



Synergy '91 Talent show boasts best of best

By SUSAN TRIMARCHI
Collegian Arts Writer

Contestants in the Alumni Association sponsored "Synergy '91" sang, tap danced and juggled their way to winning cash prizes Saturday night.

Performing for a packed audience in Schwab Auditorium, 18 acts representing varied class divisions competed for nine winning categories.

For winning their class divisions, contestants received \$250, the overall winner received \$500, first runner-up received \$250 and the second runner-up received \$150.

Calling themselves The Ragamuffins, Debbie Damp (junior-theater), Chris Laitta (junior-theater) and Devon Mills (junior-English) won the junior class division and best-of-show awards.

The group, dressed in '30s style, performed a spirited scene and song from the popular musical "42nd Street." The women energetically tap-danced to "Go Into Your Dreams."

Damp said she and the other Ragamuffins decided to audition with a dance sequence after noticing that most of the competitors were singing. She added that being part of the talent show was rewarding.

"Synergy is a positive experience, everyone is supportive and fun," Damp said.

Juggling raw eggs and dispensing witty puns, Brian Fox (sophomore-quantitative business analysis) won

the sophomore class division and first runner-up awards.

Fox said he currently juggles for children's parties in town and is interested in performing at local bars. This summer, Fox will be working as a clown at Great Adventure, a theme park located in New Jersey.

The singing octet, Dreamers of Phi Mu Alpha, took home the cross-class division and second runner-up honors. The group performed the doo-wop numbers, "In the Still of the Night" and "Mary."

Octet member Allen Stevenosky (junior-music education) said the prize money will go toward the recording costs for a compact disc the group is in the process of recording.

Juliette Leon (senior-music/voice performance) won for the senior class

division. In a strong operatic voice, Leon performed "Je veux vivre dans la reve" from "Romeo et Juliet."

Performing on his steel drum to "Rapture and "Pan in Danger," Ian Briggs (freshman-division of undergraduate studies) won for his class division.

In a creative act, Phillip Spoor (graduate-acoustics), winner of the graduate class division, displayed his singing versatility by integrating western and opera singing in "Pal-Yat-Chee."

"Inner Dimensions Jazz Ensemble" from the School of Music opened up the show with "Power House" and remained on stage for the whole performance. Disc jockey from WRSC acted as the master of ceremonies and announced each act.



The Ragamuffins, above, perform a piece from "42nd Street" at "Synergy 91," while Deena Walter and Tom Cunningham, below, rehearse for the talent show.



The Dreamers of Phi Mu Alpha garnered cross-class division and second-runner up honors. The group performed doo-wop numbers.

Lights, sound plague play

By SUSAN TRIMARCHI
Collegian Arts Writer

Distractions plagued Sunday afternoon's performance of the Rodgers and Hammerstein classic, "The Sound of Music."

What could have been a delightful recreation of the 1965 film, was rendered laughable due to harsh lighting and difficulties with the sound.

Theater Review

In several scenes, the spotlight missed centering on the characters. More distractions arose when the characters hugged or danced, and the microphones attached to their clothes muffled dialogue.

The actresses portraying the nuns of the Nonnberg Abbey often overexaggerated their lines. For instance, the nuns' argument over Maria's behavior was unconvincing and delivered flatly.

However, by the second act, the acoustics improved and the performers seemed more comfortable.

The von Trapp children, students of the Cincinnati School for the Creative and Performing Arts, turned in the strongest performances. Standing out was Cory Shafer, who portrayed Kurt von Trapp. Shafer's versatile singing voice added charm to his performance.

Catherine Morin portrayed novice and governess Maria, who changes the lives of the von Trapp family. Morin and the children's interaction was natural and endearing. The children and Morin performed the popular "Do-Re-Mi" with humor and ease.

Morin brought out Maria's gentle but confident personality. Her beautiful singing voice was demonstrated in the sweet "My Favorite Things."

A lack of chemistry between Morin and the Captain von Trapp, played by Thomas Fiscella, made their scenes together seem forced and unbelievable.

The scenes featuring the captain and his friend, the conniving Max Detweiler as played by Larry Reinhardt-Meyer, were much more entertaining. Detweiler delivered his lines with comic timing and Fiscella replied with the perfect amount of sarcasm. The captain's comments about Max's obnoxious ways evoked laughs from the audience.

Although the sets were beautiful, the stage was cluttered and prohibited the characters to freely move about on the stage. The party scene at the von Trapp villa made this painfully obvious.

"Sixteen Going on Seventeen," the duet between the character Rolf Gruber, played by recent Penn State graduate Keith Merritt, and Liesl, played by Andrea Drobish, displayed the strong singing ability of both performers.

Although technical errors were distracting, strong singing performances redeemed an otherwise lamentable show.

Scottish Orchestra plays disparate styles

The Scottish Chamber Orchestra graced the Eisenhower Auditorium stage Friday night, demonstrating its ability to perform a variety of musical styles.

Instrumentation was light for the first piece on the program, Stravinsky's "Concerto in E-flat for Chamber Orchestra." The stage was set with a few strings and winds, and unlike the traditional concerto form, this piece featured the violin section rather than a single instrument.

The violins played in a vigorous bowing style and easily made transitions to the lighter pizzicato, or plucking, phrases. The strings managed to keep

this piece moving while still remaining delicate.

Classical guitarist Christopher Parkening was the guest soloist for the next piece, Rodrigo's "Concierto de Aranjuez." Parkening played beautifully on this Spanish work, often establishing dialogue with the orchestra's solo instruments.

The orchestra did a fairly good job of scaling down its dynamics so as not to overpower the guitar, but at times it was difficult to hear the solo part. The nature of the auditorium had much to do with this since Eisenhower is not the most suitable site for a solo guitar performance.

