

# Student theater groups thrive on campus

BY BENNETT CAMPBELL  
ASSISTANT ARTS EDITOR

After arriving at UNC as a freshman in 2005, it didn't take long for William Reid to find his way into the University's theater scene.

"I actually heard about Pauper Players during CTOPS," Reid, a junior, said. "I happened to run into an orientation leader who told me if I was interested in musical theater I should check it out."

Reid is now an administrator on Pauper Players' executive board and has been involved in several productions.

He emphasized the diversity of the shows performed at UNC and of the people involved in their productions.

"They were auditioning for 'Assassins' by Stephen Sondheim at the time I got involved," Reid said. "But there are so many different styles represented by the different theaters," Reid said.

Other popular theater organizations on campus include Lab! Theatre and Company Carolina, which have put on shows in the past few years ranging from Samuel Beckett's "Waiting for Godot" to "Hedwig and the Angry Inch."

Bridget Russell, a junior, has been involved with both Lab! and Pauper Players and agreed that dif-

ferences in the groups' styles exist but don't prevent collaboration.

"There's a definite divide between where each organization specializes, but it's interesting to see how many crossovers there are," Russell said.

She added that Pauper Players focuses solely on musicals, while groups like Lab! are more varied in the type of productions they put on.

But regardless of which group students get involved in, Reid said opportunities are available for any student, regardless of their majors or whether or not they want to pursue theater after college.

"A lot of our principal performers haven't been theater majors," Reid said. "It's always a huge spectrum of people. And it's interesting that this year, we do have a lot of drama majors, which is unusual."

And throughout the year Reid said students have a chance to work on any aspect of the groups' productions.

"Even if they're not performers, people can still do integral work and be involved," he said. "My sophomore year I did publicity for the executive board. There are so many options for students."

And it appears those options will continue to grow.

"We just added (a) fourth production this year," Reid said. "Things are definitely expanding, despite our campus's lack of rehearsal space."

Space has been an issue for these groups and others at UNC, particularly with the closing of Historic Playmakers Theatre.

But other on-campus venues, such as Elizabeth Price Kenan Theatre, Paul Green Theatre, the Cabaret in the Student Union and the Forest Theatre all housed student productions last year.

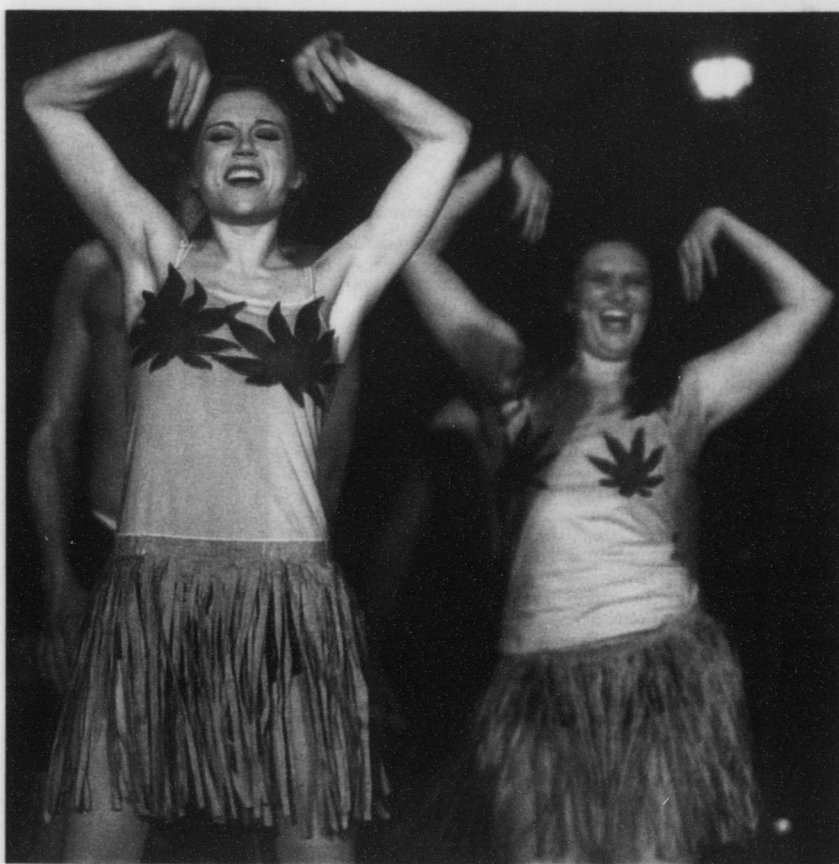
And while the various groups, performance schedules and locations can be daunting, Reid said the best way to find out how to take advantage of all the different options is to keep an eye open at the beginning of the year and especially to check online.

"The best place is up on the Web site," Reid said. "It has all the e-mail addresses for everyone on the executive board."

Reid said the groups try to do their part to reach out to students.

"One of the great things is that so many people are really passionate about theater here and would love to talk about it," he said. "We all try to be as out there as possible."

Contact the Arts Editor at [artsdesk@unc.edu](mailto:artsdesk@unc.edu).



Jocelyn Roux and Samantha Shucavage dance in "The Orgy" in a rehearsal for Company Carolina's "Reefer Madness" in April at UNC's Forest Theatre. Company Carolina puts on musicals and plays throughout the year.

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