

Mime troupe to perform in Carrboro

By IVY HILLIARD
Staff Writer

North Carolina's professional mime theatre, TOUCH, recently received a \$6,000 grant from the state to help it reach even wider audiences with its inventive brand of mime.

This weekend TOUCH will give a benefit performance at their homebase, the Art School in Carrboro, Friday and Saturday at 8 p.m. They also will give a special children's performance Saturday at 2 p.m. titled "The Wizard Who Couldn't Smile" and other stories.

Unlike more traditional mimes, which bring to most minds somber, serious figures in whiteface pulling on invisible ropes, the three members of TOUCH use masks, costumes, music and noise—and they never wear whiteface during their performances.

Jef Lambdin, one of the mimes, explained that the group's work is about human beings, not clowns, and that whiteface hides the face and makes a person less human.

"Mime is an art form to be played a couple of ways," Lambdin said. "It can be a guessing game with the audience trying to figure out what you're doing. In our work that's taken for granted, and the objects we deal with are just part of the landscape."

"That lets us focus on characters, their relationships on stage and the situations they're in."

Lambdin, along with mimes Sheila Kerrigan and Skip Mendler, pianist Paul Whetstone and a lighting designer, try to include original pieces and improvisations based on audience suggestions in their performances.

"We're trying to take mime to the limit of what you can do," Kerrigan said. "For us mime is what we can communicate non-verbally but not silently. We put mime in the context of the theatre, so we have a fusion of both."

Both Kerrigan and Lambdin said they are very excited about the grant, which was channeled from the State Department of Cultural Resources for the Theatre Arts section of the North Carolina Arts Council.

Lambdin said part of the grant money would be used as a salary support for a staff to handle the administrative duties of the group to give the performers more time to work on their art.

The largest part of the money will go to sponsor a Southeastern Regional Mime Festival in Greensboro at UNC-G during Memorial Day weekend in May, Lambdin said.

"Artists will be attending from Alabama, Georgia and North Carolina—the best mimes in the Southeast," Lambdin said. "There will be two nights of shows featuring six mime groups and three days of workshops."

Lambdin said that TOUCH is the only mime company recognized as a professional theatre in this state, and one of the few such groups which tours frequently.

Founded in 1976, the group's members come from diverse backgrounds. Lambdin said he left Colorado State University, where he was a forestry major, to study mime after seeing his first mime performance, because he was impressed with how people were communicating at an emotional level with mime.

Kerrigan said she took ballet for eight years when she was growing up in New York, but a knee injury forced her to stop dancing. It was then that she became interested in mime.

"It was a challenge to me, because I was so terrible at it in the beginning," Kerrigan said. "I ended up studying it for five years."

Skip Mendler, who later joined the group, studied at Harvard University and founded an improvisational theatre group before moving to North Carolina.

The three met in a mime school, and since then TOUCH has traveled in a 16-state region giving thousands of performances and workshops.

TOUCH's evening show, called 1984: A Question of Balance, deals with issues as love and hazardous waste in a way that is both funny and serious.

One piece, called simply "Garbage," deals with an ordinary object like trash. We see it every day but do not always realize what dangerous effects it could have on us in the future, Kerrigan said.

"Our pieces are a series of related images," Lambdin said. "It's like an animated film sometimes—a culmination of all the images you see. Not just a story."

Tickets for the Friday and Saturday performances are \$4 for Art School members and \$5 for non-members. The children's show is \$2 for members and \$2.50 for non-members. Call 942-2041 for more information.

Army is not laughing in 'Streamers'

By JEFF GROVE
Arts Editor

The first scene of Robert Altman's new film, *Streamers*, is a good metaphor for the whole movie. Two combat-weary sergeants tie a firecracker to a sleeping soldier's bunk. They attack several yards of fuse to the firecracker, light the fuse and wait for the results of their prank. *Streamers* itself is a long fuse tensely burning down to an explosive climax.

Review

Altman, responsible for directing such films as *M*A*S*H*, *McCabe and Mrs. Miller* and *Nashville*, has said of his newest work, "To synopsise *Streamers* is not impossible, but I think it is inadvisable. The storyline—the sequence of events—is one thing, but its meaning is quite another."

The statement is true but misleading. The story of the film is just as engrossing as its deeper meaning. The setting of the film is a stateside U.S. Army base in 1965. While Sgt. Rooney and Sgt. Cokes dream of going to Vietnam to "kill some gooks," three young draftees in their charge are forced to deal with social, racial and sexual tensions.

Richie, an educated, somewhat elitist homosexual, spends his time making witty observations on the Neanderthalisms of his cronies. Billy, an All-American boy from a small Wisconsin town, asserts his masculinity by reacting heatedly to Richie's teasing. Roger, a Southern black man, rolls with the punches as a way of getting along. Into

this set-up walks Carlyle, a street-wise black draftee looking for "the colored boy" he has heard lives in the barracks. Carlyle's recurring presence leads the film to its violent, exhausting conclusion.

