

# Arts & Entertainment

## Singing group to promote service

By Brad Gunton  
Old Gold and Black Reviewer

In the wake of the dissolution of Agape, a new women's singing group has formed on campus.

SOUL, Sisters of Universal Love, was founded earlier this semester by sophomores Brittany Neal, Latanya Scott and Aileen Socrates and has recently begun performing.

SOUL is composed of 14 women, two of whom, Neal and Socrates, were in Agape. According to Socrates, Agape broke up because the members had different intentions: Some took an evangelical approach, and others concentrated more on service. However, SOUL differs from the former group in that while it is spiritual, it is not based on religion.

"We promote spiritual growth through service," Socrates said. "We wanted to provide an opportunity for women on campus who have a love for music to do service using music as a channel."

According to Scott, the focus of SOUL is service to the community through their music. The three planks of their mission statement are to promote well-being within their group, among other groups at the university and within the larger community.

"After the breakup of Agape, we thought it was a shame that the service aspect would be lost, so we thought we could start a group involved in service," Scott said.

Auditions for SOUL were held in February, and the women were all interviewed about their commitment to service. New auditions will take place next semester.

"Next year, we're looking to recruit some freshmen and sophomores, because there will be mostly juniors and seniors in the group," Socrates said.

After forming the group, they had just a few weeks to rehearse before their first performance, which took place March 19 at Brighton Gardens retirement home.

After performing, they stayed to talk and mingle with many of the residents.

"The time's been really short, but we've been lucky because we've gotten a lot of help from people on campus," Socrates said.

Despite having only a few weeks for practice, Neal said that it was important to get out and begin performing.

"The service aspect of the group is very important," Neal said. "In addition to performing on campus, we want to take the music out to the community, so that's something we're definitely going to concentrate on."

SOUL has no definite plans for future engagements at the moment, but they hope to perform at Human Service Alliance, a children's home, and other hospices in the community. Also, they may perform on campus with other groups such as God's Workmanship and In One Accord.

Because SOUL is starting late in the semester, Neal said, they are now concentrating on getting established. She said that SOUL has given her the opportunity to meet people who share her interests in music and service.

"Music has always been something I've enjoyed," Neal said. "It's a lot of fun, and it's a great way to meet people and bond with them."

## String quartet triumphs for Secret

By Robert Shaw  
Old Gold and Black Reviewer

How is the string quartet, that jewel of classical balance and harmony that Haydn immortalized so elegantly during the Enlightenment, doing at the close of the 20th century?

The Secret Artist Series demonstrated March 20 that it is doing quite well.

One of the hallmarks of this unique musical form is the austere palette it offers the composer. Though the range of four-part harmony for a set of extraordinarily versatile instruments is available, it also is quite limited in comparison to an orchestra or an ensemble with a piano, for example.

The fact that composers continue to be attracted to this sort of genre and that artists' series consistently program, to audience delight, entire programs for string quartets says something about the persistent desire for the ideals of balance and unity that the Enlightenment so valued.

In that vein, the Muir String Quartet began its recital with one of the great masters of these ideals, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Bundled in this particularly well-conceived *Quartet in E-flat Major* is that wonderful blend of unmatched tenderness, subtle emotion and impish playfulness so distinctive of the Mozart aesthetic.

Mozart was an Enlightenment composer

The performance of the piece was nothing less than riveting. When dealing with performers at this level, what can one say but "Bravo!"?

with a real streak of Romanticism underneath.

Weaving that thread into the quartet fabric is skill matched note for note by the Muir team's phenomenal ability to draw out the dissonant emotions while retaining the blended purity essential to a Mozart performance.

Debussy's *Quartet in G minor* followed on the program. This extraordinary piece shows how versatile the quartet medium is. As this Impressionist composer helped lead the musical world from Romantic ideas to 20th-century idioms, he was able to create a work of the tensest emotions that sprung primarily from only one melody. Such motivic unity was unprecedented, and the fact that it occurred in a quartet of such drama is astounding.

The performance of the piece was nothing less than riveting. When dealing with performers at this level, what can one say but "Bravo!"?

