

Egotist and Ex-Wife Share Spotlight in UC San Diego's Annual Undergraduate Musical

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Christine Clark

Lust, crime and comedy take center stage in the latest Muir Musical Ensemble at the University of California, San Diego at 8 p.m. April 9 in the Mandeville Auditorium. More than 80 undergraduates from all six colleges are working on this year's musical, *Kiss Me, Kate*. The production is in its 17th year, and is the only musical theatre event on UC San Diego's campus completely produced and directed by undergraduate students.

Muir College senior Paul Scudder is directing the Cole Porter musical, leading a production team of 20, a 30-piece orchestra, and an ensemble of 25 actors and actresses.

"Directing the Muir Musical has been a fantastic learning experience," said Scudder. "It's been a joy working with the staff, orchestra and cast. They've impressed me so much with their talent and dedication."

Kiss Me, Kate is a show within a show that centers on Fred Graham as the director and star of a new musical based on William Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*. His leading lady is Lilli Vanessi, a *bona fide* diva of stage and screen and Fred's ex-wife. A slew of zany characters, such as Bill Calhoun, a tap dancer, and Lois Lane, a nightclub singer, round out the supporting cast of *The Taming of the Shrew*. Hilarity and chaos ensue when two gangsters looking for Bill mistakenly think Fred owes their boss money.

The Muir Musical Ensemble provides UC San Diego students who aren't necessarily theatre and dance majors an opportunity to get involved in musical theatre, says Patricia Mahaffey, Muir's dean of student affairs. Scudder said the musical gave him the opportunity to assume a leadership role, an experience that will serve him well later in life. Scudder plans on moving to New York after graduating to pursue directing professional theatre.

Past Muir College Musical Ensembles include *Sweeney Todd: the Demon Barber of Fleet Street*, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, and *Urinetown*. The musical is funded by the Muir Parent's Fund, Muir College Council, UCSD Associated Students, founding Provost John L. Stewart's Humanities Fund, UCSD Alumni Association, Council of Provosts, and all six colleges.

Performances run through April 11. Tickets are available at the UCSD Box office, the Muir College Center and at the door for \$8 for students, \$9 for staff, and \$10 for general admission.

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