

Clef Hangers experience full of energy, enthusiasm

They sing, they dance, they charm, they act, they joke, they laugh, they rock, they roll — but first and foremost, the Clef Hangers make sure the audience gets their money's worth of entertainment.

On Friday night, it was definitely the audience who got the better end of this deal. Performing before a packed house at Memorial Hall, the Clef Hangers gave UNC a show of a great deal of talent and even more fun.

The performance opened with a scene set on the corner of 42nd Street and Broadway in New York City. The group successfully grabbed the audience's attention and held it with a running theme — the Mystery of the Murdered Clef Hanger. The props and scenery (especially the fog) and the characterizations of the various bums were the first clues that this was not just some sort of recital. Presenting more than 20 songs, they sang some typical examples of light, jazzy, "just-for-fun" barber shop-type tunes, such as "Sixty Minute Man," "Sassafias!" and "Lida Rose."

Simply listening to this frequently repeated style might have become tiring. The key to the success of the concert, however, laid in the fact that the Clef Hangers are not just heard; they are experienced. The enthusiasm and personality reflected on each singer's face showed the real reason he was on stage — to have a good time. This energy adds another dimension to the group's music.

The intermittent skits, the self-introduction of each member and the remarks leading into the songs contributed to the show's variety. Some of them, however, were a bit corny, or were really reaching, in an attempt to make it relate to the

Student 'Picnic' excellent

The only thing wrong with Thursday night's performance of "Picnic" was that the audience was too polite (or too reserved) to give the players the standing ovation they deserved.

But despite the lack of a standing ovation at the end of the play, the audience showed its appreciation throughout the performance in Playmaker's Theatre.

Beth Buffington Theater

The Department of Dramatic Art undergraduate students' production of "Picnic," a play about the turmoil that an intriguing stranger brings to a small town in Kansas, was definitely entertaining.

The success of the play centered on the entire cast's fine performances and their ability to individualize and add dimension to what could have been rather flat, stereotypical characters.

During the almost two-hour show, the most noted performances came from Scott Bowman, Kristine Watt and Deb Teitelbaum.

As the young vagabond intruder named Hal Carter, Bowman showed a deep understanding of the diversity of his character. Not only was he able to show the rough and rugged side, but he allowed the soft, sincere and even vulnerable side to shine through.

The transformation of the bratty, brainy younger sister in the play was delightfully accomplished by Watt. She drew the audience into the process as she progressed from the jealous, tomboyish youth in the first act to the more secure, fun-loving, beautiful teen in the final two acts.

Having to be both an extremely funny and serious character, Teitelbaum played up the eccentricities of her character, the old maid schoolteacher Rosemary Sydney, and won over the crowd. As the other half of the comedic team, Allen Simpson did a wonderful job as Howard Bevans, the dopey local businessman.

Melody Williamson as Madge Owens, the beautiful girl in town and Millie's older sister, was more than adequate and displayed subtlety in the self-awakening of her character.

Although the mother, Flo Owens; the neighbor, Helen Potts; and Madge's steady boyfriend, Alan Seymour, were less flamboyant than other characters in the play, Amy Rosenberg, Michele White and Walt Spangler made their characters unique and memorable.

The minor character of the paperboy, played by Paul Dawson, and the teachers, Irma Kronkite and Christine Schoenwalder, played by Deidre White and Lane Hoff, were also enjoyable and were anything and everything but dull.

The 11-member cast of undergraduate students and the dozens of others responsible for the performance earned every bit of the audience's applause.

Jessica Yates Concert

upcoming song. Nevertheless, the singers kept the audience from "zoning out."

The evening's music came from all types of eras, backgrounds and musicians. Love songs such as Yaz's "Only You," "Love Passing By" and "Time After Time" were balanced with comical pieces like "Mighty Mouse," "Walk Like an Egyptian" and a song about the lonely West, complete with cacti, tumbleweeds and cowboys.

"Happy Days," "I Get Around" and the "Monday, Monday/California Dreamin'" medley were some of the more familiar tunes, while gospel melodies such as "De Animals A' Comin'" and "Little Innocent Lamb"

provided a nice contrast and a bit of culture.

A particularly humorous song performed was "When I See All the Lovin'," a complaint about the abundance of love girls seem to have for babies but the lack of it they sometimes have for their male followers. The irony in the piece is that these guys truly do crave attention, and they take advantage of every opportunity to be in the spotlight. The cheers, claps and laughter — they eat it all up, but the Clef Hangers maintain just enough modesty to keep from repelling the crowd.

By the end of the show, each member had had his chance to shine, and I felt as though, even though they didn't know me, I knew them.

Before, someone had told me that if you've seen one Clef Hangers show, you've seen them all. Well, if this is true, I plan to go back this spring to see that one show again.

UNC actor training program gets grant, national exposure

By **ASHLEY CAMPBELL**
Staff Writer

The professional actor training program at UNC recently was one of seven programs in the country to receive a training grant from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).

The grant is a first for UNC's program and the first such grant the NEA has given to a Southeastern training program.

