

Celebrating muliticulturalism with music

By Sarah Visser

A blizzard blew into Belleville this past weekend, but it was one of drumming, not snow.

Fubuki Daiko, a Japanese drumming group from Winnipeg performed for school groups last Friday at the Maranatha Christian Reform Church in Belleville with additional family shows on Saturday.

Ted Howe, the artistic director of Quinte Children's Theatre, spearheaded the event. A former elementary school teacher, Howe said he feels it's important to expose children to unique forms of art they may not otherwise experience, whether because of a lack of access or lack of funds.

World music is something QCT wants to bring more of to children, and Fubuki Daiko is a great start, he said. Half of the members have some personal link to Japanese culture; Hiroshi Koshiyama's parents are both Japanese, his wife Naomi Guilbert is half Japanese, half French-Canadian. All members were born and raised in Canada.

"This is a perfect example, especially in the Canadian context. This is a real celebration of multiculturalism in its highest form.

"For people to draw from their ancestral roots and to share that, we're just thrilled to do that," said Howe.

Fubuki Daiko has been performing together for 19 years. Most of their performances have been to younger audiences. In fact, teaching their craft in schools generates most of their income.

Their use of Hyottoko, a masked character known as the town fool, is a strategic maneuver the group uses to get the children engaged.

And engage it did. Laughter rang through the church as Koshiyama danced around in the audience and pulled children—and teachers—up on stage to play with the band. Most of the audience waved their hands in the air, hoping to be chosen.

Howe said he was happy with the reaction. "I'm just so thrilled and pleased with how this show turned out. The children looked like they thoroughly enjoyed this experience and to me this is all what it's about, making sure the children have fun and experience something they would never ever have an opportunity to experience. That makes me proud of what we're accomplishing here."

Olivia Latrille, 16, who attended Saturday's show said, "I thought it was very cool and powerful. I'd like to come again."

"We had a great time. The kids were



Photo by Sarah Visser

Members of Fubuki Daiko, a Japanese drumming group from Winnipeg perform for school children on Jan. 17 at Maranatha Church in Belleville. The members, from left to right: Naomi Guilbert and Giselle Mak.

super fun audience to play for," said Guilbert.

Talking to Guilbert, one can learn a lot about the art and soul of taiko drumming. The incorporation of martial arts is a major part of the technique of taiko drumming. But not in the way you'd expect: it incorporates itself through the stance of

the drummers and the philosophy they must practice.

"You need to be with no ego and connected to the energy of the people around you," said Guilbert.

What's also interesting is Guilbert's foray into taiko drumming.

"As a kid, I was exposed to Japanese

culture, from my mom's side of the family, but all the stuff for girls I thought was really boring.

"But then I saw I taiko group perform. They were from Vancouver and they were mostly women in that group, and then the first time I saw that it was like, 'oh, maybe there is something interesting there.' I

was hooked after seeing them perform. I thought, 'one day I want to learn how to do that.'

Twenty-five years later, she is still performing and travelling around North America to perform and teach with the band. The farthest they have gone is Poland, and they hope to do more in the future.

Dancers share love of performance with senior spectators

By Julia Karpiuk

Seven dancers from the Maracle Centre for the Arts arrived at the Westgate Lodge Nursing Home Saturday with their dancing shoes on.

The Maracle dancers usually perform at Westgate Lodge around Christmas time but because of the poor weather conditions, the performance was moved to the new year.

The dancers—of all ages—enthusiastically approached the chance to share their

talent with the Westgate community. The studio prepared eight dances for the residents. Offering a little bit of variety with some hip-hop, modern, jazz and ballet, the residents were offered a nice break from the usual daily activities.

"It's nice to have a change of pace. I enjoyed the little youngsters best of all," said Donald Rogers, who has been at Westgate for two years now. It's a satisfying feeling for dancers like Hailey Proud who performed solo two pieces. "I like contributing to the commu-

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Mother Kelly Proud

nity and sharing with others what I can do," said Proud.

Proud's mother, Kelly has had her two daughters at the studio for four years now and enjoys seeing her girls perform anywhere.

"We love to perform in the community and it gives them a lot of time to practise. This is why they do it. They love to dance," said Proud's mother. As for the studio, this isn't the first time they have showcased their dancing abilities in the community.

They also perform annually at the Classic Cruisers Car show in Marmora, which is a charity event.

"Pretty much every time people ask us to do something, we will do it free of charge," said Angela Maracle, owner of Maracle Centre for the Arts.

"It's so good for the kids. That way they're not actually taking classes, they're actually going out and doing things to benefit other people," said Maracle. Maracle has owned her studio since 1988 and it is a staple in the Belleville community.

School stages 1960s musical production

By Samantha Quinn

Vacant hallways were filled with classic songs of the '60s, the laughter of families, a special guest, and voluminous up-dos to celebrate the beginning of a new year at Centennial Secondary School.

The school staged the classic 1960s musical *Leader of the Pack* for the school's annual production Jan. 16 to 19.

Originally called *The Songs of Ellie Greenwich*, it celebrates the life and times of the singer, songwriter, and record producer, Ellie Greenwich, from her professional triumphs to her personal misfortunes.

It includes such well-known songs as *River Deep Mountain High*, *Rock of Ages*, *Leader of the Pack*, *Hanky Panky*, *Be My Baby*, and *Chapel of Love*, all performed by students who are apart of the drama and art programs at CSS.

The students of CSS have been practicing almost daily with their music teacher, David Reed, since the first week of school. The girls have been growing their hair since summer for their beehive hairdos.

"The audition process was internal; when we started in the first week of September, I had 18 kids in class, all good singers, who all became the core group that drove the show," said Reed, director of *Leader of the Pack* and the vocal and guitar teacher at CSS for 15 years.

The last four days have been hectic and exciting for the cast members, running around doing costume changes into long evening gowns, colourful flowing dresses, tuxedos and leather jackets for their back-to-back performances.

"I've always loved the theater, even when I would do acting, but once I started working in the back with lighting for talent shows, I found my true talent. Now I am doing stage managing and I love it," said Amy Owen, 15, the future stage manager of productions at CSS.

Holly Owen, 16, drama major, and Colton Crawford, 16, who's in the arts program, play the two main characters, Ellie Greenwich and Jeff Barry.

"When it is show time, I get so into the zone, I can't think of anything else. I want to be an actress once I'm done high school so this is my passion," said Holly Owen, Amy Owen's sister.

Many of the other performances CSS has done in the past 15 years include *Sound of Music*, *My Fair*



Photo by Samantha Quinn

Drama students perform, *I Wanna Love Him So Bad*, the closing number of Centennial High School's performance of the musical *Leader of the Pack*.

Lady, The Music Man, Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, Little Shop of Horrors, and Sherlock Holmes.

"These kids have been very involved and have wanted to make this performance their own. They coordinated all of the costumes and sets as well as all of the publicity put into this," said Reed.

Although it was Reed's first time directing a play, in the past he has brought in several special guests

for local performances, such as the Wild Strawberries, the Rheostatics, Ron Sexsmith, the Skydiggers, and this year's guest, Freddy Vette, a Rock and Roll performer from Stirling-Rawdon, north of Belleville, who brought in many locals.

With the school's average audience of 250 to 350 people each night, they were able to make a profit from their \$15 ticket price to put towards the next

production in late May 2014 for things such as costumes, props, setup, and lighting.

"My favourite part is watching these students have those moments when they rise to occasion after working so hard for four months. I see them every day for four years, watching them grow and achieve. I have the best job in the world. I get to be with talented musicians all day every day," said Reed.