

**PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****MEDIA CONTACTS:**

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**November 15, 2010****Monterey Peninsula College Theatre Company to open****'A TAFFETA CHRISTMAS****December 9 - 19, 2010****Tickets on sale now!**

**Monterey, CA** - The Taffetas are four singing sisters from Muncie, Indiana. This fictitious 1950's girls group was first introduced to audiences in **THE TAFFETAS**, which featured the girls making their national television singing debut on the real-life Dumont Television Network, performing some of the greatest musical hits of the 1950's. **A TAFFETA CHRISTMAS** is set in December 1959 at the Moose Hall in the Taffeta's hometown of Muncie, Indiana. This musical sequel features the girls in a live television special, "Holiday Hometown Hoedown." The actual DuMont Television Network, the first television network in the country, presented some of the most creative and innovative shows for their time and was licensed before NBC, CBS and ABC.

Tickets for **A TAFFETA CHRISTMAS** are priced from \$10 - \$25, with Young Adult (16-25) and military and group discounts available. Performances are Thursday December 9<sup>th</sup> (Preview) 7:00 PM, Friday December 10<sup>th</sup> (Opening) 8:00 PM, Saturday December 11<sup>th</sup> 8:00 PM, Sunday December 12<sup>th</sup> 2:00 PM, Thursday December 16<sup>th</sup> 7:00 PM, Friday December 17<sup>th</sup> 8:00 PM, Saturday December 18<sup>th</sup> 8:00 PM, Sunday December 19<sup>th</sup> 2:00 PM. **A TAFFETA CHRISTMAS** is recommended for theatergoers 6 years and over. For tickets, go to [www.mpctheatre.com](http://www.mpctheatre.com), call the MPC Box Office at 831-646-4213, or visit the Box Office in person on the MPC Campus, Wednesday through Friday from 3:00 PM to 7:00 PM.

**A TAFFETA CHRISTMAS** features the four singing sisters – Donna (Phyllis Davis), Peggy (Lyla Englehorn), Kaye (Gracie Moore Poletti) and Cheryl (Kay Akervik) – who are very typical of the girl groups of the 1950s and '60s, and will be directed by Walt deFaria.

**KAY AKERVIC as Cheryl** – Kay is very excited to be singing her favorite songs for the holidays. After an 8 month tour around the United States with Missoula Children's Theatre, she's happy to be back home with her friends and family and entertaining children at the Monterey Bay Aquarium. Some of her favorite performances include Beauty and the Best (Princess Belle), Alice in Wonderland (Alice), both at the Outdoor Forrest Theatre, Carmel, as well as My Fair Lady (Eliza) at the Western Stage.

**PHYLLIS DAVIS as Donna** – Phyllis feels very fortunate to have performed in over 75 productions on Monterey Peninsula stages. She was most recently seen at MPC as Charity in "Anything Goes". Other favorite MPC roles include Jenny in "Quilters", Marie in "Most Happy Fella", Domina in "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum", Fraulein Schneider in "Cabaret", Dottie in "Noises Off", Josephine Strong in "Urinetown", and Joanne in "Company". She's delighted to be singing and performing with her three very fun and talented "sisters" in "A Taffeta Christmas"!

**LYLA ENGLEHORN as Peggy** - Lyla Englehorn is thrilled to be sharing the holidays with the TAFFETAS. Favorite local credits include "Betty Blake" in THE WILL ROGERS FOLLIES (TWS), "Carrie Pipperridge" in CAROUSEL (MPC), and "Stella" in A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE (PRT). Recently she took a hiatus from performance to earn her Master of Public Policy degree, and now works as a research assistant at the Naval Postgraduate School. She'd like to thank her two children, Robert (6) and Olivia (3), for reminding her what the holidays are all about.

**GRACIE MOORE POLETTI as Kaye** Local theater credits include *Reno in Anything Goes*, and *Faye in Chapter Two* at MPC, *Maria in Sound Of Music*, *Anna in The King And I*, *Fiona in Brigadoon*, *Mrs. Darling in Peter Pan*, all at the Forrest Theater. Gracie's voice over resume includes over 1,000 performances on television shows, feature films, cartoons and soundtracks. On-camera acting credits include roles on *Murphy Brown*, *Double Rush*, *Candid Camera*, and a number of commercials and films. She was a regular at the world famous Comedy Store on Sunset Blvd for five years and performed at other major comedy clubs such as The Ice House in Pasadena and The Improv in Hollywood. Gracie gives acting and singing lessons, teaches after school drama at Carmel River School, and is director of the Actor's Forum Summer Theater Camp.