The actors in the film form such a tightly knit ensemble that they jointly won a single Best Actor award at last year's Venice Film Festival, but individual performances can be singled out.

Mitchell Lichtenstein's Richie expresses his inner conflict about his sexuality without being a stereotypical "self-tortured pansy." His obvious intelligence engages the audience's sympathy.

As Carlyle, Michael Wright gives the most overtly emotional performance in the film. Trapped in a world that wants to strip him of his identity and individuality, he plays by his own rules. Wright makes Carlyle's actions seem almost acceptable because he shows that Carlyle is a victim of his own instincts.

Matthew Modine's Billy, a somewhat brooding characterization, seethes with repelled fascination at Richie's encroachments. Roger, in the capable hands of David Alan Grier, emerges as a character slowly grasping at truth. Guy Boyd and George Dzundza are effective as Sgts. Rooney and Cokes, and Dzundza has two powerhouse monologues which he makes especially compelling.

David Rabe's script, a slightly cut version of his 1975 play, is brilliantly written. Its overwhelming sense of oppression is mirrored in Steve Altman's one-room set design and Norman Smith's tight editing.

The main idea of the film seems to be that violence is an unavoidable result when the army—or any other group—robs people of their individuality. The opening and closing credits, which are superimposed over shots of a crack drill team at work, symbolize this message.

Altman also seeks in *Streamers* to explore masculinity and courage—odd themes from a director known for his sensitivity in working with women in such films as *Three Women* and *Come Back to the 5 & Dime, Jimmy Dean, Jimmy Dean*. Is it more "masculine" for Billy and Roger to go outside and play basketball than it is for Richie to stay inside because he does not need to "prove" his manhood? Is Carlyle less brave than Rooney and Cokes because he's openly scared of combat, or is he braver because he admits his fears while the sergeants hide theirs? Altman never really resolves these questions because there are no answers.

This is where the title of the film comes into play. Rooney and Cokes tell stories about "streamers"—paratroopers struggling in mid-air when their parachutes fail. Everyone in *Streamers* is grappling with this air, too blinded by fear to see any escape from his situation.

That's a very different tone than was manifest in Altman's last film on a military theme, *M*A*S*H*. But the two films are not so dissimilar; each deals with people being put into combat against their will and inventing their own way out. Altman himself admits the similarity; he has said that *M*A*S*H* and *Streamers* are the same story—only he isn't laughing any more.

SECS to hold business meeting Sunday

The Sexuality Education and Counseling Service will hold a business meeting at 8 p.m. Sunday in the Union. The meeting had previously been announced as on Monday. All volunteers are invited.

housing

Kuncl said that when the new 500-resident dorm opened next fall, more upperclassmen would be able to return to campus.

Last fall the housing department was

able to find space for more upperclassmen in a shorter span of time than the previous year, Kuncl said. He attributed this success to better communication with the students.

The rates for on-campus housing have not been set. Kuncl said he would present

the projected budget and rate recommendations to the Housing Advisory Board, the Residence Hall Association and Odum Village family housing community. It will then go to the administration. Kuncl said he expected an estimate by Feb. 1, and a final figure within a few weeks.

From page 1

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STREAMERS

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7:15 • 9:15

THE Daily Crossword by Elaine D. Schorr

ACROSS 1 Scarlett's home 5 African antelope 10 Devious doing 14 Skip 15 Director King 16 Menu mixture 17 Stop (with "in") 20 Deleting item 21 Distinct 23 Drag along 25 Got the message!

26 Mockingbird state 30 If not 33 Church announcement 34 Conductor Georg 36 Pair 37 Stupid one 38 Paris pops 39 Coconut fiber 40 Calendar abbr. 41 "Green Hat" author 42 Moroccan 43 Husky owner 45 Hamlock drinker

47 Tissue swelling 49 Seven — 50 Pleasure seeker 53 Villies 57 "Unto us — is given" 58 Close down 60 Computer fodder 61 Moray catcher 62 Big brass 63 Decamped 64 Play 65 Prognostication

12 Settled down 13 Horse hair 18 Signs of the times 22 Vedic god 24 Painter's prop 26 Letter group 27 Auscultation sounds 28 Stopped 29 Skin woe 31 Retinue 32 Shore birds 35 Gauzy materials 38 Guaranteed 39 — be (expires) 41 So be it 42 Muscle problem 43 "Rio —" 44 "— choose to run" 46 Rhythmic pause in melody 48 Son of Jacob 50 Pluvial bombardment 51 Flei drudge 52 Mex. fiber 54 Like a live 55 Court wear 56 Arch 59 Pro — (for the nonce)

Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:

XIYST PIESIA SASH ROAR OILIER MOTE ARCA UNDERWATER YESMEN MOJA OWE
PADRE WARM TOASTIER SCOOP AMS ENERO ATEE CASINGS BEDDING KNOT EPOXY VAG TICANI AIRLINEELY LIES SLINE IVA ELI AGENDA RETIREMENT DAUB ANET TEPEE EPEE KIDS STIES DELL

1/20/84

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