

Arts/Features

Physicists parallels modern physics and Eastern mysticisms

By Buddy Ritchie
 McEniry 147 was packed Thursday night, Nov. 16, at 8 p.m. as Dr. Fritjof Capra of the University of California presented a talk on the parallels between modern physics and Eastern mysticism. Speaking to an audience composed of a wide variety of disciplines, the Czech-born physicist introduced himself by admitting a previous ignorance of the existence of Charlotte, N.C.; he did, however, confess a certain happy anticipation of his visit, owing to his once having a girlfriend of the same name.

Capra launched into his talk by presenting a slide of the *tao* (pronounced *dow*), the oriental symbol of the complementarity existing between the *yin* (intuition) and the *yang* (rationale). Capra extended this parity to Western rationalism and Eastern mysticism, and traced the divergence of the two from the Greek introduction of an atomic model of matter. This theory of inert fundamental particles acted

on by seemingly divine forces effectively divorced mind from body, and thus set East and West on separate courses.

Capra then explained how he saw the two at least partially rejoined in the contributions of quantum mechanics to modern particle physics. It is one of the results of quantum physics that no bound system (from an atom to a car) can have exactly zero energy; in its least energetic state, it will still have a very small, but nonzero, energy. Thus, the particles composing matter are constantly in motion, creating, Capra said, a Cosmic dance comparable to that of the Hindu goddess *Shiva*.

At the end of his hour-long talk, Capra fielded several interesting questions from the audience:

Q: Can time pass faster than the speed of light?

A: Capra explained how one could not speak of the rate of time passage in terms of speed (distance/time).

Q: What does all this have to do with heaven and hell?

A: Nothing (eliciting much applause from the audience).

Q: What is your opinion of nuclear energy?

A: Capra expressed opposition, based on risks, economics and primarily, his fear it would, in the end, be a hindrance to man's technological advancement.

After the talk, there was general approval of the program. At least one UNCC physics professor, however, was disappointed, referring to Capra's treatment as "Pop physics," and "California flotsam."

Capra is the author of the book *The Tao of Physics*, and is currently working on a second book along the same lines. He is a specialist at the University of California in *bootstrap theory*, which attempts to explain the structure of matter without the use of fundamental particles.



(photo by Mike Harrison)
 UNCC Symphony, conducted by Robert Glazer, in a recent campus appearance.

Symphony: fresh diversion

By Luann Whitley
 Robert Glazer conducted the UNCC Symphony Nov. 21 at 8:15 p.m. in the Rowe Recital Hall. Richard Kennedy, a tenor and UNCC voice instructor, was featured. He performed "Delia" by Thomas Arne.

This was a special moment for the orchestra because it was performing the "Dramatic Overture," by Karl Kroeger. A resident of Winston-Salem, Kroeger is a nationally known composer and is director of the Moravian

Music Foundation of Winston-Salem. Kroeger was present at the concert.

The symphony did produce a fresh diversion from the lull of the changing season with a Christmas medley and works from Ground and Schubert.

The UNCC Symphony is open to the community and is used as a vehicle to give the students and faculty an opportunity to perform.

The orchestra's concert was open to the public with no admission charge.

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