**ROBBIE LEE as the Announcer** Robbie is a familiar face to Monterey theatre goers alike, including shows for Pacific Repertory Theatre such as *Oliver!*, *Wizard of Oz*, and *High School Musical*. He recently attended Belmont University in Nashville Tennessee as a musical theatre major and had the opportunity to go to New York with a casting agency and audition for the nationwide tour of *Grease*, where he made it to the final two for his part of "Eugene". Now, Robbie is back in the bay area for a year with hopes to go down south to Pacific Coast Performing Arts Conservatory for formal training. He thanks God for his musical talent and his middle school friends at Calvary Chapel, where he leads worship, and of course his family who supports him 100 percent.

#### The Creator: Rick Lewis

**Rick Lewis** is the creator/author/musical arranger of the hit Off-Broadway musical, *The Taffetas*, which premiered at the Cherry Lane Theatre and subsequently moved to the Village Gate, with productions currently around the world. Television appearances include *48 Hours*, *CBS This Morning*, *Entertainment Tonight*, *PM Magazine*, and *Live! with Regis and Kathy Lee*. With *The Taffetas* he was featured in *People Magazine*, *Time Magazine* selected *The Taffetas* as 'Critics Choice' for four consecutive weeks. He was nominated for a Jefferson Award For Outstanding Musical Direction for his work on the Chicago production of *The Taffetas*. He served as Assistant Conductor/Vocal Director on the workshop production of Tony winner Cy Coleman's Tony Award winning Broadway musical, *The Life*, as well as casting pianist for Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine for the original Broadway production of *Sunday In The Park With George*. Other hit shows include *Have A Nice Day!* - A '70's Musical Flashback, a spoof of *Up With People*, utilizing pop hits from the 70's, which premiered at New York City's Theater East, and *G.I. Jukebox*, a 1940's Stagedoor Canteen!.

#### The Director: Walt deFaria

Walt directed *ANYTHING GOES*, earlier this season at MPC, and last season *A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD*. He has directed numerous productions at Carmel's outdoor Forest Theater for PacRep including *BEAUTY AND THE BEAST*, *JOSEPH AND THE AMAZING TECNICOLOR DREAMCOATCOAT*, *THE WIZARD OF OZ* and *PETER PAN*. Currently he is Executive Producer on an animated film in Japan and a movie for television for the BBC, both based on the classic children's books, *THE BORROWERS*. He has a film project based on Russell Hoban's *THE MOUSE AND HIS CHILD* in development with Kennedy/Marshall Productions in Los Angeles.

The creative team includes **Walt deFaria** (*Director*); **Gloria Elber & Reed Scott** (*Choreographers*) **Barney Hulse** (*Musical Director*), **D. Thomas Beck** (*Technical Director, Scenic Designer, & Lighting Designer*), **David Rigmaiden** (*Sound Designer*), and **Constance Gamiere** (*Costumes*).

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**About The MPC Theatre Company**

\*\*\* A TAFFETA CHRISTMAS will be the second to last production on the Morgan Stock Stage, before we close the building for approximately 18 months, while the building undergoes a much needed and much anticipated renovation. For more information on this, please contact Technical Director Dan Beck at 831-646-4211.)

\*\*\* Our 2011 Season will open with FUNNY GIRL, The Concert on the Morgan Stock Stage, then continue with GREASE at the brand new Carmel High School Performing Arts Center, ONCE UPON A MATTRESS at the Outdoor Forest Theatre, and COMEDY OF ERRORS at the Carmel High School Performing Arts Center.

The performing arts have always played an important part of life on the Monterey Peninsula, and for over 55 years the MPC Theatre Company has been entertaining, educating and enriching our community. In addition to making live Theatre a major part of our local culture, some of our past students have gone on to professional careers in theatre & television, and others have started their own amateur and professional theatre companies. MPC Outreach Programs also fund and support many local performing arts organizations, including Junior High & High School Drama Departments, Children's Theatres, and Dance Companies, as well as Community and Professional Theatres, such as the Pacific Repertory Theatre, the Staff Players Repertory Theatre, and the Forest Theatre Guild.

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