

Arts & Entertainment

Secrest focuses on salons of Paris

Da Camera Society combines music, poetry of Proust's era

By Michelle Young
Old Gold and Black Reviewer

In an intellectual community, there is a tendency toward constant digression; we constantly look through a smaller lens as we study an ever-more specific area of one subject or another. We research one person's life or one specific movement. We talk about one isolated time period or the cause of a war or economic depression. The concept of an interdisciplinary musical program



seems odd and peculiar. Sarah Rothenberg, director of a uniquely diverse program, deserves immense praise for her ability to step over the carefully drawn border which divides music from language.

"Marcel Proust's Paris," performed on Oct. 25 in Brendle Recital Hall by De Camera of Houston, effectively demonstrated the unification of art. The program contained readings from Proust's poetry both with and without accompaniment, Faure's *Violin Sonata No. 1 in A Major*, Franck's *String Quartet in D Major* and songs and poems sung by world-renowned tenor John Aler. Despite the various musical genres, a commonality between all the works on the program was that all of the composers were disillusioned, French, male contemporaries living during the

middle-to-end part of the 19th Century.

Sarah Rothenberg, innovator and director of De Camera of Houston, wrote in the program leaflet an informative and fascinating "Notes on the Program," which contained critical information about the atypical lives of the artists whose works were performed in this concert. We learn from Rothenberg's brief synopsis that Hahn and Proust apparently had a two-year homosexual affair, Proust admittedly fell in love with Faure's music and unconventionally and impulsively hired a string quartet, after they gave a concert, to replay Faure's *Violin Sonata* while Proust, alone absorbing the music's vivacity, lay on the floor of his house with his eyes closed. Hence, Proust's sensitivity, passion and adoration for these particular musical selections were integrated into the program well.

The program began as Aler belted out Reynaldo Hahn's *Five Songs*, with Rothenberg playing the piano accompaniment. Both musicians had commanding stage presence and they performed with flawless and confident conviction. At times the piano, softly offering chords in the background, merely accompanied Aler. Other times, the piano possessed the melody or echoed the singer.

In "Le Printemps," the piano flirtatiously executed technically-challenging ornaments while the voice sustained chilling half notes. Long notes enabled Aler to illustrate his complete musical control over dynamics, tone and phrasing. As each phrase progressed, one sensed the blossoming growth of an innocent spring flower. The lyrics of each poem confront life's realities, including the dualistic beauty and harshness of love, nature and life.

Aler next read Proust's poems "Paulus Potter" and "Antoine Watteau" while Rothenberg accompanied him with Hahn's *Portraits de Peintres*. The first poem, "Paulus Potter," conveyed a depressing, unsuccessful search for happiness.

Its dramatic piano accompaniment augmented the innate emotionality of Proust's poetry; the audience could not escape from the captivating sadness of this poem. Aler's phenomenal French accented the poet's beautiful manipulation of language. Likewise, the second poem was set very effectively to Hahn's music. The piano has a very simple melodic line which repeats at the end but with a haunting quality. The audience was entrapped in the secret of love's capriciousness which the lyrics, human voice and piano's musicality revealed.

Following *Portraits de Peintres*, world-famous author, translator and Pulitzer Prize-winner Richard Howard (wearing a

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lime-green tie) read an excerpt from Proust's novel, *Swann's Way*. The impressionistic novel relates the intense musical experience of Swann, a common man, at a party.

The beauty of a single phrase from Faure's *Violin Sonata* generates an awakening within Swann, who is, according to Proust's novel, "transported to unknown perspectives" and "discovers in himself ... the presence of one of those realities in which he had ceased believing ... He longed to hear (music's) language and its secret." The audience hence ecstatically anticipated hearing Faure's *Violin Sonata*, which followed the reading of this novel. Proust's novel served as incredible inspiration and motivation for the audience to search for meaning within the upcoming musical phrases because it showed the undeniably awesome power of music.

Peter Winograd, who next performed the *Violin Sonata in A Major*, is a very accomplished young violinist. He played with emotional and electrical charge which he transmitted to the audience through his talented, well-trained, and precocious hands. One could see Swann's experience re-enacted through Winograd's physical movements as he paced forward to back and side-to-side. In fact, he practically moshed to the music — his blond hair flailed up and down as his head expressionistically danced to the fierce message latent within Faure's music.

Howard's second reading of Proust's prose occurred after the intermission. In Proust's *Within a Budding Grove*, beautiful prose flows with adjectives and philosophical overtones. The writer's control of language, knowledge of and lust for music and unique tone were highlighted through Howard's reading of this prose. *Within a Budding Grove* emphasizes the extrinsic value of music and one's appreciation for the depth of music: "It is the least valuable parts (of a musical work) one understands first... We shall love (the phrase) longer than the last because

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Town loves its famous chicken

By Scott Mayne
Contributing Reporter

Bored with Lasagna Night, stuffed chicken, and fried catfish, this past Saturday night I ventured off campus for a dinner amongst friends. Taking the advice of John Dawson, a professor of economics, I led five of my friends to Pfafftown — home of Ted's Famous Kickin' Chicken, and



in my eyes Phattown. The restaurant and city can be reached from the university by taking Robinhood Road west until it dead ends. The building that will stare you in the face is the home of Lowell — chicken-cooking guru and possessor of "the" secret chicken recipe.

If you're wondering what people do in Pfafftown on Saturday night, try squeezing your way into the 50-by-50 foot chicken establishment.

With its red and white checkered floors, Jeff Gordon posters, 11 neon beer signs and various chicken and rooster paraphernalia, this restaurant is the ideal atmosphere for consuming Ted's Famous Kickin' Chicken.

