

Dear Reader,

Here are six stories I wrote that appeared in the Los Angeles Times and the LA Daily News. They date back before 2006 and were written well before I became a music critic. The photos have been added by me.

I am including these articles even though they may not seem appropriate for this opera-theater website because they show my long-term commitment in support of more and better arts education. I am including a story about the legendary Westmore family because whether on stage or in film, makeup is an art unto itself, and the Westmore family is a testament to the art's longevity and to how it can be used therapeutically for those who face adversity. My story on Danny Simon illustrates how one creative person can influence another to develop what might have been undiscovered talent. And finally, I have included a story on language strategies for immigrant children so that you will better understand that as the daughter of immigrant parents from Vienna, Austria – having been a teacher and counselor – my views in support of a multicultural society with equal opportunities for all can be evidenced in the stories I have written in the past, and in the positions I take on arts issues today, including LA Opera's 2010 Wagner festival. So please read what interests you.

Carol Jean Delmar

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## 'Opus' Could Even Score for Schools

### COUNTERPUNCH

February 12, 1996 | By CARIE J. DELMAR, *Carie J. Delmar is a freelance writer specializing in entertainment and education. She holds degrees in theater arts and psychology and has worked as a reporter and publicist in the fields of entertainment, politics and education. She has also been a teacher and school counselor.*

"Mr. Holland's Opus" evoked emotions and memories in me that I thought had long been forgotten ("Why Has 'Opus' Struck a Chord?," Calendar, Feb. 3). A lump in my throat, a tear in my eye for dreams lost, dreams found: My personal identification with some of the characters was complete. Part of me was the aspiring young singer. Another part was Mr. Holland, the impassioned composer-turned-teacher who found success and fulfillment on the stage of a high school auditorium.

But just as nothing in life remains constant, Mr. Holland was forced to face a new challenge after 30 years at the same school. Fiscal problems necessitated elimination of the music program. Mr. Holland had become expendable. But he was never to be forgotten. The unexpected ending, which I won't give away for those who haven't seen the film, was just right.

This film makes me want to stand up and cheer for those who have chosen the "noble" profession of teaching and for those who strive to find a place for the arts in our local schools and communities.

As I look back, school only became purposeful for me when I took my first drama class and acted in my junior high school play. Piano and ballet classes helped me develop the discipline necessary to become a productive adult. But true to the plot of the film, last year when I was a counselor at a Los Angeles public middle school, there were no drama classes; there was no school play. When I wrote a story a few years ago about an orchestra made up of children who traveled for miles every Saturday morning to play their instruments together and perform classical music under the baton of a conductor, I discovered that few junior and senior high schools maintained full orchestras.

The rationale for the lack of arts classes in public schools has always been the same. Proposition 13, passed by California voters in 1978, shifted school funding from property tax revenue to the state, and there has never been ample funding in the state's budget for education.

I have to hope that "Mr. Holland's Opus" could be the vehicle to influence a change in governmental priorities and in the way the teaching profession is perceived--that is, if it is viewed by enough people, particularly legislators, teachers and students.

School districts continually attempt to recruit high-caliber college graduates into the field of education, but teacher morale remains low. Teachers want higher pay, smaller classes, more supplies and less paperwork. Why should students aspire to become teachers when they can be more highly regarded and compensated as members of other professions?

Yet if they would go to see this film, they might change their minds.

"Mr. Holland's Opus" is the first movie in a very long time that takes us back a few years, when sensitive lower-budget films were able to find success. Congratulations to screenwriter Patrick Sheane Duncan and actor Richard Dreyfuss for creating a significant work that is truly memorable.

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As article appeared in the LOS ANGELES TIMES below:

### Putting on a Face for Hollywood

**Movies: The Westmore clan created a makeup dynasty. Mont slicked back Valentino's hair, and Michael won an Academy Award for 'Mask.'**

By CARIE J. DELMAR  
SPECIAL TO THE TIMES  
APRIL 12, 1991

Family dynasties are not uncommon in Hollywood, but few could rival the longevity or success of the Westmore clan.

For four generations, the family has pioneered the art of movie makeup – beginning in 1917 with patriarch George Westmore, an English wig maker who immigrated to the United States and established the first makeup department at Selig Studio, which was later purchased by Louis B. Mayer.

George's six sons – Mont, Wally, Frank, Bud and twins Perc and Ern – soon followed him into the business, becoming heads of makeup departments at the major motion picture studios in Hollywood and the San Fernando Valley, including Warner Bros., RKO, 20<sup>th</sup> Century-Fox, Paramount and Universal.

“They’ve been around since the beginning of movies,” producer Marty Hornstein of Paramount Pictures said. “There really isn’t a bigger or better family of makeup people in the industry.”

“The best part about the Westmores is that they can design makeup concepts. People who create special makeup are really in demand today, with the rise in production of futuristic films and horror pictures, and the Westmores were doing it years ago, way before it was this popular.”

