

Cultural Conversations to talk 'War Against Women'

By Hannah Rishel
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Cultural Conversations wants to start a dialogue about the elephant in the room.

"We have created a reputation: What people don't want to talk about, that's what we put on," said Susan Russell, artistic director for the group. "It's important for the audience to talk back and engage."

The theme of this year's Cultural Conversations is "The Global War Against Women." Topics range from the various forms of violence against women that take place across the planet to women's empowerment.

The festival will take place Feb. 22-27, 2011 at the Penn State Downtown Theatre Center, 146 S. Allen St.

This is the fifth season for the organization and the first year it has had a clear-cut theme.

"I think that's what will make this year interesting," said Hannah Cranville (senior-public relations and theatre). Cranville is the public relations spokeswoman for the organization.

Over the course of the five-day

festival, 10 plays are performed. Five plays have been written by students and five by professional playwrights.

"We're the only play festival in the country like this," Russell said. "It's very hard for a playwright to have a place where they can come and explore."

The professional guest artists who visit Penn State to take part in the festival are fully supported, spending their nights in student apartments.

This allows students to have the opportunity to see the plays develop.

"We have open submissions," Reagan Copeland (senior-theatre and English) said. "We don't tell people what to write about. It's a workshop setup, so we help them develop their plays."

After every play is performed, the audience takes part in a dialogue with the actors and the director about the issues raised by the play.

"We usually spend as much time talking afterward as we do watching the performance," said Russell, also a Penn State theatre professor. "We don't approach art as entertainment; we approach

art as citizens. Every scene in the festival is an important social theme, locally and globally."

Russell came up with the idea for the theme of the women's genocide after reading "Half the Sky" by Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn.

"They're comparing the modern women's genocide to genocides of the past," Copeland said. "It's a discussion to recruit the everyday modern reader."

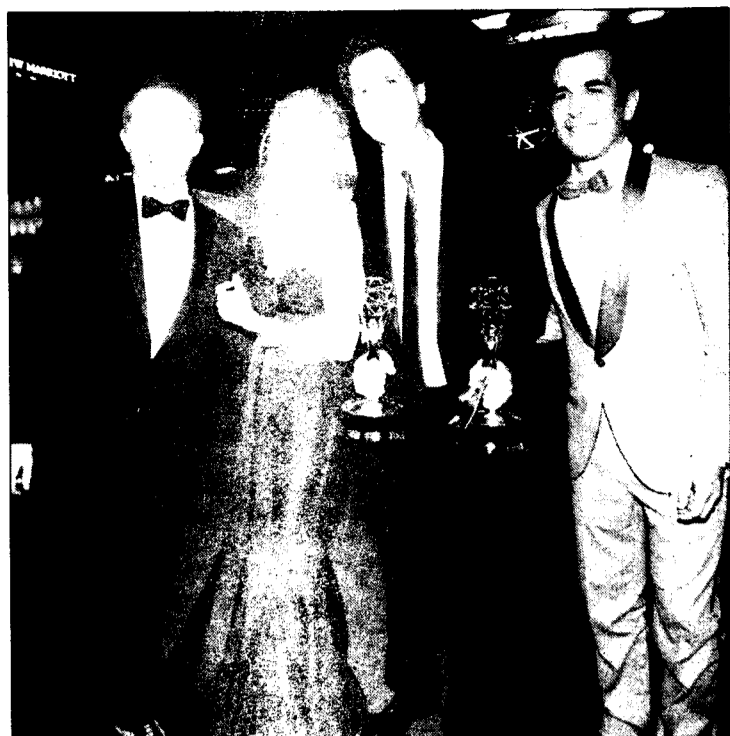
Russell said the theme is very important because females have a different world perspective not always taken into consideration.

In addition to the festival, Russell is putting out a book about young women's body image, which will be available online in September.

An academic journal of all the plays that have been performed by Cultural Conversations is also being published so the playwrights have the opportunity to have their work in formal print.

The journal will be on sale during the festival. Proceeds from the sale of both texts benefit the organization for years to come.

