

10 THE PAC TURNS

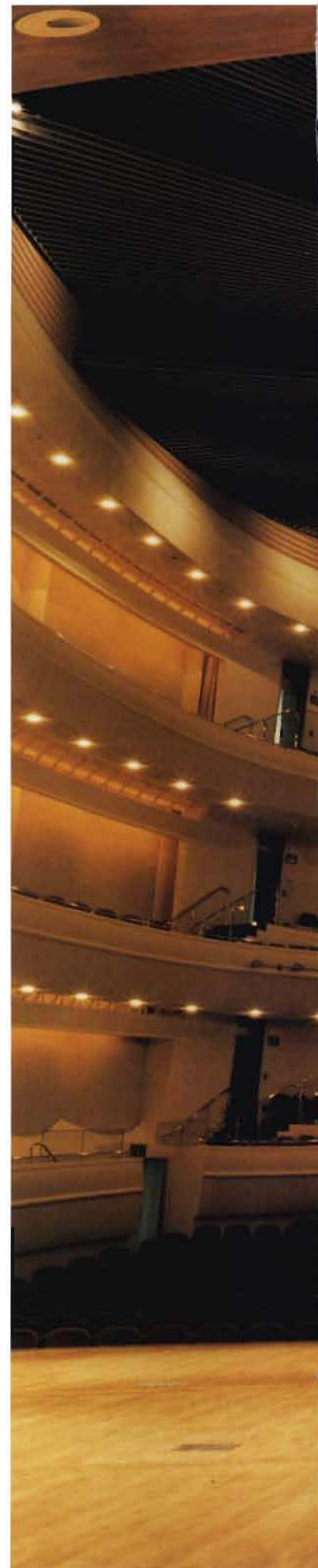
SINCE OPENING A DECADE AGO, the Performing Arts Center San Luis Obispo on the Cal Poly campus has staged nearly 1,500 public events, welcomed more than one million patrons, and sold in excess of \$20 million in tickets.

It's also seen a truly remarkable succession of dynamic performances and cultural events, emerging as the region's premier venue for music, theater and dance productions.

"The 10-year partnership between Cal Poly, the city of San Luis Obispo and the greater arts community, through the Foundation for the Performing Arts Center, has been a magnificent success," said Cal Poly President Warren J. Baker. A recent survey showed that one-third of county residents attended center performances in a 12-month period!

The center also serves as a public venue for many community functions, from student performances and graduation ceremonies to public interest forums. "The Christopher Cohan Center is a monument to the vision, leadership and hard work of many people. It is a source of pride for all of us. We look forward to another decade of rich cultural opportunities for the campus and the community," Baker added.

Having opened in November 1996, "The PAC," as it's known affectionately to locals, includes the newly renovated, 497-seat Alex and Faye Spanos Theatre (formerly the Cal Poly Theatre) and the spectacular Christopher Cohan Center. The latter consists of Harman Hall, a 1,282-seat concert hall; the Pavilion, a multi-purpose venue; and Philips Hall, a 170-seat recital and lecture hall.







"WE ARE ABLE TO SEE WORLD-CL

Each year, the PAC hosts a full slate of big-name entertainers. Pop stars Emmylou Harris, Judy Collins, and Kenny Loggins have performed there, as have comedians Jay Leno, Bill Maher and Lewis Black.

Cutting-edge dance troupes such as the Alvin Ailey Dance American Theatre, the Paul Taylor Dance Company and Moximix; jazz greats David Sanborn, George Winston and Wynton Marsalis; international acts such as the Chieftains and Gaelic Storm; and classical troupes including the Russian National

the PAC as an extraordinary cultural asset. "We are able to see world-class artists in our own town," he said.

His wife, Marianne, added, "Not to mention Broadway touring shows like 'Show Boat' and 'Stomp!' And all that happened in just one season. You ordinarily don't see those kinds of acts outside large cities."

