



Senior citizens: an ignored generation



State of Illusion

By CHRIS MARSHALL

One of the core teachings of Confucian thought is the concept of filial piety (xiào), which consists of obedience to, respect for and loyalty to one's parents. Filial piety is an important ideal that should be part of everyone's core philosophy, but regrettably it seems to be a rare practice in America.

This past week my grandfather had to make a trip to the hospital, up in Jackson near where he lives,

after taking a fall and possibly having a seizure. After a stay in intensive care, he was moved to the hospital's Extended Care & Rehabilitation Unit. This was quite a wonderful place compared to the rest of the hospital--the highly personable physical therapists there had my stubborn, bitter crotch of a grandfather simply beaming with smiles. It was as if he was young again, no longer the weathered age of 89.

One evening, my mother began to gab with another resident of the unit--a small, elderly woman, cradling a plastic baby doll. The woman presumably suffered from some sort of dementia, as she seemed to be "not all there." She talked about her "baby" and such,

but nevertheless she said some saddening things. She kept asking my mom to help her escape the hospital so she could finally go home. She inquired whether or not the door near her was unlocked and my mom tried her best to play along; though one has to wonder if the woman knew she was being patronized. My mother was trying to convince the woman that her "baby" seemed happy where it was when she was forced to leave seeing as visiting hours ended. My mom said she was looking forward to talking to the woman the next day.

Morning came and my mom returned to the hospital, deplored to find the woman was no longer there. The woman had been

moved to the nearest nursing home, one with a less-than-respectable reputation. There, I assume she will be slowly forgotten, fading from memory along with her "baby."

I find it hard to believe the ease with which we forget our elders. My dad had his mom put into a care facility, which he visits on occasion. I spent three days sharing a hospital room with an elderly gentleman. No one ever came to visit him. Do all of us really spend 75 years of our life--of sweat, blood and tears--contributing to the world just to be forgotten with one responsibility-absolving signature?

We, the younger generation, need to adopt a bit from the teach-

ings of Confucius. We need to start respecting not just our own parents, but all of our elders. Of course, respect is something earned, and I don't believe we should bestow it on those not deserving, but there are a lot of old people out there who will fade from memory even though they deserved our respect and our benevolence. There is nothing worse than being forgotten; all that matters, in the end, is the small impact we make on the world and those with whom we interact. Without that impact, if the tiny marks we leave fade away and are forgotten, it is like we never existed at all. By the way, the rehab center in the hospital I praised so much, it is being shut down due to the lack of funding.

ASOC leads student discussion on racism

By FRANKIE ADDIEGO
Staff writer

On Wednesday, April 12, the Ohlone College ASOC held a special screening of the Academy Award(c) winning movie *Crash* at the Naz 8 Cinema as part of Unity Week.

The film was followed by a discussion about race led by Comedian Ernie G and attending Ohlone students. The panel agreed for the most part that the film dealt with racial tension in a realistic fashion. Panelist Tatyana Hamady said, "It played onto the stereotypes...we de-

cide to give into these [stereotypes] for protection."

The panel then went into the definition of what "racism" meant to them. ASOC Senator Ken Steadman related stories about times when he was kicked out of clubs and so forth because he was white. While ASOC Senator Erick Sanchez said that he felt he lacked the "power" to be racist.

Unlike most one-sided panels, questions and comments from the audience flooded the panel after each question. Someone brought up the question of whether it was racist to hate a culture for something de-

monstrably inherent in that culture, which led to a tangent with panelists and audience members sharing a range of viewpoints.

Speaking from the audience, Ivy "Mr. Ohlone" Brawner said, "Hollywood taught me that we [African-Americans] have to look out for each other." Brawner then talked about how experiences and the example set by his friend Lasite Luke showed him otherwise.

As for other audience remarks, one white student recalled a scene in which a well-to-do TV director told a stereotypical black thug that he embarrassed him. The student

commented on how that character spoke to him about how he felt about clichéd racist rednecks. Another challenged the idea that racism and prejudices were merely products of ignorance, saying that different cultures have strengths and weaknesses.

Crash follows a day in the life of several denizens of Los Angeles and how racism affects them all. It relates almost anecdotal stories about a black carjacker, who's paranoid about racism; an angry Persian storeowner, who blames a Mexican locksmith for failing to fix his problem and vows revenge;

a racist cop who nevertheless puts his life on the line to save a woman he previously racially profiled; and much more.

