# **Audiences Will Want a Repeat** of Witty 'Play it Again, Sam'

**By Sophie Braccini** 



The Beginning of a Beautiful Friendship: (From left) Humphrey Bogart (Jerry Motta), the Fantasy Woman (Ginny Wehrmeister), Linda Christie (Heather Kellogg) and Allen Felix (Alan Coyne) in Town Hall Theatre's "Play It Again, Sam" by Woody Allen, directed by Søren Oliver Photo provided

Woody Allen on how to im- by someone who is insecure and press dames is the comic scenario on which is built Town Hall Theater last play of the season, "Play It Again Sam." A very funny screenplay by Allen himself, it is close to the namesake 1972 movie that was in fact based on the 1969 Broadway show. Served by a talented cast, this new production beginning June 4 will delight Woody Allen as well as Humphrey Bogart lovers, or just way the play is directed makes it directing this fast pace comedy. anyone ready for a fun evening.

Town Hall Theater 71st season has been incredibly diverse again self — perfectly impersonated by this year, featuring a wide range of Jerry Motta, the real stud of a man plays and talents. Before the very that gives Felix advice on how to 4 through June 25 at Town Hall amusing closing production, Town play it tough with the women and Hall had presented the multiple award winning play "Angels in mous fitted trench coat and wearing America" about the AIDS epidem- the classic fedora hat, Bogart tries ics, with Alan Coyne in one of the to teach Felix the confidence he's title roles as a young Mormon lawyer. It is this same actor that plays results vary, to the great delight of here Allen Felix (played by Woody Allen originally), a recently diguilt and lust, trying to re-enter the dating world and forge a new meaningful relationship.

gauche never fails to create gentle laughter.

The charm and effectiveness of the play comes from the way the different voices that play in Felix's mind are materialized on stage. With a different light and different costumes they enter and exit ously directed "Art," "Twelfth like colorful ghosts, sometimes in parallel with "real" characters. The very clear and amusing.

"be a man." Wrapped up in his faalways lacked with the ladies. The the audience.

Ginny Wehrmeister, also a regvorced neurotic writer riddled with ular performer at Town Hall, must be having a blast playing all the different fantasy women Felix dreams about. She gives to the depressed The story might have been intellectual, the lascivious dancer, written in the 60s, but it is still or the eccentric hippie her charmrelevant today. There are no cell ing energy and nuanced imperson-

umphrey Bogart coaching ated by the difficult pursuit for love Peabody are very credible as Felix's supportive friends, while Megan Stetson, playing his wife, is trouble, right on the mark.

> The references and lines from "Casablanca" and "Maltese Falcon" dot the play and all the classic Bogart movies lovers will rejoice.

Director Søren Oliver (previ-Night" and "Sly Fox" at Town Hall) said that he had great pleasure

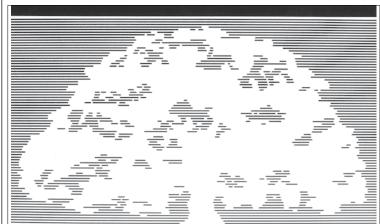
"A lot in comedy is about tim-First is Humphrey Bogart him- ing," he said. "Making people laugh is not easy."

> "Play It Again, Sam" runs June Theatre, located at 3535 School Street in Lafayette. Tickets are available on the website at townhalltheatre.com, or by calling the Box Office at (925) 283-1557.









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phones or internet surfing interject- ation. ed in the action, but the humor cre-

Heather Kellogg and Edwin

## JM Students Shine in **Annual Math Olympiad**

#### **By Sophie Braccini**

There is no need to be a math of different ways of answering genius to participate in Karlene Steelman's math competition class at Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School. This class provides a playful and differ- problem where one person goes ent approach to solving math to a shoe store where the third problems. And when it came to well, with four of them ending in The question is, how should they top 2 percent of the annual Math that the most advanced math stu-Olympiad.

Enriched with this first years' year say they will take the elec- paid for the gas, and who protive class again.

Moraga middle school for 10 years, was looking for a math enrichment class; something she would have loved to have as a kid, she says. She views the class as an opportunity for every student, an alternative where all abilities can flourish and learn from each other.

this class."

The class works collabora- Sel. tively on questions and thinks

them. Steelman says that she learns every day because the students think in different ways.

She gives the example of a pair is free when someone buvs compete with 150,000 other stu- two pair. In the problem, the dents from all over the planet, person invites a friend along the Moraga students did very because he needs only two pair. the top 10 percent and one in the share the savings? Steelman says dents will immediately go into equations, while others are going experience, the students who are to wonder about the interaction not off to high school math next between the two friends, who vided the savings opportunity. Steelman, who has been For that question, Steelman says teaching math and science at the there could be tens of different right answers.

Noel Sel a seventh-grade student says that she chose this class because she likes solving puzzles and is interested in math. With Annika Johnson, an eighth grader she met in the class, they are among the few girls belonging to that group. They both say they "This is an outlet for fun and have fun while learning to use interesting ideas," she says. "I do different concepts in a different have some students struggling in way to solve problems. "It was a math that I have seen blossom in cool experience to compete and try to get the best scores," adds

... continued on page B3



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