

Philomathesians unveil new season of cinema, poetry, lectures

By ELISE MURPHY
CONTRIBUTING REVIEWER

As so much of our campus rushes ahead into the future, at least one group on campus is remaining loyal to part of the university's tradition.

Since its origins over a century ago on the old campus, the Philomathesian Society has sought to stimulate creative thinking among students.

The Philomathesian calendar for this coming school year is already filled with events designed to teach students more about social, political and artistic aspects of life.

"[We aim] to facilitate discussion and com-

munication among students and encourage the life of the mind outside the classroom," co-chairman senior Kristina Hemphill said.

The Philomathesians are perhaps best known to the general campus population through their film series, which has already begun and will continue throughout the year. However, this series is just one of the group's planned events.

The Philomathesian, a journal featuring in-depth non-fiction pieces, debates, photography and essays, debuted last fall.

This year, the journal has been expanded to a three-issue run. The debate subject for the fall issue is about gender bias in university recruitment processes.

This fall's issue of the *Philomathesian* will also include movie reviews, interviews and commentaries, in addition to 3000-5000 word essays arguing both sides of the gender debate.

All students are encouraged to contribute their views to the journal by sending all submissions to Box 7653 by Friday.

"We are actively seeking submissions from all students so the journal will more accurately represent the views of the whole student body," Hemphill said.

The Philomathesians' roots on the old campus were as a student debate society, which will be continued not only through the journal, but also in the public forum.

The society also hopes to sponsor a series of panel discussions, one of which will center around welfare reform. This discussion will include both welfare recipients and government officials who deal with the welfare system in the Winston-Salem area.

Faculty involvement aids the society's efforts in many ways. Notable among these are Philomathesian-sponsored lunches which will be held at 11 a.m. every Thursday in the Pit. Professors will present a brief talk to interested students, followed by an open discussion session.

The Philomathesians are also looking forward to sponsoring poetry events this year. The society's goal is to produce one or two

readings per semester, culminating the year with an outdoor reading of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in the spring.

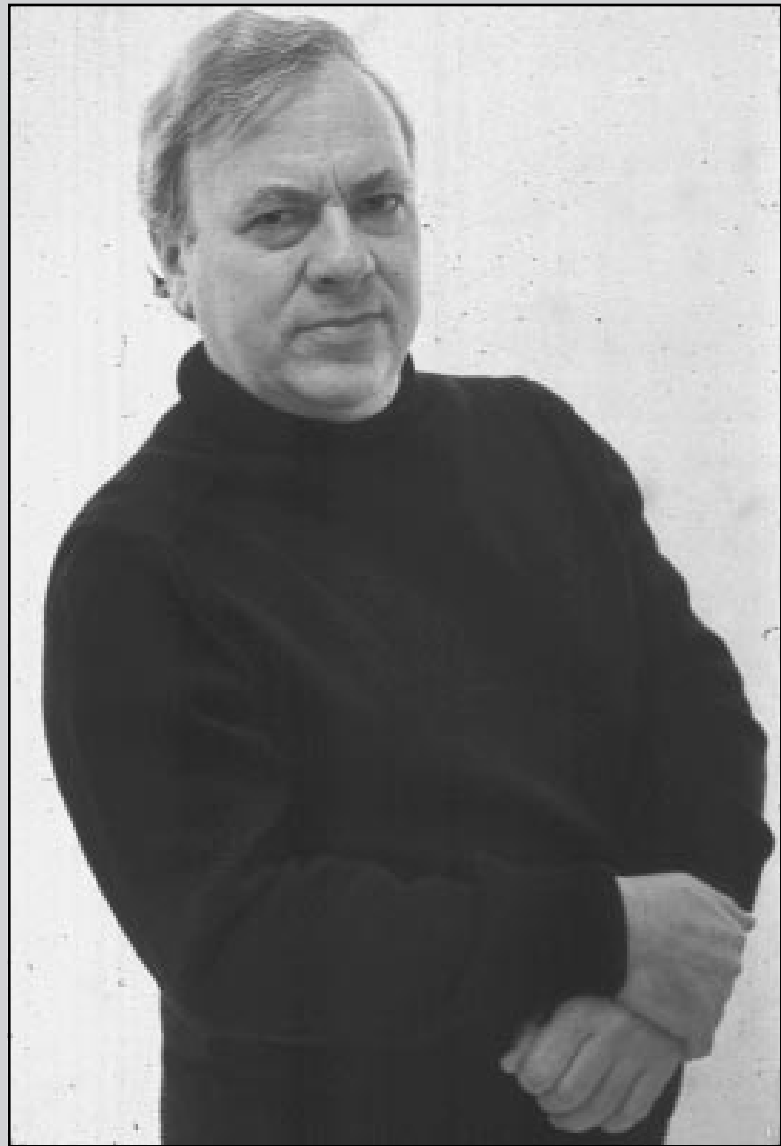
On a less serious note, the society will sponsor a masquerade ball at Halloween. Keeping with their intellectual theme, this will not be an ordinary costume party. All attending students must come dressed as their favorite characters from literature.

