

Fox Riverside Live

July 2011

Volume II Issue II: Exposing the Fox to New Audiences

The Fox Goes Blonde!

By Anne Marie Acosta

Another instant hit at the Fox Riverside Performing Arts Center! Broadway in Riverside's highly anticipated presentation of *Legally Blonde The Musical* was presented on the Fox stage the weekend of March 18, 2011. The story of perseverance and staying true to yourself first conveyed in the 2001 film was brought to life in this upbeat, toe-tapping, pooch-tastic and incredibly pink musical!

It was a celebrity-filled weekend at the Fox! Brian Casey from KOLA 99.9 Radio and Casey Reinhardt from Casey's Cupcakes and winner of Food Network's "Cupcake Wars" introduced the show on its opening night. "Gleeks" (mega-fans of the hottest show on Fox-TV, no relation, about singing and dancing high school students) were also surprised on Saturday evening when Lauren Potter (Becky Jackson on *Glee*) and her family

were in the audience. Lauren and her family were given a warm welcome into the Fox Foundation's Tower Room and at the Cast's request were escorted post-show to a private Super Star Meet & Greet with the *Legally Blonde* cast. The cast members loved meeting Lauren who was as thrilled as they were. They took pictures, signed autographs and compared notes about their acting careers. The cast members had all started as *Glee* Club members in their own hometowns.

Before the weekend was out, the Fox Foundation also welcomed Governor Michael Dukakis and his wife Kitty, at Sunday evening's show. The former Massachusetts governor absolutely loved the musical because of its references to his home state, to Harvard, his alma mater, and to UCLA, where he has taught classes for many years.

La Sierra High School drama students were sponsored at the show's opening night, as part of the Foundation's educational outreach program underwritten by Target Stores' Field Trip Grant Program. Immediately after the show, the students and their teachers were ushered into the theater's orchestra section for an up-close and personal view of the stage and orchestra pit during a private chat with Gary Payne, Fox Technical Director. Gary is a natural



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teacher and welcomes people with an interest in sound and lighting to talk about his job at the Fox. He spoke to them about his crew, the lighting and sound, the production, and loading the show in and out. At the end of his talk, students asked how they could become part of his crew at the Fox. Gary explained that it may not be as glamorous as it looks from the theater seats, that it is hard work, but it is rewarding and particularly satisfying when you hear the audience's reaction to the entertainers. He invited their resumes for volunteer positions.

The students were then joined by Hannah Rose DeFlumeri (Vivienne) and other members of the ensemble for an intimate Q&A session. The cast talked to the students about life on tour, how they loved seeing parts of the country that they would not be able to see on their own and how traveling with the rest of the cast has brought them closer together as friends. They also enjoyed getting to perform for families who do not live in or cannot travel to New York City to see a show on Broadway. "We bring the show to them," said DeFlumeri.

The students, being aspiring actors and actresses themselves, asked the cast how they got where they are in their careers. DeFlumeri shared that she was cast at her first audition. "I was planning to go to college as a theater major, but I got the role when I graduated from high school." She is the youngest member of the cast at 19 years old. The other members didn't have such a quick journey onto the cast. It took some several auditions. The entire cast got the acting bug in high school. Most of them are college graduates that had acted in school productions. The overwhelming message was that it takes time and a lot of hard work to achieve the dream. None of the challenges of the tour override their excitement over bringing the show to thousands of people and getting paid to do what they love.

The cast agreed that they loved the historical look and feel of the Fox, along with the facilities that Downtown Riverside had to offer. It was the second time for Ken Arpino (Ensemble) and Shannon Mullen (Brooke) to perform on the Fox stage. The two first performed in the National tour of *Hairspray* that landed at the Fox last spring.



Family Fun Days at the Fox

By Anne Marie Acosta

On the first Sunday of the month, from October to May, arts and culture organizations in downtown Riverside open their doors to the public for free family-friendly activities for children of all ages. The Fox Riverside Theater Foundation had the pleasure of being part of this monthly event that offers something for everyone to enjoy.

