

WHAT'S UP Guide to Arts & Entertainment

CONCERTS
WUSC is presenting its second concert of the year at 7 p.m. at Annie's. The show will feature Rhode Island's Small Factory with Low and local group Imp. Cost is \$3.

The USC Symphony Orchestra will perform their fall concert Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. at the Koger Center.

CONTESTS
USA Today is beginning its annual search for the nation's best college students. Sixty will be named to the 1995 All-USA Academic Team. The key element will be a student's outstanding original academic or intellectual product. The judges will be influenced by the student's ability to describe that endeavor in their own words. For more information, call Carol Skalski at (703) 276-5890.

Blackboard Entertainment Inc. presents "The America's College Video Competition" sponsored by Levi's 501 jeans. Calling all college students, grab a camcorder and do something! Speak out on issues of your generation for \$10,000 in cash awards. Create an original short-length video that tells your story. Be funny, serious or stupid, but most of all be creative. Deadline is March 15, 1995. Call (415) 974-6844 for information.

Evian issues an open call to decorate a special edition bottle with its contest inviting amateurs and professionals to submit a design or toast that conveys the theme, "Evian Toasts the Culinary Arts." The winning artwork and toast will appear on a limited edition glass bottle of Evian Natural Spring Water available to restaurants next spring. Entries must be submitted to Evian, c/o Ketchum, 220 East 42nd St., 12th floor, New York, NY 10017 by Nov. 30, 1994. All entries with proper address and information will be returned and for further information call 1-800-633-3363.

Mangajin Magazine presents the Fourth Annual BABEL International Japanese/English Translation contest open to any resident of the United States or Japan whose name has never been credited as translator or co-translator in any publication. To participate, entrant must translate a one-page essay from Japanese to English. The essay to be translated can be found along with complete information in issue #39 of Mangajin magazine. Further questions on contest rules should be directed to the Kawamura Cultural Foundation at (212) 808-5335 or fax (212) 697-4738.

LECTURES
International Programs for Students is offering lively multicultural talk, free food and an informal discussion, "What is Pornography? Different Culture=Different Definitions" Tuesday at 7 p.m. in Russell House 207.

Libby Larsen, one of America's foremost composers, will give a public lecture Wednesday at 1:30 p.m. in Fraser Hall in USC's School of Music. Her lecture will feature discussions about her compositions and the art of music writing. After the lecture, Larsen will visit with USC music students to provide critique and commentary of their compositions.

"Rainforest Conservation and the Search for New Jungle Medicines" will be presented by Mark Plotkin, author of "Tales of a Shaman's Apprentice," Monday, Nov. 21 at 6 p.m. in the USC Law School auditorium.

MOVIES
Nickelodeon theatre presents Allie Light's "Dialogues With Madwomen" in its Southern Circuit series at 8 p.m., Tuesday. Southern Circuit allows students and film lovers to engage in face-to-face dialogue with some of today's leading film- and videomakers.

MUSEUMS / GALLERIES
McKissick Museum
The USC art department faculty show is featuring approximately 40 recent works in a variety of media, including paintings, drawings, mixed media, printmaking, photography, watercolors, jewelry and sculpture. The exhibit will run through Feb. 12, 1995.

Columbia Museum of Art
"Richard Estes: The Complete Prints" will run through Dec. 11. This is the first traveling exhibition surveying the print work of photo-realist Richard Estes. Admission is free.

South Carolina State Museum
The museum has introduced a new exhibit, "Brain Teaser," that includes a puzzle so difficult the curator is offering a free museum membership to the first visitor who can solve it.

Rex Ellis, director of museum programs with the Smithsonian's Institution's Division of Arts and Humanities, will join members of the Three Rivers Story Telling Guild for "Tellation! The Night of Storytelling" from 7-9 p.m., Saturday. Storytellers will relate tales from mountain, African and European traditions. The program is free.

PLANETARIUM
"Season of Light" at the Gibbs Planetarium is open. The show begins with the winter solstice and examines how ancient cultures celebrated this dark time with their warmest and brightest holidays of the year.

POETRY READING
The third annual Benefit Poetry Reading featuring poets with local roots will be held at the Nickelodeon Theater Wednesday at 7 p.m.

TELEVISION
A series of discussions about education in South Carolina will be shown on SCETV Tuesday at 8 p.m. in "Conversations on Education."

"The World of Jim Henson" is a tribute that looks at all the dimensions of this puppeteer's work, from his Muppets—Miss Piggy, Kermit the Frog and Big Bird—to his other fantastic creations for film and TV on SCETV at 9 p.m., Nov. 23.

THEATER
Drayton Hall Theatre USC will present "Eastern Standard" through Dec. 2.

WORKSHOPS
Irina Koipakova will lead a classical ballet workshop from Nov. 18-20. This is the first of a guest artist series by the USC department of theatre, speech and dance.

Play Time

The We're Not Your Mother Players take their cues from the audience in an evening of improv comedy

By Meredith Turner

An old-fashioned improv variety show, such as the one Puppet Regime hosted last Saturday night, is just the sort of diversion one needs from a week of term papers, all-nighters and pop-quizzes. Luckily, after having recovered from an all-nighter by sleeping all day, my roommate and I awoke refreshed and eager to attend the 11 p.m. show.