Hemphill stressed that all events associated with the Philomathesian Society are open to the entire student body.

"The main function of the society is to sponsor these events for all students, and there is no society membership list," Hemphill said.

Celebrated concert pianist talks shop

By SETH BRODSKY
OLD GOLD AND BLACK REVIEWER



Courtesy of Frank Solomon Associates

Pianist Richard Goode, whose recent recording of Beethoven's solo piano sonatas has been earning him long-deserved recognition, will perform at 8:30 p.m. Oct. 6 in Wait Chapel.

"It is the most direct experience I can have." So confessed pianist Richard Goode in a phone interview when asked why he is a musical performer.

His answer, in its simple immediacy, presents in words a microcosm of what this extraordinary artist conveys with equal immediacy in music.

Goode only recently has been gaining recognition as a piano soloist after almost thirty years as a chamber musician in New York City. Since his groundbreaking recording of the 32 solo piano sonatas of Ludwig van Beethoven and his New York performances of the entire cycle, he is finally becoming acknowledged as one of the premiere living pianists.

As the first artist in this season's Secrest Artist Series, Goode will perform a concert of Beethoven and Chopin at 8:30 p.m. Oct. 6 in Wait Chapel. At 10 a.m. the next morning, he will participate in a panel discussion with Music Department faculty in the Benson University Center.

"(Performing) seemed a natural thing ... not totally natural, because there were aspects of performing that I never did love," said Goode, who was plagued with stage fright as a child. "(Yet) it was the strongest musical experience I could feel."

Goode expressed his feelings of liberation derived from his recent solo performances. "It is quite a change of life," he said. "It is psychologically very different ... though the contrast of personalities (in chamber music) can be inspiring, there are certain personal things you want to do, you have to do, and only when you're playing by yourself can you make all

the voices totally agree."

Yet Goode is adamantly not a musical egotist, bent on imposing any flamboyant rhetoric upon the music. Many critics have remarked that he takes his greatest cues from the legendary pianist Arthur Schnabel, who rigorously adhered to the written score, viewing the composer as the highest authority in the musical hierarchy.

One writer, profiling Goode in the *New Yorker*, wrote that after a performance of a Schubert sonata, the audience was not applauding Goode, but Schubert himself.

"I really don't know what Franz Schubert would say about such things," Goode joked. However, he admitted that the performer finds himself in a precarious situation.

"You're always aware that what you're doing is something very formidable. ... I often have the image of the composer coming along, sweeping aside the performer, and saying, 'You idiot, it doesn't go like that!'"

"You hope that you get part of the message of the music across as best you can, but you know that it's always a partial message. It's a music that contains all kinds of possibilities, and you can only realize a few of them. ... A performance is (only) a gateway to the music."

The music of Ludwig van Beethoven is a dear topic to Goode; many consider him the greatest living interpreter of Beethoven's solo piano works.

Goode, who has commented on the "indestructibility" of **See Goode, Page B7**

First play of season offers farcical fun

By CRAIG JOSEPH
OLD GOLD AND BLACK REVIEWER

It's midnight, the night before your brand new play is set to open, and you've only begun dress rehearsal for Act One.

Your cast can't remember which props to use, when to say their lines, and where to move.

Your stage manager has been awake for forty-eight hours, his assistant is making eyes at you, and neither have a clue. On top of all this, you've been romancing several members of the troupe and have to watch your step.

Sound like an implausible situation? This is precisely the tumult which greets director Lloyd Dallas (junior Don Pocock) as his theatrical masterpiece moves toward its premiere performance in the university theatre's season opener, *Noises Off*.

