

*Community Theater Programs Entertain
and Educate Local Families*

The Arts are Alive in Cy-Fair

Written by Laurie Humble

Sleeping Beauty Ballet at the Cypress
Academy of Performing Arts



The cast of High School Musical



Kids can participate in play and musicals or take classes at Cy-Fair theater programs

The success of theater programs often depends on parent volunteers



Performers of all ages take the stage





Cypress Dance

Classes and Private Lessons
Available for Couples,
Kids & Adults.

Ballroom • Latin
Salsa • W.C. Swing
Belly Dancing
Country Western
Special Occasion

Call or
Register Online
today!

www.CYPRESSDANCE.com

25250 N.W. Frwy Cypress, TX
832.475.9142

Community theater programs require actors to go through the audition process to participate



Since the first known theatrical event of the sacred plays in 2500 BC in Egypt, live theater has been entertaining audiences, transporting them to different times and places right before their eyes. As theater evolved into the modern art form we are familiar with today, the community theater has become a popular venue for amateur actors who love the stage.

Cy-Fair boasts a number of wonderful community theaters groups who present elaborate productions in local venues such as The Berry Center, Lone Star College Cy-Fair Main Stage Theater and The Texas Repertory Theatre.

Bringing Families Together

Shows staged by community theatre companies in Cy-Fair cast actors of all ages, from as young as six years old to adults and senior citizens, allowing families to share the experience together.

Houston's Center Stage Theater President Gary Kreitz says, "We always encourage families to audition together in hopes one or more can be cast." For example, three members of the Simmons family, sisters Genevieve and Juliet and their father John, were part of the cast of Disney's High School Musical 2 this summer. The inaugural Houston Center Stage production was presented as a collaborative effort with Lone Star College Cy-Fair at the Main Stage Theater.

Each season The Houston Family Arts Center presents a combination of musicals, dramas, and comedies, featuring excellence in writing, diversity in casting, family-friendly content, and variety of styles. Executive Director Bob Clark says the organization was founded in 2005 by a group of families who wanted to create a theater where families could work together in all aspects of the production, and since their first production in 2006, they have presented 22 high-quality, family-friendly shows.

Learning the Process Early

The audition process is one of the first tastes of theater a promising actor will have. Depending on whether the show is a play or musical, prospective cast members must prepare a song to sing or a monologue to deliver in front of a panel of the production team who will determine if you are right for the show. Other aspects of the audition process can also include cold (without preparation) readings from a script, or even a dance routine.

According to Cypress Academy of Performing Arts Program Director Maggie Duncan, their students, children ranging in age from 3 to 18, are cast in their productions through full-fledged auditions. The philosophy at the academy is every child is a star. "Training in the performing arts can elevate one's ability to live a more creative, confident, healthy, and productive life through artistic expression," says Duncan.

Volunteers Make the Difference

Volunteers are imperative to any on stage production. "Volunteers also help with costumes, set construction and painting, obtaining and maintaining props, and working technical aspects of the show," explains Clark. HFAC is fortunate to have its own orchestra.

"It's also a great opportunity for musicians to use their talent in a fun way. We consider the entire cast, crew, and orchestra to be all part of the team." Volunteers are also relied upon to usher, help with concessions, and work the box office.

Those working behind the scenes are just as important as those performing on stage. Students at the Cypress Academy of Performing Arts who are interested in the technical aspects of a production have the opportunity to take on tasks such as lighting and sound. Parents also step in and fill in some of the other back stage positions. Kreitz says, "With community theater, parents get extremely involved with everything." But you don't have to be a parent to be part of the show. All you really need is a love of the theater.

Classes to Enhance Your Talent

In addition to the actual productions, each group offers a wide variety of classes in acting, singing, dance, and technical theater taught by professional instructors. Duncan states, "We have classes for beginners to the seasoned veteran. We offer a free trial class as well." Kreitz adds, "We develop and tailor each class individually to meet the skill level of the entering student." HFAC goes a step further by offering classes for adults as well as children. Courses offered include dance, dialects, and audition preparation.

Oscar Wilde once said, "The stage is not merely the meeting place of all the arts, but is also the return of art to life." Whether you choose to answer the call of the theater on stage, behind the scenes or as a member of the audience, take advantage of Cy-Fair's quality live theater without the hassle of driving into the city. CFM

Laurie Humble is an artist and the author of Watercolor Depth & Realism. She also writes for Examiner.com and Suite101.com.



PRAIRIE VIEW A&M UNIVERSITY

is the second oldest public institution of higher education in Texas. Offering baccalaureate degrees in 50 academic majors, 41 master's degrees and four doctoral degree programs, the University has an established reputation for producing thousands of engineers, nurses, educators and corporate leaders.

- Student-to-faculty ratio of 16 to 1
- Specialized programs in teacher education, juvenile justice, architecture and agricultural engineering
- Over 90 percent of PVAMU students receive some form of financial aid including scholarships and grants
- Students live and learn in state-of-the-art facilities
- More than 100 student honor societies, clubs and other special-interest groups

imagine yourself here



A Member of The Texas A&M University System
www.pvamu.edu | (936) 261-3311

Cy-Fair Area Community Theaters



Houston's Center Stage Theater

17338 FM 2920
 Tomball
 281-357-0385

Houston Family Arts Center

10760 Grant Rd.
 Houston
 281-685-6374

Cypress Academy of Performing Arts

11707-B Huffmeister
 Houston
 281-469-4599

Texas Repertory Theatre Co.

14243 Stuebner Airline Rd.
 Houston
 281-583-7573