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Cal Poly Theatre & Dance Department to Present 'Betty's Summer Vacation' Nov. 13-15, 20-22

SAN LUIS OBISPO — The Cal Poly Theatre & Dance Department will present its fall production, "Betty's Summer Vacation," at 8 p.m. Thursday through Saturday, Nov. 13-15 and 20-22, in the Spanos Theatre on campus.

"Betty's Summer Vacation" is an outrageous play and a dark spoof commenting on the media's obsession with sensationalizing events and its ability to cater to our fascination with notorious behavior. The play explores how people respond to horrific acts — sexual abuse, rape, incest, castration and dismemberment — in disturbingly funny, astonishing and unabashedly truthful ways.

Written by Christopher Durang, the Obie Award-winning play opens when Betty and her friend Trudy rent a seaside cottage that they have to share with a group of unsavory characters.

The cast includes Keith, a strange introvert who carries around a shovel and hatbox; Buck, a sex-crazed hunk; Mr. Vanislaw, a degenerate flasher who gets his thrills from hiding in women's dressing rooms and exposing himself; and Mrs. Siezmagraff, a raging drunk and widow desperate for male affection who is also trying to forget her ex-husband's abuse of their daughter, Trudy.

To add to the madness, a group of voices coming from the ceiling suggests that everything the characters say and do is being observed. To avoid boredom at all costs, the voices urge the characters to commit heinous acts.

The production is directed by Theatre Professor Al Schnupp; the settings are designed by Pegi Marshall-Amundsen; costumes are created by Thomas John Bernard, assisted by Costume Shop Manager Sarah Bryan; and Clint Bryson serves as technical director and lighting designer. The stage managers are students Nathan Norris (Theatre Arts) and Brianna Zamora (Theatre Arts).

The student cast includes Karlee Benner (English) as Betty; Maddie Pomaro (Theatre Arts) as Trudy; Jake Malloy (Food Science) as Keith; Jacob Corsaro (Communication Studies) as Buck; Sarah Gamblin (Theatre Arts) as Mrs. Siezmagraff; and Kyle Palazzolo (History and Anthropology-Geography) as Mr. Vanislaw. The voices are brought to life by Theatre Arts students Rachel Murphy, Jennie Casey and Antonio Mata.

Tickets are \$20 for the public and \$12 for students, seniors, faculty and staff. Parking is included in the ticket price. This performance is not recommended for audiences younger than 16.

Tickets are sold at the Performing Arts Center Ticket Office between noon and 6 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. To order by phone, call 805-SLO-4TIX (805-756-4849).

On opening night, patrons will be eligible to win a free iPad mini. The door prize drawing will be held after curtain call. Faculty and staff of the Theatre & Dance Department are not eligible to win.

The performance is sponsored by Cal Poly's Theatre & Dance Department, the College of Liberal Arts, and the Instructionally Related Activities program.

Links

- Theatre and Dance Department: <http://cla.calpoly.edu/thtrdanc.html>
- College of Liberal Arts: <http://www.cla.calpoly.edu/>

About Cal Poly's Theatre and Dance Department

The Theatre & Dance Department provides students with programs of study that integrate practical production work with theater and dance principles, theory and historical development. The department also acts as a cultural focus for the campus and San Luis Obispo community. Each year the department presents three main-stage theater productions, the Orchestris Dance Company production, and a student-directed dance concert, all showcasing the importance of the department in realization of the university's mission as a comprehensive polytechnic identity.

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