“I’ve known many of the Westmores throughout the years, and I worked with Frank on ‘The New Dick Van Dyke Show,’” actor Dick Van Patten said. “They’re like magicians. Without a doubt, they’re the makeup leaders in the business.”

Carrying on the family tradition today are members of the third and fourth generations.

Mont’s sons include:

-- Michael, 52, of Studio City, makeup supervisor and designer for the syndicated television series “Star Trek: The Next Generation.”

-- Marvin, 56, of North Hollywood, who was makeup supervisor on the recently canceled CBS television series “WIOU” and currently is makeup supervisor of the latest “Star Trek” movie being made by Paramount.

-- Mont Jr., 67, of North Hollywood, frequent makeup artist for Paul Newman and Gene Wilder’s makeup artist on the film “Another You.” He also is makeup artist for “Hook,” in production at Columbia Pictures with Dustin Hoffman, Robin Williams and Julia Roberts.

Marvin’s children include:

-- Kandace, 30, of North Hollywood, who worked with her father on “WIOU.”

-- Kevin, 33, of Burbank, makeup artist on the CBS-TV series “Guns of Paradise.”

Other Westmores in the business include:

-- Ern’s daughter, Lynne, 56, of Northridge, who has worked on a number of independent films produced by Summit International Pictures, based in North Hollywood.

-- Wally’s granddaughter, Pamela, 30, of Marina del Rey, makeup supervisor on the ABC drama series “Life Goes On” and makeup artist on the Kathleen Turner film “Warshawski.”

One of the most recognized is Michael, who uses the lab at Paramount and a workshop adjacent to his Studio City residence to design special makeup that turns ordinary-looking actors into hairy monsters with bulging eyes, alien creatures with ridges and spines attached to their foreheads, and green lizard-like characters with webbed feet.

The business has changed a lot since the days of his father and grandfather.

“There might have been a glamorous side to my job in the olden days, when my relatives created the makeup for legendary actors like Rudolph Valentino and John Barrymore,” Michael said. But today, “makeup artists don’t have the time anymore to socialize and involve themselves with the intrigues that take place on the set. I have so much to create, and every move I make has to be directed toward the ultimate finished project.”

An autographed picture of Rita Hayworth hangs on a wall in Michael’s living room. It reads: “Thanks to Perc Westmore for the stunning new makeup I use in ‘Affectionately Yours.’” The photograph is signed: “Affectionately yours, Rita Hayworth.”

Perc, Michael’s uncle, is credited with changing Hayworth’s raven-haired locks to reddish blond for the film “The Strawberry Blonde” and for fashioning the little knot that often sits securely atop Katharine Hepburn’s crown. He also engineered the deformed physique of Charles Laughton in “The Hunchback of Notre Dame.”

Perc wasn’t the family’s only trend-setter. Wally transformed Fredric March from Dr. Jekyll into Mr. Hyde. Frank did the historically accurate makeup worn by the ancient nobility and biblical characters in the spectacular “Ten Commandments.” Ern, Perc’s twin brother, created a full red-colored look for Bette Davis’ mouth, and Mont gave Valentino his distinctive slicked-down hair and long slanted sideburns.

Grandfather George invented false eyelashes for Billie Burke and long, twisted curls for Mary Pickford, later popularized by Shirley Temple.

Since makeup artists were not honored with Academy Awards until 1981, none of the first- or second-generation Westmores became recipients.

Michael Westmore is the only member of the family to win an Oscar – for the 1985 film “Mask.” He has had two other nominations – for “2010” and “Clan of the Cave Bear.”

Michael and other family members have been nominated for nearly 30 Emmy Awards. Michael has won five – for “Eleanor and Franklin,” “Three Wishes of Billy Grier,” the “Without Diana” episode of “Amazing Stories,” the “Conspiracy” episode of “Star Trek: The Next Generation” and “Why Me?” Frank Westmore received an Emmy in 1972 for the Movie of the Week “Kung Fu.”

The family’s accomplishments – especially the second generation’s – were chronicled in 1976 by Frank Westmore and writer Muriel Davidson in a book titled “The Westmores of Hollywood.” The lives of the competitive, flamboyant and colorful Westmore brothers were cut short by a congenital heart defect, most of them dying in their 50s or early 60s.

No doubt due in large part to professional jealousies, the Westmore family, particularly the six brothers, rarely saw each other socially. Even today, Michael said, “we’re not a close family. Because of the rivalry that existed between my uncles, the only time the

family got together was for a wedding or a funeral. Each one of us has his own life to live. Marvin has his, and Mont has his.”

Whatever the problems of their predecessors, the third- and fourth-generation Westmores continue to thrive in the industry.

Michael learned his craft as an apprentice for his uncle Bud at Universal Studios.

Now an expert in the field of special makeup, Michael designed the makeup and prosthetic appliances for “Mask,” most of the “Rocky” movies, “Raging Bull” and other films.