Written by Michael Frayn, *Noises Off* is a play within a play about an amateur troupe attempting to put on the British sex farce *Nothing On*. Act One catches the actors on the night before opening, ironing out the many glitches. It also sets up the many amours, affairs, grudges, and passions which characterize the zany troupe.

The last two acts find the company at various points in the run, giving audience members a chance to see how the bumpy situations have progressed and how life backstage begins to mirror the chaos onstage.

Noises Off is a challenge for cast and audience alike. Each actor must portray two characters: the company member and their character in the sex farce.

Additionally, quick comic timing and delivery are essential for Act Two, which is done entirely in pantomime as the *Nothing On* company members fight backstage as the performance continues onstage.

Unsuspecting audience members may get lost in the shuffle, but are sure to laugh at this portrayal of theater life.

Sophomore Bo Perry has found that working on the show has been a valuable experience. "We've really learned how to develop different characterizations — the fading actress, the zoned-out stage manager, the ditzzy bimbo, the stuffy realtor — but it's also been good to learn to work as an ensemble," he said. "Without that cooperation, the show drags and flops."

In addition to Pocock and Perry, the ensemble consists of seniors Mandy Lauffer and Lauren Kirby, junior Amber Evans, sophomore Dan Stern and freshmen Megan Noble, Doug Perez and Jeff Schoenheit, all preparing for a quick-paced opening of this uproarious farce.

Noises Off will open on the Mainstage of the Scales Fine Arts Center at 8 p.m. Friday. The audience is cordially invited to attend a post-show reception in the main lobby.

The show will continue at 8 p.m. Saturday and from Wednesday to Oct. 7 and at 2 p.m. Oct. 8.

Prior to the Oct. 7 performance, Liz Bergstone, a repertory theater actress from England, will speak about her experiences similar to those in the play. The talk starts at 7:15 p.m. in the Ring Theatre. For more information, call the box office at Ext. 5295.

Rugged ride over rocky terrain gives naturalist pause to ponder mortality

By BRIAN SMITH
OLD GOLD AND BLACK REVIEWER

I'm on 52 North headed toward Pilot Mountain; passing the Tobaccoville and King exits, I'm nearly there. The large pinnacle looms up over the ribboning four-lane highway.

I turn off onto a rural 35 mph state road and lose sight of the quartzite mountain, but I'll be seeing it again soon. Driving through the small town of Pinnacle, I turn onto anonymous blacktops and soon lose my fragile sense of direction.

There it is: a small gravel parking lot with horse trailers. Dodging horse manure, I take the bike off my truck and head for the trail. Previously, there was only a primitive parking area and an almost undetectable trail.

But progress and development have provided me with a nicely graded parking area and plenty of signs and directions.

However, the trail quickly returns to its back country character and a fast, rutted downhill jars my arms and teeth.

It soon becomes obvious that this trail demands all 21 gears. Eye-searing dusty descents and leg-bursting, vein-bending climbs blend nicely. The first creek has a bridge.

Then a steep uphill with loose rock greets me and I spin out and fall over.

It's flat for a few minutes and then steeply descends to a creek. Rocky and hub-deep, it's pretty easy to get dumped in the water. I make it, but my companion does not. Sporting a soaked foot, he curses the water gods as he climbs the bank.

The terrain changes quickly from old hardwood (oaks, maples and poplars) to dense pine. The trail is wide, smooth and fast, covered with pine

needles. Pine trees soak up the sun, but here and there some light dances on the trail. Old barbed-wire fence weaves in and out of the large pines, and I realize that rusty lacerations would not be cool.

I cross a rural highway and cruise through a meadow. It's hot and grass gets tangled in my chain. The trail is dry and dust coats my eyes and throat. I am descending toward another creek and there's shade up ahead. Soon I'm back under oaks and pedaling uphill. The elevation changes every minute and, if it doesn't kill you, it's a lot of fun.

Dodging a healthy pile of horse manure, it's time for a fun descent on railroad ties. What appears to have been a noble attempt at preventing erosion makes for a difficult riding environment. Braking and praying, I negotiate the ancient embedded timbers down to a deep creek crossing. The water gods are obviously angry; a submerged boulder grabs my front wheel and over I go.

I have examined different maps and have never really been able to decipher just how long this trail is or where

it ultimately ends up. I've heard rumors of a twenty-mile loop and I've heard from riders that it runs one way to the Yadkin River.

