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Weekly Specials:

Arroz Con Puerco Taco
Tender pork roasted in a tomato-jalapeno sauce and Mexican rice in a flour tortilla.

Black Bean Enchiladas
Two corn tortillas are filled with refried black beans and topped with cheese sauce and avocado-jalapeno drizzle. Served with Mexican rice and salad mix garnish.

Tilapia Frita
Fillets of tilapia are corn meal fried and served with hushpuppies, red jalapeno tartar sauce and a mixture of turnip greens, rice and charros beans.

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theatre notes

SCHOOLED IN THE ARTS

Theatre productions keep coming throughout November and December. Here's what's coming up in the next few weeks:

Arts!Oglethorpe presents *Grace & Glorie* by Tom Zeigler on Nov. 19 & 20. Contact www.artsoglethorpe.org. **Athens Little Playhouse's** presentation of *The Frog Princess* continues Nov. 19 & 21—perfect for children ages three and up. Call (706) 208-1036 for reservations. The ALP auditions for *Rapunzel*, a new twist to an old story, were held last week, and the production is slated for Feb. 25-27 & Mar. 4-6. Call for more info.

Rose of Athens Theatre is touring with its production of *Frankenstein Lives!* It is available for booking through March. RoA will also perform in the Convention and Visitors Bureau/Athens Historic House Museum Association's third annual *Christmas Spirits Holiday Tour* on Dec. 11. Call (706) 208-8687 for tickets and info.

North Oconee High School presents *Broadway Breaks Boundaries Revue* on Nov. 17 & 18; **Prince Avenue Christian School** presents *O, What a Tangled Web* on Nov. 19 & 20; while over on campus, UGA's **Improv Athens** performs on Nov. 17 at the Balcony Theatre, and the **UGA Department of Theatre and Film Studies** presents Samuel Beckett's *Endgame* on Nov. 17 & 18. See www.drama.uga.edu.

► The premier production of **Circle Ensemble Theatre**, *The Threepenny Opera*, continues on Nov. 19 & 20 at New Earth Music Hall. Directed by Joelle Re'Arp-Dunham, the production features several Athens music and theatre luminaries including Dodd Ferrelle, former frontman for Rags and current leader of the Tinfoil Stars; singer-songwriter Nathan Sheppard; Kathleen Hogan (Robert Redford's *The Conspirator*); Lisa Mende ("Seinfeld," "Friends," "Sex and the City"); Mirla Criste (Broadway production of *Miss Saigon*); and Lynn Halverson (*Twist, Zorro! The Musical*). For info and tickets, see www.circleensemble.com or call (706) 362-2175. Check it out!

Children's theatre veteran Jay Holl directs the **Young Actors Studio's** *Miss Nelson Is Missing* on Dec. 10 & 11 at the Seney-Stovall Chapel. Describing the process, Holl said, "To accommodate the overwhelming number of young auditioners, Miss Nelson's class has grown from seven to 17 children, making for an even more hysterically chaotic classroom." Check www.youngactorsstudio.googlepages.com for more info.

Cries from fiscal reformers jeopardize performing arts programs because they are seen as frills and not important to the success of graduates. I asked **Athens Academy** drama teacher Lorainne Thompson to question her students about the value of these programs. Here is just a handful of the powerful responses given by some of the Academy's graduates:

• "Working with the cast and crew taught me about the importance of collaboration and building relationships. Currently, I am doing research on public-private partnership development project models in urban slums in

India. The value of teamwork and communication I learned through drama has followed through, even in the research I am conducting today."

• "One of the biggest things I gained from participating in theatre was self-confidence. I felt comfortable growing into the person I wanted to be. I learned about teamwork, leadership and communication. While I am not working in the theatre, I have gained so many things from my experiences that help me on a daily basis, including a greater appreciation of the arts."

• "You learn more about human interaction and communication through acting than anything else."



The Circle Ensemble Theatre production of *The Threepenny Opera* is at New Earth Music Hall on Nov. 19 & 20.

• "When I was onstage, I had a voice. I could communicate what I was feeling; I could have a platform for that communication, and I possessed a bravery I didn't have in the other aspects of my life... If I could have that strength in that environment, if I could get onstage in front of a ton of people and make them feel something, I could do anything."

• "As a very insecure 13-year-old, being a part of theatre transformed my personality. It boosted my self-esteem. What most people who aren't a part of theatre don't understand is that it really is a team that puts on a performance. I learned how to work with different people, how to problem solve and how to be resourceful. While theatre is not my career, it will always be a part of who I am—part of the person I have become: someone confident, someone who is a patron of the arts, someone who found her place—not on an athletic team—but on a performance team. For that I am always thankful."

The words could have been taken from how-to books for success in business, relationships or living a fulfilled life. But they are from the experiences of young men and women who have learned these things by participating in theatre—hardly a "frill" or a clever little t-shirt slogan. Thank you, drama teachers, for giving our kids, and us, this incredible gift.

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