The film won an Oscar for Best Picture for 2005. Many critics praised the film for offering a balanced, complex view of racism, rather than a preachy, judgmental condemnation of a typical group of racists.

"All are victims of [racism], and are all guilty [of] it," said noted film critic Roger Ebert in his review of the film. "Sometimes, yes, they rise above it, but it is never that simple."

'Romeo & Juliet' reinvented

By SEAN G. CRAWFORD
Investigative Reporter

The Ohlone Theater Department will begin casting for its production of "Romeo and Juliet" April 24 - 25 at 6 p.m. in the Jackson Theater. Actors are expected to have a two-minute contemporary or Shakespearean monologue prepared.

This won't be your great-great (etc.) grandfather's Shakespeare--the play is being updated by famed Seattle Playwright-Activist Edward Mast and will focus on addressing contemporary issues using a nonlinear framework.

"We are using the play as a jumping off point to focus on the larger theme of disagreements...

misunderstandings; cultures that don't see eye to eye," said Director Tom Blank.

The auditions are not for specific roles, but for a place in the acting company forming around the production. Specific roles will be assigned at a later date based primarily upon the level of commitment shown by each member of the troupe.

Once the company is formed, the cast will be tasked with improvising situations around the general themes presented in *Romeo and Juliet*. Mast will then base his script around the improvisational work and integrate it more fully into a cohesive whole.

The production will begin touring next fall among 14-16 local

high schools. Because the show will be mobile, the set will be scaled down.

"We will be using the largest, most adaptable environment that we can come up with," said Blank. Also, Michael Daw, the fight specialist from last year's production of "The Three Musketeers" will be back to do fight choreography.

Those chosen to be a part of the production company are expected to sign up for the fall semester class TD 124, which meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8 p.m. to midnight. "We need a company of people not allergic to mornings," said Blank.

For more information, contact Blank at 510-659-6209 or tblank@ohlone.edu

Activist playwright

Playwright Edward Mast is famous for his work in adapting stories for children's theater, however he also has garnered plenty of success from his politically charged work, most notably from the 1996 production of "Sahmatah."

"Sahmatah" was based upon interviews Mast collected in 1995 concerning the destruction of 418 Palestinian villages that were destroyed by the Israeli Military.

Since the production of "Sahmatah," Mast has become a prominent activist for Palestinian causes. He helped co-found the Seattle based "Palestine Information Project" and is a member of the International Solidarity Movement. In August 2001 Mast was arrested during a protest in Israel.

In 2002 Mast was awarded the Human Rights Award of the United Nations Association of Seattle.

Next fall's production of *Romeo and Juliet* will likely touch upon the Israel/Palestine conflict, as it relates directly to the broad themes of the play, however if the conflict is brought up, both sides will receive an equal pummeling. "Both families are knuckleheads because of the inability to embrace the unknown," said Tom Blank.

Music Man auditions

Missed your chance to audition for *Music Man*? Another search for singers, dancers, actors and set designers will be held this Saturday, April 22 at the NUMMI Theatre in the Smith Center at 9 a.m.

Students interested in trying out should bring sheet music in their key--16 bars ballad or 32 bars uptempo. An accompanist will be provided and no acapella auditions will be accepted. Also be prepared to dance and dressed to move!

Rehearsals are evenings. Monday-Thursday from 6 to 10 p.m. and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. starting to April 24. Rehearsal times will be determined by roles.

Music Man is the story of conman Harold Hill who wanders into the town of River City offering to train a boy's marching with the intention of skipping out as soon as the first payment is in. Things go awry however when he falls for the town librarian while trying to divert the townspeople from discovering he's a fraud.

For more information, call 510-659-6169.

'Literally Dancing' recital

By IRA LAZO
Staff writer

The Ohlone Dance Department proudly presents "Literally Dancing," a spectacular production that reinterprets different forms of literature into dance.

The show's title is a clever pun as it alludes to the theme of this year's performance, which focuses on three different forms of literature: Newspaper, Fairytales and Diary.

These three forms of literature will be made into moving, breathing and sensual works of art.

Artistic Director Janel Tomblin Brown remarked that the spring production not only showcases talented dancers but brilliant cos-

tume designers, choreographers, sound, lighting and set designers as well.

Auditions for the show started during the last week of January, and after deciding upon the cast the grueling rehearsals began. Students were not the only ones making decisions within the production, faculty also collaborated to pick the choreographic ideas.

