

# No barrier between new teacher, her students

**Karlin Johnson**  
THE CLACKAMAS PRINT

Students buzz with chatter before rehearsal for the Clackamas Chorale.

As conductor Jolanta Szopa-Tabisz enters the room with a smile, students talk and joke with her right away. Soon, she begins stretching

and her students follow suit, leaning and groaning.

"Good things in, bad things out," says Szopa-Tabisz softly, as she and her students take deep breaths in and out slowly. Shortly, without speaking, Szopa-Tabisz has her class warming up their voices through many different exercises. After this, class can begin.

Szopa-Tabisz was born and raised in Poland, where the high school that she attended prepared all of the students to become music teachers. In her following years in Poland, the young musician performed in concerts and competitions in Austria, Ireland, Luxembourg, Switzerland and the United States. She also has a Master of Music Education from Silesian University in Poland.

In 2000 Szopa-Tabisz moved to the US to reside here in Portland.

After singing in choirs at Clackamas with Music Department Head Lonnie Cline for two years, she was asked by him to teach herself.

This is Szopa-Tabisz's first year teaching at the college, and so far there is nothing holding her back. A good relationship with her students was not something that was difficult to gain.

"They are a very nice group of people. I don't have to break the walls between them and me," said

Szopa-Tabisz, who also appreciates the way her students give her exactly what she asks for when she is conducting.

Students feel the same gratification from their instructor.

"Jolanta is a wonderful conductor," said student Michael Lyman, "She is very light hearted and has a

really good spirit. She enjoys what she does, which really reflects on the choir."

The conductor shows her enthusiasm visibly; the whole time she leads the choir there is a smile on her face. She even begins hopping up and down while conducting a song that she describes as "very happy."

Szopa-Tabisz's teaching style also seems to make the music more personal to the students. Part way through the class she has them gather in a circle and make eye contact.

"Sing to each other!" she instructs. Language barriers don't seem to effect the class either.

"Since English isn't her first lan-



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Conductor Jolanta Szopa-Tabisz sings along as she leads her choir students.

guage, she sometimes demonstrates how music sounds [with motions], and it's fun," said student Jenna Ellefson.

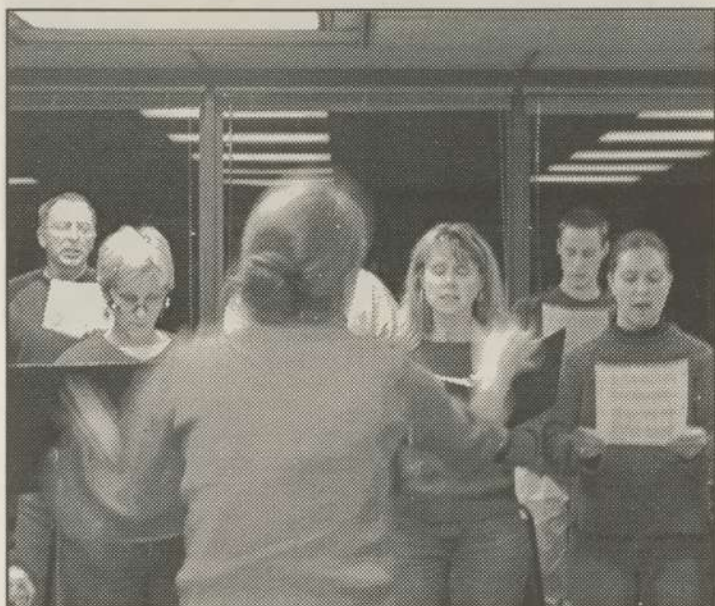
As a new teacher at Clackamas, Szopa-Tabisz is finding her place quickly. She will continue to conduct the Clackamas Chorale all year.

Outside of the college she is an Assistant Conductor of the Unistus Chamber Choir in Oregon City. She is also a private piano teacher and a eurhythmics instructor.

The Clackamas Chorale will be performing in December at the Christmas by Candlelight concert at St. John the Apostle Church in Oregon City.

