

Arts

'The Gilded Age' delights Elon audience

By Yvonne Evans
News Editor

Although the roads were still covered with snow and ice from North Carolina's second major snow storm since December, The Acting Company presented *The Gilded Age* to a large crowd on Feb. 17 in Jordan Gym.

The company, based at the Kennedy Center in Washington, was to have performed in Whitley Auditorium but discovered earlier in the day that Whitley's stage was too small to accommodate the props for the performance.

The Gilded Age is a play from a novel by the same title, written by Mark Twain and Charles Dudley Warner. Directed by Mark Lamos, The Acting Com-

pany provided its Elon College with a truly entertaining evening.

The 14 actors and actresses portrayed the more than 60 characters in the play, often having to change clothes and characters within a few seconds.

Play review

We first saw the players as they appear on stage singing a melody entitled "Hard Times." The hard times to which the group were the years following the Civil War, when many people were trying to get rich quick; they were years of westward expansion, rapid industrial growth, reckless financial ventures and rampant political corruption.

We discovered Colonel Beriah Sellers, played wonderfully by

Phillip Goodwin, trying to convince the others to join him in Missouri in building a town called Napoleon. As he excitedly mapped out the town on a linen tablecloth, the others were captured by his enthusiasm and decided to join him in his brave venture.

The action shifted between three different story lines. While the Hawkins family planned to leave their home in Tennessee to go west, Senator Dillworthy and a lawyer discussed opening a Negro industrial school, which would suppress the free slaves while benefiting the senator's reputation and wallet.

Their discussion takes place at a performance of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, in which Eva pleaded with her father to free the slaves and help the poor. Eva's dying voice was weak compared to Dillworthy's booming voice, possibly symbolizing the death of humanity in the money-making schemes.

The stage was then easily converted to a Mississippi river boat

on which all those with hopes of a new future in Napoleon were traveling. It was on this boat that Laura May Hawkins and Major Charles Langhorne Gillette met and fall in love. As the two courted, the captain somehow got the boat in a race.

We saw the director's true charm during this scene as the characters swam for their lives after the boat crashed. The waves of water were really long sheets of cloth that were drawn across the stage.

The folks finally arrived at the sight of their new town and began to discuss construction plans, which included changing the course of the Columbus River so that it would flow past Napoleon.

Once the characters discovered that the money appropriated to them by the government had not arrived, they sent Harry, a Yale engineer with a sense of eventual greatness, to Washington to find out where the money was.

Twain and Warner have clearly depicted the political corrup-

tion of the time in Harry's discovery that the money was spent bribing congressmen to vote for the measure to allow them to build the town.

In the meantime, Laura had gone to Washington with her beloved, only to be abandoned by him for his wife. She sought shelter with the senator and finally became the society lady she always wanted to be. She was also very powerful because she owned the land on which Dillworthy intended to build his school.

A chance encounter with Major Gillette ruined the plans Laura had of becoming rich by selling her and her brother's land to Dillworthy, but came up with a scheme that will return her to society's favor. As she and Dillworthy were left reaching their respective goals, the other characters travelled off into the future, dreaming of bigger and better notions.

Arts shorts

Gallery Players Stage Cole Porter

The Gallery Players, Alamance County's community theater, will present *Anything Goes* by Cole Porter on Friday and Saturday at the Paramount Theater in Burlington. The musical comedy will also be presented March 1, 6, 7, 8, 13, 14 and 15. All Friday and Saturday productions begin at 8:15 p.m. The Sunday matinees will begin at 2:15 p.m.

Anything Goes takes place aboard a luxury oceanliner, the S.S. American, bound for England. On board are a famed female evangelist and a celebrated gambler who has become "public enemy No. 13." During the voyage, these two join forces to help a young friend win the woman he loves. This amusing story is wrapped about a magical score by Porter which includes "Friendship," "I Get A Kick Out of You," "Anything Goes," "Let's Misbehave," and "Blow, Gabriel, Blow."

The director of this performance, Joan Pearlman, has a long history of community theater in the Triad area.

Borealis Wind Quintet To Perform

The Borealis Wind Quintet, a nationally acclaimed chamber music group, will perform in Whitley Auditorium on March 3 at 8 p.m. Admission is \$5 or college identification. The event is sponsored by the Elon College Lyceum.

Formed in 1976 at the Juilliard School of Music, the quintet features Richard Price, horn; Kathryn Taylor, clarinet; Katherine Fink, flute; Michael Finn, bassoon; and Tamar Beach Wells, oboe. Their performance will include a selection of woodwind classics from well-known symphonies and operas in addition to modern works, including some specially commissioned by the performers.

Goter To Present Carnegie Program Here

Dr. Arlene Goter, assistant professor of music at Elon, will present a preview of her upcoming Carnegie Hall recital at 8 p.m. Sunday in Whitley Auditorium. The performance is free and open to the public.

The concert will include a Bach French suite, a Beethoven sonata, three Debussy etudes and a Prokofiev suite. The Carnegie Hall performance, Goter's New York debut, is scheduled for March 26.

The Elon recital is one of five that Goter will play in North Carolina in the weeks before the Carnegie date.

'Platoon' gives realistic view of horrors of Vietnam warfare

By Carrie Town
Arts Editor

As I stood in line to see *Platoon*, I noticed people from the previous screening slowly leaving the theater. They were all strangely silent. Even the children were quiet.

In contrast, the people in my line were laughing and munching on popcorn. We were all waiting to see the movie which recently collected eight Academy Award nominations, including Best Picture.

We soon found out what had so obviously shaken those at the earlier showing.

Movie review

The first scene of *Platoon* showed the clean shaven, freshly pressed Army recruits stepping from their airplane.

On one side, the men see two men loading body bags onto an airplane. On the other side, the men see a group of combat veterans walking toward the same plane on their way home.

These troops, with hollowed-out faces and torn clothing, look at the new recruits with distaste. One black soldier yells sarcastically to the recruits, "Ya'll gonna love Nam."

The veterans have come to resent new, untested recruits because newcomers' blunders in battle have

often resulted in the deaths of many American soldiers.

The story is told through the eyes of Chris (played by Charlie Sheen), a college student who dropped out of school to fight in Vietnam. He quickly realizes that he made a mistake.

The men in his platoon do not bother to learn his name because they have seen new men die quickly and because they consider newcomers bad luck. The rookies are too green for jungle fighting and, most of the time, they freeze up in combat.

Chris is told in his first week that if he is lucky he will die within two weeks and save himself a lot of suffering.

Platoon showed the U.S. soldiers with no direction and no reason to fight. One man said, "I knew why I was here in 1965, but in '67, I don't know any more."

Platoon shows the U.S. soldiers as drug-using, destructive rapists. Director Oliver Stone, himself a Vietnam vet, uses details that are so graphic that a veteran beside me left in the middle because the movie brought back too many unpleasant memories.

Platoon ends with a scene of an airlift of wounded while Chris' voice-over narration asks people to learn from what they have just seen and to realize that war is not the only answer to solve the world's problems.