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Jae Hong/Associated Press

"Modern Family" cast members are seen at the Governor's Ball following the 62nd Emmy Awards on Sunday in Los Angeles. "Modern Family" won Best Comedy.

Emmy winners celebrate at ball

By Beth Henne
ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES — The stars of the Emmy Awards were on his feet for three hours on Sunday night at the Governors Ball.

He stayed up late for hugs and congratulations. A steady stream of Sunday night at the Governors Ball. Fey, Amy Poehler, Universal president Jeff Zucker.

"He did great," former co-star of "Night Live."

The ball was the night's party of guests, who walked to the Los Angeles Center.

The football room was decorated of "Starry, Starry" dangling from the ceiling.

A 565-pound dancer in a glittering sash above the musicians.

glowing spheres representing each sign of the zodiac circled the dance floor.

Partygoers dined on dungeness crab salad, rack of lamb with dried fruit crumble and dark chocolate decadence with smoked fleur de sel on a chewy fudge brownie.

They washed it down with 4,416 bottles of red and white wine, champagne, and vodka cocktails throughout the celebration.

Among the 3,600 celebrities and other invitees dining in close quarters were Wanda Sykes, Lily Tomlin, John Lithgow, Glenn Close and daughter Annie Starke, and Rainn Wilson of "The Office."

The musicians played such classics as "Route 66" and "Girl from Ipanema" during dinner. Later, the musicians opted for current hits including "Poker Face" and "I Gotta Feeling," both

of which drew several partygoers to the circular dance floor surrounding the orchestra.

"I got a feeling. Do you have a feeling?" nominee Mariska Hargitay jokingly asked her friends.

Movie revenue up, attendance down

By David German
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

LOS ANGELES — Hollywood is finishing its summer with record revenue but the lowest aqal movie attendance in five years.

Domestic receipts from the first weekend in May through the upcoming Labor Day weekend should come in at about \$4.35 billion — \$100 million more than the record set last year, according to Pat Dergarabedian, box-office analyst for Hollywood.com.

Attendance is down because of a step rise in ticket prices, heavily due to a surge in 3-D screenings which cost a few dollars more than regular movie admission.

Tough Labor Day, the actual number of tickets sold during the summer season is expected to come in at 552 million, the lowest since 563.2 million tickets were

sold in summer 2005, Dergarabedian estimated Monday.

Ticket prices this year are averaging \$7.88, according to the National Association of Theatre Owners. That's up 38 cents, or 5 percent, from 2009.

"To have record revenue built on the back of much higher ticket prices, in a way, it's kind of a shallow victory."

You want to see attendance go up every year, not down," Dergarabedian said.

The summer delivered some huge crowd-pleasers, led by Disney's "Toy Story 3," which followed "Shrek 2" as just the second animated film to top \$400 million at the domestic box office.

Paramount's "Iron Man 2" shot past \$300 million, while Summit Entertainment's "The Twilight Saga: Eclipse" has almost hit that mark.

Topping \$200 million were the

Warner Bros. release "Inception," Paramount and DreamWorks Animation's "Shrek Forever After" and Universal's "Despicable Me."

Sony had three \$100 million hits with "The Karate Kid," "Grown Ups" and "Salt."

Other releases failed to live up to the hype of summer blockbuster season, among them the Warner Bros. sequel "Sex and the City 2," Disney's "The Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time" and "The Sorcerer's Apprentice," and 20th Century Fox's "Marmaduke" and "Knight and Day."

"Audiences were underwhelmed, and they voted with their absence," Dergarabedian said.

"If you asked most people what they thought of the quality of the movies, it's kind of a so-so summer. We could have done a lot worse were it not for films like 'Inception' and 'Toy Story 3.'"

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Those interested should come to a brief information session at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 7, at the Collegian office in the James Building on South Burrowes Street.

Applicants must be full-time Penn State students to be eligible. Students who cannot make it to the information session can email Heather at hrs5029@psu.edu.

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