

# THE DAILY UNIVERSE

The Voice of the Brigham Young Community

MONDAY  
June 12, 2010  
Provo, Utah

## Animation Professor recognized for dedicated work

Variety.com named ten leading educators at universities around the country who really make a difference in their respective entertainment disciplines. One BYU professor, Kelly Loosli, was among the ten.

"This is a tremendous honor," Loosli said in an email, "but in reality is more an honor for the program."

Loosli helped found the animation program at BYU in 2000. The program spans multiple colleges and programs, including the department of visual arts, theater and media arts, and the school of technology within the college of engineering, according to the program's description on byu.edu. The resources that come

from these multiple departments help animation students get a solid, thorough education.

"He really gets the big picture," said David Wardle, a BYU grad who has worked closely with Loosli in helping connect students and professionals. "He understands what it takes to make the leap from student to professional in the entertainment business."

In 2000, Loosli was hired to help create the animation program at BYU, a need for which was becoming apparent as film and design students expressed interest.

"He's done a great job of promoting the university and his students to not only develop the skill set," Wardle said, "but to learn the next step in

helping them find placement.

It's training not just for training sake, but with an eye toward being able to support a family."

The BYU animation program is known for putting out students who do quality, uplifting work and who are hard workers themselves, and that is widely recognized by animation companies.

"It's the student's work ethic," Loosli said in an interview with Mormon Artist in 2009. "When they get out in the industry, they're such good examples that that's what opens up the doors. ... By and large, people recognize the quality of the people BYU turns out and they love it."

Loosli sees a great connection between his work and the

gospel.

"There are so many ugly things out there that we should be creating beautiful art, doing stuff that testifies of God's creation. ... Animation is cool because you can create all the worlds you want, or you can just imitate the beautiful world we live in," Loosli said in the Mormon Artist interview. "You can take people places they can't ordinarily go. If you can get enough positive media out there, it can influence people regularly. That's the great vision."

Loosli hopes the animation program will continue to expand to better prepare students for the professional world.



## Broadway stars to perform at Orem's Hale

This summer, two Broadway veterans will appear on Orem's Hale Theater stage for a once-in-a-lifetime event.

Audra McDonald, known to theater lovers as a four-time Tony-award winning actress and the star of the Broadway musical "110 in the Shade," and Will Swenson, of "Singles Ward" fame (in these parts) and a Tony-nominated actor, plan to perform in a limited engagement at the Hale Center Theater in Orem. The two Broadway veterans are coming to the Hale to raise funds for the Hale Center Foundation for the Arts and Education.

McDonald will be reprising her Tony-nominated role in the musical "110 in the Shade" at the Hale. Swenson will fill the role for which he was the original understudy on Broadway.

"This was Audra's idea," said Sean Murphy, the Hale Theater's director of marketing, communication and development. "She came out to Utah and met the managing directors and got to know more about the theater and what we're trying to do."

McDonald and Swenson discovered a great opportunity to help a community theater they both loved, while having the opportunity to play opposite each other.

"Once I got to know about [the Hale]," McDonald said, "it reminded me so much about the theater I grew up in in California. So it will feel like going back to my roots in a way."

"110 in the Shade" tells the story of Lizzie Curry (played by McDonald), a spinster whose father and brothers are trying to get her married to the town sheriff. Soon enough a con man named Bill Starbuck (played by Swenson) shows up in the desert town and promises to make it rain, as well as teach Lizzie some life lessons.

In 2007, the show received Tony nominations for Best Revival of a Musical and Best Orchestration.

The New York Times praised McDonald's performance saying, "You don't know how she feels; you feel how she feels. You're likely to find tears in your eyes by the end of even comic songs."

Performances featuring McDonald and Swenson run June 28 through July 10. With a run this short (only 16 performances), seats are expected to sell out quickly.

Tickets to the event range from \$99 to \$149 a seat.

## Utah Theater Bloggers Association new medium for arts discussions

Utah is known for its support and care of the arts, from top-notch high school productions to innovative college shows to quality community theater. This makes for an environment to learn about theater from a variety of different productions, but until now there really wasn't a public forum for theater-goers to share and discuss their theatrical opinions.

Thus Dave Mortensen, a local producer and recent BYU graduate in Theater Arts Studies with an emphasis in producing, began the Utah Theater Bloggers Association (UTBA), a Web site where people could post reviews, discuss shows, and read others' critiques of productions.

"I was looking for a way to support local arts," Mortensen said, "and in some way lift the theater in Utah to the next level by providing a social forum that discusses theater events."

