

Instructionally Related Activities Report Form

SPONSOR: Bob Mayberry

PROGRAM/DEPARTMENT: Performing Arts

ACTIVITY TITLE: Fall Performing Arts Production, original play, “The Thief, the Madman, Quixote & the Magic Doors”

DATE (S) OF ACTIVITY: Aug 30-Nov 6

Please submit via email to the IRA Coordinator along with any supporting documentation at david.daniels@csuci.edu within 30 days after the activity. Thank you for your commitment to engaging our students!

A. ADDRESS THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

(1) PROVIDE A DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

Rehearsal and performances of “The Thief, the Madman, Quixote & the Magic Doors”

(2) HOW DID THE ACTIVITY RELATE TO A COURSE(S) AND/OR LEARNING OBJECTIVES?

As the culminating experience of the PA / ART 391 Production course, the play served as a vital component of the learning experience for all PA majors and minors, as well as providing an opportunity for students of all majors to participate in a high-impact, project-based, learning practice. It addressed the PA Program Learning Outcomes providing students with an opportunity to collaborate with peers from a diverse range of artistic and cultural backgrounds to produce a live stage performance. Student participation included performing on stage before a live audience, designing prop and scenic elements for the show, assisting the director and stage-manager, coordinating stage-costuming and accessories, running the front-of-house, designing the audience programs and publicity. Students worked on the technical preparation, rehearsal, and performance of the play culminating in 8 public performances for CI students, faculty, staff, and the general community.

(3) WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE STRENGTHS OF THE ACTIVITY?

Students pushed themselves to achieve levels of performance, commitment, technical expertise, physical expression, and vocal skill that many of them never thought they were capable of.

(4) WHAT WOULD YOU SAY ARE/WERE THE ACTIVITY’S WEAKNESSES?

I underestimated the rehearsal period required for the production, creating unnecessary stress in the final week before performances. At least one actor got sick during that final week, in large

part because of the stress of rushing toward production, which I believe could have been avoided had we rehearsed for one week more before Opening Night.

(5) HOW WOULD YOU IMPROVE THIS ACTIVITY FOR NEXT TIME?

Audience attendance was lower than expected. We were prepared for full houses (100), but averaged roughly 50. I'm never sure how best to advertise the show, but it was disappointing that none of the University's publications or PR venues mentioned the show. It wasn't even visible on the Activities Calendar until the week we opened, though we added it to the calendar in early September.

Several years ago, to draw students to a show I directed, a couple actors and I attended a dorm meeting to pitch the show. That seemed to work. In the future I would make more of an effort to reach out to resident students.

(6) WHAT DID YOU LEARN FROM THE PROCESS?

What do you always learn from a production? First, that the script worked and the show entertained its audience. Second, that our student actors really enjoyed being part of this show. Since the playwright was also the director and one of the actors, the student actors felt more empowered to suggest changes to the script, which led to a fair amount of revision during the rehearsal process. And since the play is built around comic physical business, the student actors were encouraged to develop comic "bits" and "business" of their own devising. That opportunity, I have heard from them repeatedly, made this a particularly enjoyable production to work on. Finally, one of the best things the Stage Manager and I decided to do was include the crew in the show. So we developed moments when the crew were visible on stage, included in scenes, and most importantly, involved in one of the major dance numbers in the show. So even the crew got into the act!

(7) WHAT ARE STUDENT RESPONSES TO THE ACTIVITY? ATTACH STUDENT EVALUATIONS OR ASSESSMENTS (IN ACCORDANCE WITH FERPA RESTRICTIONS YOU MUST REMOVE ALL PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE STUDENT INFORMATION)

The final requirement of the Production class is a reflective, process paper focused on what the students have learned from their experience with the show. Their papers are uniformly positive in their evaluations of the experience. Here are some of the juicier excerpts:

"Something I would love to share with you is a story about the impact our character of Dorotea made on a young student at CI. One day I was getting coffee and a young woman approached me. She asked if it was okay to talk to me about the show and I expected her to tell me she was offended or wondered how awkward it was to kiss a female; that is what usual conversations became. This woman however shocked me and said that Dorotea inspired her to become a stronger woman. She was afraid to stand up for herself and to embrace all that she was but after watching a character do just that, she knew she could too. It was honestly the most beautiful

moment I could have asked to happen. We since then have seen each other and she is now telling me about how she feels so much more confident and in love with life, because of the character I played. This is what I wanted for Dorotea, and I am so glad at least one person was impacted in this way. It is all I could ask for as an actor.”

