

On shock and Shakespeare

By LAURA ELLIOTT
Arts Editor

Right now I am the personification of "culture shock." The third weekend of June, I was in Spivey's Corner enjoying the annual hollerin' contest. There were lots of drunks, lots of dogs and lots of fun—very American. The next weekend I was on a plane to England. I arrived in London. It was 20 degrees colder and foggy. Little did I know that I would not see the sun again for two months.

I spent most of my time in England seeing plays. Last week I was in Scotland at the International Arts Festival.

A few days ago I arrived back in the flower bed of Chapel Hill. You know, I don't think they even make pink and green dyes in England.

I think I'm confused. I tell you all this not to recite my summer experiences like I did in grade school, but to encourage you to save your pennies for a trip overseas. Especially if you are interested in the performing arts.

The United Kingdom has a lot of things—everything from truly frightening punk rockers who shriek "boo" at you with their lavender colored lips to sheep who sun themselves in one lane "highways" and refuse to move even if you shout "boo" in their fuzzy ears.

One of its main attractions, however, is the theater. London's subways may close down at midnight, but its nightclubs and theatres stay open. Stratford-upon-Avon is the home of the Royal Shakespeare Company—an innovative troupe which works in repertoire. And Edinburgh annually hosts its International Arts Festival to which hordes of hungry people flock, as well as established artists from all over the world—even from the Carrboro Arts School. The city virtually vibrates with creativity.

Stratford-upon-Avon, Shakespeare's home town, is a strange jumble of the quaint with the tacky. It has been able to avoid the natural bastardization which soils any place of pilgrimage. I spent most of my time dodging huge groups of tourists who brandished packages like shields to knock unfortunates into the street. Don't go to see the town, go to see the RSC perform.

In two weeks time you typically can see four different productions of Shakespeare of varying quality. While there I was "lucky" enough to see a sadistic Hamlet beat his lusty Ophelia, a punk rock version of Romeo and a weak Timon of Athens whose tragic ending the audience happily accepted so it could leave the hot theater.



Festival a smorgasbord for arts
...opportunity abounds for fans

Innovation sometimes backfires but is always interesting. I must admit, however, to being more than a little disappointed by the presented romance of Juliet and her Romeo. Mercutio prancing about with a transvestite and dangling a four-foot tall Cupid with a foot-long penis in front of Juliet was a bit tasteless. Actually, I would have liked to have seen the earlier production of *Macbeth* on motorcycles. It must have been quite a challenge for the actors to deliver their lines over the motors.

Edinburgh has often been called the Athens of the north. That might be pushing things a bit far, but the city is a beautiful backdrop for the arts festival. Moody, dark and windy, the city is presided over by a blackened castle aloft a slab of volcanic rock.

For three weeks clowns, musicians, dancers and pipe players prance under the shadow of this ominous mountain. The most interesting element of this festival is not the festival proper but what is called "the fringe."

It is here the enthusiast will find premier works and experimental theater. Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* had its first performance here. It is possible on the fringe—on makeshift stages in basements, alleyways and courtyards—to see up to five performances a day, and they are usually good.

I'm not sure how I will acclimate myself to Chapel Hill again. I'm obviously going to have to start thinking for myself rather than waiting to be entertained. What a drag.

I guess I could start studying. But I can't seem to work in this heat. After all I'm used to 50-degree weather.

I think what I'll do instead is take an inner tube to Sugar Lake and float around with a good bottle of wine. After all what could be more culturally American?

Local stores enjoy rising album sales

By LEE DUNBAR
Staff Writer

Chapel Hill's record business is alive and well, and store managers say the reason is due partially to the recent return of students, but also to competitive prices, greater selection and specials.

Although record companies have raised their prices, stores have managed to keep their increases to a minimum. In the past year, both Record Bar Stores and Big Shot records have raised their prices approximately 25 to 50 cents. For new releases and artists' catalog that list \$7.98, the Franklin Street Record Bar charges either \$5.99 or \$6.99 for its \$8.98 list albums. Big Shot sells all list records for either \$4.99 or \$5.99. But the Record Bar in University Mall sells its \$7.98 list records for \$6.49 or \$6.99 for its artists catalog.

"Because we're in the mall we have higher rent and more overhead, so we have to sell for a little bit more," said Besty Heady, manager of the Mall Record Bar. "Otherwise our profits would be less."

The two Franklin Street stores are practically next to each other, and both agree on the reason for lower prices. Joe Deese of Record Bar said "We are extremely competitive, so we must stay constantly on our toes, because anytime anyone can walk next door if we don't have the album. It's one factor in our price structure, but also our overhead is lower."

But David Giles, manager of Big Shot said, "We have been here for five years and our ideas haven't changed. We have our own code, and we let them react to us."



Area record stores report business doing well
...due to students' return, competitive prices

All three stores have discounts for their customers. Both Record Bars have weekly specials when certain new releases are sold for \$1 less. They also have a weekly classical special and a blank tape sale. The Franklin Street Bar also features cutouts and overstock for \$2.49 to \$3.99. Big Shot has overstock in addition to an exchange deal, where three used albums that are approved by a store employee can be traded in for any new album. The Bar in the mall had a manufacturers special clearance in April and plans another for back to school in September.

Both the mall Record Bar and Big Shot report increases in sales during the past year. "People seem to be buying more records. We doubled our rock catalogue and expanded our jazz section by 10 times," said Giles of Big Shot. Heady adds, "Our sales are up 35 to 40 percent simply because we have a widening selection, which ranges from rock to blue grass to children's music."

Not only students are buying records, however, and although rock is the big seller, many other categories are beginning to get a lot of attention. "We sell a lot of rock, particularly the

California mellow type rock, like Christopher Cross and Jackson Browne. Our other strength is rhythm and blues," Deese said. "But we also sell a great deal of jazz and classical music." Another store that has found success is the Fair Exchange in Carrboro. People can bring in their used albums to this store and receive either cash or credit on other used albums.

"We check them for any defect and anyone who is not satisfied with an album can return it for a refund," an employee said. Prices depend on the degree of usage.

Although this has been a good year for record stores, the future trend of record buying is uncertain. "It is hard to tell," Deese said. "The record industry has recently been in a state of change. They've started to raise a lot of their list prices to \$8.98 on albums, and they have not sold as well as expected."

But both Heady and Giles said they thought business will stay the same or become better. "There are a lot of wealthy people in Chapel Hill. They come in and spend \$30 on records, and even if the prices go up, it won't matter."

Volunteers needed for YMCA

Do you have diverse interests and a genuine desire to help others but no outlet in which to develop these characteristics?

The Chapel Hill-Carrboro YMCA is now encouraging volunteers to assist in a wide variety of programs. Anyone can go by the YMCA and fill out an application specifying his area of interest and "make their talents and desires to help others known," said Cindy Billings, senior program director. Applications will be accepted anytime. The fall program begins Sept. 8.

Laura Webb, a gymnastics instructor at the YMCA and a senior business administration student at the University is optimistic about a strong volunteer turnout. Webb has worked

with the Chapel Hill-Carrboro branch since her freshman year.

The YMCA stresses experience, the possibility of meeting future employment contacts and the personal satisfaction of helping others as the chief advantages of being a volunteer.

There are fringe benefits for volunteers. Billings said the YMCA tries to recognize the fact that the volunteer is really a "special person" and for that reason offers him or her membership privileges. Facilities include racketball courts, a sunroom, sauna, whirlpool and a pool.

—MIKE McFARLAND



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