

The Amateurs are far from it

What's in a name anyway? The Amateurs, a reggae-style rock group from Greenville, played at the ArtSchool in Carrboro Saturday night. In general, the band's playing was clearly far from the implications of their name.

The Amateurs have played the circuit from Greensboro to Charleston, S.C. This weekend's performance was actually the fourth time the band has rocked the ArtSchool. They played July 4 at the ArtSchool and then at the Eno Festival in Durham. Their next Triangle appearance will be at the Durham CenterFest on Sept. 21.

Bill (Shep) Shepherd, who handles lead vocals and congos, also writes about half the band's repertoire. The other half consists of classics like "Johnny B. Goode" and other music that is recognizable but can be appreciated anew because of the group's cool, jammie reggae style.

The other Amateurs are guitarists Mike Davis and Buddy Alcorn,

Rene Meyer Concert

bassist J. W. Rayburn, drummer Rocky Warren, and keyboard player Andrea Faulkner. These six were joined by several stand-ins Saturday.

The band's reggae twist definitely comes from Shep. His energy and original songs ignited the stage. In between his attack on the congos and the mike, he bounced around the stage and got the audience going.

Shep is originally from Lenoir County but has been around the Greenville music scene since 1971. While living for a short period in New York City, he had neighbors from Trinidad, and he was thereby exposed to and inspired by the Caribbean sound. Returning to North Carolina, he learned to play congo drums, and the band deve-

loped from there. Shep was also influenced by his mother and sister, who both sing gospel. The voices and complex harmony of gospel are an important part of the band's sound.

The lead guitarist, Mike Davis, has a style reminiscent of Carlos Santana, and awed the audience Saturday night with his hot solos. Maracas, tambourine, and keyboards were adroitly managed by two female members of the band (one of them a stand-in).

The audience was typical of crowds at the ArtSchool's reggae events, but there were not as many real "rastafarians," (which is to say hard-core reggae fans). The band's style, essentially rock'n'roll with a heavy reggae flair, was reflected in the avid crowd. The dance floor was packed for sardine dancing and the crowd went wild between, during and after every number. For regular groupies or first-time listeners, the band was definitely hot.



The Amateurs perform at ArtSchool in Carrboro

DTH/Dan Charlson

Drama department gives non-majors opportunity to perform

By BRUCE BYERS
Staff Writer

One does not have to be a drama major or a graduate student to participate in campus productions. As the Department of Dramatic Arts gets its season underway, both the students heading the undergraduate theater community and the department faculty are discussing the acting and directing opportunities available for non-majors in the six or seven undergraduate performances the department produces each semester.

The DDA is beginning the academic year with "A Little Wilder," an evening of two early Thornton Wilder plays, "The Happy Journey" and "The Long Christmas Dinner." With only a few rehearsals behind him, guest artist/director Thomas Nahrwold said he is already pleased. Discussing selection of the cast, he said he was able to "get the best people for the parts." The cast includes a history major, a political science major, and a journalism major. "There was simply no prejudice with regard

to (major) selection at all," Nahrwold said.

Nahrwold said "A Little Wilder" was a chance for audiences to see some of Wilder's rarely-performed earlier plays. "They (the plays) were written at a time when Wilder was being shadowed by Fitzgerald and Hemingway," he said. This shadowing is a shame, said Nahrwold, because the plays show Wilder's "struggling with new techniques involving the audience (which are) similar to (techniques) Brecht dealt with."

By no means shadowed by the DDA production, however, are the plays produced by the department's Lab Theatre. While the DDA's production occurs once a semester and involves a small admission charge, the Lab Theatre produces five or six smaller shows per semester with free admission. These productions have been exceptionally popular, and in response to the demand, the DDA has decided to expand the number of performances of each play from four to five.

The Lab Theatre not only casts both

major and non-majors but also allows non-majors to direct productions. According to junior Doug Wagner, director of the Lab Theatre's production of "Wait Until Dark," the system lends itself to people interested in writing their own plays, since it is up to the director to list the play he is interested in producing.

Already scheduled and cast for this fall's Lab Theatre are "Wait Until Dark," "Vinegar Tom" and "Uncommon Women and Others." The rest of the plays for this season have not been selected or cast, however, and according to undergraduate DDA representative Mike Wilson, now is the time to get prepared for auditions.