Mortensen is careful not to claim too much authority for the site. "By taking the name Utah Theater Bloggers, right up front we're saying this is not the New Yorker. A blog review can be much more casual than what you'd be reading in the paper, or it might be the same quality."

The reviewers are made of of "patrons to professionals," according to Mortensen. Reviews could be written by someone who has worked in theater for years, by college student studying theater or by someone who simply enjoys attending shows.

"There's a wide variety and we welcome other people to

post reviews along with ours," Mortensen said. "We certainly don't claim to be the definitive response of 'This is what the show is about, and this is how good it is.'"

The site has been well received in the theater community. Many smaller theater companies welcome the publicity opportunity to be reviewed because they usually don't get coverage from local newspapers. Some companies have had bad experiences when press coverage compares them to larger, more established theaters. UTBA acknowledges that these are different levels of theater, and should be critiqued differently.

"We want to do a responsible response to the production," Mortensen said.

Jason Langlois, a junior Theater Ed major, has reviewed a few shows for UTBA.

"Something I really like about UTBA is that it's always spun as positively as possible," Langlois said. "So that it's not, 'This show was terrible.'" Rather, Langlois said, the reviews give insights into which of the show's conventions worked, which didn't and why.

Christian Cragun, a senior in theater arts education, provided a director's perspective on this type of forum.

"I wanted that discussion," Cragun said. "I wanted to hear more about what people thought, especially people who have some professional experience in the theater because I really respect and value their opinions. I want



## BYU Philharmonic to perform

Canadians Tessa Virtue and Scott Moir chose Symphony No. 5 by Gustav Mahler as their music as they skated the ice dance program that won them a gold medal on Monday night.

That same symphony is also the choice of the philharmonic orchestra this weekend. After rehearsing for months, the philharmonic orchestra will perform Mahler's 70-minute symphony under the direction of the School of Music's Director of Orchestras Kory Katseanes.

"I'm hoping that when people come they will get a sense of how great this music is," said Katseanes. "It's so incredible and inspiring and powerful that your life is kind of incomplete, really, if you're not somewhat familiar with art at this level."

Katseanes stressed at how important it is to know the story behind this particular symphony.

"[Mahler's] music is kind of biographical," Katseanes said. "[When people hear it], they just think it's beautiful music, but if they know some of the story, they think this is incredibly beautiful music and powerful."

At the beginning of the concert, Katseanes will give an introduction to present key events in Mahler's life that influenced the symphony.

The story behind Symphony No 5 spans a year of Mahler's life, beginning with great hardship and sadness during a time when he was very ill – at one point he came within an hour of death – and ending in great happiness as he met, courted, and married his wife.

Freshman Tim McLure, a violin performance major from VA, plays third chair, second violin in the orchestra. He expressed his hope for the audience's reaction to the symphony.

"I hope they are bowled over," McLure said, "that they can just hear the incredible depth of emotion that this piece has. It's intense. ... I want them to come away saying, 'that was an experience.'"

The concert will be held in the de Jong concert hall on Saturday, Feb. 27 at 7:30 p.m. Tickets can be purchased from byuarts.com, at (801) 422-4322 or at the HFAC box office.

## Playing piano from the inside out

People walk past the south foyer of the de Jong concert hall in awe. A group of students stand over a lidless piano, their hands inside playing the strings. "What is this?" an onlooker asks.

The pianists respond enthusiastically. "Bowed piano!"

Students of Dr. Scott Holden, department chair of piano and organ studies, embarked on a challenge a few weeks ago to create and play a bowed piano. Dr. Holden made the pieces from things like fishing wire, eraser heads, and bits of

wood, and the ensemble of nine students and Holden began rehearsing.

"I teach a contemporary music class for piano," Holden said. "We talk about bowed piano, and the students are always so mesmerized, and I thought 'why don't we do it?'"

A bowed piano rehearsal is a scene of focused, scrambling players. The piano's lid is no where to be found. 20 hands play a single grand piano, with 16 hands actually inside the piano at a time.

"There's a ton of stuff going on," said Emily Sain, a piano

performance major. "We have to kind of choreograph our moves."

Two play the traditional black and white keys, while the others use fishing wire bows or mallets or files to play the internal strings.

There is constant movement as players move from playing a string to playing the keys to keeping the beat with a mallet to clapping along.

"Nothing like this has been performed at BYU. Ever," said Rob Sowby, a civil-engineering major and a member of the ensemble.