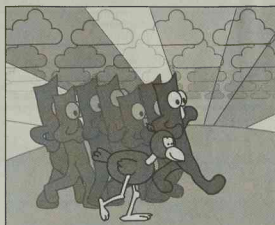


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UNCA takes top awards at Theater Olympics

Becky Reese
News Reporter

The UNCA chapter of the United States Institute of Theater Technology (USITT) recently claimed top awards at the Theater Technology Olympics, including the national title.

"The Tech Olympics are more of a social event where all the undergraduates get together at the conference than [a competition], but it's still important because we're the best," said Lachlen Smith, a sophomore design theatre major. "It's a fun thing, too."

The Theater Olympics test the skills of students involved in theater production and design. Skills include prop shifts, lighting, sound, stage plug wiring and knot tying. Currently, time determines who wins events. Judges penalize technicians who make mistakes by adding more time added to the technician's total time.

"If you're doing [a skill] during a practical application, like during a show, in the event you make too much noise, that would be disturbing to the audience members and they'll add on five seconds to your time," said Jenny Prather, a senior theatre major.

"If you drop something or something's not in the right place, they'll add time to your score. That's basically true of all events. If you don't do something right, or if there's a safety consideration that you didn't take into account, a lot of times they'll add to your score." However, the events have begun to take a turn towards creativity as well. Next year, new events may be added.

"They're talking about having different events with a little more design aspect to it or trouble shooting



COURTESY OF ROBERT BOWEN

Two teams from the UNCA chapter of the United States Institute of Theater Technology (USITT) participated in the Theater Technology Olympics. The teams took the top awards and honors.

aspect to it, which will be really nice," said Johannes Pikel, a junior technical theatre major.

"The events now are all based on time, and that's the only thing they're really judged by," said Smith. "That's why it's changing, because they don't feel it's the best way to judge events like that because they feel like safety is such an important issue."

The Tech Olympics are not simply a competition. The event also gives students a chance to learn new

skills they may not have learned otherwise.

"If you don't know how to tie all the knots that they ask you to, you can learn from other people there try out the event," said Pikel. "It's also a learning experience. There is a practical application into what you will be doing for the rest of your life."

The Tech Olympics are part of the USITT national convention, which students and professionals from all over the nation attend.



COURTESY OF ROBERT BOWEN

Lachlen Smith and Jenny Prather compete in the lighting competition at the Theater Olympics. Smith and Prather's team went on to win both first place and the national title.

"You don't do it for the glory or the adoration of it because most of the time the audiences are totally unaware of all the work that goes into putting up a show."

Jenny Prather,
senior theatre major

UNCA has the oldest chapter in the nation.

"I'm not sure how many teams [were there]," said Smith. "There were probably about 10 schools though, and they had various teams. We had two teams from our school."

Several UNCA theater students took top honors at this year's Tech Olympics. UNCA sent two teams to the event.

The first team, consisting of Jenny Bowen, Jessica Kammerud, Johannes Pikel, Jenny Prather and

Lachlen Smith, took first place and the national title, according to the UNCA Web site.

The second team won second place at the event. This team included Don Engle, Mike Henning, Dennis Woods and Kate Yuhus.

Individual awards were also given. Bowen won the knot tying competition for the fourth consecutive year, according to the UNCA Web site.

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U.S. talks with North Korea uncertain

Laurea Logeman
News Reporter

North Korea withdrew from the Global Arms Control Treaty after making the statement that the war with Iraq demonstrated the need for a strong military defense against the United States Apr. 10.

United Nations Security Council members expressed their worry over the tension between North Korea and the U.S. Apr. 9. However, the U.N. did not condemn North Korea for leaving the treaty, according to *The Associated Press*.

North Korea claims that following the U.S. plan for disarmament would provide the U.S. with the perfect opportunity to invade, according to *The Associated Press*.

"The Iraqi war launched by the U.S. pre-emptive attack clearly proves that a war can be prevented and the security of the country and the nation can be ensured only when one has physical deterrent force," said KCNA, a North Korea news agency, according to *The Associated Press*.

