

Theatre Notes _____ **Out & About~The Valley**

HONK! —a 2000 Olivier Award winner (the British equivalent of a Tony) for Best New Musical, has, according to my good friend **Donna Federico** of the Western Stage, great characters, a sterling score and is “a true delight for the entire family.” It opens January 28th and runs through February 19 at the Morgan Hill Playhouse.

The whole cast is very impressive. I have seen and enjoyed most if not all of them in many shows over the years. Readers of this column will certainly recognize the names **Lane Grover, Sandi Lewandowski, April Ouellette, Dave Leon, David Sandhu, Maureen Imagawa, Jen Volturno, Kae Jenny-Spencer** and **Connor Bray**. Others named in the SVCT press release include **Jennifer Hamilton, JoAnna Evans, Bobby Lewis, Donna Knippen, Matt Alpert** and **Austin Corini**.

Almost the entire Pintello family—**Rod, Marion, Whitney** (Pintello McClelland), **Simon**, Simon’s wife **Stephanie** and Whitney’s daughter **Shelby** — are involved in this one. Whitney is directing the musical adaptation of Hans Christian Andersen's classic tale *The Ugly Duckling* while the others tread the boards.

'Honk!' opens this weekend

Posted: Thursday, January 27, 2005 12:00 am | Updated: 2:07 pm, Tue Dec 27, 2011.
Nathan Mixer |



Cast members of 'Honk!' David Sandhu as The Cat, left, and Jennifer Leon, as Queenie the Cat, court each other as Lane Grover playing Ugly and Maureen Imagawa watch during dress rehearsal Wednesday.

Musical comedy "Honk!" will be opening Friday at the South Valley Civic Theatre in Morgan Hill.

The production, which runs for four weekends, tells the story of "The Ugly Duckling," who struggles to find acceptance after being born abnormally large.

The two-hour musical adaptation from Hans Christian Anderson's classic tale was produced by Kevin Heath and Steve Spencer and directed by Whitney Pintello McClelland.

Carol Harris, who has been involved in music and teaching for many years, directed the music. The production uses a five- to six-person orchestra with a piano and synthesizer.

Zana Vartanian, in her first full musical production, coordinated the costumes, renting some and holding sewing parties to make others.

"I think once the show opens, it will be a hit," said Heath, who is also on the theater board. "It has lots of color and fun. The adults will be able to laugh a long with it. I anticipate tickets will sell very quickly. You don't want to wait to last weekend to go."

This is South Valley Civic Theatre's first production of "Honk!" which was written by George Stiles and Anthony Drewe .

"It may not be as familiar as "My Fair Lady" and other productions we've done, but it is really popular in England and is becoming more popular in the United States," Heath said. "I've seen all the rehearsals, but I still laugh at some of the lines in the play. It's got numbers you'll walk away singing, some of which I wake up singing at 3am."

For the most part, there are not a lot of intricate decorations, Heath said.

"There were some set pieces that were challenging," Heath said. "We've done minimal sets to showcase the talent on the stage and to fit the 42 members on the stage."

The ugly duckling is played by 6-foot, 2-inch Lane Grover, while the other ducklings are played by young kids, adding to the production's visual parody. The ducklings are dressed in bright yellow costumes, while the ugly duckling has on a gray costume.

The 42-member cast ranges from ages 6 into the 50s who perform solos and as a whole. All the characters are dressed as animals – there are no human characters in the play.

The cat, whose mission is to have the ugly duckling for lunch, is played by David Sandhu.

The production has a lot of family connections in it. Mary and Rod Pintello, who run Pintello Comedy Theatre, are part of the cast. Their daughter Whitney Pintello McClelland not only directed the play but also handled the choreography. Her daughters, Shelby and Mary McClelland, are both making their stage debuts.

"We had a huge turnout for auditions," Heath said. "Our leads are incredible, solid and experienced. We knew we could get through anything with the cast we had. There is also so much new talent and such fresh blood, we've continued to raise the bar."

"Honk!" runs Jan. 28, 29 and Feb. 4, 5, 11, 12, 18 and 19 at 8pm at the Morgan Hill Community Playhouse on the corner of Monterey and Dunne Ave. Sunday matinees on Feb. 6 and 13 are at 2pm. The Feb. 13 show will be also presented in sign language. The cost is \$12 for students and seniors and \$15 for adults. For more information, call (408) 842-SHOW or go to www.svct.org.