

Music society to play Bach on original instruments

By ELIZABETH ELLEN
Arts Editor

American society in general has always worshiped progress, and the constant striving to improve technologically is an ingrained part of the culture. There are still groups of people, however, who believe that the products of a less technically advanced civilization are preferable, at least when it comes to performing music of other eras.

A Society for Performance on Original Instruments is one such group. The musicians of the Society will reproduce with the greatest possible authenticity two works by Baroque composer Johann Sebastian Bach in concerts this weekend in PlayMakers Theatre.

Philosophical and aesthetic considerations are an impetus to the original instrument movement of which the Society is a part. "Technological progress is not always a thing to be universally admired," said Society music director Richard Luby. "A point of equilibrium is reached when a level of technology is suited to the music of a period."

Luby said he saw a connection between ecological movements and the original instrument movement. People involved in ecological pur-

suits are, like aficionados of authentic music, often "not pushed around by technology," he said.

One of the pieces on the Society's program is Bach's Concerto in C Major for three harpsichords, which Luby describes as "warm, jolly music." It is a rarely performed piece, he said, that harpsichordists love to play when they gather on festive occasions.

The Society's performance of the concerto features a trio of instruments made by two of the finest American harpsichord makers, Richard Kingston and William Dowd. According to Luby, these recently-made instruments are more authentic than those made in past decades. "In the 1960s, harpsichords were like little pianos," Luby said. "They were too stable and mechanical." More recent instruments are made without steel and with more regard for aesthetics.

Lilian Pruett, Elaine Funaro and Margaret Atkinson will perform the harpsichord solos in the Society concerts.

"The Musical Offering," the other work on the program, is a chamber ensemble work on a grand scale. Consisting of two ricercars, ten "diverse canons," a trio sonata and

two "perpetual canons," the "Offering" is an example of the rich, complex counterpoint for which Bach is known.

Luby said Bach's scoring of the "Offering" was fairly free, leaving musicians with choices about which instruments to use in interpreting the work. The trio sonata was, however, expressly written for flute, violin, harpsichord and continuo (the Society will use a gamba). Luby said this sonata was probably written with Frederic the Great of Prussia, an accomplished flutist, in mind. Frederic was one of the best trained musicians among the European royalty, he said, and Bach may have been jockeying for a position in his court.

In addition to the harpsichordists, musicians involved in the concerts include Luby and Ruth Johnsen, violin; Rebecca Troxler, flute; Ann Woodward, viola; Brent Wissick, cello and gamba; James Lambert, violone; and Kathy Peters and Robert Link, gamba.

A Society for Performance on Original Instruments will perform tonight and Saturday at 8 p.m. in PlayMakers Theatre. Call 962-1039 for ticket information.



Members of the Society for Performance on Original Instruments in rehearsal

DTH/Larry Childress

Ebony Readers to present love story for Valentine's Day

By KELLY RHODES
Staff Writer

The Ebony Readers, a subgroup of the Black Student Movement, will present "Black Love, Black Pride" in Upendo Lounge Saturday evening. The play was written by former BSM vice-president Eric "Wacko" Walker in honor of Valentine's Day. "Especially on this campus," Walker said, "there seemed to be a lot said of what's wrong with black male and black female relationships." Walker added that as artistic director of the Ebony Readers, he

had looked for an optimistic play on black relationships. Not finding one, Walker decided to write "Black Love, Black Pride."

Cast member Cynthia Martin describes the work as "a positive expression from both sexes, praising black men and black women."

"Black Love, Black Pride" is a compilation of works by black poets such as Sonia Sanchez, Carolyn M. Rogers and Arnold Kemp. Martin said the play combined sincerity with comedy and romance.

"Ebony Readers tries to relate the

black experience through plays," Martin added.

Walker sums up his feelings of the play with a line from Kemp, spoken by cast member Greg Bargeman: "(It's) expressing the love that was lost in the slave ships, in the cotton fields, in years of oppression."

The Ebony Readers was formed in 1972 after several students performed at the BSM Coordinating Ball. This year, the group has 17 members. The group performs two or three plays a semester, depending

on the amount of time the members can donate, Martin said. The most recent Ebony Readers play was "Legacy," about Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in January.

The group performs poetry and prose works by black artists. "We emphasize black writers because otherwise these works would not be heard of," Walker said.

Ebony Readers members performing in the play are Walker, a senior from New Bern; Martin, a senior from Walnut Cove; Bargeman, a senior from Beaufort; and

Cedric Brown, a sophomore from Pfafftown.

Others participating are Anecia Holmes, a sophomore from Wilmington; Valerie Murray, a junior from Mebane; and Peggy Jenkins,

a freshman from Bethel.

"Black Love, Black Pride" will be performed by the Ebony Readers Saturday at 6:30 p.m. in Upendo Lounge at Chase Hall.

Fall from Paradise theme of anthology from Lab Theatre

By MARTY MICHAELS
Staff Writer

This weekend the Lab Theatre premieres a theatrical cornucopia of strange and forbidden fruit with "The Garden of Eden: An Evening of Original Works." This anthology of four pieces promises to be "an evening of weird but entertaining theater," according to actor Bobby Wallace.

"Garden of Eden" is comprised of

two pieces by young playwright David Torbett and two additional pieces by UNC drama student Jeff Hartwig. Torbett's two segments, "Edward" and "Garden of Eden," were showcased in New York City last spring. The connecting pieces by Hartwig, "Marie" and "Projections," are new material which should add an interesting juxtaposition of dramatic methods. Hartwig is also directing the collection, which should be a thought-provoking dramatic experience. Previously, said Hartwig, "nothing had been attempted that would boggle people's minds."

Taken as a whole, "The Garden of Eden" is a serious work, unified by the theme of reshaping a potentially destructive past into a constructive future. The first piece, "Edward," involves a character named Charles (Wallace) who is haunted by the suicide of his friend Edward. "Charles idolized Edward and now must deal with being his own person," said Wallace of his character.

"Marie" is the stunning monologue of a young rape victim. Played by Nicole Nichols, Marie must come to terms with her "fallen state" of innocence. The third piece, "Projections," investigates what happens when fear is transferred into a false power over others.

The final piece, "Garden of Eden," concerns a war veteran (David Gardner) who returns home only to find himself unable to reconcile an "original sin" in his past. A pixie-like spirit, played by Amy Nigro, coerces him to travel back to this sin. By confronting it, he is able to strip away subconscious layers and reach a shocking conclusion. Wallace describes this play as "A Christmas Carol" as if it happened on Halloween. The overwhelming impression of all four pieces is that of the symbolic "fall from Paradise" which may haunt those who are unable to penetrate to the heart of their experiences.

Because it is an experimental forum, Hartwig considers the Lab Theatre to be a place of great interchange for drama enthusiasts. "It's a splendid opportunity for anyone who wants to put on a show," he said. "It is THE performing art form for undergraduates."

Somewhat disconcerting to those involved, however, is the fact that Lab Theatre productions are tremendously underbudgeted. They are not funded by student fees and receive only minimal funding from the University. Considering that the productions involve a large revolving group of undergraduate drama students, it is unfortunate that such scant support is available, said Hartwig. "We need backing from underneath," he said.

"The Garden of Eden: An Evening of Original Works" will be performed by the Lab Theatre Sunday and Monday at 4 and 8 p.m. and Tuesday at 5 p.m. in 06 Graham Memorial Hall.

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