



FAR CORNERS COMMUNITY MUSICAL THEATRE SHOW BULLETIN

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Recent and Upcoming Events

July 31 - August 1, 2009

Urinetown: The Musical
Monteverde, Costa Rica

February 20 - 22, 2010

Interscholar Music and Theatre Workshop
Maputo, Mozambique

June 27 - August 9, 2010

Musical Theatre Connections: Monteverde Program

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

This has been an exciting year for Far Corners Community Musical Theatre. In late May, the first annual Maputo Interscholar Music and Theatre Workshop brought together 150 students and teachers from seven different schools to study and perform everything from instrumental music to gumbot dancing. This summer, we launched Musical Theatre Connections, a program in Monteverde, Costa Rica, in which international high-schoolers and local students join forces to rehearse and perform a musical. This year's production, *Urinetown*, brought a message of sustainability uniquely suited to this rapidly-developing community in a pristine cloud forest. As our younger students took the stage for the first time and returning students continued to mature as performers, an enthusiastic audience demonstrated the growing support for theatre in this community.

On the administrative front, FCCMT convened its first board meeting over a shaky internet connection between Massachusetts and Maputo. We wrote and approved FCCMT's first set of bylaws, and submitted an application to the IRS for 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status. We approved a budget for the upcoming fiscal year, and began to put together plans for Musical Theatre Connections 2010. This year's program will be held in Monteverde from June 29 to August 9, and is open to all international students who will be entering high school (or equivalent) by the fall of 2010. In addition to participating in a full-length musical production, our international students will enjoy local volunteer opportunities, social activities like Improv Night, and adventures like a zip-line tour of the forest Canopy. It looks to be a busy and exciting summer!

As we look forward, we want to focus on sustaining the programs, like that in Monteverde, that we've already put in place—but also on laying plans to extend our programming to new locations. I am especially aware of our continuing need for support from the broader community. We are looking for volunteers with all skills sets, interests, and time commitments. Whether you'd like to travel the world and spend a summer teaching theatre, or just have a free afternoon to help us design a web page or write an article, your help, your talents, and your input are vital to the continuing work of FCCMT.

Yours,

Robin Richardson
President of the Board of Directors



Board president Robin Richardson teaches high school English in Newton, Massachusetts. A major supporter of FCCMT from the start, Robin connects our work to her school community, where students and staff have responded with enthusiasm and interest as well as contributed financially through a successful fundraiser.

ALUMNI UPDATE

OLIVER CHA - BEIJING, CHINA



Left: Oliver in Beijing, fall 2009.

Right: Oliver onstage as Motel the tailor, March 2008.



As a third-year student at Jiujiang University, Cha "Oliver" Yifeng played an expressive and energetic Motel the tailor in *Fiddler on the Roof*. Oliver comes from Yunnan province in southwestern China. "My family loves music very much," writes Oliver. "That's where my passion and inspiration for music comes from." For Oliver, *Fiddler* was "unforgettable."

Since graduation, Oliver has found his way to Beijing where he works for a media company dealing with the film industry, under a boss who "knows the showbiz circle and encourages me to be a part of it." Meanwhile, he continues to pursue his dream of being a singer/songwriter. And, he says, "I'm always ready for another show."

FROM THE AUDIENCE OF *URINETOWN*

MONTEVERDE RESIDENTS JOHN AND SUZANNE TROSTLE

How long have you been in Monteverde? What drew you here?

About 35 years. We had visited Monteverde back in 1962 and re-visited in 1974. It seemed like coming home. We were drawn here by the community - we are Quakers - and by the beautiful environment which surrounds it.

When did you first see a musical? What is your favorite musical?

The first musical we saw together was *Oklahoma* in Chicago, the summer of 1944. I think it's still my favorite, though John's might be *The Music Man*.

What did you think of our productions of *Guys and Dolls*, *The Music Man* and *Urinetown*?

We thought they were each another "Monteverde Miracle". The working together of many different schools, both teachers and pupils, involving the parents, getting the productions ready in such a short time, the costumes, the enthusiasm generated by all concerned, and the continuation of musical productions of other years, and the high levels of performance are most appreciated!

What is the role of the arts in the Monteverde community?

