

Chapel Hill modeling agency exposes local talent

By LEIGH ANN MCDONALD
Features Editor

When Deborah Johnson advertised in the Village Advocate for people to model her line of lingerie, she had no idea one ad would cause a turning point in her life.

"Selling lingerie wasn't too big of a success — I was wondering how I could attract a larger market," Johnson says. "I thought I'd get two or three calls. We received over 100 calls."

Realizing there was a need for someone to represent Chapel Hill's aspiring models, Johnson and her partner Rick Fearrington used their private funds to open Exposure Plus, the town's only modeling agency, in January.

Located at 106 Henderson St., the agency is small, but every bit of space is used to its potential. "The rent's twice as high as our house at home," Fearrington says. The partners each have an office, and there is a room where photographers can make pictures of the models.

And with the closest modeling agency found in Raleigh, Exposure Plus doesn't have too much competition to put it out of business. Johnson's and Fearrington's inexperience could be a downfall, but they do have New York model Pamela Purdy as a consultant. "She is doing a lot of leg work for us," Johnson

says, and is "making sure that our policies coincide with agencies in New York."

One aspect in which Exposure Plus differs from many agencies is how it chooses the models. "We take anyone who's interested," Johnson says. "It's always better for the person who has the perfect face or body. But we are finding that merchants and designers are into new trends. There is a market for full-sized women."

"We feel it isn't how you look — it's your attitude. If you want to be an actress or a model, we will help place you."

Fearrington agrees. "The only qualities we are looking for are mental. The people must have the desire first — they come in knowing they want to do this."

Eleven people with this desire have paid the \$100 fee to sign with the agency. Mostly college students, some — like UNC sophomore Katherine Ouderkirk — have modeled in the past and still want to model during their spare time.

Ouderkirk, who has modeled in Atlanta and New York since she was five years old, gained more recognition through Exposure Plus. She won \$200 and a plane ticket to the regional competition in the English Leather Calendar Girl Contest.

"Debby (Johnson) found out about it for me," Ouderkirk says. "It was a contest in Greensboro at the

World of Wheels car show. We were judged on personality, poise and figure." She could be chosen to go to the national competition next January where the final 12 women are chosen to be on the calendar.

Model Stephanie Mason, a Chapel Hill Senior High School senior, says she doesn't expect a lot of jobs to come through the agency until this summer. "We are just now getting our portfolio ready," she says. But the agency will be using its models for a fashion show at a nightclub in Greensboro.

"At least by summer we'll be in full force," Johnson says. "We're looking to handle assignments in print work, runways, and we are in contact with movie casting agencies." The agency is now on the North Carolina Film Director's list, and some of the models recently auditioned for the movie "The Handmaid's Tale."

"We are eventually hoping to have the casting directors and agencies get in touch with us first," Johnson says.

So will Chapel Hill's only modeling agency succeed?

"We're confident, 100 percent, that we'll make it," Fearrington says. "The thought is always there of losing it. But we deal in positives — I despise individuals who deal in terms of 'can't' and 'won't.'"

"It's a dream come true to have a business near Franklin Street."



Area models gain modeling experience through their local agency, Exposure Plus

Orchestra, soloists to perform at music department benefit

By JESSICA YATES
Staff Writer

The 18th annual benefit concert for the UNC Department of Music will be held at 8 p.m. in Hill Hall auditorium. Winners of a student concerto soloist competition and the UNC Symphony Orchestra will be featured in the program.

Proceeds from the benefit will go to the department's music scholarship fund for talented students. Tonu Kalam, an associate professor of

music and the conductor of the UNC Symphony Orchestra, said: "There will be lots of variety, with many different styles, periods and nationalities being represented in the music. It's a well-rounded picture of what we can produce."

The soloists were chosen from a concerto competition held in December. Robin Gorham, Michael Nicholson, Mark Simonsen and Ann Waldhart were the winners of the contest, which is open to students

enrolled at UNC and taking music lessons through the music department. According to Kalam, freshmen, sophomores and first-year graduate students are usually not eligible to enter. All musicians must arrange for their teachers to sponsor them. Three music instructors from areas outside the Chapel Hill community judged the 15 students who participated this year.

The UNC Symphony Orchestra will perform the opening and final

pieces in the program which include Mozart's Overture to "La Clamenza di Tito" and Walton's Spitfire Prelude and Fugue. The remaining four works, which are the same pieces the students used in the competition, will be performed by the student soloists with the orchestra accompanying them.

Nicholson will sing "Salut! Demure Chaste et Pure" from Faust, and Beethoven's Concerto No. 1 in C major will be played by Waldhart.

Following intermission, Simonsen will perform Milhaud's Concerto for Percussion and Small Orchestra, and Gorham will play Strauss' Concerto No. 1 in E-flat major.

