‘Chickens’ clucks its way to spring musical fame

By Fred Shackelford
Staff Writer

David Burke, assistant professor of theater and director of the theater, describes the Union University Players’ upcoming spring production as “a barnyard musical comedy.” The “rock-a-billy” musical, according to Burke, is a Canadian play entitled “Chickens” by Lucia Frangione. It will premiere in America at Union in April.

The plot of the comedy, according to cast member John Highsmith, is the story of a farmer by the name of Pal (played by Tim Powell) and his wife, Liza (Heather Duncan). “Nothing’s going right with performances to take them to the fair and enter them in a contest. Liza is fed up with her husband’s shenanigans and decides that if the chickens all don’t win first place [in the contest] she will kill them,” he said.

Highsmith describes his character, His Nibs, as an “impotent, squirrely, eccentric, moronic chicken. He’s not good for breeding.”

At a garment party, asked about costumes, Burke said that “[T]he costuming will be somewhat symbolic—with probably a few feathers here and there.”

This musical is not all about sterile chickens and crazy cackling. According to a promotional flier. “This [production] does have a serious side,” Highsmith said.

Other cast members include Jonathan Hickey as the arrogant rooster Alphonse. Joye Johnson as Stewer and Jennifer Davis as Butterball. The chorus is comprised of Jack Cordwell, Mary Catherine Bond, Jill Hutchinson, Ben Wilkerson, Sarah Myers and Chris McNeese. Burke also chose Jimmy Duke to be the assistant director.

The musical will play April 4-11 in the W.D. Powell Theatre with a dinner theater performance on April 4 and 8. There will be no showing on April 9.

Chickens

Models pose new art opportunity

By Jeremy “Moose” Langston
Staff Writer

The Union Art Department has a job for anyone looking for some extra cash. Signs directing you to a career in modeling offer a $5 an hour stand-up fee.

This is a chance for students to become today’s muse for tomorrow’s Leonardo da Vinci.

Enterprising students who have free time from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Mondays, Wednesday and Fridays, or noon to 3 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays can become a Union University model.

“The models need to understand the seriousness of the job,” senior art major Jennifer Thompson said. She stressed the importance of being able to stand still during this time.

The job does have its shortcomings, but Thompson said the rewards of becoming a work of art far outweigh the means. She said drawing the human figure is one of the final crossroads to becoming a skilled artist.

There are some do’s and don’ts to becoming a Union art model. No models are nude, and it is not a fashion contest. Men must wear shorts, and women are required to wear a one-piece bathing suit.

Besides the obvious cash benefits to modeling for the art department, there is also the fringe benefit of seeing yourself on display in the art exhibition hall any day of the week.

So go down to the art department, relax in a chair and get paid.

As Michael Mallard, chair of the art department, said “A happy model makes for a better art session.” So smile and let the artists do the work.

Bach’s Lunch packs a punch with performances

By Wendy Wexler
Staff Writer

Union University’s music department will present its eighth annual Bach’s Lunch recital series with four 30-minute recital performances at noon on the four successive Wednesdays before Easter.

The first recital occurred Feb. 26. The March 5, 12 and 19 recitals will be held in the G.M. Savage Memorial Chapel.

This year’s recital coincides with the 200th anniversary of Franz Schubert’s birth and the 100th anniversary of Johannes Brahms’ death and will feature many of their works. Selections from Johann Sebastian Bach will also be performed.

The series features Union music faculty and special guests. Dr. Linda Shipley, a pianist from Nashville, performed piano music from Schubert Feb. 26. Shipley is also an authority on the music of Giuseppe Ferrata and presented his music Feb. 25.

March 5, Dr. Terry McRoberts, associate professor of music, and Dr. Ron Boud, professor of music, will play piano and organ music from Bach, Brahms, and Johann Walther.

Internationally recognized soprano Julianne Baird will perform March 12. Georgia Wellborn, associate professor of music, said Baird “is one of the best known and most respected sopranos who sings music from the time of Bach and Handel.”

Baird will be accompanied on piano by Dr. David Dennis, associate professor of music. Baird will also perform March 11 at 8 p.m. in the chapel as part of the Lyceum Series.

Dr. David McClune, professor of music, with the Union instrumental faculty and members of the Jackson Symphony, will present a program of chamber music March 19.

Wellborn said the series was created by the Union University music department in 1990 based on a European tradition of holding organ recitals at midday during the period before Easter.

The series is open to the public and is being publicized in Jackson, Memphis and the surrounding region.

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Announcements

- The fifth annual Creative Writing Workshop will be held Friday, March 7 with guest speaker Charlie Jones. Registration begins at 9 a.m. in the PAC in front of the G.M. Savage Memorial Chapel.
- The Torch is accepting entries for this year’s publication in poetry, essays and artwork. Entries can be submitted to Dr. Ernest Pinson in the English department until March 10.

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