Marvin’s credits include makeup work on the films “Dr. Doolittle,” “Blade Runner,” “The Buddy Holly Story” and “The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas,” and on the CBS sitcom “Designing Women.”

In addition to his show-business career, the North Hollywood resident shows post-operative burn and accident victims, and people with birthmarks and skin disorders, how to apply makeup to camouflage their scars. At M. G. Westmore Academy of Cosmetic Arts, his Sherman Oaks Studio, he also trains students who want to become makeup artists in photography, film, the stage and fashion.

Marvin said he began working with accident and burn victims in the early 1970s, after being asked by a plastic surgeon to help a badly scarred patient. Other doctors heard about his work and referred patients to him.

He believes that facially disfigured people are handicapped in today’s society. “I have empathy for these people and the ability to make a difference. To turn my back on them would be like turning my back on society,” he said.

Mont Jr., who designed Paul Newman’s makeup for the recently released “Mr. and Mrs. Bridge,” is a very private person, reluctant to speak about his work or personal life. He is secretary-treasurer of Make-Up Artists and Hair Stylists Local 706.

Ern’s daughter, Lynne, is also a makeup artist, although she has spent most of her adult life as a sculptor and painter. She began applying makeup 10 years ago when her eldest son, Stephen Seemayer, was directing a picture that required an Armenian actor to look Japanese and Mexican-American.

“He wanted me to help out because he was on an extremely tight budget and knew that I had learned the techniques to do the job by watching my father,” said Lynne, who maintains a 700-square-foot art studio on the property of her Northridge residence.

“I never really wanted to be a makeup artist when I was younger,” she said. But, for the past few years, she has applied makeup on a number of films produced by Summit. She also exhibits her artwork at the Orlando Gallery in Sherman Oaks.

“When I’m working on a picture, I can’t imagine doing anything else. I can’t even think of being a sculptor,” she said. “Then, when I’m finished with the film, I often think that I don’t want to go back and work 16 hours a day again, day in and day out. But then I find myself accepting a new project designing makeup and special effects, and I think that I’m doing the greatest thing in the world.”

The fourth-generation family members are sustaining the show-business tradition.

“I was always fascinated with the old movies and thrilled when I saw grandfather’s pictures of Fredric March as Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde,” Pamela said. “I have a beautiful heritage to carry on. When I pick up my brush, I feel a lot of pride in my ability to maintain what was established 70 years ago.”

“I cherish the family name and will always protect it in the industry,” Kevin said. “I’m just trying to catch up; I still have a lot to learn.”

*Delmar is a Sherman Oaks free-lance writer.*

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News

**Speaking With 1 Voice**  
**New Strategies Emerge to Help Immigrant Students Learn English**

June 16, 1991 | By CARIE J. DELMAR, SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

Paul DeBonis spends a good portion of each day in the world of make-believe.

One recent morning, he pretended he was eating a scrumptious meal, with invisible silverware and dishes. Then he stepped into an imaginary car and pretended to drive.

No, DeBonis was not teaching pantomime to aspiring actors; he was teaching English.

His task is not an easy one. In DeBonis' classroom of 10th- and 11th-graders are recent immigrants from Russia, Armenia, Central America and Vietnam.

DeBonis' task, while daunting, is not unique.

Immigrant children are flooding into California schools, and as they do, teachers are struggling to deal with classes in which many, sometimes most, students speak little or no English. No school district has a greater influx of such children than the Los Angeles Unified School District. And in Los Angeles, it would be hard to find a spot where the challenge they present is more evident than in Hollywood, where DeBonis teaches.

DeBonis is a teacher at Hollywood High School, where about 1,200--or about 55%--of the school's 2,182 students have limited English skills. More than two dozen languages--including Spanish, Armenian, Russian, Tagalog, Korean, Vietnamese, Thai, Chinese, Arabic, Romanian and Hungarian--are spoken. More than half of the students speak Spanish, and about 25% speak Armenian. The rest speak other languages; about 15% speak only English.

In the Los Angeles Unified School District, about 38% of the district's 625,000 kindergarten through 12th-grade students--more than double the statewide average of 18%--have been identified as having limited proficiency in English.

Even if DeBonis taught in a dozen languages, instead of just English, he would not be understood by many in his class. So he gestures, pantomimes and slowly speaks sentences describing his actions, all part of his method of teaching ESL--English as a Second Language.

“Every day when I see my friend, I shake his hand,” he said, grasping a student's hand and moving it up and down. “Now, I ‘am shaking’ his hand,” he continues, carefully enunciating each syllable.

“Because my students come from five or six different countries, it's difficult to communicate in a language they all understand,” DeBonis said.

ESL, DeBonis’ preferred method, is but one of the components of the Los Angeles school district’s bilingual education program. Teachers throughout the Los Angeles area are trying a plethora of methods and combinations of methods to help their students reach fluency in English.

