

The Hilltop



Mars Hill, N. C. 28754

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M.H.C. Announces "Culturefest" 1978-'79

Mars Hill College has announced a series of ten special lectures, concerts, and theatrical presentations sponsored by the school's Visiting Artists and Lecturers Committee.

The committee moved two years ago to upgrade the quality of special events at Mars Hill and one of the ways was to charge a token admissions price to each event. This amount, coupled with the monies allocated from the overall college budget, allowed the committee to bring several outstanding lecturers and performers to the college instead of only one or two per year. "Culturefest," the title of this year's series continues that practice with a charge of between \$1 and \$2 for most events. A special season pass to all 10 performances is also available.

The series will start September with a concert by Doc Watson, mountain music's living legend. The Tuesday

concert with the blind musicians will be held in Moore Auditorium, with a curtain time of 8 p.m. as will all of the events during the series.

The second presentation will be one week later on September 19, and will feature "Way of Action," a theatrical experience of the martial arts. This unusual program is a choreographed performance of the martial arts of Kendo, hand and foot fighting, sword, chain, stick, and knife fighting combined with music from both East and West.

There will be two events in October. The first, on Tuesday, October 3, will be reknown magician Kramer and Company. Regarded by his peers as one of America's top illusionists, Kramer and Company's show features a flowing multisensory series of spectacular illusions. Also in October will be a concert by the Porgy and Bess Singers, who will present concert staged scenes

from George Gershwin's folk opera as well as other great musicals. This performance will be held on Thursday, October 26.

The last event of 1978 will be the North Carolina Dance Theatre production on November 8. The company of 15 talented performers will present their repertoire of classical and contemporary ballet as well as modern works.

On February 5, 1979, The National Opera Company, a troupe of 12 multi-talented artists, will perform Puccini's comedic opera, "La Boheme." This poignant love story of carefree students in Paris of 1830 will be performed in English. On Thursday, February 19, The Nation Theatre Company will be on campus to present a musical adaptation of Mark Twain's "Tom Sawyer."

One production is planned for March when the Tucson Boys Choir will perform on Tuesday, March 20. Known internationally as the "ambassadors in

blue jeans," this company of youngsters performs an assortment of classics, carols, folk songs, Mexican novelties, and flavorful westerns.

The final two presentations will be featured in April. On Tuesday, April 10, ABC White House correspondent Tom Jarriel will be on campus. Georgia-born and Texas-educated, Jarriel joined ABC as a correspondent with the Atlanta bureau in 1965. His coverage of the civil rights movement earned him national distinction and the White House job in 1969. He was one of the reporters who accompanied then-president Nixon on the historic trips to China and Russia. His reputation is that of one of the most knowledgeable national political reporters/commentators.

The final event of the series will be a film festival featuring foreign directors and the films they made specifically for the American market on April 24, 25, and 26.

Coming In Concert . . . Doc Watson

Fabled blind musician Doc Watson will be in concert on Tuesday evening, September 12, beginning at 8 p.m. in Moore Auditorium. "Patchwork Quilt," an old-time string band will also perform. The concert is the first of ten during the year that is sponsored by the college's Visiting Artists and Lecturers Committee under the title "Culturefest."

Arthel Watson - he picked up the nickname "Doc" when he was 19 - was born in the Stoney Fork section of Watauga County in 1923. Blind since birth, he was educated at the State School for the Blind in Raleigh.

Like so many other mountain musicians, he came from a family of accomplished musicians. His mother was well known in the area as a ballad singer, while his father picked a banjo and also sang.

When he was 29, Watson's music became a paying proposition. Jack Williams of Johnson City, Tenn., chose Doc to play guitar - an electric guitar - in the band Williams was putting together. The two worked together for eight

years, playing at VFW dances and the like until 1960, when Doc was "discovered" by folklorist Ralph Rinzler.

The 1960s saw folk music undergo a popular revival, and Doc became much in demand. His warm personality and genuine, unflinching honesty coupled with an incredibly fluid picking style kept his name prominent even as the folk movement waned and rock resurged.

Watson's followers also credit him with single-handedly elevating the flat-top guitar from the role of rhythm and background to the level of a lead instrument. Recently, rock stars have credited Watson on their albums with "influence and inspiration." This wide range of acceptance, his warm understated personality, and his virtuosity have led one critic to call the blind guitarist "a legend, and it's still his own time."

Tickets for the concert will be \$1.00 at the door. A season pass to all ten events may be purchased for \$15.00. For further information call Robert Kramer, chairman of the Visiting Artists and Lecturers Committee at 689-1114.



Pure, old fashioned, two-handed guitar player - Doc Watson