After the piece, Parkening was called back to

the stage for an encore. He performed a short Spanish work, but the audience demanded more. He came back one more time to play a piece that he dedicated to the legendary guitarist and mentor Andres Segovia.

The concert closed with Beethoven's "Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Op. 36." This was by far the most dramatic piece on the program and was highlighted by the brilliant conducting of Jukka-Pekka Saraste.

Conducting without a score in front of him, Saraste took on a major interpretive role as he led the orchestra through the driving movements of

Concert Review

the symphony. The young conductor directed the group with great intensity and sharp body movements.

The near capacity crowd obviously appreciated Saraste's performance as they called him back to the stage for several curtain calls.

— Michael Florio

Goodwill and music unite for a good cause

By JENNIFER PENN
Collegian Arts Writer

Goodwill will combine with good music Friday night when a national touring band raises money for a former University track team member who was paralyzed in a diving accident two years ago.

All proceeds from Beat Surrender's benefit show, which starts at 8:30 p.m. in the HUB Ballroom, will be donated to the Tom Kleban Recovery Fund, which was founded by University track coaches in January 1990 to help Kleban and his family financially after his accident. The Student Union Board is sponsoring the event.

The benefit was organized after Paul Souza, the band's lead singer and a 1983

University graduate, heard about the fund from University track coach Harry Groves. Souza then had the band's agent contact Kevin Sinagra, head of the Student Union Board.

"When I heard about Tom and what happened, it struck me that the only thing to do was to go back (to the University) and try to help," Souza said.

Souza was a member of the track team with Kleban's brother, Rich. He didn't know Tom Kleban personally but said he felt compelled to try to help anyway.

"It's a great cause. How often do you get to go to a concert and know that you're helping someone?" Souza said.

An optional \$2 donation will be collected at the door. Sinagra said the board is hoping for an attendance of

about 300 people to raise money for Kleban.

"We'd like to raise \$500-\$600 for him," he said.

Kleban's accident occurred on July 2, 1989, when he dove into a friend's pool and hit an unknown object. He said the money received through donations helps him pay his bills and enables him to buy the special equipment he needs.

"I use some of the money to pay outstanding bills. I have a lot of them, mostly medical bills, and they tend to build up," Kleban said.

Kleban said his most recent purchase was a computer, which helps him with his schoolwork. He added that his recovery is going well.

"Right after the accident I couldn't

move at all, and now I can type my own papers for class," he said.

Kleban, who plans to attend the benefit, wants to put the money raised at the benefit toward buying a Regys bike, a machine which electrically stimulates and rehabilitates the muscles. He said that presently his schedule is filled with therapy.

"I'm in therapy five times a week - rehabilitation three times a week, and the assistant track coach takes me out and works with me twice a week, so they definitely keep me busy," he said. "I'm also going to school part-time."

Recently a few of Kleban's neighbors put together a raffle and raised enough money to buy him a van equipped with a wheelchair lift. "That was great. Now that I have the van, I'm mobile. It's so

much easier to get around now. I can just get in it and go."

Dave Colton, a member of the Nittany Lion Club and treasurer of the fund, will be at the benefit Friday night to accept donations.

"Overall we've raised more than \$40,000 for Tom, and that's with small \$50-\$100 donations from people in the area. We haven't had any major gifts," he said.

Colton said that the fund is supported mainly by individual donations and donations made by Bi-Lo Food Market, N. Atherton Street. For every \$200 in register receipts collected in a box at the store, Bi-Lo donates \$1. Colton said the fund receives checks regularly from the supermarket.

Please see BENEFIT, Page 16.

Bands bring progressive, psychedelic sounds

Blake Babies and The Machine stop off to play their unique brands of music

By GREGG DICK
Collegian Arts Writer

The Blake Babies, a progressive band from Boston, bring girlish voices and plenty of guitar riffs at 8 tonight at Player's, 112 W. College Ave.

The trio features bassist Juliana Hatfield, guitarist John

Stroh and drummer Freda Boner. The group is on a lengthy tour that started in January and should help to support its latest release, *Sunburn*.

Player's was chosen because of its large capacity and allowance for an 18-year-old and older audience. "I'm getting sick of hearing there are no activities for kids under 21," Ted Swanson, the band's State College promoter, said.

"I'm getting sick of hearing there are no activities for kids under 21."

— Ted Swanson
Blake Babies Promoter.

The progressive-oriented band is receiving critical acclaim for *Sunburn*, its second release as a trio.

The Machine will offer psychedelic sounds and a smoke-filled show as it performs the music of Pink Floyd tomorrow night at The Saloon, 101 Heister St.

The Rockland county band features Adam Price on bass, Joe Pascarell on guitar, Todd Cohen on drums and Sarah Gardener on keyboards. Although they don't dress and look like Pink Floyd, the band members' sound is very similar to the legendary band, said Molly Mauch of Cole Publicity, the band's promoter.

Mauch said The Machine offers a smoke and a light show, and develops a rapport with its audience. She said the band may even throw in a Grateful Dead song.

The show will cover Pink Floyd's *Dark Side of the Moon*, *Wish You Were Here*, *The Wall* and some obscure songs, Mauch said.

The Machine does not wish to be known as a tribute band, but simply "a band that enjoys Pink Floyd and gives it the acclaim it deserves," Mauch said.

The Machine is thriving on the music, popularity and image which Pink Floyd exudes. Although the band takes pride in sounding very similar to its influence, it still adds its own creativity to the music.



Boston's Blake Babies will bring their progressive sound to Player's, 112 W College Ave, tonight at 8.

The Machine