

Speaking of ...



A newsletter for friends of Speaking of Stories

Fall 2003

10th Anniversary Season

*Celebrating our past . . .
as we charge into the future!*

by Maggie Mixsell, Artistic Director

For our 10th Anniversary season our performances will blend the best of the old with some changes and additions suggested by you — our best advisors! Everything you have loved about Speaking of Stories will still be here, talented actors bringing to life compelling short stories — but in our desire to improve and grow we will also be exploring some new ideas.

Each of the performances will be constructed around a theme. For example, in February we present *Speaking of Mysteries* and we are particularly excited that famed writer Sue Grafton has agreed to be part of this performance. Or, how would you like to spend *April in Paris*? On April 26 you will hear stories inspired by the city of lights. For complete details on the season so far, please see the enclosed insert which includes the stories we have planned and, wherever possible, the actors scheduled to perform.

We are making some other changes to the performances: most evenings you will be “in the car, or in the bar” by 9:30 pm; our lighting consultants will be softening the glare from the stage and creating some subtle visual elements to improve the look of the shows; and some fine-tuning around the edges.

The season will be filled with a cast of returning favorites such as David Rasche, George Backman, Henry Brown, Jerry Kroll, Robert Lesser and Rudy Willrich plus readers from our early years, E. Bonnie Lewis, Faline England, Meredith McMinn, Joanna Barnes, and Richard Jones. Other experienced actors who will be on our stage for the first time include Heather Rasche, Sage Parker-Lang, David Miller, Saral Burdette, Jeff Mills, David Morris, Will McFadden, Brian Hansen as well as James O’Neil and Karyl Lynn Burns, who founded Ventura’s highly successful Rubicon Theatre Company.

Our stories will range from the poignant to the hilarious. This year we will be featuring the writings of a handful of local authors: Barbara Parker Robinson, Bert O. States,

Kick off the Holidays with an evening of Seasonal Stories, December 8th

starring

Jay Thomas



Jay Thomas

On December 8th, we return to the Lobero stage with our annual holiday production. Emmy Award winner Jay Thomas heads the cast, making his Speaking of Stories debut performing the charming *H Street Sledding Record* by Ron Carlson.



Katie Thatcher

The evening will also include several favorites of the Santa Barbara theatre community: Tony Miratti, Katie Thatcher, and Jon Koons. Tony will deliver an excerpt from *In God We Trust* by Jean Sheppherd. This novel is the basis for the film *The Christmas Story*, which has come to rival *It’s A Wonderful Life* as required holiday viewing.



Tony Miratti

The evening will take a decidedly irreverent turn with Katie Thatcher’s performance of *Front Row Center with Thadeous Bristol* by David Sedaris. For a little southern spice we have Jon Koons delivering *Cajun Night Before Christmas*. We are very pleased that Konrad Kono will be returning to provide musical interludes for the evening and, by popular demand, Christina Allison will reprise her irreverent (and hilarious) rendition of *The Twelve Days After Christmas*.



Christina Allison



Konrad Kono

December 8, 2003

7:30 pm

Lobero Theatre, \$30*

963-0761

**If you order your tickets along with a subscription you save 25%!*

***Sus Narrativas* returns to Center Stage Theater**

by Lisa Jackson

We are delighted to once again be presenting our Spanish language show, *Sus Narrativas*, featuring the works of Latino writers performed in Spanish. We are very fortunate to see the return of Leo Cabranes-Grant in the role of both Director and performer, together with actors Luis Moreno and Melinda Yao.

"This year *Sus Narrativas* . . .", explains Director Cabranes-Grant, ". . . explores the surprises of our daily life – the unexpected events that challenge us every day. This show will focus on the accidental gifts that dreams, fables and jokes offer to us; the serendipitous nature of reality as presented in stories by *Quiroga, Piñera, Carballido, Gómez-Peña* and others." Though the majority of the program will be in Spanish, this year, one story will be presented in English celebrating the blend of cultures that makes up our community.

We do hope you will join us and experience this unique performance in the intimate Center Stage Theater Friday and Saturday, November 21 and 22, at 8:00 pm. All tickets are \$5.



Melinda Yao



Leo Cabranes-Grant



Luis Moreno

**Sus Narrativas
Friday & Saturday
November 21 & 22, 8:00 pm
Center Stage Theater
963-0408
All tickets \$5**

***Word Up* Performance at Santa Barbara City College**



On November 16th we were proud to present a combined performance of *Word Up* students from Los Robles High School and Santa Barbara City College in the Fe Bland Forum at SBCC. 25 students performed, including 5 reading their own poetry. Generous donations from the Santa Barbara Foundation and Hal Wallis Foundation made the workshops and performance possible, and we are very grateful for their support.