To mark its 10th anniversary, the PAC was the site of a five-hour gala August 26. Performers included the Original Drifters, Lavay Smith and Her Red Hot Skillet Lickers, the Oakland

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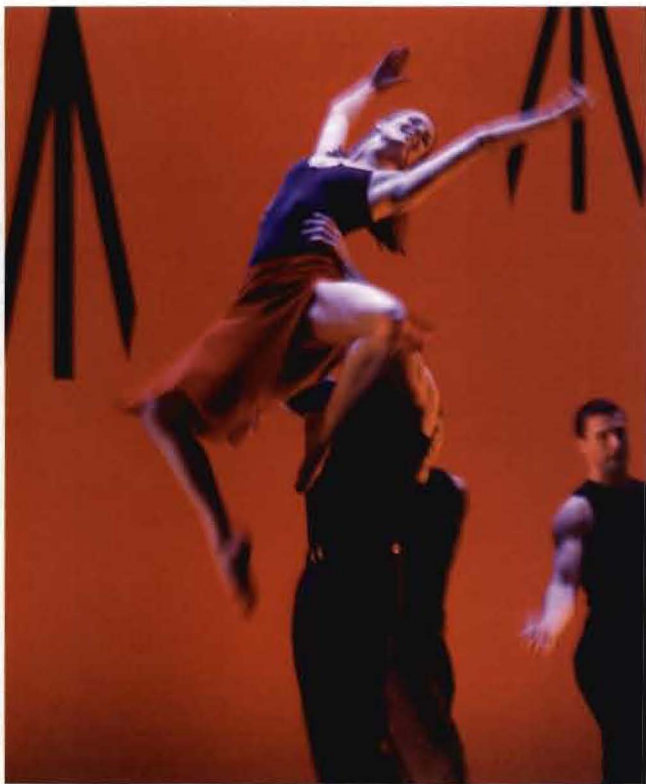
Orchestra – all have appeared at the PAC in the past decade.

The center also hosts performances by local organizations such as the San Luis Obispo Symphony, San Luis Obispo Civic Ballet, the Mozart Festival, and the Vocal Arts Ensemble. The Mozart Festival, held each July, offers a series of concerts over several weeks, featuring professional musicians from across the nation.

Sounding a theme heard commonly on the Central Coast, Cal Poly Arts season ticket subscriber Mitch Wolf described

Interfaith Gospel Choir, Jill Knight, Dale Gonyea, the Sugar Daddy Swing Kings, Louie Ortega & the Wild Jalapeños, Oasis, Viper Six, and the JD Project. A week's worth of related programming took place September 23 through October 1.

"Our goal was to recapture the magic and good vibes felt by all in 1996, and at the same time to celebrate the collaborative spirit that has sustained the center and nurtured the artists who have performed here since," explained Ron Regier, who



ASS ARTISTS IN OUR OWN TOWN."

CAL POLY ARTS SEASON TICKET SUBSCRIBER MITCH WOLF

has managed the PAC for 10 years.

In late June 1996, the Foundation for the Performing Arts Center staged a Hard Hat Ball to introduce the center to the community. That was followed in the Fall by Overture to an Opening, a 10-day festival of events held to celebrate the center's inauguration.

"The summer was a blur, but the hard work paid off and the center's opening was a spectacular success," recalled Regier.

The most significant recent project was the installation of a magnificent Fisk pipe organ, which arrived in pieces from Gloucester, Mass. The installation process took most of the summer, and the tuning process will last almost a year, according to Regier.

"A year-long anniversary celebration is under way," he says. "Through the 2006-07 season other special events will help everyone remember that it's a year to celebrate and understand that these 10 years represent a good start toward a lifetime of service to the arts and to the greater San Luis Obispo community."

For the latest news on PAC listings and events, visit the Cal Poly News Events Web page at www.calpolynews.calpoly.edu/eventsindex.html or Cal Poly Arts' Web site at www.calpolyarts.org. The PAC Web site also offers online ticketing and a calendar of performances at www.pacslo.org. □

