

Arts

George Fox to Host One-Person Play on Multicultural Issues

A one-person play that addresses issues of multiculturalism in today's society through the eyes of young adults will be presented free to the public on George Fox University's Newberg campus on Tuesday, Nov. 14.

The program begins at 7 p.m. in Wood-Mar Auditorium. The play follows a brief performance by local Christian rap group, "DAS PHAT."

"Faces of America" stars actress Bernadette Balagtas, who presents eight characters all based on true stories researched through workshops and interviews with high school and college-age populations.

The eight characters depicted each represent a different cultural aspect of American society: African, Asian, Mexican-American, Native American, East Indian, European, Happa (mixed blood), and an "all-in-one Generation X-er."

Balagtas starred in "The Debut," the first Filipino-American movie to be released in the United States. She appeared in James Brooks' "As Good As It Gets," and was an original contestant in the Hawaii-based television show "Destination Stardom." She also performed in NBC's "Friday Night," and is a host and performer at famed Laugh Factory in Hollywood, Calif., where she

regularly performs with such popular comics such as David Alan Grier, Jay Mohr and Damon Wayams.

The program, which is described as appropriate for high school students and older, is presented by Will & Company, a Los Angeles-based drama group dedicated to shattering stereotypes of race and gender.

Daryl Dixon, George Fox's director of multicultural services, said the program is a creative way to inspire consideration of important issues.

"I think it's valuable to bring it to campus," he said.

An Opera to Remember

By JOY RAMOS
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Making his debut with Portland Opera as the star of *Otello*, John Keyes recalled that his favorite operatic experience was not performing at a prestigious opera house, but singing to inner-city kids in his home state. For him, that experience alone topped the recordings he did with Luciano Pavarotti and Placido Domingo.

During an outreach event sponsored by a Wisconsin opera company he worked for, Keyes was asked to perform before an all-Black elementary school in Milwaukie. Being raised most of his life in a predominantly White part of town, Keyes

felt uncomfortable doing it. In attendance were little boys wearing T-shirts with tuxedos and little girls wearing T-shirts with ball gowns. Before the event, the kids were groomed in the manners of attending an opera. To top off the event, the elementary school kids were allowed to meet with the artists. Keyes admitted to feeling funny being around Blacks despite their rousing enthusiasm. While still in costume, Keyes felt a tug at his leg. Looking down, he noticed a good-looking African American boy about 8 years old who asked him something where Keyes only heard the word money in his question. Assuming the boy was hitting him for

cash, he brushed him aside and told him that he didn't have any. The child emphatically answered, "No!" to mean he was misunderstood. He reached into his pocket and placed a dime in Keyes's hand. "He gave it to the opera. I loved it!" beamed Keyes. When he walked away, Keyes noticed how poor the boy was in his tattered pants and worn out shoes.

Because of the boy's kind gesture, Keyes still keeps the dime taped down in his make-up kit. The dime serves as a constant reminder of an important lifelong lesson that Keyes holds true to which is not to ever judge others by the color of their skin.

"Throughout history, theatre has been a valuable tool to present issues to the public at large. Shakespeare did it in his day. It will help us to understand more in areas

of multiculturalism. When you can educate and entertain together, it's a powerful combination."

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