You can help make all of these valuable programs possible. Please send a gift in the enclosed envelope today. Thank You!



(continued from page 1)

John Luca and, as I mentioned, our own celebrated mystery writer Sue Grafton. As part of our "mystery night" Sue will read an essay about the genesis of her heroine, Kinsey Millhone. The evening will also include one of Sue's stories performed by Joanna Barnes, and some classic tales, including one by O. Henry.

The season continues to evolve as I fit in actors for each story, you can visit our website for updates and new information.

We are pleased to announce that Borders Books has invited us to present a monthly preview discussion for each performance. On the Monday before each season performance, at 7:30 in the downtown Borders, Steve Gilbar and I will lead a discussion of the stories and authors for the upcoming performance. These should be lively evenings and I hope to see many of you there.

We look forward to sharing with you our tenth season of stories.

Speaking of Steven!

by Carolyn Butcher, Board President

In January we will begin our 10th season of Speaking of Stories...and we have much to celebrate. From our small beginnings at the Center Stage Theater to our current reign at the historic Lobero Theatre, there is one man in particular who has been cheering us on – Steven Gilbar. It was Steven who, after becoming a fan of *Selected Shorts* on public radio, thought: “I could do that...live...on stage...in Santa Barbara”. And so he did.

It gives me great pleasure to announce that we will be honoring Steven as our Man of the Year at the annual fundraising event, *Speaking of Steven*, which will be held on Sunday,

December 7th from 4:30 to 7:00 at my home in Montecito. You will have the opportunity to bid on inticing auction items, to chat with actors from the upcoming season and, in addition, David Rasche, one of our most popular “regular season” performers, will showcase his unique musical talent.

The Board of Directors of Speaking of Stories has decided that the best way to honor Steven will be to dedicate all the money we raise at this event to our unique educational program, Word Up. If we can raise at least \$12,000, it means 70 students will be able to benefit from this extraordinary experience in the coming year.

I hope you will join us. Please call 966-3875 for more details.



Barbara Burger, E. Bonnie Lewis and Maggie Mixsell, enjoy the party.



Marcia Larsen, from the Santa Barbara Chamber of Commerce enjoyed the art and readings



Actors Geraint Wyn Davies and Robert Lesser enjoy the party with subscriber Richard Goggin

Speaking of Steven!
Honoring Steven Gilbar,
in tribute to his years of service to Speaking of Stories

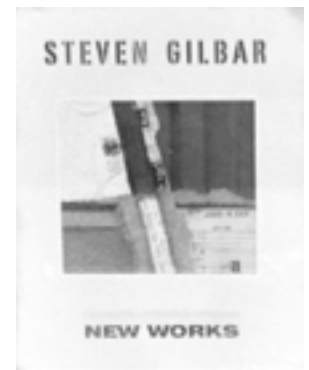
December 7, 4:30 to 7:00 pm
Call 966-3875 for tickets

at the home of Andrew & Carolyn Butcher
all proceeds support our education program Word Up

Our Season Launch Party was a Blast!

On October 24th we kicked off our 10th anniversary celebrations with a showing of new art works created by Steven Gilbar at the Contemporary Arts Forum. In addition to the art exhibition, partygoers enjoyed performances by Charles de L'Arbre and E. Bonnie Lewis.

The auction raised \$4,800 and, thanks to Steven generously underwriting the event every dollar will go directly to support our theatrical and educational programs. Thank you to everyone who attended -- particularly to the those lucky buyers who took home a Gilbar original.



Maggie Mixsell and Carolyn Butcher congratulate Charles de L'Arbre after his performance at the party.



Holiday Gift Ideas from Speaking of Stories

Give the gift of stories, in many ways

A subscription for a season of performances - \$63-\$122

Tickets to the December 8 performance starring Jay Thomas - \$30

Spoken word CD's - \$15

The Best of Holiday Chestnuts - enjoy past holiday performances with a collection of favorites featuring performances by Jeff Bridges, Jill Eikenberry , Michael Tucker and others.

Richard Jones performs *The Gift of the Magi* and other stories by O. Henry. This compilation includes 4 classic O. Henry stories.

To purchase any of these items call Lisa at 966-3875 or email info@speakingofstories.org

www.speakingofstories.org



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