

California Polytechnic State University

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Cal Poly Arts Brings Lilly Tomlin to PAC October 16

SAN LUIS OBISPO -- Fans remember her from TV's "Laugh-In" and Hollywood's "Nashville" and "9 to 5." They've seen her Tony Award-winning Broadway show and now watch her in "The West Wing." They hear her voice urging them to ride on "The Magic School Bus."

On Saturday, October 16, 2004 at 8 p.m., Cal Poly Arts presents one of America's favorite comediennes in her one-woman show, "An Evening with Lily Tomlin," on stage at the Christopher Cohan Center. An audience question and answer session follows the performance.

Lily Tomlin launched a successful comedy career with the chatty 6-year old Edith Ann and the irascible telephone operator, Ernestine. For over four decades, she has starred in television, theater, motion pictures, animation, and video -- all to critical and popular acclaim.

Tomlin grew up in a working-class Detroit neighborhood and although she claims she wasn't funny as a child, Tomlin admits she "knew who was (funny) and lifted all their material right off the TV screen."

Early influences included Lucille Ball, Bea Lillie, Imogene Coca, and Jean Carroll, one of the first female stand-ups on "The Ed Sullivan Show."

After high school, Tomlin enrolled at Wayne State University to study medicine, but her elective courses in theater arts compelled her to leave college to become a performer in local coffee houses.

She moved to New York in 1965 and built a strong following with appearances at landmark clubs such as The Improvisation, Cafe Au Go Go, and the Upstairs at the Downstairs.

Tomlin made her television debut in 1966 on "The Garry Moore Show" and then made several memorable appearances on "The Merv Griffin Show." In December, 1969, Tomlin joined the cast of television's top-rated "Laugh-In" and immediately rose to national prominence with her

characterizations.

With Jane Wagner, Tomlin went on to co-write and star in six comedy television specials: "The Lily Tomlin Show" (1973), "Lily" (1973), "Lily" (1974), "Lily Tomlin" (1975), "Lily: Sold Out" (1981), and "Lily for President?" (1982), for which she won three Emmy Awards and a Writers Guild of America Award.

Tomlin made her Broadway debut in the 1977 play, "Appearing Nitely," written and directed by Wagner. The production garnered two Tony Awards and was later adapted as both an album and an HBO Special.

"Appearing Nitely" included such characters as Ernestine, Edith Ann, and Judith Beasley, the Calumet City housewife. It also introduced Trudy the Bag Lady, Crystal the hang-gliding quadriplegic, Rick the singles bar cruiser, Glenna as a child of the sixties, and Sister Boogie Woman, a 77-year-old blues revivalist.

She next appeared on Broadway in 1985 in a year-long, sold-out run of Wagner's critically-acclaimed play, "The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe." Tomlin won a Drama Desk Award and Outer Critics' Circle Award for her one-woman performance.

The actress extended her theatrical career with a cross-country, 29-city tour of "The Search..." and by recently mounting a new production of "The Search..." on Broadway. She also performed a record-breaking six-month run in San Francisco and a six-week run in Los Angeles.

Back on television, Tomlin starred in the 1993 HBO special about the AIDS epidemic, "And the Band Played On." She guest-starred on numerous television shows and played the boss for two years on the popular CBS series, "Murphy Brown."

She also voices Ms. Frizzle, the science teacher on the popular children's animated series, "The Magic School Bus," for which she was awarded an Emmy.

In 2002, Tomlin joined the cast of the hit NBC series, "The West Wing," playing President Bartlet's assistant, for which she received a Screen Actors Guild nomination for Best Actress in a Drama Series.

In addition to Tony and Emmy Awards, Tomlin received a CableAce Award for Executive Producing the film adaptation of "The Search...", a Grammy for her comedy album, "This is a Recording" as well as nominations for her subsequent albums, "Modern Scream," "And That's the Truth," and "On Stage."

Tomlin won two Peabody Awards for the ABC television special, "Edith Ann's Christmas: Just Say Noel" and for narrating and executive producing the HBO film, "The Celluloid Closet."

Lily Tomlin was also honored as the 2003 recipient of the prestigious Mark Twain Prize for American Humor in Washington DC.

Tickets for the performance range from \$52 to \$64, with student discounts available, and may be purchased at the Performing Arts Ticket Office, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays and 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturdays. To order by phone, call 805/756-2787; to order by fax: 805/756-6088. Order on-line at www.pacslo.org.

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