“This show taught me some great lessons. One, trust yourself and your abilities. Two, trust your fellow actors, but don’t rely on them. Three, it’s okay to be scared. Own the fear and use it to your advantage. Four, improvisation is hard, and improvising for a purpose is harder. It’s okay to not be excellent at it. And five, those frozen moments are much shorter than they seem. Eternity does not last forever.”

“This production was possibly one of the most fun, most beneficial, most eye opening productions I’ve ever had the privilege to be a part of. I’ll never forget my friends I’ve made as my cast mates and the choices I made as an actor, I honestly think this is the only project at this school that I’ve done that I can genuinely say has made me a considerably better actor than I was before.”

“I had forgotten what it was like to learn about a character, to understand where she is coming from, and feel her emotions onstage. I wanted to know where each line came from and learn which plays lines were lifted from (my Shakespeare knowledge is fairly limited). The hardest part of creating Lucinda was getting how I wanted her to sound from my mind and out of my mouth. In my mind, I could hear exactly how she would say something and see how she would react to whatever misogynistic comment one of the men would make but I couldn’t quite get it to come out right. Every time I said a line, it didn’t sound right. It wasn’t until opening night that I finally felt like I got something. She was sassy in all the right ways. I still feel like I could have done more but I am happy with what I was able to do.”

“I was also really fortunate to work with the most amazing, dedicated, mature, and caring cast and crew that I have ever had the pleasure of working with. From the beginning, the cast that remained with us were dedicated and cared passionately about not just acting or performing, but the whole show and each other as well.”

“I never felt more pride or accomplished as a crew member as I have on *The Thief, the Madman, Quixote, and the Magic Doors* and that is because this was the first time I had felt that the CSUCI crew were utilized and appreciated completely though out the entire process at the same equal rate as the actors were.”

*“I was honored and giddy with pleasure for helping design and build costumes for *The Thief, the Madman, Quixote, and the Magic Doors*, and would like to remark that it was so much more than a class I had to take or a task I had to accomplish but a mission to enhance an already brilliant show.”*

8) GIVE A SUMMARY OF EXPENSES FOR THE ACTIVITY.

I requested \$19,380.00 from the IRA, and because we didn't have to hire a Costume Designer (a student enrolled in the class filled the role very nicely) and saved money on a Technical Director (hiring, instead, a carpenter for our simple set), we came in under budget.

B. ATTENDEE LIST- SUPPORTING DOCUMENT:

In addition to the report form, *in a separate document*, attach to your email a list of attendees complete with each student major and grade level. This for IRA Committee reference only and will not be published on the IRA website. Include your name and the title of your IRA activity on the document.

The following students were part of the cast and crew for the play:

Robert Barner, PA Music, Sr
Noemi Castaneda, PA Music, Jr
Dallas Cohen, PA Theatre, Sr
Rosie Diaz, English, Frosh
Irene Flores, PA Dance, Soph
Isabel Gonzalez, PA Theatre, Jr
Emilee Grochowski, PA Dance, Jr
Frances Klingenger, Anthropology, Sr
Grace Loeffler, PA Theatre, Sr
Jackson Miller, PA Theatre, Sr
Nick Rada, Computer Science, Soph
Phillip Sanders, PA Theatre, Sr
Grant Smith, Art, Sr
Joshua Stapel, Art, Sr
Raquel Strobel, PA Theatre, Jr
Nathan Weinstein, PA Theatre, Jr
Shelby Wills, English, Sr

Several hundred students attended the production, but there's no record of their names or other information. One class, PA 101, attended both a rehearsal and a performance as part of their course requirements. Information about those students can be obtained from Professor Laura Covault.



C.IMAGES FROM ACTIVITY:

Finally, attach to your email up to 6 images demonstrating student participation (under 2 MB total) with captions/titles. Please attach these photos in .JPEG format directly to email. Thank you!

The attached photos were taken by Sean Engle during the dress rehearsal.









Photos from Sean Engle's post in The Thief, the Madman, Quixote, and the Magic Doors



