

"Kids Do It All" at Colorado State University theatre camp

by COLLEEN MCSWEENEY
The Rocky Mountain Collegian

bookmark this page



last edited: 10:00 pm 06/21/2011

Sometimes all it takes is a magical tree to make a shy, lonely little girl realize life isn't so bad after all.

Or at least that's what has manifested from the creative minds of the children participating in "Kids Do It All," a summer theatre program at the University Center for the Arts.

Over the past two weeks, young theatre enthusiasts ages seven to 12 have taken part in the program, learning not only how to act, but also write, design and compose plays or musicals — including an untitled play about one girl's journey with an enchanted tree.

This is CSU's first year hosting the innovative children's camp, which is split into three separate weeklong sessions, and it has Walt Jones, Director of CSU Theatre, to thank.

Jones founded "Kids Do It All" in 1991 while teaching theatre at UC San Diego and has witnessed the program evolve significantly over the past 20 years.

"Doing the program in San Diego, it went through growing pains like any other pilot project," Jones said. "Over the sessions we adapted it based on things that worked and things that didn't work."

One thing Jones said has always worked is allowing the children to express themselves creatively, rather than creating a competitive environment as many other theatre camps do.

"The program is not intended to discover new talent or make eventual majors; it's about collective problem solving, self-image and tolerance of others' perspectives and views," Jones said.

Each session of the program, which is currently in its third and final week, allows a group of 18 or more kids to experience the entire process of creating a staged show — from idea conception to the final performance.

Laura Jones, a CSU theatre professor who works directly with the kids, says the participants grow over the week, and some even temporarily transform into mini-Spielbergs.

"Clearly (the kids') confidence builds and their understanding of the process increases daily by leaps and bounds. By the end, they are even using theatrical jargonplaces, please and cut to the next sound cue," Jones said.

And while the kids are behind the majority of the creative process, they have a supportive group of CSU theatre students and professors to guide them.

"The goal is to provide a forum where kids can learn how to create a fully-staged play; however, we provide the instruction and resources for them to see their ideas come to life," said Jennifer Clary, director of marketing for the School of the Arts.

"From my own experience of having a daughter in theatre from a very young age, I've seen how it translates into a confidence booster at school," Clary said. "Theater is an incredible vehicle for kids to discover their place in school, and in the world."

The final performance from the "Kids Do It All" participants will be June 25 at the University Center for the Arts. Admission is free and open to the public.

Editorial Editor Colleen McSweeney can be reached at news@collegian.com.



ERIN MROSS | COLLEGIAN

Cameron Montague, Emma Fries, Allison Tidwel, and Murphy Berglund rehearse a song about life at sea during the Kids Do It All youth theatre program Saturday. Throughout the course of one week, kids participating in the program create and star in their own play.



recent comments most commented

RECENTLY ADDED COMMENTS

- Mike on MourningStar: The on-going healthcare debate (1)
- Ellen on Stern: 'U.S. News' lies about CSU prof (5)
- Marc on Stern: 'U.S. News' lies about CSU prof (5)

NEWS

SPORTS

OPINION

RECENT MULTIMEDIA

PHOTO SLIDESHOWS

VIDEO

03/11/2010 Cupcake Cabaret: Fort Collins' newest burlesque revue

POLL

How do you deal with construction stress?

- ☐ Go to the Skeller.
- ☐ Hoard traffic cones.
- ☐ Sleep.

vote

results | poll archive