On April 3, 2011, the Fox Foundation teamed up with the Riverside County Philharmonic and brought music to the Fox colonnades. Families got up close and personal with the Philharmonic's "Instrument Petting Zoo" which included violins, guitars, ukuleles and various percussion instruments. We polled the children's favorite instrument, and the violin won by a landslide! From the looks of things, we had a number of future Riverside County Philharmonic violinists in the crowd. At the craft table, children created their own harmonicas out of wooden tongue depressors and rubber bands. They produced kazoo-like sounds to their favorite tunes. It was a very musical Sunday at the Fox.

Sunday, May 1, was the last Family Fun Day of the 2010-11 season. Families joined the Fox Foundation in making homemade poppies in honor of the upcoming Fox Foundation celebration of *The Wizard of Oz* in July. We were also joined by the dancing of *Dancesport* at UCR, UCR's ballroom dancing club, and *Illerside BBoys*, UCR's bboy/breakdancing troupe. Families were also able to take their personalized "Fox Walk of Fame" stars home with them as a Family Fun Day souvenir.

Thank you to all the families who came and participated in our Sunday events. We look forward to having another great and successful season of Family Fun Days next year!

“Magandang Mabuhay Sa Lahat!” or “A beautiful and long life for all!”

By Anne Marie Acosta

On Saturday, April 2, 2011, UC Riverside’s Filipino student organization, Katipunan, hit the FOX stage with their annual Philippine Culture Night (PCN) entitled “*In Good Taste.*” Founded in 1979, Katipunan began with the purpose of representing the Filipino and Filipino-American population of UCR through educational, political and social means. It is now one of the largest and most successful organizations on campus. This year marked their 22nd consecutive production and featured a new comedic, student-written Filipino-American play woven between beautiful folk dances.

The Fox Foundation had the opportunity to interview Ms. Chelsi Dayrit (21), a Filipino-American and recent graduate, and this year’s cultural coordinator and PCN’s director and producer. Chelsi’s love for her native country and her training in authentic Filipino dances as a child greatly contributed to a successful show.

★ ★ ★

Fox Foundation (FF): How long have you been a member of UCR’s Katipunan?

Chelsi Dayrit (CD): I have been an active member of Katipunan since my freshman year in college. I was fortunate to be part of the PCN working crew during my first year, and more so during my second and third years of college. Ever since then, I have been choreographing and teaching Philippine folk dances to my fellow Katipunan members.

FF: What was your role as this year’s cultural coordinator?

CD: I was in charge of the entire cast and crew. I choreographed, designed costumes and essentially put together the show. My job was over 50 jobs put together!

FF: What does it take to be in charge of something so big? How did you personally prepare?

CD: It takes a lot of mental preparation and help. There are so many people in the cast and only one of me. I had acting and dancing committees called the “Creative Team” and the “Core Team”. They helped me organize and facilitate rehearsals and also assisted me in any planning when needed. Because we only had three months to rehearse, I had to plan way in advance. I started coming up with ideas back in May 2010. Although it was difficult, I received all the help and support I could ever ask for.

FF: Did you come up with all the ideas for the show?

CD: The Creative Team helped direct scenes and worked closely with the actors as I oversaw them. Meanwhile, the Core Team helped me choreograph and teach the dancers. Each of these committees collaborated together to form the ideas seen in the show.

The choreography was heavily influenced by my former teacher Chona Gentilizo, an original *Bayanihan* member. As a child, I danced and performed with a group called *Sining Ginto* where Chona taught me original indigenous dances from the Philippines. I took all the knowledge and experience I gained and brought it to Katipunan.

FF: In your opinion, what makes this year’s PCN different and more special than any of the other shows you have done in the past?

