

COMING
UP AT THE MELLO

Pajaro Valley Performing Arts Association

2003
SUMMER

Sign your kids
up now for
Performing Arts
Summer Workshops



Photo by Ricky Schenck

Americana Music at the Mello

The Pajaro Valley Performing Arts Association is pleased to announce a newly-formed partnership with Snazzy Productions to bring an exciting line up of remarkable singer/songwriters to the Mello Center in the coming season. Dubbed “Americana Music at the Mello Center,” this series of special performances will feature recording artists whose music tells the unique story of American life.

To quote John Sandidge of Snazzy Productions, “Americana music is American roots music, from acappella to bluegrass to zydeco. It’s folk, it’s rock’n’roll, it’s blues, it’s the weird edge of country. Americana is Hawaiian slack key, rockabilly, and country swing. Sometimes it’s a mixture of all of this, other times it’s something your niece from Austin just made up.”

We are most pleased to launch this partnership with a return engagement at the Mello Center by Iris DeMent on Thursday, June 26 at 7:30 PM.

Iris DeMent is an American classic. The beauty, passion and raw honesty of her music are an emotional cache of immense power. The full character of her voice adds a piercing reality to everything she sings and goes beyond words or thoughts.

Iris wrote her first song while living in Topeka, Kansas, and after a two-year layover in Kansas City, Missouri, she headed to Nashville, Tennessee. Two years later, she signed recording contract with Rounder Records and returned to Kansas City—her home today—where she finished writing her first album, *Infamous Angel*. The release of that album in ‘92 brought her industry attention. Its evocative “Our Town” was the perfect close to the final episode of Northern Exposure. “Let The Mystery Be,” also from *Infamous Angel*, was featured in the motion picture, *Little Buddha*.

SPOTLIGHT

THURSDAY, JUNE 26, 7:30PM

The PVPAA and Snazzy present,
Iris DeMent

continued on back page

Ikuyo Conant Second in a series of articles about Artists in Residence at the Mello Center. See inside.

summer 2003 events

WELCOME TO THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF THE PERFORMING ARTS SERIES

Summer Workshops for Kids at the Mello Center

If you are looking for something fun and exciting for your kids to do over the summer holidays...this is it! Performing Arts Workshops for kids are being offered this summer at the Mello Center in Taiko Drumming, Capoeira, Theater Arts, Hip Hop Dance, and Brazilian Dance. Workshops are available for students in grades K-12. Each weekday morning for five weeks a different performing art form will be taught by one of our community's talented artists. At the end of each week the students will present a short performance, utilizing the skills they have learned. Join us for one weeklong workshop or register for them all.

Come on down and be a star...onstage at the Mello Center!

Workshop Dates & Descriptions

JULY 7 - JULY 11

Taiko Drumming

The Class: Taiko is a traditional form of Japanese drumming. This class will develop rhythm and the power of mind-body integration by having students learn basic stances, forms and full body movements.

The Teacher: Ikuyo Conant, PVPAA Artist in Residence-see article below, is a master teacher of Taiko and teaches these techniques at CSUMB and throughout the Santa Cruz area.

JULY 14 - JULY 18

Capoeira Dance

The Class: Capoeira is a Brazilian martial art that combines acrobatics, music and song. Students will learn basic Capoeira movements and how to sing a Capoeira song in Portuguese.

The Teacher: Papiba Godinho, a native Brazilian, is a master of Capoeira, director of SambaDá Brazilian Band, and member of Raizes do Brasil, a well-known international Capoeira group.



Left Center: Papiba Godinho

JULY 21 - JULY 25

Theatre Arts

The Class: A five-day introduction to the five basic acting values: Energy-Voice-Presence-Timing-Intelligence.

JULY 28 - AUG 1

Hip Hop Dance

The Class: This class will be an energetic and fun opportunity to learn some of the current trends in hip hop dance as well as some hip hop basics.

