

Student Musician Entertains in Gallery Lounge

By Sharon Olmstead

The Gallery Lounge was quietly filling up with students, faculty, and staff on January 25 for the noon-time concert. An attractive, dark-blond guy in the front row near the grand piano broke the silence.

"I hope this guy's good!" he said, laughing. Others who knew him laughed too. He was Rich Carpenter, the pianist scheduled for the concert.

He seated himself at the piano, and the music flowed. "I can't say what takes over," he says with sparkling brown eyes. "Especially when I get into a deep song--but it's like my hands are a different person," says the 23-year-old musician with enthusiasm.

"I'm so relaxed when I'm done. It's sort of like self-hypnosis," he says.

Carpenter, who is from Long Island, New York, entertained the large crowd with selections ranging from Beethoven, Broadway hit tunes, to one of his own compositions. He concluded with a song Frank Sinatra made popular, "My Way."

"I like almost any kind of music--hard rock, punk rock, classical, Irish, jazz," he says. "Country is the one thing I despise," and he wasn't exposed to Bluegrass, he says.

Billy Joel and Lionel Richie, his favorite artists, inspire him. "I like love songs and soft music with meaning," he says.

He describes himself as a normally quiet person. "I don't say too much, but I can have a good time," he says. "When I

play, my personality comes out."

During the concert Carpenter sang Billy Joel's song, "You're My Home," a song that he says has very special meaning for him.

There are three things in life that he holds most dear--home and family, religion, and music.

Home and family head the list. "It's number one. Some people say they don't need it," he says, "but you need family."

He talks about his sister, 19, brother, 27, niece, and parents with great respect and love. He says that he, his brother and sister are adopted. "I'm proud of it!" he says.

"I consider myself very

Photo by Sharon Olmstead



Rich Carpenter warms up at the keyboard before performance in the Gallery Lounge

lucky." He says his parents are really great. "I couldn't have made it without them."

Carpenter's father, a retired New York Telephone Company executive, still works as a consultant for the company and does home remodeling. His mother works for AT&T.

Next to his family, his religion is most important, he says. Carpenter, a Roman Catholic, says that it is a big influence in his life.

While he talks about values, he says, "I'm young, but I'm very old-fashioned in mind." He is against divorce and abortion because "it is going against God," he says.

"I'm a pretty religious guy, but I don't force my opinions on others," he says.

"He's a very mature, ethical young man--nice-looking too," says Jeanette Brinker, president of student government.

Carpenter enjoys racketball, golf, and tennis, and says he enjoys theater in New York City, forty-five minutes from his home on Long Island. His house is half a mile from the water where he goes sailing, skiing, and windsurfing. Television doesn't interest him very much. "It limits creativity," he says, and is mesmerizing.

President of Beta Chi, a business club, Carpenter graduated from Nassau Community College before coming to Penn State. A job with Shearson American Express is waiting for him after graduation in May. "I know where I'm going," he says as he talks about his plans as a stockbroker.

Music, a major part of his life, ranks third on his list of priorities. "It allows me to get

away from everything," he says.

As he walks home to Meade Heights from classes, Carpenter says he composes music and lyrics. He began classical piano lessons at 13 with a unique, stern lady teacher in her seventies, Mrs. Stenson.

He has also played clarinet, and he has a large organ at home that he plays. Future plans include guitar and drums, he says.

Carpenter teaches one piano student and practices an hour every day, he says. He enjoys playing at parties and says a short-range goal is to play professionally at night at a piano bar.

But his main goal after graduation in May is to be a stockbroker back home and to find a serious girl with whom he

can have a good life, he says.

"I'm not rushing into anything," he says, and he wants to enjoy his time to himself now. But a relationship is very important to him, he says.

"Relationships do a lot for the music industry--the three stages--falling in love, being in love, and breaking up," he says. He's in the last stage right now, he says.

"I want to find somebody that really cares about me," he says. Carpenter says she will be witty, family-oriented, and will contradict him a little. "Some conflict is good," he says.

It doesn't matter to him if she has a career or not. "She should do what she wants," he says. "A relationship is your home," he says. "If you find the right person, you can do anything--together."

Is There Communism at Capital College?

By Julie Larson

To drink or not to drink, that is not the question. It is evident, whether you attribute it to moral erosion or modern culture, Capital students will drink. The philosophy is an old one, "I drink, therefore I am."

The alcohol policy, implemented in the fall of '86, has taken a drastic toll on school sponsored campus activities. Dance attendance has declined from a romping 300 of last year, to a disappointing 50 of this year. Since no one caught their autumn buzz, the "Autumn Buzz fun", a tradition at Capital, seemed to change its tone this year, implying, "Autumn Wuzz fun - (last year)."

So where are the students? It seems that the

social activities are now strictly private sector ordeals. Socialization is an integral cohesive force between students, students prefer to socialize at events with alcohol, and alcohol is not permitted at school sponsored activities. Therefore, we find students at private campus parties, The Burst, Rose's, and other places where alcohol is provided for a nominal fee.

Whether or not drinking should or should not be used as a stress relieving agent or social catalyst is beyond the scope of my analysis. However, since four classes this semester are studying from Plato's The Republic, I think it is well-timed to point out that the alcohol restriction policies in effect at Penn State are surely the seed of

communism.

Let me explain. (Philosophy teachers may tune out here, lest I display my ignorance to a too critical audience!) Plato's Republic outlines the steps necessary to achieve the ideal (good, just etc.) society. These steps rely, for implementation, on a carefully monitored education of the public. The modern reaction is to associate Plato's ideas with communism.

If we were to ascribe to Plato's method in order to initiate evolution toward the ideal society, we would, then, begin by censoring and imposing restrictions on education.

In The Republic, Plato states that education is comprised of two parts: the arts, "to instruct a man in his quest for

knowledge", and gymnastics, "to tutor his high spirit." (Plato, approx. line 412). He goes on to say that deviation in the education of art and gymnastics produce lust and eventual moral corrosion. (approx. line 405)

Plato asserts that moral, beautiful, and calming art shapes "just men". Miss Piggy and the Smurfs, the art to which this generation has been exposed, could only lead to a neurotic and degenerate society if we were to turn to them in our quest for knowledge.

Next, Plato addresses gymnastics. He maintains that certain gymnastics or "play" shapes "just men". In our Capital society, alcohol is the means by which we tutor our high spirit--therefore alcohol is the modern form of Plato's

gymnastics.

Recognizing that our education system is producing less than Plato's ideal society, those who would strive for Plato's ideal would seek to remove the current arts and gymnastics from the education system.

In light of our new restrictive alcohol policy, and in light of the art to which we are now exposed--by means of the Gallery Lounge and the Sculpture Garden--it must be obvious to all that the most blatant seeds of communism have been planted here at Capital College.

Therefore, if you value democracy, and the further corruption of your morals, we'll see you a Rose's Thursday night!