, will design the set to incorporate a five-piece band and many levels of playing space. Thomas John Bernard, assistant professor in costume design, will assume the challenging task of designing the costumes for the ten-member ensemble playing more than 50 characters. The show will be a colorful, fanciful extravaganza full of music, physical movement and special effects such as puppets.

This is the final of three shows produced by Cal Poly’s Theatre and Dance Department as part of its 2008-2009 Mainstage Season.

Tickets are \$12 to \$14. For ticket information, call 805-756-2787. For information about the play or Cal Poly’s Theatre and Dance Department, please contact Erma Stauffer at 805-756-5361 or [estauffe@calpoly.edu](mailto:estauffe@calpoly.edu) or go online to [www.cla.calpoly.edu.thtrdanc/index.html](http://www.cla.calpoly.edu.thtrdanc/index.html).

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