

Local Individuals and Artists Honored at Excellence in the Arts Awards 2018

On Thursday, October 18, 2018, The City of Thousand Oaks Cultural Affairs Department honored local individuals and artists for their work in the arts. The event was held at 7:00 pm at the Janet and Ray Scherr Forum, in the Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza, 2100 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd., Thousand Oaks, CA 91362. The free event was followed by a light reception featuring jazz duo Jeremy Stein and Graham Houts, and catered by LA Roots Catering.

A string quartet from Conejo Valley Youth Orchestra opened the show in honor of that organization. Other performances included musical selections on Orff instruments by students from MATES Elementary, "Adelaide's Lament" performed by cast members of Guys and Dolls at Conejo Players Theatre, and the Oaks Christian Advanced Women's Chorus singing "Believe".

This year, the event honored:

Conejo Valley Youth Orchestra with the Artist of the Year Award. CVYO has provided thousands of student musicians exceptional symphonic orchestra training and artistically excellent, unique performances for the community.

Judy and Len Linton with The Emerging Arts Leadership Award. Len and Judy have recently taken on new leadership roles; Len with the newly-formed California Museum of Art, Thousand Oaks and Judy with the newly-formed TO Arts. They have both been long time supporters and held leaderships in the New West Symphony, Rotary and the Wellness Community.

Frank LaGuardia received the

Community Impact Award for his work as an elementary school choir, band and general music teacher in the Conejo Valley for 20 years.

Dana and Ed Rouse received the Exceptional Arts Education Award for their work in music education and with Los Robles Children's choir.

Conejo Players Theatre received the Mayor's award from Mayor Andrew Fox in their 60th year of presenting Thousand Oaks audiences with entertainment and thought-provoking theater, staged by an all-volunteer team of actors and crew.

The Excellence in the Arts Awards have been presented by the City of Thousand Oaks since 1988. Overseen by an ad hoc committee of the Cultural Affairs Commission and volunteer members of the community, the committee defines the Arts as visual and performing arts, including but not limited to music, dance, theatre, painting, sculpture, photography and traditional/folk art. For these specific awards, the arts do not include literary arts. Philanthropy, while important, is not considered to be a factor in the criteria for any award. Members of the committee included Commissioners Stephanie Wilson - Chair, Cathryn Croall, Christina Duffy and Cory Hills, alongside community members Anthony Angelini and Kimberly Wright. The event was sponsored by the City of Thousand Oaks and other important sponsors including Montecito Bank & Trust, Mastro's Restaurants, Grounds Maintenance Services and TOArts.

Theater Review – True West

by Charles Foster Carmichael

"The cow as white as milk, the cape as red as blood, the hair as yellow as corn, the slipper as pure as gold." These ingredients comprise the spell at the center of *Into the Woods*, the classic musical with music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim and book by James Lapine that twists popular fairy tales into a brutal exploration of the consequences of wish fulfillment. Camarillo's Skyway Playhouse hosts this production, usually directed by Michael J. McGraw.

The story follows the Baker, played by Ken Patton and his wife, played by Genevieve Levin, who wish for a child, but a family curse placed on them by a witch, played by Mary Grace Zehnpfenning, is giving them troubles. The curse can be reversed with four key ingredients, and off they go into the woods to find them. On their quest they meet a runaway Cinderella (Sara Marie Calvey), Jack (Logan Milburn), who's selling Milky White, his cow, and Little Red Riding Hood (Michelle Harris).

It takes a few minutes to adjust to this different take. Musically, it's the same, only the direction has been altered. Examples: the Wolf being in regular clothes, without any hint of being a wolf, the Narrator remains on stage for many of the numbers, often a distraction in doing so. The true test of any re-imagining is

if it manages to find a new layer of meaning, or unearth something surprising even to those intimately acquainted with the source material. I definitely found myself paying more attention to different moments and even characters in a new light as a result of this staging.

Levin is outstanding as the Baker's Wife, with a clear voice and strong acting skills as well as Calvey, who handles her role as Cinderella with aplomb. The highlight of the show fall with the two Princes, Grumney and Pi, who deliver a rousing and very funny rendition of "Agony." Harris is delightful as Riding Hood, and Zehnpfenning shines as the Witch, as does McKay. Also, kudos to Laura Comstock for the costuming.

For any fan of Sondheim or fan of inventive musical theater, this production is definitely flavored for both.



What You Need To Know
Into The Woods
October 19 through November 18
Camarillo Skyway Playhouse
330 Skyway Dr. in Camarillo
805.388.5716
Tickets @ skywayplayhouse.org

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As always, sincere thanks for your patronage over the years!







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down the lines, and 400 feet to center. So it was a big ballpark. Instead of a fence around the outfield, there was a bank of grass about five feet high with a forty-five degree incline. So the bank served as a fence. The fiasco of Frank trying to hit Connie Grob's curveball, when he knew it was coming, was fresh in my mind. I was pretty confident he would have trouble hitting my curveball. I threw two curveballs and he swung and missed both. That's when I decided to get smart. I thought I could sneak a fastball by him on the outside corner. I didn't sneak it by him. He hit a bullet into right-field that was hit so hard, it stuck in the bank that surrounded Holman Stadium.

I learned my lesson. From then on every time I faced Frank in spring training, I threw him three curveballs. He would swing and screw himself in

the ground and then sit down. He just couldn't hit a curveball.

In 1959, the Texas League had a lot of young hard throwers with poor curveballs, and that allowed Frank to hit .371 with twenty-seven homers. He was promoted to the Dodgers in June, but only for a short period of time (23 plate appearances) before he was sent to Spokane in the Pacific Coast League. It was probably done this way to placate the owner of the Victoria club because the Dodgers knew that he wouldn't complain about losing his star to the big leagues.

Frank went on to hit 382 home runs in the majors, including three consecutive forty-plus homer seasons for the Washington Senators. They called him "The Washington Monument." Obviously he learned how to hit a curveball.



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