

FOR RELEASE: IMMEDIATE

Mailed January 28, 1988

YOUNGSTOWN, Ohio - The Office of Continuing Education at Youngstown State University is introducing "Basic Business Japanese," a course for business managers that could open more communication with Japanese companies. Classes will begin Feb. 2.

Participants will learn words, phrases, numbers and pronunciation enabling them to conduct basic business transactions.

The seven-week course will meet from 5:40-7:30 p.m. on Tuesdays, Feb. 2 through March 15.

The instructor will be Kyoko Okano-Dicks, a business consultant, interpreter and translator who has lived in this country for 19 years. Mrs. Dicks acts as a communication liaison/consultant between a number of Japanese and American companies.

The fee for the course is \$94. For more information, contact the YSU Office of Continuing Education at (216) 742-3358.

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YOUNGSTOWN, Ohio - A chorus sings.

But how could the chorus for Aristophanes' ancient Greek comedy sing without music?

Dr. Dennis Henneman, professor of theater at Youngstown State University, faced that problem when he began to work out the mechanics of directing Aristophanes' "The Birds."

The play was performed in ancient Greece as an opera, but the music has been lost in time. So Dr. Henneman started seeking a composer.

Although the search led him from the East Coast to the West Coast, he finally found the right person at nearby Kent State University. Dr. Halim El-Dabh, a native of Egypt, is a professor of Ethnomusicology and co-director of the Center for the Study of World Musics at Kent State.

Dr. El-Dabh began composing music in his early 20s while he was an agriculturalist in Egypt. His native culture, combined with world travel that including a year in Greece, made him the "perfect person for the job," according to Dr. Henneman.

He was a Guggenheim Fellow and holds degrees from Brandeis University, Cairo University and New England Conservatory of Music. In 1951-52 he was one of six composers invited by conductor Serge Koussevitzky to study with composer Aaron Copeland. Before coming to Kent State, he served on the faculty of Howard University and Haile Selassie University in Ethiopia.

Dr. El-Dabh has also worked with Martha Graham in writing and composing text and music for the PBS dance drama "Clytemnestra," and with Graham and dancer Rudolph Nuryev in writing music for "Lucifer."

MORE

ADD ONE

"The Birds" is a fantasy-comedy about the birds of the world who decide that they are no longer going to allow the humans and the gods to communicate. According to Dr. El-Dabh, music was a fundamental part of the play since it required such a great amount of singing.

In order to set the text to music and dance, Dr. El-Dabh found that he had to "live the play in order to write the score."

"I had to think as Aristophenes would have, then how the translator would, and finally as I would," he said. "I had to use the minds of three people in order to get the final version of the music."

According to Dr. El-Dabh, "The Birds" is not something "frozen in history." Instead, he maintains that the ancient play "holds a lot of contemporary overtones and reflections on our society."

"The Birds" consists of roles for 21 men and two women as well as a chorus of six women and three men. The majority of roles will be played by YSU students. Choreography is being done by Marie Pesce and Susan Miracle.

The play will be performed on Feb. 25, 26, 27 and March 3 and 4 from 5-8 p.m., and on Feb. 28 and March 6 at 3 p.m. All performances will be held in YSU Bliss Hall's Spotlight Arena Theatre.

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By Erika Hanzely - YSU News Service

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FOR RELEASE: PHOTO CAPTION

Dr. Halim El-Dabh composes the original score for Youngstown State University's production of Aristophanes ancient Greek comedy, "The Birds." A professor of Ethnomusicology and co-director of the Center for the Study of World Musics at Kent State University, Dr. El-Dabh is composing music that will incorporate a piano, flute and synthesizer/percussion instruments. Performances of "The Birds" will begin Feb. 25 at YSU Bliss Hall's Spotlight Arena Theatre.

(YSU Photo by Elise Cleary)

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FOR RELEASE: PHOTO CAPTION

Dr. Halim El-Dabh, a native of Egypt, works on his original scores for Youngstown State University's production of Aristophanes' ancient Greek comedy, "The Birds." Dr. El-Dabh is a professor of Ethnomusicology and co-director of the Center for the Study of World Musics at Kent State University. Performances of "The Birds" will begin Feb. 25 at YSU Bliss Hall's Spotlight Arena Theatre.

(YSU Photo by Elise Cleary.)

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