In another Hollywood High classroom, for example, Cecile Schwartz helps her 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students learn English by teaching language concepts and other subjects entirely in Spanish, a method known as primary language instruction.

During a recent class, she and her students ran through the conjugation of the verb “preferir” – to prefer. She pointed to the words that the overhead projector shone on the wall and the students enunciated: “Yo preferi, tu preferiste, el prefirio, nosotros preferimos and ellos prefirieron.” They went on to conjugate “dormir” – to sleep.

“Being able to revert to the native language of my students makes it easier for me to communicate complex concepts,” Schwartz said.

A third method, known as “sheltered subject matter teaching,” uses visual aids to teach course material in subjects such as math, science, social studies, art or physical education.

“When students take a subject matter course that is comprehensible, they acquire language just as easily as if they were taking a language course,” said USC linguistics professor Stephen Krashen, an expert in bilingual education.

Marissa Hipol uses the sheltered technique to teach science to her Latino and Armenian 10<sup>th</sup>- and 11<sup>th</sup>-grade students at Hollywood High. Like Schwartz, she used an overhead projector to illustrate a lesson. “Here is a picture of a crayfish,” she said. “We drew it yesterday. Let’s discuss it before we have a quiz.”

This is the dorsal view,” she continued, placing her hands on her back. “What do you have in the cephalothorax region?”

Her speech became slower and clearer as she answered her own question: “Face, eyes, head and neck,” she enunciated, pointing to the crayfish’s body parts. “Now let’s talk about the abdomen.”

The three techniques used by the Hollywood High School teachers also are used – alone or in combination – to teach elementary school children who speak limited English.

On a recent morning at Grant Elementary School in Hollywood, Lucy Gureghian taught ESL to nine of her 23 third-grade Armenian-speaking students, while her aide, Sirvart Egian, taught reading to 11 other Armenian students. A third group that included two Korean-speaking children was involved in independent study areas within the classroom.

The groups – each with different proficiency levels in English – rotate from teacher to aide to the study centers. Later, the students receive sheltered instruction in mathematics, art, social studies, science and physical education.

Gureghian’s task is made a bit easier by the fact that she speaks Armenian.

But often it is the children themselves who make the difference.

“The children are so eager to learn. They’re excited because they’re in a new country where they’re exposed to new foods and customs,” she said.

About 80% of Grant’s nearly 1,200 students have limited English skills, according to school officials.

Los Angeles Unified is struggling to deal with such staggering numbers. Newcomers are asked the languages spoken in their homes and are evaluated for fluency in English. Those termed “limited-English proficient” are placed in a bilingual-ESL program and assessed periodically to see if they are ready for a mainstream, total English-language curriculum.

According to Amelia McKenna, assistant superintendent of bilingual ESL instruction, Los Angeles Unified in 1988 adopted a master plan for bilingual education, which details models of instruction. Most schools use more than one model, she said.

In elementary schools, a so-called full-bilingual classroom usually contains students who speak a common language but who are not fluent in English and who are taught in their native language most of the day.

In contrast, students in a modified bilingual classroom – such as Gureghian’s class at Grant – might receive instruction in their primary language from a teacher’s aide. Both programs also provide students with ESL and sheltered instruction.

When a classroom contains smaller groups of students who speak a variety of languages, the teacher usually develops a strong English-language development program rich in ESL and sheltered teaching.

The guidelines are similar in junior and senior high schools. In the upper grades, however, students with limited English skills are rarely placed in a full- or modified-bilingual program unless their literacy level in their native language is low. A typical 10<sup>th</sup>-grade schedule for a Latino student at Hollywood High who is not fluent in English might include language arts and math classes taught in Spanish, an ESL class and a

sheltered physical education class. By the 12<sup>th</sup> grade, the student would receive instruction entirely in English.

According to McKenna, the Los Angeles Unified School District offers full- and modified-bilingual programs in Spanish, Armenian, Cantonese, Korean and Tagalog, the most widely spoken native language of the Philippines.

The recent wave of Soviet immigrant students to Hollywood-area schools could necessitate an addition to the list. But at present, the children are receiving mostly ESL and sheltered instruction, with some Russian-language support.

“We don’t have enough Russian reading materials for a bilingual program,” said Phillip Wright, a teacher and bilingual coordinator at Laurel Elementary School, where Russian is the primary language of about one-third of the students. “The parents opt not to have one. They want to get into the American mainstream as quickly as possible.”

At Wilton Place Elementary School near Koreatown, first-grade teacher Monica Kim teaches a full-bilingual program to 28 Korean students with limited English skills for 80% of the day. During the rest of the day, her Korean-speaking students are mixed with children who speak other languages, and the group receives sheltered English instruction in art, music and physical education.

As Kim’s students learn English, use of the sheltered technique is increased until the children are prepared to be mainstreamed with fluent English speakers.