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Student



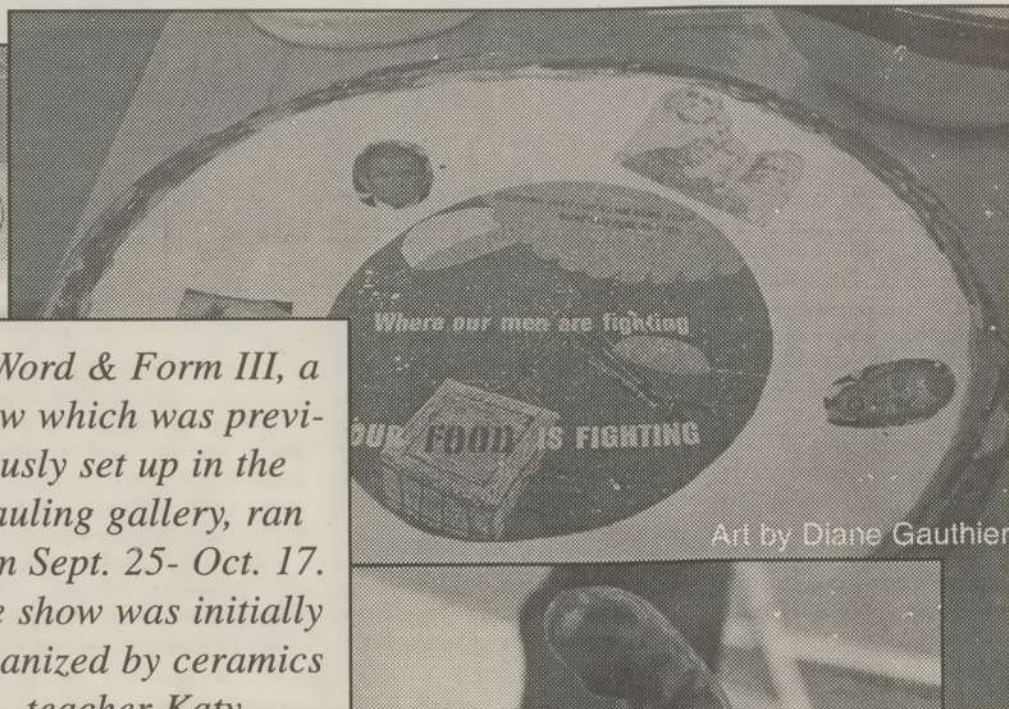
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A former Clackamas student, Jolanta Szopa-Tabisz is now the new conductor of the Clackamas Chorale.

## Staff members show artistic sides at art show, Word & Form III

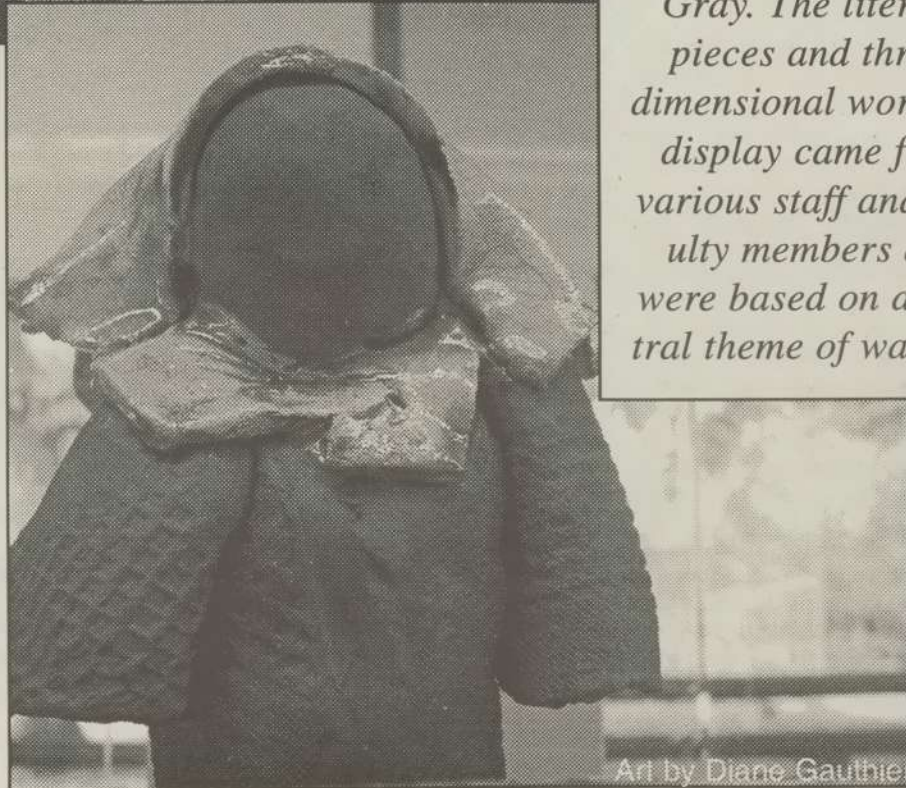


Art by Brenda Inglis-Marks



Art by Diane Gauthier

*Word & Form III, a show which was previously set up in the Pauling gallery, ran from Sept. 25- Oct. 17. The show was initially organized by ceramics teacher Katy McFadden and English teacher Kate Gray. The literary pieces and three-dimensional works on display came from various staff and faculty members and were based on a central theme of warfare.*



Art by Diane Gauthier



Art by Hilary Robinson