To aid both majors and non-majors, the department's Evan Yionoulis will be holding a workshop for students who may need guidance in preparing for DDA's formal-style auditions. The workshop, set for Sept. 20, will offer aid in selection of the two monologues which participants are required to deliver in auditions and possibly

some other forms of coaching.

In addition to workshops aimed specifically at preparing the students for auditions, the department has tentatively scheduled a voice workshop. This workshop will be led by Cicely Berry, head vocal coach for the distinguished Royal Shakespeare Company in London. The precise date has not yet been announced, but will be in late September or early October. Another workshop, either on scene or movement, may be scheduled later this semester.

In addition to the workshops, the department is also making its visiting and resident professionals more available for contact. Starting Sept. 12, the department will be holding a dinner discussion series at the Carolina Coffee Shop. On a first-come, first-served basis, ten undergraduates will be allowed to sign up for dinner with any of a consortium of theater professionals. The aim of the department is to cover topics such as direction, design, stage

management, writing and movement and vocal coaching. The dinner series will begin on Sept. 12, with Dr. Milly Barranger, chairwoman of the department.

DDA's "A Little Wilder" is scheduled to run Oct. 8-12. Lab Theatre productions start off with the classic "Wait Until Dark," which is, according to Wagner, wonderfully suited for production in what can be the foreboding environs of the Lab Theater. It will be performed Oct. 5-7. "Vinegar Tom," a musical about people getting caught up in 17th-century English witch hunts, will be directed by Steve Maler and is set to run Oct. 12-14. "Uncommon Women and Others," which was described by director Lydia Worthington as an "extremely honest play exploring women's choices between traditional and not-so-traditional roles," will run Oct. 19-21. Lab Theatre productions are free, but since past shows have filled the house, it is recommended that seat reservations be made at the Playmaker's box office.

Student Stores' safety measures seem effective

By MARIA HAREN
Staff Writer

The Student Stores' new \$35,000 electronic theft-detection system, which has prevented two thefts already, will help deter theft and reduce supply shrinkage, said Student Stores administrators.

Rutledge Tufts, general manager of Student Stores, said the idea for the detection system was introduced a year ago because of a high theft rate.

"We were looking for a way that was effective but not real intrusive for the customers who shop," he said.

A "reasonable" amount of theft at a college bookstore is usually a 2 percent loss of total sales, Tufts said. UNC Student Stores lost \$170,000, about 1.5 percent.

For merchants like those on Franklin Street, Tufts said, theft rates can be as high as 3 to 4 percent. Shrinkage chips away at the Student Stores' profits, Tufts said, which go either to scholarships or back into production. "We will give the University \$3,000 just for scholarships," he said.

Total value of stolen goods cannot be determined, Tufts said, because employee errors in pricing, book keeping and cash register operations affect that value also.

Total thefts include employee as well as consumer theft, he said. "We've caught employees, students, faculty members and non-students stealing," Tufts said.

The Bull's Head Bookshop is

where most people are caught stealing, he said. Two of the four "detection corridors" are in the front of the building; the third at the Pit Stop and the other at the pen counter.

Monitors stand at the front detection corridors and at the electronics counter all day, checking people who trigger the alarms.

Sometimes two people walk through at the same time the alarm goes off, the wrong person is stopped, he said, and sometimes the alarm malfunctions.

When the alarm does go off, Tufts said, it is not an automatic accusation of theft. "All it means is that an alarm has been set off," he said. "Usually it is a store error."

If students are caught stealing, and it is their first offense, they must sign a document saying they have been warned against stealing. If caught a second time, they are then turned over to the Honor Court.

Others caught stealing are taken to University Police, Tufts said.

Tufts said he had hoped the detection system would deter potential thieves rather than putting the Student Stores in a position to confront them.

A recent study, which asked shoplifters under rehabilitation what was most effective deterrence in stores, showed that 70 percent felt electronic detection systems were the strongest deterrents against theft, Tufts said.