Still another approach is taken at the Bellagio Road Newcomers School in the lush surroundings of Bel-Air. Opened in August, 1989, in an elementary school that had been closed because of low enrollment, Newcomers caters to immigrant students in grades 4 to 8 who have been in the United States for less than a year.

Students – including 12 from Grant this year – are bused from schools in the Mid-City and Hollywood areas as part of the voluntary program. They stay at Bellagio Road for one year, then enroll at schools near their homes.

At Bellagio Road, Spanish speakers are placed in a full- or modified-bilingual program, and students who speak other languages receive English-language instruction and sheltered teaching.

“The purpose of the Newcomers School is to provide students with a positive first-year school experience as they make the transition into American society and culture,” said Principal Julie Thompson.

At Grand View Boulevard Elementary School in Mar Vista, two kindergarten classes are participating in a voluntary two-way bilingual-immersion program. In each class, 50% of the students are not fluent in English, and 50% speak English as their primary language. Ninety percent of the curriculum is taught in Spanish, and 10% is taught in English. By

the time the students reach the fourth grade, the program will shift so that 50% of the instruction will be in English, the other half in Spanish.

“The aim of the developmental program is to have bilingual, bi-literate students,” said Principal Rebecca Clough.

The Culver City and Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School districts provide kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup>-grade “language minority” students with ESL and sheltered instruction, and teach some classes only in English and some only in Spanish in their elementary schools.

Educators who are dealing with the polyglot classes say more training is necessary to make bilingual programs successful. The Center for Academic Interinstitutional Programs recently held a conference at UCLA attended by more than 350 junior and senior high school teachers who wanted to learn strategies for their bilingual, ESL and sheltered classrooms.

Although bilingual-ESL-programs are expanding and the need to train and hire more teachers to implement them appears to be swelling, a recession economy, a projected shortfall in the state’s 1991-92 budget and a drop in state lottery proceeds are creating a feeling of uncertainty among parents and educators.

Because of the fiscal problems, the financially strapped Los Angeles Unified School District is struggling to balance its 3.9 billion 1991-92 budget.

An extensive district reorganization plan unveiled by Supt. Bill Anton to save \$10 million would eliminate some bilingual-ESL management positions and shift much of the administration of the department from district headquarters to locally based management teams. By the 1992-93 school year, one goal of the plan will be to allocate funds to each school so that school councils composed of parents, teachers and administrators can make their own decisions regarding expenditures.

“The reorganization will help increase awareness of limited-English-proficient students’ needs,” McKenna said. “The plan will provide flexibility in getting more materials and teacher support for bilingual and ESL education.

“The kids are not going to go away.”

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Santa Clarita Valley Youth Orchestra, 2010

**Story as seen in LOS ANGELES TIMES and ARTICLE COLLECTIONS below:**

### **Ensemble Attunes Youthful Ears to Sound of Classics**

**Music: The Santa Clarita Valley Youth Orchestra engenders a commitment to artistic expression in students of all ages.**

May 03, 1991 | By CARIE DELMAR, SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

For Jung Sun Ryu of Bakersfield, there is no sleeping late on Saturday mornings. Instead, the 16-year-old crawls out of bed, dresses, grabs a cookie and quickly joins her father by 8 a.m. in the family Oldsmobile, where the two spend the next hour driving to Valencia.

Jung, a cellist, is one of 46 students in the Santa Clarita Valley Youth Orchestra, which rehearses at 9:30 every Saturday morning at College of the Canyons.

"My cello teacher made me aware of the orchestral program," Jung said. "At first I was skeptical because there were so many younger children, but after I heard them play, I was really impressed. Some of the third-graders play at the same level as I do. I learn a lot about music theory, and I earn college credit."

Enrollment in the course is open to students of all ages, but most of the musicians range from 7 to 20 years old, with at least one year of instrumental training from their elementary, junior or senior high schools. Some have studied privately.

"It's easy to teach students of all ages," said Pat Norris, who coaches the orchestra's string section. "Musical ability is the key, not chronological ages. A 14-year-old may be more advanced than a 17-year-old."

Norris, 38, of Valencia, also teaches instrumental music and chorus at schools throughout the Palmdale School District. "The youth orchestra is the only one in the Santa Clarita Valley," she said. "Typically, every area has one youth orchestra and one community orchestra. Santa Clarita still doesn't have a community orchestra, but our youth orchestra effectively prepares students for a career in music. They're exposed to playing pieces they might later perform in a professional arena."

On Thursday, the orchestra will perform in the College of the Canyons cafeteria. Selections will include the first movement of Haydn's Symphony No. 104 ("London"), Tchaikovsky's "Capriccio Italien," Sibelius' "Finlandia, Opus 26, No. 7," Copland's "Down a Country Lane" and songs from Meredith Willson's "The Music Man."

"I want this to be the premier youth orchestra in California," said Robert Lawson, 38, the group's teacher-conductor. "It's my dream to see some of these kids graduate to form a professional orchestra" in the Santa Clarita community.

