

# ENTERTAINMENT



Sean Sebastian Sharpe, an ECSU senior, majoring in Music and the Related Arts, gave his voice recital Tuesday, April 18, 1989, in the Moore Hall Auditorium. The recital was part of Sharpe's graduation requirement. The Beaufort, South Carolina native hopes to obtain a Master's degree in Vocal Performance/Music Education. Sharpe performed pieces from classicists Handel and Mozart, as well as American favorites from Hammerstein and Kern. Sharpe currently studies under the direction of Professor Billy C. Hines, Director of Chorale Activities here at ECSU.

## ECSU's Spring Concert Choir Tour gives students chance to learn

By Florestine Jones and Kimberly Robinson

The Elizabeth City State University Concert Choir toured seven states during its Spring Concert Tour 1989, March 10 through March 20.

"The tour was truly a wonderful experience," said Travis Manuel, a first tenor in the choir. "This year everyone seemed to be one big family."

Manuel said he had the most fun in Connecticut, where the choir sang for high school students. "Many of them asked how they might go about being admitted to ECSU," he added.

Under the direction of Choir Director Billy C. Hines, the University Choir has performed throughout the eastern United States and the Bahamas. Former North Carolina Governor James B. Hunt has said ECSU "has the best university choral group in America."

Hines said the annual spring tour reaps many benefits for the University.

"The tour communicates to the public the high quality of music performed," said Hines. "It also gives students the opportunity to learn and perform some of the finest music, from some of the finest composers. Students also get a lot of exposure and a chance to visit cities and learn how people in other cities and states live."

Hines said ECSU students who sing in the University Choir are "Am-

bassadors of the University."

Although students enjoy the tour, they admit that there is a lot of hard work involved in the tour's success.

"In order to perform well, there has to be several hours of hard work to reach excellence," said first soprano Amanda Massenburg. "Singing in the choir has helped my voice develop and become stronger."

Massenburg, a choir member for four years, serves as president of the University Choir.

"The tour was a lot of fun and an experience," said Nicholas Allen, who sings bass. "It gives us a chance to meet new people and it helps in gaining knowledge from different environments."

The choir's performances consisted of four separate parts. Music performed during the first part included, "All the Earth Sing Unto the Lord" by Lena J. Molin, "The Day of Judgement" by A. Arkhaanelsly, "Sing Unto God" by G.F. Handel, "As By the Streams of Babylon" arranged by R. Nathaniel Dett, solo by Alvera Gunn, and "Glorious Everlasting" by M. Thomas Cousins.

The second part consisted of "Gossip, Gossip" by Betty H. Jones and Jester Hairston, "Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy," arranged by Frank McTis and performed by the Female Ensemble, and "Misty" arranged by Clay Warnick and performed by the Male Ensemble.

The third part consisted of Mozart's

"Madamina il catalogo e questo (Don Giovanni), performed by Sean S. Sharpe.

The fourth part consisted of "Have You Heard About Jesus?" by Robert Winder. Amanda Massenburg was the soloist, and Kevin Alston, the pianist. The choir also performed, "I Want to Die Easy," soloist Alvera Gunn, "Talk About a Child" arranged by Howard A. Roberts, "Daniel, Daniel Servant of the Lord," soloists Travis Manuel and Sean Sharpe, and "In Bright Mansions Above" arranged by Roland Carter.

The choir performed at such diverse places as Carver Memorial Presbyterian church in Newport News, Va., John Wesley A.M.E. Zion church in Washington, D.C., and St. Catherine's A.M.E. Zion Church in New Rochelle, N.Y.

Members of the choir are Uchenna Bulliner, Alvera Gunn, Florestine Jones, Amanda Massenburg, Karen Moore, Phyllis Price, Kimberly Robinson, Shana Robinson, Cathy Thomas, Michelle Watts, Amanda Freeman, Jimmie Knight, Sylvia Purvis, Sarita Sawyer, Carol Scott, Tammy Solomon, Nichele Watson, Kevin Alston, Adrian Arceneaux, James Hardy II, Christopher Jones, Kenneth Jones, Lamont Lawrence, Darian Little, Travis Manuel, Nicholas Allen, Ronald Boone, Scott Byers, Tony Dawson, Edmund Roush, Sean Sharpe, Patrick Sullivan and Charlie Tyson.

