

Thirty-two children to perform musical play "Peace Child" at UCSD

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32 CHILDREN FROM THE UNITED STATES, AUSTRALIA AND THE SOVIET UNION WILL PERFORM IN MUSICAL PLAY "PEACE CHILD," JULY 22 AT UCSD

Thirty-two children from the United States, Australia and the Soviet Union will perform at the University of California, San Diego in a musical play called "Peace Child," at 7:30 p.m., July 22, in the Mandeville Auditorium. The play and its songs, scripted mostly by the performers, present alternatives to war in an attempt to end world aggression by Peace Day 2025.

Narrator for "Peace Child" will be noted theatre personality Anna Strasberg, wife of the late Lee Strasberg who was the world renowned teacher of the Actors Studio in New York City for nearly 40 years. Strasberg's legacies are theatre training institutes in Los Angeles, New York City and London.

Strasberg, the mother of two sons, 17 and 19 years of age, said she wanted to take part in the "Peace Child" performances as an affirmation of the future. "The children are the 21st century," she said.

The "Peace Child" cast is made up of 15 young Soviet performers, 16 Americans, and one Australian, and will be backed up by a San Diego youth choir.

The Peace Child exchange project began in 1981, in England. The Peace Child Foundation, a non-profit organization based in Virginia, has developed a Peace Child Study Guide for Schools.

A production manual, the guide contains the complete script, score and guidelines for producing the play. More than 500 performances have been produced in the United States, involving more than 10,000 children. The project has expanded to involve children from Asia and South America.

Soviet participation in the project began three years ago, and in 1986 the play toured 12 U.S. and four Soviet cities, becoming the first reciprocal U.S.-Soviet youth exchange.

The cast of the Southern California tour will range in age from 10 to 17 years. The San Diego production will be backed up by a youth choir of approximately 50 children from Valley Center, Escondido, San Diego, Rancho Santa Fe and other towns in North County, and will be directed by Judy Bowman of Valley Center.

According to Peace Child Foundation volunteer Barbara Katz of La Jolla, the setting of the play, Peace Day 2025 (a day when aggression ceases), never changes. However, the story of how Peace Day comes to be is usually different in each production. It becomes the personal story of the children of the countries involved in the productions, who write new dialogue, and invent new scenes and songs, Katz says.

A Peace Child program takes about one month to produce and tour, and is open to students aged 12-18. The first two weeks are spent writing and rehearsing a new version of the play; the second two weeks are spent touring four or five targeted cities.

Katz said that the effort and intensity of the work formed strong friendships among the cast, and provided a wonderful way for children to experience another country.

The Southern California tour group began rehearsing in Ojai, California, in the beginning of July, and will give performances in Ojai, Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, San Diego and Irvine.

Tickets are available at \$8 and \$6.50 for students and seniors, from the UCSD Box Office (534-4559) and from TicketMaster outlets.

Editor's note: The cast of "Peace Child" is arriving in San Diego midday on July 21. For information on photo opportunities please call Alixandra Williams at 534-3120.

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