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CRC Music Professor Receives National Award

Cosumnes River College Music Professor Kurt Erickson is the recipient of the 2008-2009 ASCAP PLUS Award-Concert Music Division. This award, made by the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP), consisted of an independent panel and based on the unique prestige value of each writer's catalog of original compositions, as well as recent performances in areas not surveyed by the Society.

This award also provides meaningful compensation and national recognition to composers working in the concert arena, and in areas that are not typically well compensated or recognized by ASCAP's professional peer group.

"This prestigious award is in honor of Professor Erickson's creativity, excellence and dedication to his craft as an outstanding composer and instructor of students," said CRC President Dr. Francisco Rodriguez.

A native of Fresno, Erickson says he is honored to receive an award like this, which is awarded from a panel of his peers across the country.

"For me personally, this award has provided a certain validation while I was involved in projects that were under the radar from what my peers across the country were doing," said Kurt Erickson, CRC Music Professor and ASCAP award recipient. "To cite an example, early in my career I was involved in multi-year composer residencies at cathedrals and national shrines. These types of projects don't normally catch the attention of people who follow the ensembles and soloists who have name-recognition in my field, but this was precisely the kind of project that the ASCAP PLUS award sought to recognize. As a working artist as well as an educator, I am grateful for the continued support that ASCAP provides."

Erickson continues to be an active composer creating valuable additions to the catalog of American Contemporary works. Recently, he was commissioned by the Sacramento

Philharmonic and composed "Chicago Songs," which will have its world premiere at the Sacramento Philharmonic November 1.

"When it came time to approach this piece for the Sacramento Philharmonic, I was first intrigued by the idea of creating a song set using an eclectic set of 20th century American texts-something akin perhaps to a writer wanting to write the elusive Great American Novel," Erickson said.

This recent work, and his national award brings much expertise to the classroom where Erickson is teaching beginning and intermediate piano, music theory and a jazz history class.

"We are extremely excited and pleased to have Kurt as a member of our talented and diverse music faculty, and our students are already benefitting from his expertise," said CRC Communication, Visual and Performing Arts Dean Ellen Arden-Ogle.

ASCAP is the world's largest performing rights organization, with more than 330,000 composers, authors and publishers in the United States, representing music of every variety and style.

Cosumnes River College is part of the Los Rios Community College District.

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