'Handmaid's Tale': a novel of the future

Kelly Rhodes
Books

Margaret Atwood's latest novel, "The Handmaid's Tale," should one day take its place between classics such as George Orwell's "1984" and Aldous Huxley's "Brave New World." Realistic and chilling, Atwood's book is somewhat different from the other two negative utopias: the narrator is an abused woman cruelly caught up in a system that has turned faith and belief inside out. This woman, Offred, makes the reader stand up and listen.

The year of the story's setting is not specifically mentioned; one can only assume it is sometime in the near future. The United States is now called the Republic of Gilead, and religions are at war with one another. The government makes the masses believe that it is an omnipotent god: constant, sinister, and threatening.

Offred is a Handmaid, or roughly, a surrogate mother. She is to conceive a child for a Commander and his wife by a rather clinical method. Like all other Handmaids, Offred wears red (remember Hester Prynne?). She clings to her past, constantly searching in crowds for her husband, daughter, best friend and mother. Their remembered dialogues are distant and haunting.

There are both contrasts and similarities between "1984," "Brave New World" and "Handmaid." While Orwell saw the future government as a repressive Big Brother that monitored thoughts and watched every action of its citizens, Huxley saw

a free society of drugs and sexual promiscuity. Atwood borrows some ideas from each of these authors and adds a few innovations of her own.

In "The Handmaid's Tale," Big Brother appears in the form of "Eyes" that are undercover spies in Gileadean society. Gileadeans are free to think and remember, but not to read. Atwood shows that alcohol, drugs, "orgasm and arousal" are thought to be frivolous, unnecessary and illegal.

Atwood ironically shows the system as being ultra-conservative, yet surprisingly the system pushes open adultery with Handmaids. She brushes over the hatred and punishment of doctors who perform illegal abortions, of homosexuals and of religious groups such as Catholics, Jews, and Quakers.

The only very obvious fault in "The Handmaid's Tale" is Atwood's purposeful, sporadic quotation marks. As Offred's mind wanders into her past, the speech she recalls is jumbled and loose, usually unpunctuated. Also, the ending may be disappointing to some, but the "Historical Notes" after the text compensates for any frustration. Atwood's imagination seems to know no bounds.

Offred is an unforgettable character, and her tale makes for a book that is hard to put down.

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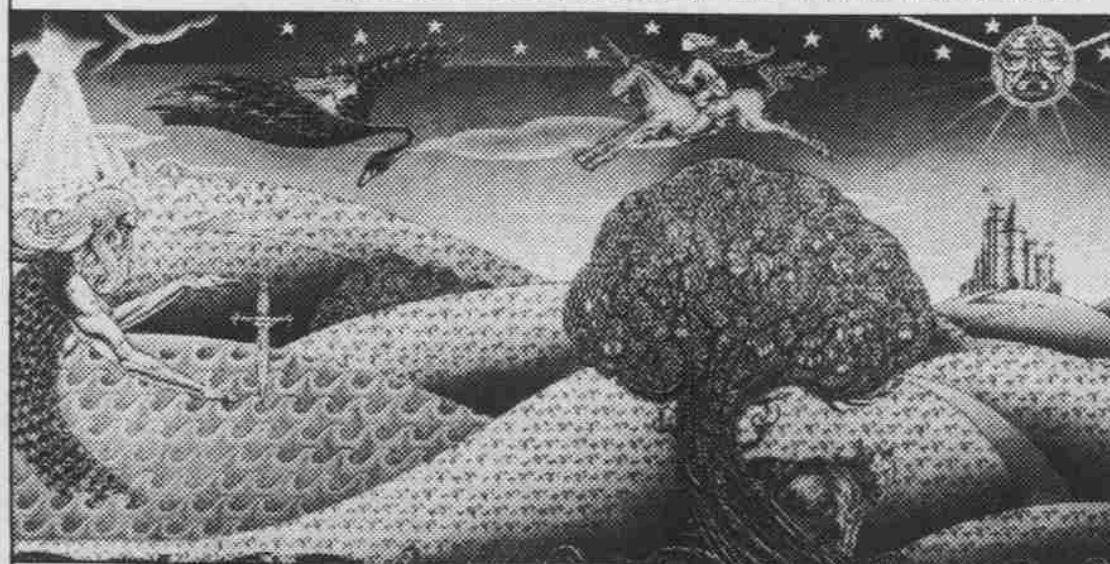
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