The Teacher: Molly R. Heaster is founding owner/co-director of Motion Pacific Dance Studio in Santa Cruz which has been awarded "Best Dance Studio" by the *Good Times* and *The Metro*.



Right: Molly Heaster, Left: student

AUG 4 - AUG 8

Brazilian Dance

The Class: In this workshop the students will learn three Brazilian dances, the traditional afoxé and samba, and the more contemporary and popular dance style of samba reggae.

The Teacher: J'Ann Rains is co-founder and Artistic Director of Fusao Brazilian Dance and Drum Company.



AMERICANA MUSIC AT THE MELLO

FRIDAY, AUGUST 15, 7:30pm

Snazzy Productions Presents
An ACOUSTIC concert by

Robert Earl Keen

Tickets \$22, reserve yours now by calling 763-4047 or order online at snazzyamericanamusic.com

"The very model of the timeless Texas troubadour..." -Daily Variety.

Robert Earl Keen is a potent force among a cadre of talented Texas tunesmiths making musical hay early in the new millennium. Keen leads the pack of noteworthy performers whose artistry is marked by a quality of edgy rebelliousness that doesn't quite mix with country music's mainstream.

"I think of myself as a songwriter first," Keen said. "That's what I feel is my true talent. If I have a gift, that's the gift. However, the performing part is what gives me a lot of pleasure in life...I find that writing the songs gives me more reason to get up on stage."



SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 7:30pm

The PVPAA and Snazzy present the hilarious,

The Teacher: David Scott has a degree in Theater Arts from San Jose State University, has directed actors of all age groups, and taught drama and directed plays at Watsonville High School for four years.

Workshop Times

9:00am-10:00am Kindergarten-2nd Grade 10:00am-11:00am 3rd Grade-6th Grade 11:00am-Noon 7th Grade-12th Grade

* The cost for each weeklong workshop is \$50. * A 10% discount will be applied if student registers for all workshops. To register or for more information please call: The Pajaro Valley Performing Arts Association at 831-763-4047.



J'Ann Rains

Photos of Papiba and J'Ann by www.kyerphotography.com

The Trailer Park Troubadours

Tickets \$18, reserve yours now by calling 763-4047 or order online at snazzyamericanmusic.com



Flem and Antsy of the Trailer Park Troubadours

The Second in our Americana at the Mello Series, see article about this series on front page.

SECOND IN A SERIES OF ARTICLES ABOUT ARTISTS IN RESIDENCE AT THE MELLO CENTER

Ikuyo Conant: Artistic Director of Watsonville Taiko

When Ikuyo Conant performs with the Watsonville Taiko Group, she is not just playing the drums, she is sharing a story with the audience. The story could be about the opening of a delicate lotus blossom or about the setting sun; whatever the story, it is seeped in the tradition of Japanese mythology and folklore.

Ikuyo was raised in a small farming community near Mt. Fuji in Japan, where her family raised cucumbers, tomatoes, peaches and rice for market. She first heard Taiko drumming as a child in the local village festivals at a time when neither women nor children were allowed to play Taiko drums; it was a time when Taiko was performed only by male elders of the village.

Moving to Watsonville to attend Monterey Peninsula College and later UCSC, Ikuyo received her degree in Anthropology with her main interest being mythology and folklore, through which she feels we can find the understanding to reach past the boundaries of 'culture' and touch on the universality of the fact that we are all human beings.

When Ikuyo was asked to teach a Taiko class in Watsonville, she returned to her village in Japan and

went to the village storeroom in order to find music of the Taiko drummers she heard as a child. Although she found some written music, she realized most of it was not appropriate for the Chu Daiko (the medium sized drums used by the

Watsonville group). She also realized that the most of the Taiko music and rhythms had been passed down by singing or oral traditions. It was then that Ikuyo began to write and translate music for Taiko drums. She artfully weaves threads of the stories she learned as a child and folklore she studied in school into the drumming of the Watsonville Taiko rhythms.

