BEAM HIM UP, SCOTTY!

George Takei, the original Sulu, to talk about ‘Star Trek’ and civil rights in Santa Barbara

By DAVE MASON
NEWS-PRESS STAFF WRITER

E ngaged and inspired by a year, month, week-long LA gay pride charged Capt. Kirk with a kaiju.

As the actor playing him on the original USS Enterprise bridge, George Takei, loved every second of it. “A long last, I was uncertain of that being possible,” the 71-year-old ‘Star Trek’ icon told the News-Press by phone from his Los Angeles home. He laughed.

Little did Mr. Takei know at the time that ‘Star Trek’ (9:00-9:30 on NBC), a series launched after just a few years, would flourish in Ralph Bakshi’s ‘Star Wars’ and other big-screen versions. He stayed aboard the Enterprise right through ‘Star Trek V: The Final Frontier’ (1989). Then he began to get the promotion that the actor longed for: He became Capt. Sulu, in command of the USS Excelsior in ‘Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country’ (1991).

“How a thrill!” Mr. Takei said, still searing at Worf. Mr. Takei continues to boldly go where no actor has gone before, his starring role as ‘Mikado’ in a Broadway musical based on Mr. Takei’s childhood experience in a Japanese-American internment camp in Arkansas. Mr. Takei, who’s married to Brad Takei, also votes for the rights of the LGBTQ+ community and sometimes even includes him.

And with his theatrical voice, inimitable laugh, his eyes and his trademark expressions, “Oh, my!” he keeps surprising viewers of all ages at ‘Star Trek: Conventions’ and has a large following on social media.

If all the never left the captain’s chair, they’d talk about ‘Star Trek’ and civil rights at 7:30 p.m. Fri. 14 at the Arlington Theatre, 1357 State St. The program is called “Where No Star Has Gone Before,” a talk on Capt. Kirk’s words “where no man has gone before” in the captain’s log with each episode’s opening credits.

Please see: TAKEI on A7

University of Washington class on how to spot BS goes viral

By KATHERINE LONG
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

SEATTLE — When it came to picking a title for the course they would teach this spring, University of Washington professors Carl Bergstrom and Jevin West decided to abandon academic stuffiness and get real.

Their new course title: “Calling B.S.!!! in the Age of Big Data.”

Mr. Bergstrom and Mr. West figured using a minor proximity was a sneaky way to draw attention to the course. And sure enough — within hours of unveiling a wickedly funny webpage they created for the proposed class, and announcing it via Twitter, the BS course went viral.

The webpage went live at midnight, and “we woke up the next morning and it was over the whole planet,” Mr. West said. “I’ve never seen anything like it... the response has been insane — emails, questions, comments.”

But sometimes, he said, they’re also infuriated.

“As we read various scientific papers, or media descriptions of the latest discoveries, or the latest claims some startup is making — let alone seeing the kind of stuff you get sent on Twitter — we’re like, ‘Jesus!’” Mr. Bergstrom said. “There’s so much bull****.”

Mr. West and Mr. Bergstrom say the course will arm students with critical reasoning skills they can use to identify BS and respond to it. Those skills will take the form of a set of rules to follow, a kind of

Please see: BS on A9

Out & About

Don Gilman

Gilman named VP of Symphony board

Don Gilman has been elected vice president of the Santa Barbara Symphony board of directors. He also chairs the Governance Committee for the board. Dr. Gilman is executive director of the Institute for the Advancement of Critical Thinking and is a senior faculty member at the American Management Association.

Our Town

Festival of Hearts

“California Dreamin’” is the theme for the 10th annual Festival of Hearts sponsored by FriendShip Center, an adult day care center. The event will be from 12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. in the Reagan Room at Fess Parker’s Doubletree Resort, 655 E. Cabrillo Blvd. In addition to lunch, there will be a silent auction with unique heart art by local artists and celebrities including Jeff Bridges, Academy Award winner of ‘Crazy Heart’ in 2009 Santa Barbara International Film Festival honoree, and Anita Lowey-Bryan, “sens geared” and “I love you,” star. The Montecito Board Fish Project will provide musical entertainment. Tickets ($75) Proceeds support the H.E.A.R.T. (Help Enable Refugees and Exiles) Program, which subsidizes the cost of health services and other income and dependent children in their families. For more information, call 968-4388.

