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“SENIOR” STARS SHINE IN QUEENS

Astoria Performing Arts Center Launches Successful 2nd Annual “Senior Stars” Program

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

February 1, 2007 -- (Astoria, New York) -- The Astoria Performing Arts Center (APAC) announced today their 2nd annual Queens-wide talent search for local seniors (ages 60 years and older) interested in performing as part of the APAC “Senior Stars” program. This program in its second year running will offer a unique opportunity for senior citizens to receive high quality performing arts training designed around their talents, interests and abilities.

The program’s capstone event will be two showcase performances on April 14th providing the chance for the larger population of Queens to realize and appreciate the talent of the community’s many seniors. The performances will take place at the Variety Boys and Girls Club of Queens located in Astoria.

“I am really looking forward to welcoming back many of the same faces from last year’s incredible Senior Stars showcase as well as meeting and working with all of the new talented seniors of Queens that will hopefully be a part of this terrific APAC program,” said “Senior Stars” program director Sandra Bargman of Authenticity in Motion (AIM) Productions. “As this is our second year bringing the program to life, I just know that we’re going to have a really terrific time!”

The “Senior Stars” program is a natural and exciting addition to APAC’s youth and senior programming inviting seniors (ages 60 years and older and Queens Residents) to audition for a one-of-a-kind intensive training and performance opportunity. Once selected, participants will dive into a 7-week intensive musical and theatrical training program that will culminate in a public performance. Rehearsals will be Thursdays from March 1st through April 12th.

The program is free for all participants as result of the incredible support from Peter Vallone Jr., the NYC Department of Aging, and Con Edison.

Seniors are encouraged to call 718-393-7505 to get answers to questions or further information regarding the auditions. Auditions will be held at the Variety Boys and Girls Club of Queens in the Broccoli Theatre, located at 21-12 30th Road Astoria, on Thursday, February 15th, 2007 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

“We’ll be inviting producers from other theatre companies so that the program will not only serve as a regular performance for the public, but a talent showcase for the performers,” said APAC’s Executive Director Taryn Drongowski. “We’d love nothing more than for our seniors to get some real gigs out of this!!”

For the audition, seniors should be prepared to showcase their own unique talent – whatever that may be-- to the best of their ability. Juggle? Tell jokes? Sing? Tap dance? Whatever!! The show will be tailored to the talents of the cast. Those auditioning their singing abilities should come ready and warmed up to sing any song with sheet music or taped music. A piano player will provide accompaniment. -- Those auditioning their acting abilities will be given dialogue for scene auditions or prepare a monologue.. Participants cast in the program will be given tapes or CD’s to use for rehearsal at home, but must be in attendance at every scheduled cast rehearsal in order to participate in the performances.

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The Astoria Performing Arts Center (APAC) is dedicated to providing high quality theatre and entertainment at an affordable cost for the Astoria/LIC communities and to supporting local youth and senior citizens. Founded in 2001, APAC is a not-for-profit professional theatre that couples its mainstage programming with community outreach efforts. Each year, APAC brings extended networks of artists, technicians and interns together to produce major musicals, classical, and modern plays. Committed to bringing new voices to visibility in New York theatre, APAC has held 3 playwriting contests, and produced two staged readings, as well as a showcase of songs from as-yet-unproduced original works of musical theatre. Examples from its youth and senior programming portfolio include an annual free summer intensive musical theatre training program for Astoria’s 3rd –5th graders (“Summer Stars”), after-school playwriting classes for middle schoolers (“Astoria Playmaking Program”), and a popular training

and performance program for senior citizens (“Senior Stars!”) APAC strives to create innovative and engaging work equaling that of the most established and accomplished New York theatre companies. In 2004, APAC was honored with an Off Off Broadway Review Awards for its production of “Is there Life After High School?” In 2006, APAC’s production of FOREVER PLAID garnered three nominations from the New York Innovative Theatre Awards including best direction, choreography, and production. (Both productions were helmed by APAC’s Artistic Director, Brian Swasey.) The work APAC produces is accessible, in a broad sense: the programming is varied in order to cultivate a broad audience, produced regularly each season, and affordable –so that theater-going can become a habit--not just a rare treat--for the people who see APAC’s shows.