The Brahms *B-flat Clarinet Quintet* formed the second half of the program. Like the



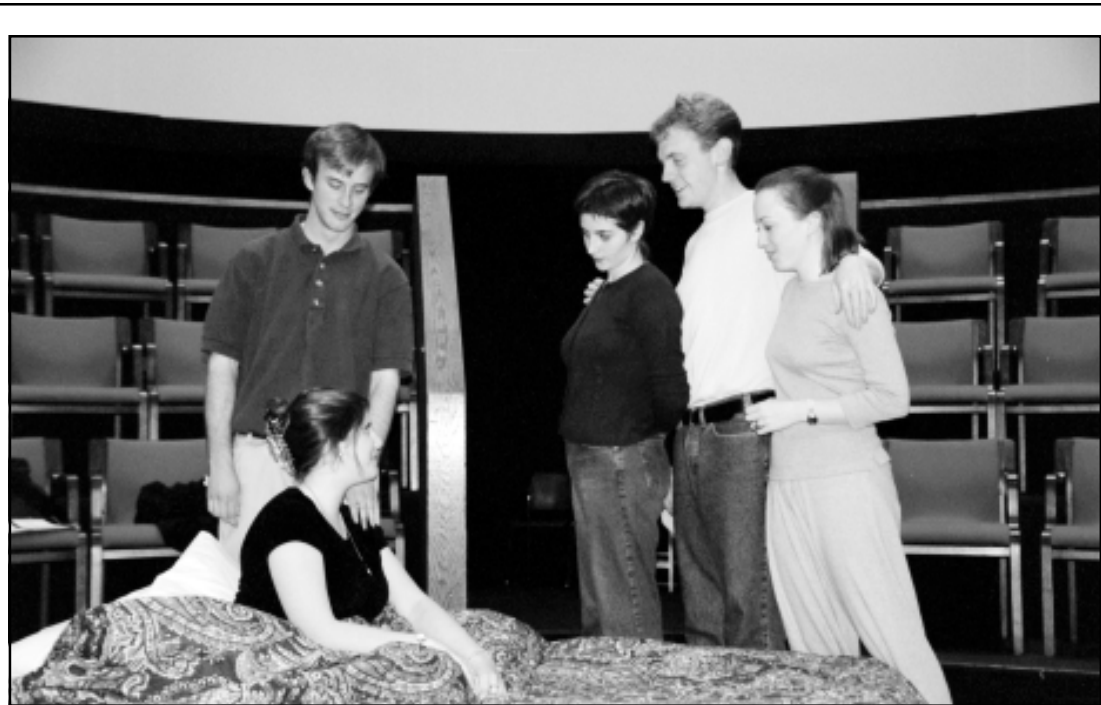
Courtesy of News Services  
The Muir String Quartet gave a masterful performance of extraordinary pieces by Brahms and Mozart as part of the Secret Artist Series.

other works on the program, Muir plus the fabulous clarinetist David Shifrin were impeccable in blending their sound and working together to present the composer's music to the audience. In turn, the audience responded with a well-deserved standing ovation for a fantastic evening of music.

Listeners undoubtedly would have liked an encore, but on the other hand, any vignette seems sure to have taken away from the lovely fading moment at the end of the

quintet, one of Brahms' last works.

The audience was very responsive, and the attendance was quite good, virtually filling up Brendle Recital Hall. Great performers recognized by a great artists' series, a full and attentive audience, three legendary composers and a healthy art form. Culture critics can say what they want about the decline of standards in American society. I point to the concert to suggest that they must somehow be wrong.



Photos by Kirsten Nantz/Old Gold and Black



### Playing around

Another installment of the university's Studio Series, one-act plays acted, produced and directed by theater students, begins March 29. Seniors Elizabeth Page and Megan Cramer director of the performances that begin next week. *Mourning Pictures*, written by Honor Moore and directed by Page, is about a woman whose mother has cancer and their journey through the traumatic experience. *The Bear*, written by Anton Chekov and directed by Cramer, is a farce that tells the story of a widow in a power struggle with a man to whom she owes a debt. The plays will be performed 7:30 p.m. March 29 and 4:30 p.m. March 30 in the Ring Theater. Tickets are \$2.

## Smith, Sebadoh lure enthusiasts to Ritz

By Matt Harrington  
Old Gold and Black Reviewer

I walked into the Ritz in Raleigh expecting to see two great bands, Sebadoh and Elliot Smith. I expected the show to start at 7 p.m. as it said on every schedule I'd looked at, and I expected to be home by midnight, which was good, because I was really tired from the drive back from New Jersey that morning.