Because all of the tables were filled, and booths for four were seating seven, we sat at the bar and were welcomed with a warm, "Hey dudes" by our server Linda.

We politely ordered beers in an attempt to fit in, but mostly just because we could. Not everyone can, unfortunately, as a sign hanging above the bar reads, "Remember, No identification, No Beer, No Kidding."

The menu at Ted's revolves around chicken, and a patron has the option of a half chicken for \$4.95, an Upper Chicken for \$3.45 or a lower chicken for \$2.25 (a two-lowers-for-three-bucks special is offered to locals and preferred guests). The terms upper and lower apparently refer to chicken anatomy, so I opted for the half. It was frankly one of the best halves of a chicken that I have ever eaten.

In addition to this strikingly savory chicken, Ted's offers a variety of side items including potato salad, baked beans, French fries and coleslaw.

Although these items are obviously not the house specialty, they complement the overall dining experience.

I am not sure how the chicken is cooked, or what makes it taste so good, as the staff was very concerned about accidentally disclosing any secrets.

Although they would not appreciate it if they knew this, from my angle of vision at the bar I was able to observe Lowell in action through a window in the kitchen. For all intent and purpose it is this individual who is the mastermind behind the taste of the Pfafftown Kickin' Chicken. I noticed him soaking the chicken in a mixture, and I saw him put it in a pot, but that is all I was able to ascertain. Unfortunately, I could not see anything that looked like a sauce recipe.

One of the most redeeming characteristics of the restaurant is its hometown family atmosphere. After speaking at length with Linda I learned that Wednesday night is "Family Night," and they like to call it "Show and Tell Night" at Ted's because all of the people from Pfafftown bring in their children and show them off.

Another special night at Ted's is Thursday night, when the Yadkin County crowd "piles in."

This Wednesday night I am busy, but Thursday is already on my agenda.

To exhibit the hometown flavor at Ted's I would like to share one of my fondest memories from my visit. When a man got up to leave at the far end of the room, Linda noticed his movement and made it a point to holler, "Bye Duke!"

Who is this guy Ted and exactly how famous is his chicken? Evidently, Ted is a retired truck driver who started in the business about eight years ago.

He now has three locations in North Carolina, and I see marketing opportunities for him in other remote areas across the country. As for his chicken renown, I talked to my parents the other night in Delaware, and they had not heard of it. Several of my friends at this university were unfamiliar as well.

In Pfafftown, however, he is a legend. I sat next to a friendly local as I ate my dinner at the bar, and he really summed it up when he said, "I've lived here all my life. Best chicken around."



Dave Frisvold/Old Gold and Black

Sarah Rothenberg, pianist of the Da Camera Society, created the program that combined the music and poetry of Marcel Proust's era. Rothenberg accompanied tenor John Aler who sang several poems by both Proust and Charles Baudelaire. The Muir String Quartet added to the evening with its performance of the *String Quartet in D Major* by Cesar Franck. The performance was the first performance in this year's Secrest Series.

Emotion captures players in *Fool for Love*

By Jenny Blackford
Arts and Entertainment Editor

A dingy motel room is the scene for an intense hour and a half of violence, love and hate in the Ring Theater this weekend. The Anthony Aston Players perform Sam Shepard's *Fool for Love* starting Oct. 30 and running through Nov. 1.

The play, which is directed by senior Jenny Harrison, takes full advantage of the unique stage the Ring Theater provides. Because of fire codes the original set design had to be adapted, but the use of actual doors on two of the four stage entrances and a window on the third add elements that draw the audience into the motel room with the characters.

The plot centers around May (played by senior Kristen Eppley), a young woman wasting away while working at a run-down hotel in rural Texas, and Eddie (freshman Matt Lutz) a young man she was once romantically involved with who tries to drag May back into the past.

Emotion is central to the themes of the play and the relationships involved. In the course of the play May has to deal with her current flame Martin (played by freshman Nick Kinder) her ex-boyfriend and an old man, whom the audience later finds out is her father (sophomore Adrian Greene.) Though May is the central character, the play is told from a male perspective. The situation in this rural Texas town is very unique but the emotions

are so true to life it still appeals to a wide audience, Harrison said. For the most part Harrison tried to leave the play the way Shepard wrote it. She incorporated most of the original blocking into this performance, but had to change some minor aspects due to the round stage. "My goal is that if he (Shepard) was in the audience he would be proud," Harrison said.

The Anthony Aston players chose this piece because they wanted to produce more innovative pieces that could not be put on the Mainstage, said Harrison. "The play has a lot of young energy, it is a very passionate, in-your-face show that fits very well in the Ring Theater," Harrison said.

Harrison originally suggested the play to the Players and was then elected to direct it. "I happened upon it in the library and fell in love with it. I could see everything about the play, which had never happened to me before," she said.

The play was turned into a movie by Robert Altman in 1985, starring Sam Shepard, the playwright, as Eddie. The cast of the university production decided that they were not going to see the movie version of the piece before the production.

As for the cast, Harrison said everyone has been getting along well. "There have been no actor-diva egos involved — I couldn't have asked for anything more," Harrison said. "I would love for everyone to come and see it. It isn't pansy-ass theater — it's so cool."

Performances are 8 p.m. Oct. 30, 31 and Nov. 1 in the Ring Theater, in Scales Fine Arts Center. Tickets are available at the box office or at the door and are \$5 for adults and \$3 for students.



Dave Frisvold/Old Gold and Black

Kristen Eppley and Matt Lutz portray two characters haunted by the past in Sam Shepard's *Fool for Love*. The play will be held in the Ring Theater this weekend.