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CONTACT: LISA WOSKE
(805) 756-7110

Studs Terkel Play, "American Dreams: Lost and Found" Comes to Cal Poly April 13

SAN LUIS OBISPO - An embittered winner of the Miss U.S.A. pageant. A businessman enamored of success. Farm kids dreaming of the city and city boys determined to get out. These "oral histories" are part of "American Dreams: Lost and Found" by Pulitzer Prize-winning author Studs Terkel. Curtain is 7 p.m. at the Cal Poly Theatre on Sunday, April 13.

The New York Times calls "American Dreams: Lost and Found" "the best of Terkel's work...a stirring, hopeful book," exemplifying Terkel's ability to capture the voices of Americans from all walks of life.

Cal Poly Arts presents the original adaptation for stage, performed by Manhattan's acclaimed Acting Company. Central Coast audiences may remember The Acting Company's very successful production of "The Taming of the Shrew," presented by Cal Poly Arts last spring.

The vignettes in "American Dreams..." -- based on interviews and real-life stories from approximately 100 people -- show the simple dreams and grand aspirations of its characters. Whether the goal is to run a small-town newspaper, own a piece of land, build a fourth television network, or become the best bodybuilder in the world, Terkel gleans highly dramatic, funny, and powerful tales from each encounter.

Terkel is the author of eight books of oral history, including the Pulitzer Prize-winning "The Good War," a memoir entitled "Talking to Myself," and the just-published "Will the Circle Be Unbroken?". His other books include "Hard Times: An Oral History of the Great American Depression" and "Race: How Blacks and Whites Think and Feel about the American Obsession."

Terkel's daily radio show on WFMT in Chicago was broadcast on stations throughout the world until last year. At 90, Terkel is currently based at the Chicago Historical Society, archiving his massive collection of interviews.

"American Dreams: Lost and Found" continues The Acting Company's American Century series of commissioning, developing, and producing new plays based on great American literature.

A pre-performance lecture will be presented by Cal Poly professor Patricia Troxel and held at 6 p.m. in the Phillips Recital Hall. Tickets for the performance are $28 & $34, with student discounts available, and may be purchased at the Performing Arts Ticket Office, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. weekdays and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturdays. To order by phone, call 805/756-2787; to order by fax: 805/756-6088.
This performance is sponsored by Bill and Harriette Shaffner. Supported in part by a grant from the Western States Arts Federation (WESTAF).

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