

May 11, 2012

To whom it may concern:

I write concerning Alberto Lombardo's visit to the Clark University campus this past spring. Alberto was the invited guest of Michael Spingler, Professor Emeritus of French at Clark and was co-hosted by the departments of Foreign Languages and Visual and Performing Arts. From the planning stages of his visit, Alberto was a delight to work with. He made it clear that he was willing to work with students in different ways and contexts, both inside and outside of the classroom. He was happy to work with varying levels of students, both in French and in Theater. He proposed multiple activities, including working closely with students on writing and performing.

My impression of Alberto once he arrived confirmed my already positive opinion of his energy and devotion to his visit. His warm and open demeanor charmed students and faculty alike; we were all glad to have the chance to work with him. He visited most French classes (all but the beginning level) for one or more class sessions, and engaged students in discussion, writing, and improvisational role-playing. Students of all abilities participated enthusiastically and benefited from Alberto's feedback. My students were simply delighted to work with him, and mentioned several times how thrilled they were to have had the chance to read his play and to discuss writing and performing with someone of his stature.

Alberto also held two evening events during his two weeks at Clark. The first was a reading of one of his plays in English translation by Theater students and faculty, followed by a bilingual question-and-answer session. This event was well attended and extremely well received. Spectators got the chance to talk with a playwright about his approaches to writing, the adventures of translation, and cultural differences.

The second event was a theater workshop, also bilingual. Again, Alberto managed to engage students, faculty, teaching assistants, and other participants in various theater exercises on the subject of love relationships. This involved work with physical movement, emotional responses, dialogue and scene practice, and discussions about each scene after it was performed. All participants learned something about the French and culture, about acting, and perhaps even about relationships! All in all, it was a thoroughly enjoyable and edifying evening, made possible thanks to Alberto's marvelous dynamism and charisma.

I sincerely hope that we will have the chance to welcome Alberto back to Clark in the near future. I strongly recommend him to other campuses looking for ways to energize their students and faculty through the use of theater. He is something of a force of nature, and his visit will not soon be forgotten.

Yours sincerely,

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