

'Suite' sets Utah premiere

UVSC students to star in and direct original script

OREM — The Utah Valley State College theatrical arts department continues its 2007-08 season of "The American Experience" with the original script "Canyon Suite" by Charles Erven.

With an all-student cast as well as student directors, the "Canyon Suite" will make its Utah premiere at the Black Box Theater.

After "Canyon Suite" was presented at last year's Kennedy Center's American College Theater Festival, UVSC theater faculty members were so taken with the play, they sought to premiere the show in Utah.

"We have not presented a contemporary production quite like this before," said Terry Petrie, chairman of the UVSC theatrical department and one of the three directors.

"All humanity aches to be loved, and we often sacrifice too much for this need. It is interesting to examine these human conditions on the stage," he said.

Also directed by UVSC students Mahonri Stewart and Ruth Carlstrom, "Canyon Suite" is presented as three acts that center on nine people who meet in the same motel room near the Grand Canyon over a period of three decades. Relationships and threads through time are explored in this poignant piece involving a wide array of complicated characters, from fickle lovers to lonesome cowboys.

"This piece appears at first to be three separate unconnected one-act plays that span more than 20 years," said Petrie. "It becomes very intriguing to the audience as they are able to make connections about each of the lives of the characters even though the characters portrayed are unable to recognize or make the connections themselves."

"Canyon Suite" is about connections present, past, and lost and explores the idea that our lives and relationships are irrevocably connected. "In this piece some of the relationships are a wreck — emotionally unhealthy. Some of the relationships have a healing influence," said Stewart. "But all these bring out the universality of human nature among distinctly different experiences."

The directors hope that "this will



Kyla Curtiss stars as Cassie in "Canyon Suite," which starts tonight at UVSC. It was presented last year at the Kennedy Center's theater festival.

PHOTO, JACOB SCOTT

be a story that stays with the audience," said Carlstrom. "Real love is hard to find, but in the end it's worth it."

The cast of "Canyon Suite" includes Aaron Willden, Kyla Curtiss, Jacob Nilsson, Trisha Samiko Nozumi, Jamie Denison, Jana Grass, Scott M. Stringham, Rebecca Minson and William Cooper Howell.

'Dial Tones' created by local writer

PROVO — The Covey Center for the Arts is pleased to present "Dial Tones," a romantic comedy by local playwright/director J. Scott Bronson.

Bronson is the author of a dozen or more plays, two of which were Mayhew Award winners, and one that received the Association for Mormon Letters 2001 Award for Best Drama.

Bronson tells about the writing of "Dial Tones": "Once upon a time a theater geek named Scott met another theater geek named Lynne; they fell in love with each

IF YOU GO

What: "Dial Tones"
Where: Covey Center for the Arts, 425 W. Center, Provo
When: 7:30 p.m., Nov. 29
Cost: \$10/\$7.50 students
Phone: 852-7007

other, and they got married. One day, about a year and a half into their happy marriage, Lynne the director went to her husband,

Scott the writer, and said, "I need a play." Thus, 'Dial Tones' was born."

It started out as a short, three character one-act that Lynne directed for a class at Brigham Young University (she got an A). It soon became a full-length, five-character piece that was worked over for a semester in BYU's playwrights-actors-directors workshop.

This the world premiere of "Dial Tones," which is based on an article that Bronson read in Reader's Digest while he was serving a mission for the LDS Church in Indonesia in the late 1970s. "I'm old and feeble now," the 49-old Bronson says, "so my memory is shadowy on the details, but it had something to do with a correspondence between someone in New York and someone else in London." Bronson updated the situation with a contemporary local setting: The events of the play take place in the mid 1980s in San Diego, Bronson's hometown. He gave the correspondence some immediacy by replacing the handwritten letters with spoken telephone conversations.

If you go:

What: "Canyon Suite"
Where: Black Box Theater, Gunther Trades Building, UVSC campus, Orem
When: 7:30 p.m., Nov. 29-Dec. 8
Cost: \$10/\$8 staff, seniors/\$6 students
Phone: 863-8797
Web: www.uvsc.edu/campusconnect/events