The winners of the soloist contest have a diverse range of musical specialties, as well as different career plans. Gorham, a junior from California, Md., will play the French horn in Strauss' concerto. Although she has been playing the horn for nine years, she is a business major and plans to work in a related field after graduation.

Gorham started playing the piano when she was six years old, and later picked up the flute. In high school, she took up the French horn to play in the school band. "It was fun," she said. "Just something to do."

Nicholson, a senior from Charlotte, will sing an aria by Faust. Nicholson is a tenor who has a double major in music and economics and hopes to go to a graduate school in music. "I really want to get involved in opera," he said.

And he seems to be well on his way, with a list of summer musical experiences to his credit, including Musical Theater at the Governor's Inn, and for this summer, involvement in the opera apprentice program of "Chautauqua."

Simonsen, a senior from Raleigh, will perform Milhaud's concerto using various percussion instruments, including drums, tympani, cymbals, gongs and other hand instruments. He will graduate with a bachelor's degree of music in performance and plans to take a year off to free-lance in music. He is also considering a career in music ministry.

As president of the Undergraduate Music Student Forum, Simonsen described the funding of the music program as being "a dire situation." However, he expressed enthusiasm about being part of the concert,

saying: "I'm looking forward to it. This is the kind of opportunity that doesn't happen very often for a musician."

Beethoven's piece is being performed by Waldhart, a junior from Lexington, Ky. A piano player for 11 years, Waldhart hopes to teach piano at a university someday. She is also going to graduate with a bachelor's degree of music in performance. Although she was a winner in the soloist competition, she prefers to perform in a group. "I like playing ensemble," she said. "I find it really fulfilling to work with other people musically to get a different perspective on things."

The UNC Symphony Orchestra will accompany all the soloists in the benefit concert. The musicians include undergraduate music majors, graduate students getting their master's degree in music, some non-majors and even some people from the community. "The orchestra is open to pretty much anyone who is interested in it and who can cut the repertoire," Kalam said. He is encouraging people to come and support the orchestra, the students and the department as a whole. "It certainly is a worthy cause," he said.

Another fund raiser is scheduled in April to benefit the choral program at UNC. Kalam said it will be a similar event where the admissions charge goes to the department's scholarship fund.

The benefit concert for the UNC Department of Music will be Feb. 21 at 8 p.m. in Hill Hall auditorium. Tickets are \$10 for the public and \$5 for students and senior citizens. If anyone would like to buy an advance ticket for the April benefit as well, the additional ticket is \$5 for the public and \$2 for students and senior citizens. Tickets are available from the department and at the door, or by calling (919) 962-1039.

Protect your eyes, image with sunglasses

By CRAIG ALLEN
Staff Writer

Whatever your spring break plans — sunning on a Florida beach or skiing down the slopes at Vail — experts advise remembering to wear your sunglasses. You'll not only make a fashion statement, but your eyes will be protected from the harmful rays of the sun.

Ultraviolet light (UV) can be a problem for people who are exposed to sunlight for extended periods of time. According to Dr. Barry Adler, a Chapel Hill optometrist, evidence indicates that many hours of exposure to the sun can harm the eyes, possibly causing cataracts and macular degeneration, a degeneration of the retina.

And of course, students buy sunglasses purely for fashion reasons. But many experts warn against cheap sunglasses, recommending that customers should check carefully before buying them to be sure they are getting the best protection. "The attitude is that if you get dark lenses that do not filter the effects (of UV light), it can be even worse," Adler said. The dark lenses without UV filtering can cause the pupils to open further to absorb more light, a natural function of the eye.

To counteract this problem, people can limit their time outdoors or wear sunglasses that filter UV light. Several companies make glasses that filter the UV light, Adler said.

"Sunglasses like Bolle, Vuarnet, Ray-Ban all have good screening, but they're not the only ones," Adler said.

These safe sunglasses are part of the popular trend too. Robert Durham of Optical Illusions said he sold mostly Ray-Bans and Vuarnets to students, along with Bolle and Oakley, a brand popular on the West Coast. He recommended these brands because they offer 100 percent protection from UV light, while offering a style that interests students.

"Students are more interested in the styling," Durham said. "But they know they're getting the protection."

David Lane of University Opticians recommended Ray-Bans and Vuarnets to customers because the two companies produce quality sunglasses.

"It's the trend, but it's a justifiable trend," Lane said. "It's not just to look good — it's also functional."

For skiers, Lane recommended Vuarnet sunglasses because the company makes a special lens just for skiing called Ski Lynx. Lane said these lenses had a special coating to block the highly intense light of higher altitudes.

Sunbathers should not forget to wear sunglasses even though they can leave rings around their eyes, Lane said. Those who refuse the protection should remove themselves from the sun, he said.

Durham said students interested in sunglasses for driving should check Serengeti or Ray-Ban because both companies make lenses called "Driver." However, these glasses are not really classified as sunglasses because they have an amber-colored lens to compensate for many different driving situations.



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Many styles of sunglasses are available to consumers

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