Other schools that received this year's NEA training grant are the Yale School of Drama, the Juilliard School of Drama, the American Conservatory Theatre in San Francisco, New York University, the University of California in San Francisco and Iowa University.

"The monetary value, \$5,000, isn't as important as the recognizing we are receiving on a national level," said Sharon Broom, spokeswoman for PlayMakers Repertory Company.

"The award is very, very important," said David Hammond, artistic director of PRC and faculty member of the training program.

"The focus of this year's NEA training grants was on encouraging interaction between advanced training programs and professional theaters," Hammond said. "The drama panel of the NEA spent a day and a half observing our program. They were impressed with our classes and our policy of continually increasing students' interaction with professional actors."

The program will use the grant to increase teaching by professional actors who are working with PRC, he said.

UNC's professional actor training program, which is affiliated with PRC, is a three-year graduate program of the Department of Dramatic Art leading to a master

of fine arts degree.

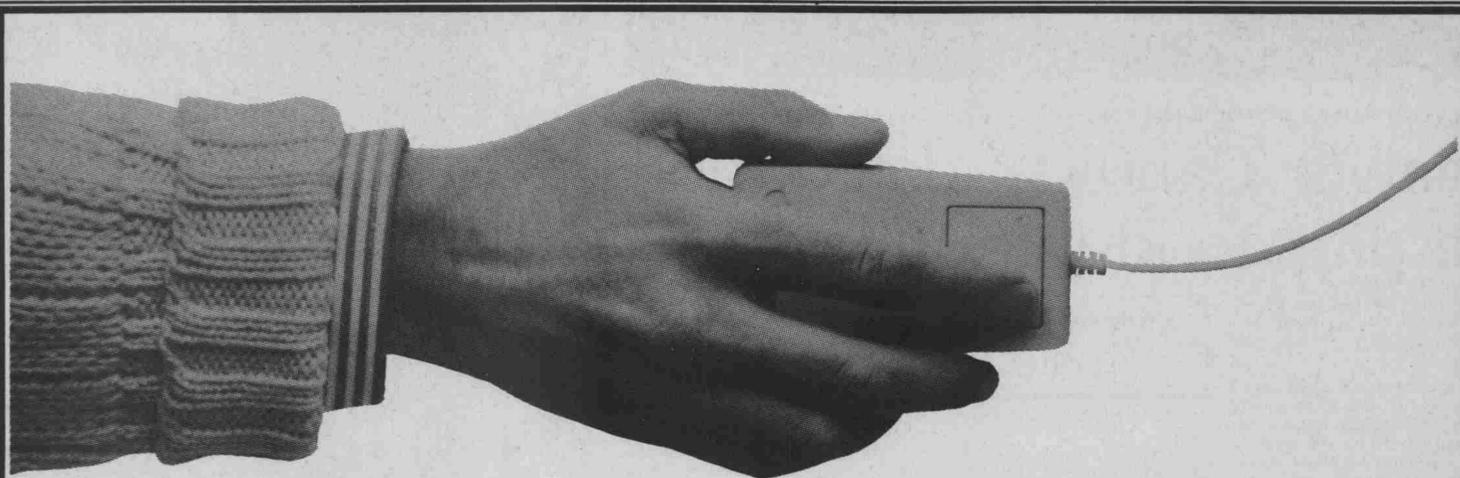
Students work with PRC during the entire three years of their training, progressing from understudy all the way to major roles.

The unique relationship between PRC and the drama department's program has been cited as an outstanding example of such interaction and a potential model for other programs and companies, Hammond said.

The NEA commissioned a paper to address the need for interaction between acting students and professional actors.

"UNC's students get to work side-by-side with major artists who are themselves grappling with difficult material, taking creative risks and ultimately growing," Hammond said.

The training program is competitive, he added. More than 100 students apply each year, but only about eight are admitted.



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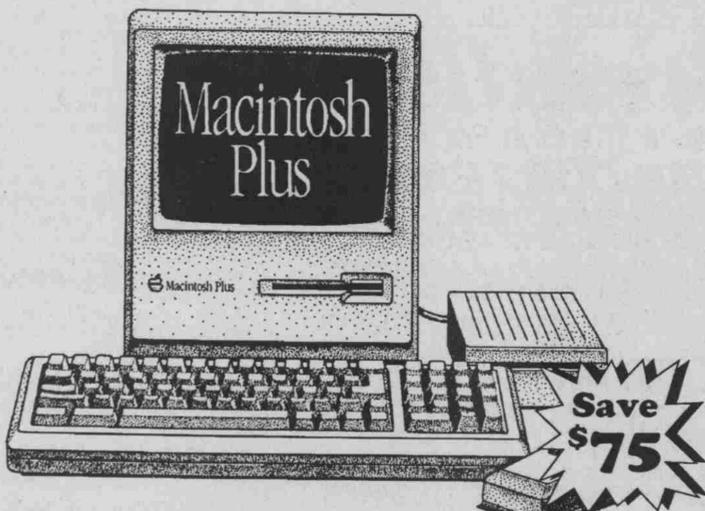
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