The show began with a tranquil solo played by Bryan Maharnes on the sitar. Then, almost giving the audience entertainment whiplash, the headlining act, The We're Not Your Mother Players, reclaimed the stage where they performed before moving to Trustus Theatre. The players, James Carmine, Holli Poole, Jayce Tromsness, Amy Dietz, Mindi Blackburn, John Bailey, John Cline, Patrick Holland, Thom Penn, Alex Smith and Lauren Scudder, were greeted with wild applause from the audience.

Master of Ceremonies and Puppet

Regime President James Carmine swung the show into action by asking for suggestions from the audience for a skit, "Stop the Action," in which the skit was periodically stopped and the audience was left to decide what happened next.

The next skit, "I Should Have Said," required the players to change the last thing they said at the sound of a clap. When debating the meaning of the prize in a cereal box, for example, John Bailey states that "the prize is the answer to life,"—clap—"the prize is the answer to the questions on the Cosmo quiz that tells me if I'm a good lover or not."

Another audience favorite involved keeping a fairy tale story line going. At the audience's suggestion, five players were required to keep the story line of "The Frog Prince" going, each contributing to the story in the style of the literary genre assigned to them by the audience. The genres were French Renaissance, Gone With the Wind, Harlequin Romance, Sci-fi and Western. If a player failed to continue the story in their genre, they were forced

THE PRIZE IN A CEREAL BOX IS...

"The Prize is the answer to life"

(Clap.)

"The prize is the answer to the questions on the Cosmo quiz that tells me if I'm a good lover or not."

THE "I SHOULD HAVE SAID" GAME



Photo courtesy of Benson Theater
Brian Maharnes and his sitar complemented the We're Not Your Mother Players improvisational comedy at the Benson theater Saturday night.

to leave the stage to the screams of "Die!" from the audience.

Without a doubt, the highlight of the show was the finale: a Wilson Pickett R&B doo-wop about a subject from the card catalog. The audience chose history. Thom Penn began the doo-wop with the profound question, "What do you mean the War of 1812 was fought in 1810?" John Bailey then chimed in with the suggestion to "just follow the time line," and James Carmine sang the blues about losing his syllabus.

After a five-minute intermission, Bryan Maharnes took the stage once

again with his original one-act play, "A Poet Named Raisin Head." Maharnes, currently on a tour of the Southeast, tailors each show to the town where he is performing. The play, a spoof of Frankenstein, involved numerous references to Columbia and the Carolina campus.

A little after 1 a.m., my roommate and I began our trek back to the dorm implemented with a whole new perspective on cereal boxes, fly's legs and time lines. Delightfully zany, energizing and witty, The We're Not Your Mother Players are comedy improv at its best.

Comedy is a 'State' of mind

The too-hip-for-you troupe brings skit comedy to MTV

LUPE EYDE Carolinal Editor

In South Carolina, the words "The State" brings to mind the Columbia newspaper, but mention them to a college student or any MTV junkie, and they're bound to break into an imitation of their favorite character from "The State."

What is "The State"? It's the funniest show I've seen in a long time (MTV is lucky to have snagged it). "The State" is the stuff of inside jokes and late-night silliness. With characters like Barry and Levon (\$240 worth of puddin', oh yeah) and Doug (I'm outta here), they've brought hope to a bleak-looking TV comedy horizon. But facing mixed reviews from comedy critics everywhere, the guys (and girl) from "The State" want to set the record straight—they're not an American "Kids in the Hall." The only similarity the shows

share is the format and the funny factor, something dinosaur "Saturday Night Live" with one funny moment a season and weird-gone-weirder "Kids in the Hall" are beginning to lose.

Michael Showalter, Ken Marino and Michael Ian Black are three members of "The State" I interviewed to dispel the myths and rumors that surround this controversial comedy troupe.

"Someone started saying we met at NYU in 1988," Marino explained. "But really we were all lost in New York and ended up in an S & M bar in the Village. We were sitting there chained to the wall and realized 'Hey, this works!'"

The rest, as they say, is history.

One of the biggest misconceptions is that "The State" was created by MTV, but in reality, they do everything themselves.

"We were hired to do some of the skits on 'You Wrote It, You Watch It,'" Showalter said. "After that, MTV liked us so much they gave us a closet to work in and create a show."

Each of the 11 members of "The State" contribute with ideas—they produce, direct, write, edit and perform all their own stuff. They run their ideas by Lorne Michaels, and if he thinks it's funny, they do it. This approach has paid off because not only is "The State" starting its new season in January 1995, but they now have two closets.

"We want to do everything: TV, movies, you name it," Showalter said.

Given some of the movies from old SNL skits, like "Coneheads" and "It's Pat," I hope that if "The State" does movies, they pick a good character. But, its only been a year since their debut and already "The State" has come a long way, so catch the reruns now. In January, check out "The State" Sundays at 11 p.m.

I'm outta here.

MTV's The State is, clockwise from top, Thomas Lennon, Kerri Kenney, Todd Holloubek, Michael Jann, Ken Marino, Ben Garant, Michael Ian Black, Joe LoTruglio, Michael Showalter, David Wain and Kevin



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