Cal Poly Vocal Jazz to Play May 22

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Cal Poly Vocal Jazz to Present First Solo Concert

SAN LUIS OBISPO -- Cal Poly Vocal Jazz will present its first-ever solo concert, featuring a combination of a cappella and lively jazz combo tunes, at 7:30 p.m. Sunday, May 22, at the Monday Club in San Luis Obispo.

Special guest a cappella group Take it SLO will also perform as part of the evening’s repertoire.

“Cal Poly Vocal Jazz Night” was recently added to the Choral Program’s season of Cal Poly Music Department events. The concert will be fun and entertaining, according to the ensemble’s interim director, John Knutson.

The wide variety of songs to be presented will include the classic jazz tune "Waltz for Debby" by Bill Evans and several pop hits, including Stevie Wonder’s "I Wish."

Cal Poly Vocal Jazz has received nationwide recognition over the past several years and has participated in the Reno Jazz Festival, among others. A highlight last year was the group’s performance in New York City’s world-renowned Carnegie Hall.

Knutson is director of choral studies at Cuesta College and interim director of vocal jazz at Cal Poly. He is also a member of the professional vocal jazz ensemble Vocalogy, formed by Phil Mattson in 1998.

Before moving to California, Knutson taught at Treasure Valley Community College in Oregon and at Southwestern Community College in Iowa. While at Southwestern, he performed throughout the United States and Europe with the award-winning vocal jazz group VoicesIowa.

Under his direction, Cuesta Vocé performed at the 2005 National American Choral Directors Association Convention in Los Angeles and at the 2003 International Association for Jazz Education convention in Toronto.

Knutson has served as a clinician at jazz and choral festivals in Arizona, California, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, and Oregon. He has numerous choral compositions to his credit. He earned a bachelor’s degree in piano performance from the University of Minnesota and a master's degree in conducting from Northern Arizona University.

Tickets to the concert are $5 and can be bought at the door the night of the concert. The Monday Club is located at 1815 Monterey Street in San Luis Obispo.

Cal Poly Vocal Jazz Night is sponsored by Cal Poly’s Music Department, College of Liberal Arts and Instructionally Related Activities program. For more information on the concert, call the Music Department at 756-2406.

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