The Ventura resident, who recently received a master's degree in music composition and conducting from CalArts, has led the young musicians since 1989. In addition, he is the music director of the San Buenaventura City Hall Concert Series in Ventura and teaches piano part time at College of the Canyons and Ventura College.

At a recent rehearsal, the students' eyes traveled intently between their music and Lawson's graceful baton. "We've been working a long time for this concert," said 16-year-old French horn player Jennifer Hiller of Saugus High School. "We've made a lot of changes and improvements because we want this performance to be great. It's sort of a culmination of a lot of other performances we've had since last winter."

Formed in 1960 at the Los Angeles Conservatory of Music in Valencia, the youth orchestra merged in 1971 with the Chouinard Art Institute when it became CalArts.

It remained at CalArts until 1985, when administrators wanted to discontinue the program to create classical courses strictly for college students, said Bernardo Feldman, chairman of the College of the Canyons music department. However, parents and community members protested by organizing a foundation to finance and maintain the orchestra. CalArts then agreed to continue the program.

Feldman, a part-time CalArts music instructor at the time, joined the foundation. In 1989, the Mexico City native persuaded College of the Canyons President Dianne Van Hook to move the ensemble to the community college. Van Hook agreed, willingly. The orchestra held its first class at the community college site in January.

"Students of any age can attend a community college and earn credits if they benefit from the instruction," Van Hook said. "Many school districts lack funding to maintain orchestras in all of their schools, so students often don't have an outlet for their musical expression. It's important to expose them to the arts to develop a discipline and self-respect that will carry over into their adulthood."

At the recent rehearsal, Mellissa DeConza, 7, sat mesmerized alongside her 9-year-old brother, Michael, during their first class. Wearing a white lace dress and pearl earrings to celebrate the occasion, the second-grader enjoyed the experience. "I might want to be a musician when I grow up," she said.

Mellissa will play drums at Thursday's concert. Michael, a fourth-grader at Sulphur Springs Elementary School in Canyon Country, plans to sit this one out until he has taken private lessons. He hopes to play cello for the orchestra in the future.

Besides Bakersfield, most students attend schools in Saugus, Castaic, Palmdale, Valencia and Newhall. Most of the area's districts do not offer classical music as part of their curriculum. Of the 51 public institutions--elementary, junior and senior high schools--only nine have full orchestras.

Music programs were drastically reduced after Proposition 13 was passed by California voters in 1978. "Schools relied heavily on property taxes at the time," said Joel Fox, president of the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Assn., "but now much of school funding comes from the state."

Although the referendum accelerated the transition in school financing, the landmark Serrano vs. Priest decision of the mid-1970s made it inevitable, Fox said, referring to when the Supreme Court upheld the unconstitutionality of unequal school district financing.

Funding improved in 1984 when voters approved the Lottery Initiative, which earmarked at least 34% of the proceeds from lottery ticket sales for education. It continued to improve in 1988 with the passage of Proposition 98, which guaranteed schools about 40% of the state's general fund. But with a recessive economy hurting lottery sales and a projected \$12.6-billion shortfall in the state's 1991-92 budget, school districts face a \$2-billion reduction, including the governor's proposed suspension of Prop. 98 funding.

Although fine arts programs continue to suffer from the fiscal dilemma, Feldman is enthusiastic about the future of music at COC. He has initiated an electronic music division, and plans are underway to build a campus theater.

He also hopes to encourage classical music appreciation in the adjacent communities. The youth orchestra accelerates those goals, he said, by performing on campus and for area residents.



"The youth orchestra is an avenue for expression," said Jan Wakelin, parent of oboist Hans Wakelin, 13, and music director of the Castaic Union School District. "Playing an instrument requires discipline and practice, and it gives youngsters something structured to do in their free time.

"It's good to know there is at least one quality program available that gives students good exposure to orchestral repertory."

*The Santa Clarita Valley Youth Orchestra performs at 7 p.m. Thursday in the College of the Canyons cafeteria, 26455 N. Rockwell Canyon Road, Valencia. Free. Information: (805) 259-7800.*

*Delmar is a Sherman Oaks free-lance writer.*

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**LA DAILY NEWS – Feb. 4, 1987**

**Another Simon Says What's Funny.**

**Neil's brother, Danny, teaches the art of comedy.**

By CARIE J. DELMAR  
Daily News Staff Writer

SHERMAN OAKS – Danny Simon is on the top of the world these days. Since his brother's most recent play opened on Broadway in December, Simon is becoming a celebrity.

The Sherman Oaks resident is playwright Neil Simon's older brother. And even though he has been characterized in a number of his brother's plays, he says his life is most accurately portrayed in the latest – "Broadway Bound."

Danny, a well-respected comedy writer in his own right, has seen the play twice, once at a preview in Washington, D.C., and once at the New York opening. "I cried at both because Neil had reached so close to home," Simon said. "The boy in 'Broadway Bound' was so much like me that (actor) Wayne Rogers and (director) Bob Fosse came to me at the party after the show and said, 'You were great.'