You'd probably get a different answer from each person you asked! For me the role is to encourage participation and enjoyment of us average people in music, art, crafts, and dance. They bring more joy into one's life, they allow development of latent talents in these areas (which also contributes to a feeling of individual self-worth), they expand horizons, and they give great happiness to the people in the audience as well as those who do the preparation. I think a play or a musical production teaches cooperation, teamwork and mutual appreciation, to all concerned.

Suzanne and John Trostle with son and pit musician Richard, after a performance. Sue and John attended every performance of *Urinetown*.



STUDENT REFLECTION: MUSICAL THEATRE CONNECTIONS

BY KATHERINE SZOCIK

Hello, my name is Katherine and I traveled to Costa Rica with Far Corners Community Musical Theatre this summer. Even though this was my first time away from home on my own, by the end of the trip I wished I could have stayed for the entire year. I cannot say enough about what this experience has meant to me, though I have tried in college application essays, phone calls to my friends, and now this excerpt. The closest I can get is life changing. However, since you are reading this, you probably want to know why.



The effect of the home stay is not to be overlooked. My family taught me about tico (Costa Rican) slang and customs. They were the ones who really got me interested in learning more about Latin American culture. I cannot think of all I would have missed had I stayed with a group of others from the United States. One of the highlights was getting to go see relatives; we ate chicharrones (fried pork) and corn that we had just picked from the nearby field. It was unlike anything I'd ever done before.

Another valuable experience for me was all the time spent rehearsing for the musical *Urinetown*. The show turned out well and I got excellent instruction in musical theatre.

Rehearsing with local teens was fantastic. Musical practices gave me a chance to hang out with Costa Ricans outside of my host family. This was so much fun, and they were all very accepting and willing to deal with my errors in Spanish grammar. A number of people I met are in the United States on foreign exchange this year and I am planning to visit them.

Having connections to a town in a different country is beneficial; I learned about a different type of community and the function of society in a different culture. My trip made me realize that there is more than one way of living and since coming back, I have been more interested in other cultures. I am more sensitive to foreigners in the United States because I know what it is like to not always understand the language and to misunderstand cultural gestures.

This trip actually made me re-define my life goals. I have always been around Spanish, but going to Costa Rica made me realize that I want to have a career relating to the language and/or culture of Latin America. There are many things I could have done this summer, but I cannot think of anything better than what I did.

Find out more about the Musical Theatre Connections program in 2010 on our website:

<http://www.farcornersmusicals.org>



Now accepting applications...

Musical Theatre Connections 2010

Quick Facts

WHO

Student performers ages 13 - 18 from the U.S. or any other country

WHAT

A summer abroad program including:

→ Full production of a hit musical alongside local Costa Rican participants

→ Home-stay with a local family

→ Community service

→ Spanish classes

→ Tours and excursions

WHEN

June 27 - August 9

WHERE

Monteverde, Costa Rica - a small town surrounded by the cloud forest atop the Tilaran mountains

More information online at: farcornersmusicals.org



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED NOW!

The success of our projects depends on the support of volunteers, and we've been lucky to find many willing individuals in the communities where we've worked.

However, as we strive to build a sustainable organization to connect these projects and replicate them in other places, we need to build a strong volunteer base that can help us throughout the year.

Could you volunteer 1 - 4 hours per month to help with one or more of these tasks?

- Editing or proofreading
- Writing
- Basic web-based research
- Graphic layout
- Web design
- Mailing
- Scanning
- Translation
- Fundraising

Register as a volunteer on our website at:
<http://farcornersmusicals.org/volunteer>



OUR MISSION

Far Corners Community Musical Theatre is committed to providing diverse youth populations from communities around the world with new opportunities to grow and succeed through committed participation in the art of musical theatre as collaborators, performers, thinkers, creators, change-makers, multilingual communicators and open-minded, responsible members of a global community.



Become a fan:

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SUPPORT OUR WORK MAKE A DONATION

Your contribution of ANY size makes a difference to our small organization!

1. Donate by credit card. Visit our website at: www.farcornersmusicals.org
2. Mail a check, payable to "Far Corners Community Musical Theatre", to

Far Corners Community Musical Theatre
1108 Fort Street Mall Suite 9B
Honolulu, HI 96813
United States

1108 Fort Street Mall
Suite 9B
Honolulu, HI, 96813
United States

Phone:
1-580-441-0089

Fax:
1-808-531-1486

E-Mail:
info@farcornersmusicals.org

We're on the web!
See us at
www.farcornersmusicals.org