CD: Personally, I believe the choreography and lighting was what set this PCN, not only apart from previous years, but also apart from other college organizations. The lighting was amazing thanks to our stage manager Ryan Turley. He was able to create every single atmosphere I requested and bring it to life. We were fortunate to have an amazing venue that complimented the production. The videographer, photographers and program coordinator created an artistic work Katipunan has never seen before. Our organization was notorious for having very lengthy productions, averaging about 4 hours, however this year we were able to pull it off in 2 1/2 hours!

FF: And, of course, I have to ask...how did you enjoy having this year’s PCN at the historic Fox Performing Arts Center?

CD: It was nice to have such a beautiful venue this year. The lighting was beautiful and it complimented the dances and acting scenes. We had a great show!

FF: What would you say is the most rewarding part of putting on this show?

CD: We were able to bring the Philippines to Riverside, taking the audience to each of the islands from which the dances originated. The most rewarding part was seeing everything that I envisioned come to life. I am honored to have worked with such wonderful, dedicated, hardworking and fun-loving cast. The successful production was just the icing on the cake. I’d like to thank all those who worked behind the scenes to help make this production such a success, especially my Core Team, my Creative Team, Daniel de Ramos, Ryan Turley, Kat Susvilla, Martin Singson and Camille Requistas.



AN OZ AFFAIRE

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Riverside, California

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Art by Yakovetic
THE WIZARD OF OZ: TM & © Turner Entertainment Co (s09)

Friday, July 22, 7 p.m. at the Fox Performing Arts Center

- Champagne & Dessert Reception with Art Auction
- Famed Munchkin Margaret Pellegrini & Great-grandson of Oz Author, Robert Baum
- Special performance by concert and recording artist Sam Harris and Artist Joe Yakovetic

**Saturday, July 23, 11:30 a.m. Oz Character Luncheon
at the Mission Inn Hotel & Spa featuring**

- Margaret Pellegrini & Robert Baum
- Oz characters drawn by Joe Yakovetic
- Autographs and photo opportunities
- The Wizard of Oz Movie Matinee at 2 p.m. at the Fox

OZ Affaire 2-day Sponsor Package: \$200
Champagne & Dessert Reception & Program: \$75
Character Lunch & Matinee: \$50
Matinee: \$10

For more information email foxfoundation@riversideca.gov or call Pamela Hogan at 951-826-5769.

Donations to the Fox Foundation are tax deductible in accordance with the law, Tax ID. 26-0698976

Volunteer Opportunities with the Fox Riverside Theater Foundation

Fox Riverside Theater Foundation welcomes volunteers to provide assistance at Foundation special events, VIP receptions and community outreach programs.

Fox Foundation volunteers provide a pleasant and welcoming atmosphere for donors and VIPs during Tower Room receptions at the Fox. They are invited to enjoy stage performances, time and space permitting. Many of our volunteers have even had the opportunity to join in impromptu Meet & Greet sessions with performers.

We invite people 21 years of age and older to volunteer as hosts and hostesses at the VIP Receptions. The minimum age for volunteering at our community outreach events is 14. We are also very pleased to have an arrangement with National Charity League (NCL) mother-daughter volunteer teams to assist in Foundation programs at the Fox.

Don't miss out on the fun entertainment at this volunteer opportunity of a lifetime!

"Thank you for giving me the opportunity to volunteer at the Fox Theater. This has been a wonderful experience. The shows you have had at the theater have been awesome. I tell everyone I know about them. Some people who overhear me talking about the shows I have seen, ask me what show I'm talking about and where did I see it. This is big for Riverside. We needed this."

—Tanya Kelly, Foundation Volunteer

For more information about volunteering for the Fox Foundation, please e-mail us at FoxFoundation@RiversideCa.gov



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Tickets for Fox events may be purchased in person at the Fox Performing Arts Center Box Office:

Box Office Hours

Monday - Friday • noon - 6 p.m.

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For more information: (951) 779- 9805

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