"Neil has treated me so affectionately and complimentarily in the play that it's making me a national hero," Simon said. "Old girlfriends are calling and coming out of the walls."

The play goes back to the days when the two brothers were growing up amid their parents' turbulent marriage, and it describes their struggle to launch their writing careers.

"I was Neil's surrogate father," Simon said. "I was writing comedy to sublimate."

Simon credits himself for teaching his brother Neil and other well-known writers some of the basics necessary in achieving success. The quote he uses most often to substantiate his claim comes from a book by writer Eric Lax titled “On Being Funny: Woody Allen and Comedy.”

Woody Allen, who had worked with Simon in the late 1950s, told Lax, “I’ve learned a couple of things on my own since and modified things he taught me, but everything, unequivocally, that I learned about comedy writing I learned from him (Danny Simon).”

Simon added that on a Bob Hope special about 10 years ago, Hope asked Neil Simon if it was possible to teach someone how to be a comedy writer. “Neil first replied, ‘No,’” Simon recalled. “Then he said, ‘Maybe there’s one person who can. My brother Danny – he taught Woody Allen and he taught me.’”

With that type of encouragement, Simon began teaching eight-week comedy-writing seminars seven years ago near his Sherman Oaks condominium.

“I think that before being allowed to write TV comedy, everyone should be forced to take the Danny Simon workshop,” said Barry Fanaro, co-producer and co-writer of the television show “The Golden Girls.” “Nobody can do it better than he can.”

Fanaro said he took the workshop seven years ago before beginning his professional writing career. “Danny teaches the structure and format to writing situation comedy,” Fanaro said. “He teaches the solid principles of how it’s done.”

Some students in Simon’s current workshop agree.

“He’s given me a way of working,” said Jeffrey Davis, who has written television scripts for “Night Court” and “House Calls.” “He teaches you how to develop true characters and how to know when you have a premise.”

“He teaches you how to think,” said Pamela Scrape, 40, a news producer with the Playboy Channel.

Simon, who describes himself as a “writer, teacher and bon vivant,” also gives weekend lectures at universities around the United States.

“I like teaching and traveling all over the country to see protégés,” Simon said. “It’s very gratifying to be able to contribute to the betterment of writing construction, taste and character development. I feel like I’m a funny version of Mr. Chips.”

Simon was born in Washington Heights, N.Y. In his early 20s, he wrote comedy sketches for shows presented at Abraham & Straus, a Brooklyn department store.

“My brother Neil was 15 then. I asked him to help me write the sketches, but he didn’t want to,” Simon said. “But after some coaxing, we became a team.”

In 1946, they created a sketch for radio personality Goodman Ace and began writing for comedians like Milton Berle and Phil Foster at CBS Radio. A few years later, they wrote television comedy for “The Phil Silvers Arrow Show,” “Broadway Open House” and “The Red Buttons Show.”

In 1956 the team broke up. Simon continued to write for television and his brother Neil began writing Broadway plays.

Simon wrote “Trouble-in-Law” for “The U.S. Steel Hour” and then became the head writer for “The Danny Thomas Show.” He moved to Los Angeles in 1959 and wrote for television shows such as “Bachelor Father,” “My Three Sons” and “The Kraft Music Hall.”

He created the idea for “The Odd Couple” while sharing an apartment with agent Roy Gerber about 25 years ago when both were estranged from their wives. The two were joking with each other one day and pretended to have a fight similar to one between a husband and wife.

“I gave the idea to Neil,” Simon said. “He wrote the play and gave me a percentage of it. That allowed me to retire from TV writing and start directing for stage.”

Simon then directed numerous plays, including a Los Angeles production of “Plaza Suite” with Carol Burnett and a London production of “The Sunshine Boys.”

He’s proud of his two children – Michael, 30, a lawyer, and Valerie, 28, an art director.

And he said he’s glad he was characterized by his brother – to varying degrees – in “Come Blow Your Horn,” “The Odd Couple,” “Plaza Suite,” “Chapter Two,” “Brighton Beach Memoirs” and “Broadway Bound.”

“My brother and I love each other,” Simon said. “I’m his biggest fan.”

IN MEMORY OF DANNY SIMON: 1918 – 2005

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**UCLA Instructor's Book on Computer-Designed Theatrical Sets Breaks New Ground**

May 19, 1991 | CARIE J. DELMAR, *Carie J. Delmar is a Sherman Oaks writer*

UCLA Associate Prof. Rich Rose says he will never forget the sabbatical he took from January to March of last year. He wrote a book on computer-aided scene design. And he became a father for the first time.

