



## Academy of Visual and Performing Arts At Culver City High School

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### AVPA's Traditional "Dance OFF!" Swings into an Evening-Length Work

*For immediate release:*

**Culver City – April 10, 2008:** “A Matter of Opinion,” this spring’s dance concert offering from the Academy of Visual and Performing Arts at Culver City High School, features an exciting array of faculty and student choreography, including tap, post modern, jazz, dance theater, musical theater, and contemporary Indian folk dance, with a twist from previous concert formats. The program will be woven together with fun and interesting theatrical and movement transitions to create an “evening-length work.” The concert will be held on Thursday and Friday evenings, April



17 and 18, at 7:00 pm and on Saturday afternoon, April 19 at 3:00 pm in the Robert Frost Auditorium, 4401 Elenda Street, in Culver City. Admission is \$10 general and \$7 ASB, faculty, seniors, and children under 12. Tickets are available at the door.

“This isn’t your average Dance OFF,” states Julie Carson, the new Creative Director of Dance for the AVPA. “Rather than presenting dances one after the other with lights on and off to signal beginnings and endings, we’re attempting an evening-length work, that is, a concert including a variety of dances with transitions that merge the evening of material together. We’ve never tried anything like this before, and the students are very excited about the possibilities of weaving dance and theater into one entire piece. Many of the AVPA dance students are educated in music and theater, and we’re going to take advantage of that.”

One of the senior dance students saw a concert presented by a world-class choreographer and her company in Los Angeles this winter. This choreographer is well known for evening-length concerts. The student was overwhelmed with excitement about this format, and enthusiastically requested that the AVPA dance company give it a try. “I couldn’t say no,” comments Carson. “I know how talented our kids are, and it seemed like a wonderful time to give this new and challenging format a try. Our students have strong theatrical backgrounds that include a variety of interesting forms of dance and theater, and they’re very open to new ideas.” With an extensive background in ballet, musical theater, sacred dance and pageantry, and an MFA in



post-modern dance choreography, Carson is eager to share her techniques and perspectives with the students. “It’s very exciting to see the students moving and imagining dance in new ways.”

Four very talented seniors will be performing in their final dance concert: Kenji Igus, Dana Morgan, Brandon Storm, and Allegra Williams. Each senior has made unique and valuable contributions to the AVPA. Kenji is already performing as a professional tap dancer. Dana, Allegra, and Brandon are all

talented dancers, singers, and actors. “I have no doubt that each of these students will go very far,” comments Ms. Carson.

Among the dances included in the evening will be a contemporary Indian folk dance, or a “Bollywood-style” dance. Choreographing and working with other AVPA dance students is Ana Swarup, an art major and dance minor. Ana spent her early years in India studying classical forms of East Indian dance. As a teenager, she watched all of the “Bollywood” films and quickly learned this contemporary style. Ana’s dances have been a highlight of many of the AVPA dance concerts, and this spring will be no exception.

“I love what the students bring to this department,” states Carson. “Each student has a form that they forte in – whether it’s modern, tap, or jazz, these students love to dance and have embraced the new ideas offered to them.” “A Matter of Opinion” will celebrate the many forms of dance the students have learned and how each has interpreted these forms to express their own views and feelings. It’s sure to be an exciting and captivating evening of dance.

### **About the Academy of Visual and Performing Arts**

The Academy of Visual and Performing Arts (AVPA) at Culver City High School has been inspiring and empowering students to build a compassionate, creative community through innovative and challenging arts education since 1996. AVPA enjoys tremendous support from Sony Pictures Entertainment and other area businesses as well as from the Culver City community. For more information about the Academy, go to <http://avpa.org> or contact Tony Spano at 310-842-4200 x6094 or Kristine Hatanaka at x6001.

### Photo captions:

20080324\_0001\_1: A. Williams & S. Meyer, G. Chellette, S. Miller, D. Morgan rehearse a modern dance for “A Matter of Opinion”

20080325\_0001\_2: O. Wong, G. Chellette, S. Miller, A. Williams rehearse ballet for "A Matter of Opinion"

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