

Cal State East Bay Launches Music Theatre Specialty

Music Theatre is a new study option for the 2005-06 academic year within the Department of Theatre and Dance, College of Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences (CLASS), at California State University, East Bay.

The work of students in the Music Theatre program specialization had its debut with the campus production of *Beehive*, a 1960s musical review, in winter 2006.

Music Theatre was launched to meet the demand for this country's most thriving form of live theatre, according to Thomas Hird, chair of the Department of Theatre and Dance.

"Music theatre has always been of great interest to students, and well supported by audiences," Hird said.

"We find our alumni working in every corner of this business," he said. "It's about time we found this wonderful model that allows students to be involved in an ensemble class for two years with faculty like Jones and Jacobs. Everyone studying here—whether future actors, singers, dancers, directors, technicians, or designers—will gain from our focus on the challenges of actual production," said Hird.

The new Cal State East Bay program is headed by Associate Professor Darryl V. Jones, with assistance from Assistant Professor Marc Jacobs.

Jones, who holds a master's degree in Fine Arts in directing from Boston University, has more than 10 years of university teaching experience, in addition to directing and acting experience with several Washington, D.C. stage companies. They include the Arena Stage, African Continuum Theatre Company, and the Source Theatre, where he collaborated with Arthur Miller on a Dominican-American production of "A View From the Bridge." Jones directed and choreographed such off-Broadway productions as "We Are Your Sisters" for the Blue Heron Theatre Company, which won an AUDELCO (Audience Development Committee) Award for Outstanding Production from Harlem Live.

Jacobs trained at the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art and has performed in as well as directed plays, musicals, concerts and operas across this country and in Canada. On Broadway he assisted director Hal Prince on the musical "Roza" and has taught acting and directing at numerous theatres and universities. He runs the Summer Music Theatre Conservatory in Burlingame, a professional training program, in addition to his teaching duties at Cal State East Bay.

More information about the new music theatre option in Cal State East Bay's Theatre and Dance Department is available online at <http://class.csueastbay.edu/theatre/>.