"I'd say it seems like a military move," said Nathan Batson, a sophomore multimedia arts and science major. "Cutting off political ties and building ranged weapons doesn't seem like a country that wants to talk."

Washington says it seeks a peaceful resolution with North Korea, but military force is not out of the question, according to *The Associated Press*.

Although North Korea has not claimed to have nuclear weapons, U.S. officials say that it has already developed one or two atomic bombs, according to *The Associated Press*.

"In today's state of world affairs where every country is in fear for its sovereignty, having nuclear weapons can greatly increase the stability of your regime," said Josh Salpeter, an undeclared freshman. "The ability of countries to keep countries without nuclear weapons from having nuclear weapons of their own increases their security."

"With the success of the war in Iraq, many people think that the U.S. might turn their attention to North Korea and start another war."

"I think that if Iraq was attacked because of their nuclear weapons then there is no reason why North Korea would be allowed to have theirs," said Zefko Marata, a sophomore multimedia arts and science major and international student from Croatia.

Adnan Abbasi, another international student from Pakistan, had a differing view.

"I don't think it's worth going to war for," said Abbasi.

North Korea asked South Korea for high-level talks, making a conciliatory gesture, Apr. 19. A Pyongyang official sent a message through KCNA saying that the two Koreas "need to resourcefully settle the issue of inter-Korean relations by the nation itself through peaceful cooperation," according to *The Associated Press*.

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Multimedia students receive awards

Kristen Ruggeri
News Reporter

UNCA's multimedia arts and science program is growing in popularity and also gaining recognition as three students earned top awards in the Carolina's premier Electronic Media Festival.

"Multimedia arts and science (MMAS) is a good challenge and a chance to learn a lot of different programs," said Tabitha Bailey, a senior MMAS major and winner of the Game Design: General category. The Carolina's Electronic Media Festival (EMF), held in Charlotte last month, is an electronic media competition accepting entries of work from colleges/students in North Carolina and South Carolina.

The EMF Festival strives to recognize the top electronic media design students, according to the UNCA Web site.

"I submitted a 30-second, 3-D animated movie using MAYA," said

Erik Perkins, a junior MMAS major and winner of the Best of Show and Animated Story/Narrative categories. "It was probably the thing I've worked the hardest on since I've been at school here."

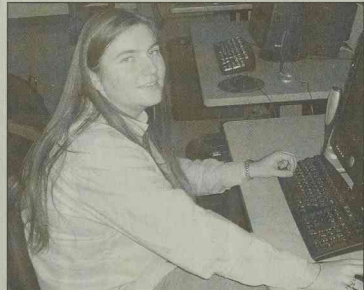
From 130 entries submitted, UNCA took home four top awards including first place honors in the categories: Best of Show, Animated Story/Narrative, Digital Video: Long and Game Design: General, according to the UNCA Web site.

"UNCA won in four of the 12 categories, and no other school that entered in the festival accomplished that," said Nick Owens, a senior MMAS major and first place winner in the Digital Video: Long category.

The EM Festival was open to anyone with an interest in electronic media, according to the UNCA Web site.

"The contestants ranged from art students to computer science students. It was a nice spread," said Owens.

UNCA is one of the first undergraduate schools to offer a multi-



MAX TAINTOR/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Tabitha Bailey, a senior multimedia arts and science student, won the game design: general category at the EM festival.

media major, according to David Bourne, a MMAS lecturer.

"Most schools that are doing the things we are doing don't call it

multimedia," said Bourne. "We were one of the first in the country at the undergraduate level to have a multimedia department that was

specifically started for the discipline."

Other schools usually have the same sort of program in their art or computer science departments, according to Bourne.

When first created in 1998, the department expected to have only 56 majors within the first four to five years, according to Mary Anna LaFratta, director of MMAS in an e-mail.

"Different departments decided we could use the strong liberal arts basis of UNCA to create an interdisciplinary department that would use computers to make interactive media and video animation," said Bourne.

The major's growing popularity has proved the initial estimates wrong.

As of fall 2002, 88 students had declared MMAS as their major, according to LaFratta.

This year the major is becoming one of the largest majors at UNCA, according to Bourne.

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