Well, the night started out for me on a poor note, as my two friends and I arrived at the Ritz only to find out that the doors opened at 7 p.m. and the bands weren't going to start until 8 p.m.

Sleep would have to wait another hour, but I was prepared to make that sacrifice.

As the three of us waited for the show to start, we looked around. The Ritz is a wonderful place to see a show. The bottom floor is wide open other than a few support poles and looks like a warehouse. The stage is up about four feet off the ground so that anyone on the lower level has a good view of the band. There is also a balcony that wraps around and provides a good view, especially from the sides.

We chose the balcony as our vantage point, thinking we'd get a better view without having to jostle with the crowd. Plus, any time we'd gone to a concert before, Geoff had always been stuck behind the tallest guy in the crowd. It never mattered where we started, Geoff always ended up not being able to see.

So we found a great spot against the rail on the right side of the balcony and sat to wait for the show to start.

Everything was all set up for the first band, and around 8:10 p.m. or so they walked out onto the stage. I looked at them and said to myself, "that's not Elliot Smith." And sure enough, the band was not Elliot Smith.

It was Playtopia. And frankly, they weren't that good. Playtopia was pretty cheesy, and the crowd knew it from the moment they started playing. The highlight of Playtopia's set, in my opinion, was when they commented on how it seemed to be raining on stage (because of a tiny hole in the roof) and someone from the crowd yelled, "Go over and get electrocuted!" Rude, yes, but the point remained that no one really wanted to see them on stage.

Playtopia finally left the stage

Smith's songs sounded wonderful live and had an energy and fullness that is not captured quite as well on his albums.

after about six songs, and another band began to set up. I didn't see Elliot Smith in any part of the setup, but I had seen him milling about the crowd during Playtopia's performance, so I figured he was up next. After what seemed an eternal wait, three people walked out onto the stage to begin the next performance. To my surprise, this was again not Elliot Smith.

Number 2 was the name of the second band that played, and I'm very glad that they were included on the bill. Hailing from Portland, Ore., they played a good set of music that was upbeat and well-written. I'd never heard of them before, but I was highly encouraged to go out and find some of their music after hearing them at the show.

But the highlight of the show was not Number 2, it was Elliot Smith. This songwriter who emerged from obscurity with his hit song "Miss Misery" off the *Good Will Hunting* soundtrack is multi-talented. His latest album, *XO*, is a bit of a departure from his previous albums because his previous albums were more acoustic and solo, whereas the latest album incorporates more electric guitar and other instruments.

Smith's laid-back style was a hit with the all-ages crowd at the Ritz. People from 13 to 39 (or so it seemed) were enchanted by his shyness and embraced him.

Backed up by a bassist and a drummer (and occasionally a female backup singer), Smith ran through a set that combined great songs from *XO* (such as "Bled White," "Waltz #2 (XO)," and "Bottle up and explode") with songs from his solo albums and tracks from the *Good Will Hunting* soundtrack.

Smith's songs sounded wonderful live and had an energy and fullness that is not captured quite as well on his albums.

The songs seemed quicker and seemed to have more dynamics between the instruments. I was surprised to hear the differences and pleased that it sounded so good.

See Sebadoh, Page B6

## Eastwood's latest effort offers redemption, humor

By Rad Hallman  
Old Gold and Black Reviewer

Clint Eastwood's latest directorial and acting effort is a quiet entrance in his catalog, but a thankful return to the narrative strength that was lacking in his more recent films.

Eastwood abandons his tough-guy image for a sort of ludicrous, hapless SOB who womanizes his way through life to the point where he is sleeping with his newspaper editor's wife. Steve Everett (Eastwood) is not the most likable of lead characters, but when his co-worker dies in a car accident, he must take over her human interest story involving a man who is slated to be executed.

Frank Beachum (Isaiah Washington) was con-

Eastwood never gives up on his story in this film, just as any good director with strong material would never give up on it in favor of making some broader statement.

victed for killing a convenience store clerk and sentenced to die, and Everett assigned the task of doing a final day interview before Beachum is executed. Throughout his years of imprisonment, Beachum has maintained his innocence, and Everett, who believes he has the ultimate journalistic nose for news, starts to believe in Beachum and decides to do some last minute detective work, much to the chagrin of his boss.

*True Crime* could have been many things. It could

See Eastwood, Page B6

