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**Dance School planning a new interpretation of 'Joseph'**

by Aurelio Sanchez  
*Journal Staff Writer*

For children whose first language is dance, learning a second language of music is cathartic, a dance school director said.

"These kids have been exposed to so much dance that the dance bug has bit some of them," said Donna Scheer, director of National Dance Institute of New Mexico's School for the Performing Arts.

"Now, we're seeing some of these kids learning about musical theater and that has piqued their interest; for some, it's more than a little interest," she added.

The school is presenting one of the best-loved and most-performed musicals of all time: Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber's "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat."

The creators of "Jesus Christ Superstar" wrote "Joseph" originally as a 20-minute cantata for a London school. As it began to have success, it was expanded and eventually premiered on Broadway in 1982 at the Royale Theatre.

Its eclectic music, Bible-based story and expansive themes have made it a favorite of schools and amateur theaters.

It's the wide ranging musical styles that appeal to almost anyone, Scheer said, noting that the styles range from country-western to calypso to bubblegum pop and even to rock 'n' roll.

Scheer said that she was also attracted by the musical parable's message: "Any dream will do, just aspire to the greatness in something."

Blessed with the ability to interpret dreams, Joseph became his father's favorite among 13 sons and was given a spectacular multi-colored coat by his father.

Joseph was sold into slavery by his jealous brothers who deceived his father into thinking Joseph had been murdered. Using his gift of dream prophecy, Joseph rose from slavery to become second in command in Egypt and was put in charge of planning for an impending famine.

Meanwhile, his brothers were in the midst of famine and went groveling for food to Joseph, whom the brothers no longer recognized.

After testing their integrity, Joseph revealed himself and there followed a heartfelt reconciliation among the brothers, and a reunion with his father.

Co-founded in 1994 by Catherine Oppenheimer, NDI-NM brings award-winning programs each year to 6,100 underserved children from kindergarten through high school in urban, rural and Native American communities.