## The Players' one-act workshops: a good training tool for students

By Lynne Chapman

Her palms are sweating as the young actress waits for her relaxation exercises to take effect. She can hear her heart pounding.

She wonders if the audience will be entertained: can I remember my lines? What happens if I fall on my face?

As she steps on stage, she puts her insecurities aside, knowing that the show must go on.

This sense of possible failure or triumph is "part of what the experimental workshop theater at ECSU is all about," according to ECSU Associate Professor Shawn Smith.

"The workshop is a valuable training tool," Smith continued. "It gives students the opportunity to take the theories on acting, directing and show production and put them into practice."

Smith, who teaches English and drama in the Department of Language, Literature and Communication, is Director of ECSU's University Players.

The One-Act Workshop is an annual Spring event, produced and directed by the advanced drama students. The students choose the plays they want to direct, hold auditions and cast their shows. Rehearsal schedules are submitted and approved by the student producer.

"The work is challenging; however, drama allows me to tap into different aspects of my inner self," explains Janis McDermott, student producer. "You go out on a limb, but the reward is seeing the immediate response of the audience."

A lot of intense planning and work goes into a performance that runs for two nights. The students are responsible for hiring technical crews that work backstage in the areas of costume, make-up, set design, lighting, sound and props.

Historically, the one-act play dates

back to the "Satyr" plays of Ancient Greece; the form is similar to the short story in literature.

Playwrights adapted the style to develop comic take-offs on the Greek tragedy. Used as "curtain raisers" and between-act entertainment in the 19th century the one-act has gained respect as a viable art form in recent decades because of the tight structure and evocative plot. A good example of the perfected one-act is "Riders to the Sea" by John Millington Synge.

The One-Act program performed by the University Players April 13 and 14 opened with "Ex-Miss Copper Queen on a Set of Pills" by Megan Terry. The play is about a former beauty queen on skid row and her interaction with two bag ladies who are happy with their simplistic existence.

"Although the play has some humorous dialogue, the tragedy of Copper Queen is very real," said Director Lynne Chapman. "Life on the streets is seldom funny."

"The Sandbox" by Edward Albee, next on the program, is a popular example of Theatre of the Absurd. The comedy uses the characters of Mommy, Daddy and Grandma to symbolically represent selfishness, loneliness and the effect of society over people.

According to Director Tom Williams, Albee uses many stage directions, so "the play almost directs itself." He added, "It was a challenge to find my own interpretation."

The opening for Act II, "I'll Be Home For Christmas" by Robert Anderson, was directed by Janis McDermott. The comedy, about a typical middle class white family in the 60's involves a couple's discussions about the sexual revolution and their children.

"Contributions" by Ted Shine followed and gave a glimpse of the black perspective in the 60's. The

grandmother and grandson make their contributions to the Civil Rights Movement, each in a unique way. The grandson participates in a sit-in and the climax of the story is reached when he realizes that his grandmother has been poisoning the white officials of the town with her homemade combread.

"The perspective of the play was important for the students of ECSU because it took the situation of black oppression and added a comedic twist," said Lisa Gregory, who directed "Contributions."

The final play, a mono-drama called "The Incarceration of Annie Brown" by Rebecca Ransom, featured Ursula McMillion as Annie. The plot centers around Annie's life in prison and the events that led to her incarceration.

"I wanted the character of Annie Brown to enhance or broaden the minds of the students," explained McMillion. "It hopefully inspired them to stay out of prison and not to jeopardize their position in society." Ursula added, "With or without a degree, a person can end up like Annie Brown."

According to Smith, audience attendance for the one-acts was small but appreciative, and the production was highly successful. Smith added that he feels the students learned from their experiences.

The Workshop Productions attract a number of freshmen and other inexperienced students who are curious about theatre, said Smith. He attributed this to the shortened length of rehearsal time and larger amount of minor roles.

"The one-acts allow novices to become involved because they are not as intimidated or afraid of audition," Smith said.

"The One-Acts are one of the most beneficial learning experiences ever afforded ECSU students," said McDermott.

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