Anyway, after riding for one hour, leg fatigue has set in and the trail shows no signs of looping back. I have exactly the same distance to cover on the return trip. Another hour. All the ups are now downs and the downs are now ups. At least the creeks are still wet and the manure still stinks.

Everything looks different backwards. An hour later, back at the parking lot, a guy is loading a horse onto a trailer and gives me a long, uneasy stare as I pedal over to the truck. I must be a freak, he figures, to wear that stupid looking helmet and to voluntarily propel myself over the same land that he uses for horse labor.

There's a convenience store nearby where I get a slushee and a bottle of Gatorade. The lady working the cash register gives me the Gatorade for free since I look so happy and thirsty. And I am.



Sweetly ethereal quintet Mercury Rev breaks new ground on third release

By MICHAEL JANSSEN
ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

After undergoing a harrowing metamorphosis, surrealistic tunesmiths Mercury Rev have emerged from their Catskills cocoon with their third release on Columbia Records, *See You On the Other Side*.

Minus vocalist David Baker, the band is free of much-publicized internal strife. Baker, whose more conventional sensibilities shaped Mercury Rev on their previous two releases, is now in his own band, Shady, leaving Mercury Rev to reflect upon the last two years.

"It wasn't as much strife as exfoliating," flutist Suzanne Thorpe said. "We were getting rid of some dead skin, shedding."

Thorpe joined the group at the University of Buffalo, when former bassist Dave Fridmann formed the band as his senior project. Mercury Rev began recording soundtracks for student films, one of which featured Thorpe as a dead person.

"It was a good experience," she said of her acting career. "I guess you can only go up from being dead. Lay

down; maybe your dog will lick your face and revive you."

Since its cinematic origins, the band's evolution has been a roller coaster ride of a trip, from their 1992 debut album *Yerself Is Steam* to the disparate dissonance of *See You On the Other Side*.

Along the way, the group collaborated with celebrated poet Robert Creeley, cut a track with former Suicide vocalist Alan Vega and were kicked off of Lollapalooza for being too loud. One member's departure couldn't hinder such a hardened group of innovators.

"No one was getting along, and the creative process was pretty much being harmed," bassist Jason Russo said. Russo recently replaced Dave Fridmann, who, although featured on the new album, is unable to tour with

the band due to paternal duties.

"We needed to become more focused," Thorpe said. "The disagreements we had with David Baker were really bad, and he kept stealing our drugs and hiding them," she said, laughing. "He was asking for it."

It's difficult to get straight answers from Russo and Thorpe, who joke almost constantly. Russo reported that Mercury Rev's creative process centers around the whim of Zenith, the band's dog.

"Zenith decides whether the songs will make it on to the album or not," he said. "If she barks, it goes on, and if she walks out of the room, it doesn't make it."

Zenith must have good taste; "Peaceful Night" is a beautiful elegy which blends blues and jazz influ-

ences, whereas "Sudden Ray Of Hope" could easily fit on a '70s station if the group excised the cacophony which punctuates the bubblegum melody.

"Everyone throws a different thing into the mix," Russo said. Russo listens to jazz, experimental music and indie rock; guitarist and tech whiz Grasshopper admires the work of free jazz pioneers; and guitarist/vocalist Jonathan Donahue puts Delta blues into the stew.

Mercury Rev's creative process is based on tension, entropy and a dose of humor. The quintet irons out most of the specifics in the studio, and they weave sounds ranging from reverberating pipes to birdsong into the music. Donahue wires guitars through television sets and plays them with phone taps; Grasshopper strings together answering machine beeps and



snatching sounds from the surrounding world are indispensable to Mercury Rev's music.

"Girlfren," an eerie tune from 1993's *Boces*, features a vocal taped from a person in Central Park. *See You On the Other Side*'s "Close Encounters Of the Third Grade" features a falcon's cry, along with a contagiously funky bass line and a female vocal reminiscent of Pink Floyd's "The Great Gig In the Sky."

Their offbeat approach to music has puzzled critics and gone largely ignored by the conservative college crowd, but Mercury Rev is unfazed.

"We don't fit, but that's almost becoming in vogue these days," Russo said. "The reason that music that is so generic does so well is because that's what the average American wants. But who would want to make something that's so generic? None of us could sleep at night."

The new album is already pricking up America's ears; Moby directed the video for the first single, "Young Man's Stride," and the band will set out on a club tour in early November. Hopefully Mercury Rev is on the verge of a major breakthrough.