

## South Valley Civic Theatre

*The Fantasticks*, a proven audience pleaser, opens April 15 at the Morgan Hill Community Playhouse.

Traditionally, the play is presented in bare bones fashion — a platform, some props, lights, costumes and a piano, maybe two. True theatre magic is created in the minds of the audience through good

acting and suggestion. This idea goes counter to the current Broadway trend,

lead by the Disney Corporation, with its elaborate stage effects. As impressive as these things may be, true theatre exists in the bond between actor and audience, everything else is icing.

SVCT's production, produced by **Kathy Tom** and **Becky Kaiser** and directed by **Jean Marie Perchalski** with musical direction by **James Chipman**, features **Ed Goldberg**, **Colleen Chipman**, **Antonio Silva**, **Peter Mandel**, **Larry Tom**, **Jon Reed**, **Bobby Lewis** and **Allyson Finn**. The fights are choreographed by **Bill Klipstine**. *The Fantasticks* runs through May 7.



## South Valley Civic Theatre

Resident Company of the Morgan Hill Community Playhouse presents

# The Fantasticks

The longest running musical ever...

Words by Tom Jones, Music by Harvey Schmidt  
Based on Les Romanesques by Edmond Rostand  
Produced by Kathy Tom and Becky Kaiser  
Directed by Jean Marie Perchalski  
Musical Direction by James Chipman

**April 15, 16, 22, 23, 29, 30, May 6, & 7 at 8pm**

**Sunday Matinees: April 24 and May 1 at 2pm**

**Morgan Hill Community Playhouse, Corner Monterey & Dunne Ave.**

\$12 students/seniors & \$15 adults

Tickets available at:

The Morgan Hill Community and Cultural Center  
Booksmart: 17415 Monterey Rd, Morgan Hill  
Gilroy Visitors Bureau: 7780 Monterey Rd, Gilroy

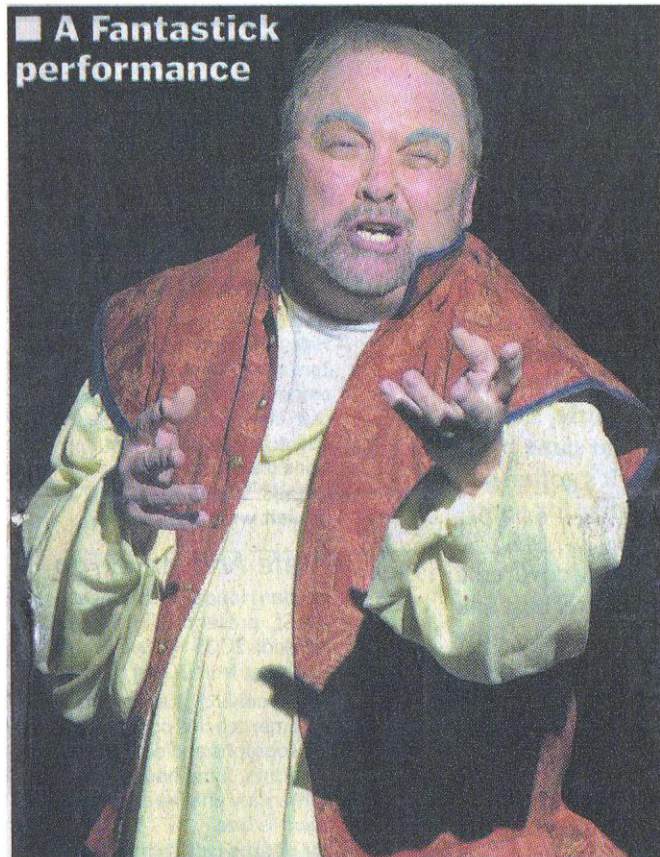
Presented through special arrangement with  
Music Theater International, 421 W 54th St., New York, NY 10019.



**April 2005 • Out & About-The Valley**



■ A Fantastick performance



## The Fantasticks opens today

ABOVE: Luisa and Matt, played by Colleen Chipman and Antonio Silva, sing to each other over the wall, played by Allyson Finn, built by their fathers to keep them apart. TOP LEFT: Jon Reed plays a bumbling actor during rehearsals for The Fantasticks. LEFT: Fathers Bellamy, played by Peter Mandel, right, and Huckelbee, played by Larry Tom, sing about their plan to hire kidnapper El Gallo, left, played by Ed Goldberg. The South Valley Civic Theater's production of the longest running musical The Fantasticks opens today at the Morgan Hill Playhouse. For information: 842-SHOW.



## Theatre Notes

by Paul Myrvold

### South Valley Civic Theatre

First, I want to thank SVCT for mounting *The Fantasticks*, one of the most satisfying pieces of musical theater ever created, an almost perfect gem of minimalist performance art. I love this show. From listening endlessly to the recording when I

was a teenager, I could have sung along with every song and hearing it live once more was a wonderful pleasure.

The joy of *The Fantasticks* is in its simplicity of story and staging, and in its delightfully melodic score written for piano, harp (or second piano), drums and string bass. In the SVCT production, the band is a piano, a synthesizer and drums and the set a small platform used as the base of the performance with added costumes and props (and two actors) emerging from a big theatrical chest when needed. With these raw ingredients, the actors use their skills and the audience's imagination to tell a story.

A boy and a girl, next door neighbors, fall in love while their fathers, who really want them to marry, pretend to feud to add false conflict so the kids will have something to overcome, thus, in theory, increasing their desire. To add even more spice, the fathers hire El Gallo—a "stage manager" character who narrates and sets the scenes and transitions—to stage an abduction to give the kids a feeling of danger and adventure that will lead them to the Happy Ending. Life is not so simple, though, and the second act finds the tender pair becoming bored with their lives and each other and so part, each seeking the missing something that gives meaning to life.

As the lovers Matt and Luisa, Antonio Silva and Colleen Chipman are ideal.

Young Silva has Byronic good looks, an innocent freshness and a splendid skill with words and music that gives full expression to his

character through text and song. Ms. Chipman, always an actress at a professional level, comes through once again with a



LARRY TOM, ANTONIO SILVA, COLLEEN CHIPMAN AND PETER MANDEL IN *The Fantasticks*.

winning performance as Luisa makes the journey from self-absorbed teenager in love with love to a tempered maturity capable absorbing the blows of life and bestowing true, unselfish love.

Larry Tom is a comedic revelation and Peter Mandel a high-strung hoot as the scheming fathers. Together they prove a yin yang engine that keeps the laughs coming. Jon Reed and Bobby Lewis as the hired actors who do the abducting fall right in line with the great comic tradition of Laurel and Hardy, Abbott and Costello and Pinky and the Brain—to quote a great director, "You cannot be too stupid."

As El Gallo, Ed Goldberg keeps the action flowing with swashbuckling good looks and bodice-ripper hair that flows down his back like Fabio. And Allyson Finn as The Mute, the visible stage hand and third person observer is always there, in the scene, doing and watching and anticipating and never distracting or upstaging, but rather redirecting the audience's gaze to the action. Good work! *The Fantasticks* runs through May 7 at the Playhouse in Morgan Hill.