"I teach a class called choreography for production. By using the select group of students who are accepted into this class, I create a choreographic team by combining them with the very talented adjunct dance faculty and myself," commented Brown, who also said that she was highly proud of her dancers and their collaborative

work of art.

Chris Guptill, who teaches an Entertainment Design and Technology class, united with Brown's dancers to generate an entertaining and professional theatrical experience.

The show will run from April 21-23. Friday and Saturday performances will begin at 8 p.m. and the Sunday performance will start at 2 p.m.

Tickets:
\$12 Adults
\$10 Seniors/Staff/Students
\$8 Youth under 12

For tickets and more information, visit: www.smithcenterpresents.com information.



Chalkdust & Friends concert

From left: The Ohlone Ukulele Renegades, K.G. Greenstein, Hal Griffin and Katherine Sparling and Chalkdust, Mark Brosamer and Jeff O'Connell performed last Friday night at the NUMMI Theatre in a benefit concert for the Speech and Music Departments. The two groups were also joined on stage by other musical guests.

O'Connell estimates that well over 100 people showed up in support. The Chalkdust & Friends concert not only sold out, but Smith Center employees had to eventually turn last-minute concert goers away even after adding more seating. Photos by Ross Tsvetanov

Ohlone art professor explores 'Similes and Sayings'

By **JOYCE LEUNG**
Features editor

What is art without controversy? Ohlone Professor of Art Kenney Mencher stirred up a bit of trouble in 2003 and 2004 when employees at the Hang Gallery in San Francisco and the STRS Gallery in Sacramento found his pieces to be too suggestive. After their removal, Mencher promptly contacted the press, garnering more publicity for his artwork than if they had been on display at the Salon des Refusés.

What puzzles me, and perhaps delights Mencher the most, is that none of the censored paintings depicted any sort of nudity or overtly sexual images.

Mencher revels in the fact that the implicit nature his artwork leaves much to be speculated; but as cryptic as Mencher would like to be, the artist does leave clues in the titles of his paintings that help his audience guess at his purpose.

"There's a Certain Slant of Light" is an allusion to an Emily Dickinson poem. Mencher's "The Music Lesson" is a reference to Vermeer's own painting of the same name, both of which portray an ambiguous relationship between mentor and student.

In "Apocrypha," a bound woman wearing little more than her knickers writhes on the floor as a man, down on his knees, clasps his hands in prayer with his eyes toward the heavens. A rabbi in the background enters the doorway with a fist in the air, as if ready to knock some sense into the offending man. "Apocrypha," if taken literally, means "hidden" or "secret" in Greek, and according to Merriam-Webster refers to biblical books excluded from the Jewish and Protestant canons of the Old Testament. Perhaps then, piecing together the images in the painting and the literal meaning of the title, one could deduce that this



sort of fetish behavior is not condoned in the Jewish or Protestant factions...though perhaps the Roman Catholic or Orthodox.

"Apocrypha" is not Mencher's only foray into the eccentricities of our bedroom behavior. In "Scooby Snacks," a woman dancing in her bra with a figure dressed as Scooby Doo is a reference to furies, a subculture fascinated with anthropomorphic characters. Mencher pursued the piece out of amusement after a student brought in a pop culture magazine about the subject and an episode of the "Drew Carey" show coincidentally focused on the very topic.

If Mencher's more explicit paintings were not done out of amusement, then they were seemingly done to satirize. In "Bulldozer," two rather muscular construction workers pose in front of what else, a bulldozer. Their minimal attire exposes their well-built body as well as their genitals. Rather than being vulgar, the piece is done in a

fashion similar to cheesy "beefcake" magazines in order to mock it.

Mencher's other nudes are actually quite naturalistic. In "Shared Space," a man who seems to have stepped out of a shower gives the viewer a glimpse of his posterior while drying himself off. His roommate, who lounges on the couch, seems to avoid the view, apparently uncomfortable with the lack of privacy that comes with "shared space."

In the more liberal setting of downtown Oakland, Mencher comfortably shares the Esteban Safar Gallery with more than 25 other artists. "Similes and Sayings" includes more than 50 of Mencher's drawings, paintings and portraits and will run through May 29 at the Esteban Sabar Gallery, at 480 23rd St. in Oakland. Although most of his works can be viewed online at Mencher's personal website: www.kenney-mencher.com, a trip to the gallery is well worth it to see everything in full-size.



From left: "The Music Lesson," "Apocrypha" and "Shared Space" by Ohlone Professor of Art Kenney Mencher. Images courtesy of Kenney Mencher.