As a professor in the theater arts department, Rose, 38, planned the leave so that he could meet his publisher's June deadline and still have time to spend with his new daughter, Melissa. But he never anticipated how demanding fatherhood could be. His wife, Leslie, 32, explains:

"I had an emergency Cesarean section the end of that February, and so Rich took care of the baby just as much as I did those first few months. Melissa had colic, and I was too weak to carry her around, so Rich laid her on one of his arms while he wrote on the computer with the other. It was quite a juggling act. Then we put her in a swing in his office, and she watched him for hours while he worked on the book."

The 272-page reference manual titled "AutoCAD Onstage" is the first book that explains how to sketch, design and draft theater, film and television sets on a computer by adapting a general computer-aided design (CAD) software program. The program, AutoCAD, has been used since 1982 by architects and engineers.

The manual will be available in bookstores this month. Half of it explains how to select computer commands to create drawings, and the remainder includes illustrations that demonstrate the steps to complete a ground plan--an overhead view of a stage that shows the placement of scenery, furniture and props.

When he introduced the program to his students, they wanted to know what the examples of exteriors and interiors of buildings had to do with theater, said Rose, a calm and somewhat studious man with blue eyes behind gold-rimmed glasses. "Out of my frustration came the idea for the book. I wanted every example to relate to the theater or the entertainment industry."

Rose, who lives in Sepulveda with his wife and daughter, spent a year developing projects that would teach students how to draw ground plans and renderings so they would know how to apply the program when it was time for them to design or draft a show. During his year of research, Rose experimented with the program in his scene design and drawing classes. And last summer, after submitting a completed manuscript to his publisher, Betterway Publications, he began using it in his advanced drafting course.

"My students like to use computers because their drawings are more accurate," Rose said. "My challenge in writing the book was to simplify the reference manual normally used with the software program, and to explain scene design to my students in an orderly fashion. A few of them have already used it to design some of our main season productions."

The 8 1/2-by-11-inch book describes how to depict the stage by activating commands on a computer. Lines and circles can be drawn at specific dimensions or angles; objects can be moved and rotated; and the final product can be shaded, printed out and later converted into a painting, to be used as the basis for a design of a stage production, film or television show.

"CAD hasn't taken hold yet in the industry because of pure ignorance and a fear of learning new techniques," said veteran art director Jeff Goldstein, 40, who has designed sets on such television series as "Hill Street Blues," "LA Law" and "Cop Rock." "I believe CAD will eventually become commonplace. It effectively saves time and does better presentation work with fine-line detail."

Rose has used computers to design sets since 1987, after receiving a \$100,000 grant from IBM to create a computer lab in the theater arts department. Since then he has used computers to design UCLA main stage productions of William Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet" and Sam Shepard's "Curse of the Starving Class," which is illustrated on the cover of his book.

From 1976 to 1978, after receiving bachelor's and master's degrees from UCLA in theatrical scene design, Rose worked as a set decorator and assistant art director on the ABC television shows "What's Happening," "Carter Country" and "Soap." But he missed the creativity of designing for the theater, he said.

As a member of the UCLA theater arts department faculty since 1978, he has been able to design, lecture and write. A precursor to the current book was "Drafting Scenery for Theater, Film and Television." And he has still found time to create sets for the Back Alley Theatre in Van Nuys.

But now that "AutoCAD Onstage" has been completed, he may be spending additional hours in the classroom. During the spring quarter, he is using the text to teach a graduate class on computer-assisted design for the stage, and he continues to utilize the manual in his 10-week advanced drafting course, which meets twice a week for two hours each session.

One recent Tuesday morning, five of his undergraduate drafting students were staring at their monitors, glancing fleetingly at the manuscript pages sprawled beside them. One student was drawing a turquoise-colored three-dimensional cube on her screen; another was giving dimension to a fence. "Rich and his book have made me excited about designing," said Ed Staudenmayer, 20, an acting student who hopes one day to own a theater.

"Having the ability to apply AutoCAD to design is going to make it easier for me to find a job" as an art director, 21-year-old Kristan Andrews said.

Even as college students introduce their innovative high-tech ideas to the entertainment industry, expense remains a major obstacle. According to AutoCAD retailer Jerry Eyrich, software sells for \$3,500, and hardware costs \$4,000 to \$15,000, depending on the complexity of the system.

Bruce Ryan, 37, production designer on the CBS television series "Good Sports," maintains his own AutoCAD computer setup at his Hollywood office. "It pays off in the time I save," Ryan said. "Initially it takes longer to input a design in the system than it does to draw it by hand, but in a sitcom or soap where the sets are repeated daily in part or in whole, CAD can be very advantageous because already-used ground plans can be called up and then modified."

Although some art directors are still reluctant to use computers in the design process, Academy Award-winning production designer Gene Allen, executive director of the Society of Motion Picture and Television Art Directors, Local 876, has arranged a computer training program for the union's 400 members. "There are brushes and there are pencils," he said, "but there are also computers, and all three are tools of the trade."

Might Rose's book be destined to become a fourth tool? "It's a much-needed publication," Ryan said.