On Stage

Music club to honor William Ramsay

The Santa Barbara Music Club will present a free concert at 3 p.m. Saturday at the Music Academy of the West’s Hana Hall, 1070 Fairview Road,ucson. Pianist Christopher Davis and vocalist Cristina Hidalgo will perform selections by William Haines, a longtime club member who died Nov. 8 in Washington, D.C. Mr. Haines, Mr. Lopez, the Lopez-Murphy and the Lopez-Murphy. The concert will feature performances by William Haines, a long-time club member who died Nov. 8 in Washington, D.C., Mr. Haines, Mr. Lopez, and the Lopez-Murphy. For more information, contact Leslie Haines, concert co-ordinator, at mh.1424@outlook.com or go to www.sbmusicclub.org.

Please see: MUSIC on A9

Contemporary Work

A contemporary take on ‘Rite of Spring’

featuring music of the world

ago 5 p.m. by Gershwin and (concert): RITE OF SPRING. TO THE GRANADA FRIDAY 17:53 PM GRANADA.

The Granada, 1070 Fairview Blvd., will present a concert featuring music of the world, including the Granada’s concert series. For more information, call 968-4388.

Please see: MUSIC on A9

University of Washington professors Jevin West, left, and Carl Bergstrom hope to teach a class on BS.
This starship is a metaphor for Starship Earth".

Takai
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(Decades later, the words would be chant for "there's no one else who's been there before" for the TV spinoff "Star Trek: The Next Generation.")

"I was exulted when I got cast in "Star Trek,"" Mr. Takai, a Los Angeles native, said. "I thought this would be a big breakthrough for me, both as an actor and an Asian-American actor."

Mr. Takai, who started acting on TV in the 1950s with various guest roles, recalled Gene Roddenberry, the series’ creator, telling him about the first day of work in 1966 at Desilu Studios in Hollywood. Mr. Roddenberry explained "Star Trek" would feature social issues thrown in the guise of science fiction, and he let that premise with episodes about racism, overpopulation, the Vietnam War, the cold war and more.

"He said, ‘This is a metaphor for Starship Earth and the strength of this starship is in its diversity—people from different parts of the planet, from different cultures, different races, different faiths, different histories.’ Mr. Takai said. ‘This great diversity would work together in concert as a team.’"

In that spirit, Mr. Takai argued against a plan to have Starfleet, in the episode "The Naked Time," "tame the Enterprise crew with a humanoid social worker" who would be played by a Japanese-American actor. "I was concerned he would be stereotyped," he said, "and I didn’t want to be presented as a teapot."

As a boy, Mr. Takai saw discrimination firsthand when President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed an executive order placing 120,000 Japanese-Americans in internment camps. He wrote about that in his autobiography, "To the Stars." (Pocket Books 1994).

"Pearl Harbor was bombed, and there was fear the West Coast would be invaded by the Japanese," he wrote in the New Press, "We happened to look like the people who would have been Pearl Harbor! They (the U.S. government) saw us as an enemy.

"My mother was born in San Francisco. My father was a San Francisco man," Mr. Takai said. "They met and married in Los Angeles, and my siblings and I were born in Los Angeles. We were Americans. We had nothing to do with Pearl Harbor.""

He recalled he and his family were ushered into a train to a place in Kentucky. "It was very hard," he wrote. "The train was in poor condition, and we were terribly uncomfortable."

"My mission in life is to get that dark chapter of American History known to all Americans," Mr. Takai said. He added that he felt he could say a film about "Star Trek" was a chance to tell the story of the next generation.

Fyi
Takai
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Story by Helen Solu (George Takai), left, and navigator Cheyenne (Walter Koenig) knew where they were going, space, but not quite to the National Park in "Star Trek V: The Final Frontier" (1989). They had to ask Uhura to send a smote.

The course will arm students with critical reasoning skills

- RS

Course Reviewed from Page A4

A full-credit RS option will be offered to students who want to study ethical questions in science. "Issues in Science Ethics," taught by Professor David R. Brown, will cover topics such as the ethics of genetic engineering, the use of animals in medical research, and the responsibilities of scientists to society.

"The course will help students develop critical thinking skills and the ability to evaluate evidence and arguments," Professor Brown said. "They will also learn about the ethical implications of scientific discoveries and how to apply this knowledge to real-world situations.""