So, next time you hear the Watsonville Taiko drummers perform, close your eyes, listen closely to the 'story' that Ikuyo and the drummers are presenting and maybe you will be able to see that lotus blossom opening up as the music of the drums permeates the theater and enters your soul.

The Watsonville Taiko perform frequently in the area. Contact the PVPAA for dates and times and mark your calendar now for their annual concert at the Mello Center in October, 2003!



IKUYO CONANT

ARTIST IN RESIDENCE

LOCAL LEGENDS

Local Talent Makes Good

Each year, the Mello Center is proud to host a series of dance school recitals by talented young people from our area. Bring your kids and check out these terrific performances from some of our best dance students.

SATURDAY, JUNE 14

Ballet Arts

Tickets sold at the door
Call 438-9447 for show time and ticket price

FRIDAY, JUNE 20 & SATURDAY, JUNE 21, 7pm

Elaine's Dance School

Tickets are \$8.50 General and \$5 Children
Call 688-1013 for more information

SATURDAY, JUNE 28 AT 3PM & 6PM

No Limits Dance

Tickets sold at the door
Call 476-0390 for more information

The Henry J. Mello Center for the Performing Arts is owned by the Pajaro Valley Unified School District and operated by a Joint Powers Authority of the City of Watsonville and the PVUSD. It is managed by the PVPAA, a 501(c)(3) non-profit charitable corporation.

Staff List
 Executive Director
Pamela Mason
 Office Manager
Michaela Weeks
 Facility Manager
Pat Edwards
 Project Coordinator
Liz Reid

Treasurer
Charles Eadie
 Secretary
Diane Cooley
 Members
 Elias Alonso
 Maria Candelaria
 Eleazar Cortes
 Rhonda McCormack
 Zoe Neves
 Patricia Prince

Board List
 Chairman
 Senator Henry J. Mello
 President
 Michael Thomas
 Vice President
 Howard Shyer, Ph.D.

Pajaro Valley Performing Arts Association
 231 UNION STREET
 WATSONVILLE, CA 95076
 T: 831-763-4047
 F: 831-763-4045
 E: mellocenter@cruzio.com
 www.mellocenter.com



Her second album, *My Life*, released in '94, garnered DeMent a Grammy Nomination, as did 1996's *The Way I Should*, an album that expanded the scope of her reflection and concern.

Most recently, Iris recorded four duets with John Prine on his latest release, *In Spite of Ourselves*, which features Prine with his favorite women singers; DeMent is in good company with Emmy Lou Harris, Trisha Yearwood and Connie Smith. The title track with Prine and DeMent is featured as the end-title theme of Billy Bob Thornton's film *Daddy & Them*. The album received a Grammy nomination for Best Contemporary Folk Album.

With all the press and acclaim, DeMent keeps her feet firmly on the ground, giving the greatest insight to what her music and her life is about. As she

relayed to journalist Scott Mervis, "I used to be able to hear a lot of things when I was growing up. I could actually turn on the radio and hear Woody Guthrie and a lot of different music that seems to have disappeared now.



So much of the music now sounds like a commercial. It's not somebody's soul. It's like somebody is trying to sell me something. There are exceptions, but not many."

Iris is one of those rare exceptions. She not only bares her soul, but shares it, not to shock or exploit or sell, but to make a connection, to reach and teach and talk and sing...heart to heart. She faces her deepest fears, her greatest losses, the bottomless hurt and anger, the joy and wonder...imparting to others the uncommon courage to do the same.

Rent the Mello Center

The Mello Center has a few dates available for renters in 2003-04. Call now to reserve dates for your performance, meeting or event. 831-763-4047

We wish to thank the major donors to the PVPAA

- David and Lucile Packard Foundation
- William and Flora Hewlett Foundation
- Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County
- Mike Thomas and Patty Powell
- Granite Construction, Inc.
- Driscoll Berries
- IBM International
- ...and the many Friends of the Mello!