

Glee Clubs teem with vocal talent

Four days a week, someone strolling through the quad on the way back from Franklin Street might hear the sound of music floating through the windows of Hill Hall. It might be the vigorous melody of an Italian folk song or the swelling lines of a ballad or the rousing refrain of a Negro spiritual. All of these and more comprise the repertoire of the UNC Glee Clubs.

The groups, which include the Men's and Women's Glee Clubs, have approximately 46 members. They rehearse four times a week, dividing their practices evenly between time spent as separate groups and as a combined glee club.

The Men's Glee Club was founded in 1848. Its female counterpart began in 1969 as a laboratory group for the choral arts program, reaching the status of a full-fledged campus organization in 1974. Michael Tamte-Horan, the groups' conductor, is responsible for the existence of the Mixed Glee Club, which combines the efforts of both the men's and women's groups.

"I wanted to offer students an opportunity to sing the men's and women's literature as well as that which is available to a mixed group,"

Beth Rhea Music

Tamte-Horan said.

The Carolina Choir and the Chamber Singers already existed upon Tamte-Horan's arrival at UNC four years ago. He saw a need for choral groups that performed a wide variety of music, ranging from lighter pop and folk songs to classical, sacred pieces, from a *cappella* pieces to those performed with the accompaniment of a string ensemble. This diversity can be found in the three glee clubs today.

Before Tamte-Horan's arrival, the Glee Clubs had suffered from decreasing student interest and motivation, because they had been led by several conductors over a short period of time. Tamte-Horan said his goal was to "build them up in quantity and quality."

He seems to have made a great deal of progress. "The group is getting more and more sophisticated all the time," he said. "The quality has really increased, and it is reflected



Conductor Michael Tamte-Horan leads the UNC Women's Glee Club

DTH/Tony Deifell

by the types of students who are in it."

The singers, who are mostly undergraduates, have majors ranging from psychology to business to environmental science; but a growing number of voice majors also participate in the groups. Students who have participated in Governor's School, North Carolina Honors Chorus, All-State Chorus and All-Carolina Chorus also have joined the clubs. Tamte-Horan said he now considers the Glee Club a very select ensemble.

Tamte-Horan said another goal he set for the groups was "to offer a rich musical or aesthetic experience to the students but also to pass it on to others." Some of his goals for the groups were personal, he said, but he wants the members to learn about cooperating with others, as well as about commitment and discipline.

Dean Amburn, president of the Men's Glee Club, said, "It's a great place to grow as a person and as a musician, because you get so much from the people around you. It's an

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— Dean Amburn

excellent opportunity to express yourself musically and to build your confidence in front of people."

Sandy Schoeps, president of the Women's Glee Club, said Tamte-Horan is demanding, expecting a lot from his singers. "He tells us what he's looking for, but he gives us freedom, too," she said.

Anne McLean, vice president of the Women's Glee Club, said she appreciates the background Tamte-Horan provides for each piece of music. "He tells us what the music is about and what it means."

The Glee Club seems to offer more than just a musical experience: the members create a definite personal dimension. Schoeps said the environment was nurturing, and McLean referred to the group of students as a family. "You get hugs and support," he said, "and it turns a bad day into a good day. It's a good stress outlet."

Amburn said the music has a therapeutic value. "You can have a terrible day, but when you come in, the emotion of the music takes over. You can forget all your problems, at least for an hour."

The Glee Clubs have scheduled several performances for this year. The Fall Concert, which will feature the UNC-G Glee Clubs as special guests, is Sunday, Nov. 9, at 4 p.m. in Hill Hall Auditorium. This exchange is the first of its kind for the UNC Glee Clubs. Groups from both schools will perform on Saturday at UNC-G, and then at UNC on Sunday.

Performances lined up for the spring semester include singing for the All-Carolina Chorus on Feb. 8 and 9, the Inter-Collegiate Choral Festival at East Carolina University on Feb. 28 and the Artist Series in Halifax, Va. on Feb. 29, as well as the Spring Concert in April. The main event, however, is the Spring Tour from March 6 through March 16. Performances are in the process of being scheduled, and among the stops will be two days in both New Orleans and Atlanta.

"Every student needs to find one or two things they can really latch onto that make them part of the Carolina experience in a way that is beyond academic," Tamte-Horan said. "I'd like our group to be that."

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