SPOTLIGHT SHINES ON RIDER IDOL

Sophomore Jamaal Harris lets lyrics lead him to victory

By Lacey Korevec
Features Editor

American idols Kelly Clarkson and Ruben Studdard may be facing a bit of competition in the future.

Last Friday night, Oct. 3, at the Bronc Buffet’s Rider Idol competition, senior Jamaal Harris wowed judges with his talent and walked away a winner.

For Harris’ first-place performance he sang an original song called “What’s My Name?” which featured second-place winner junior Andre Middleton, also known as Epiphany Blue, singing the chorus. Third place went to freshman Mona Kanwar.

“You’ve just got to go out and try your best,” said Harris. “I was happy that everyone took to my music as well as they did and that the judges thought what they did of it. I was just grateful.”

Harris said that the competition from his fellow contestants was strong.

“I thought all of the performances were outstanding,” said Harris. “I was surprised that I won.”

Student Government Association (SGA) President Ryan Kimble was one of the students who worked on creating the event, which was already being planned towards the end of the summer.

“Over the summer we wanted to make Broncotoberfest fun and we wanted to start a new tradition. We wanted to come up with our own theme for the SGA Bronc Buffet,” said Kimble. “So we decided to do Rider Idol. From there it probably took about a month and a half to plan the whole thing.”

The try-outs began on Sept. 25 and lasted two days. Kimble said that of the 24 students that auditioned 12 moved forward to the final competition.

“It was a closed try-out because we didn’t want people to feel nervous,” he said. “Only 10 people showed up for the final. There was a lot of advertisement but I think we could have gotten a lot more people to try-out.”

About 600 people attended the event, which was already being planned towards the end of the summer.

“I only heard about three people sing,” said Kevin. “It was really good, but I don’t know who won. I only heard about three people sing,” she said.

Although Vaughn did not stay long, she said that she did enjoy the event, but does not think that it should take place annually.

“The whole American Idol thing is kind of played out so doing the Rider Idol thing every year would be kind of repetitive and stupid,” she said.

After helping to organize the event, senior Shawn Hammer said that he went to watch and show his support.

“I think it went really well. I went with my girlfriend and we had a great time listening to all the contestants,” said Hammer. “It was better than I had expected. I knew that we had a lot of talented people singing but I was kind of blown away by it.”

From what he saw, Hammer said that those students who did attend seemed to really enjoy the event.

“Everyone was really interested in it. There was a lot of applause for all of the contestants and I think they influenced the judges decision a bit,” said Hammer.

Some of the judges included Kimble, Professor of English Harry Naar and Area Director Dennis Rets. Hosting the show was senior Nigel Francis, who said that he enjoyed watching everyone compete.

“I just found it surprising how the people who did their original pieces came in the top two and kind of steered away from the cliché ballads that everybody usually sings,” said Francis. “The winner was a rapper and the guy who came in second was a poet. So that was kind of cool. I think the judges did a good job.”

Depending on how far his music career takes him, Harris said that he will likely participate in future on-campus talent events, perhaps not for the sake of competing, but just to let students hear what he is working on at that time.

“Myself and Andre are both working on albums and they should both be coming out in 2004,” said Harris. “The title of my album so far is The Jersey Devil. Both of them will be available around campus so look out for them.”

New professor’s work goes beyond the classroom

By Marcus Steggers
Staff Writer

Often, students think that professors do not work hard. Some might think they have no life other than grading papers and tests.

Dr. Cynthia Lucia, however, a first-year English professor at Rider, is one of many teachers who scramble between teaching and outside work. When she is not in the classroom she is co-editor of Cineaste, a magazine devoted mainly to the art and politics of film.

“I became a professor because I studied film before entering graduate school at NYU,” she said. “Well, I’ve not necessarily studying it.”

She has a master’s degree in English and literature, and a master’s in English and literature.

“I became a professor because I studied film before entering graduate school at NYU,” Lucia said. “I really care about teaching. and would love to get students as excited about it as I am,” Lucia said. “I really love the subject and would love to get students excited about it as I am,” Lucia said.

“I really love teaching. In a way Rider is the best of both worlds because I can do my research and my own writing, but I can also spend time thinking about how to teach and be in an atmosphere where people respect that.”

Finding time to prepare classes and do scholarly writing is difficult to balance, Lucia said, but it’s certainly worth making time for.

“I guess I don’t sleep a lot. We meet on Sundays when none of us are working at our other jobs,” she said. “What do we do is we write, we edit and we contact authors about writing for us, all in between the work we are doing.”

One of working on Cineaste, Lucia is in the middle of writing a book called Women on Trial: Female Lawyers in the Hollywood Courtroom of the 1980s and the 1990s.

“There were about two to four films in which female lawyers were the protagonists. It became clear to me that it’s because law itself is such a masculine area, in the sense that laws, at least in this country, were created by men,” she said. “What’s interesting about these movies is that on the surface they seem to be feminist because they’re about female lawyers, but ultimately they are not really feminist at all and some of them can almost be seen as anti-feminist.”

Lucia, who commutes every day from New York City, taught for 10 years at New York University (NYU) and also at Yeshiva University as an adjunct for three years, before joining Rider’s staff.

Born and raised in Pottsville, Pennsylvania, Lucia said that she was interested in studying English and literature.

“I went to college in western Pennsylvania at the Indiana University of Pennsylvania. I went to graduate school at NYU. I went there because I wanted to move to New York, so I’ve been there ever since,” she said.

After graduating as an English major from Indiana University of Penn., Lucia said she switched her focus to film before entering graduate school at NYU.

“I loved literature. I loved narrative. I got a master’s degree in English and literature,” she said. “Well, I’ve always loved movies, and I thought studying film was fun because I could talk to people about films who are not necessarily studying it.”

Her plans for the future go even beyond writing a book, she added.

“I would like to be able to create new courses in film that move beyond the introductory courses,” she said. “I would love to get involved in the gender studies program and, at some point, have a student organization devoted to going to see films in New York City.”

Lucia said that she enjoys working at Rider because it is a pleasant experience.

“I’ve only been at Rider now for a little over a month and I really like being here,” she said. “I think my colleagues have been really welcoming and the students are terrific, they are so nice and fun to talk with and be in class with. So far Rider is living up to my expectations.”

Features

Sophomore Jamaal Harris, winner of the Rider Idol competition, went home on Oct. 3, with $200 in Quaker Bridge mall money. Harris is currently in the process of putting together an album to be released in 2004.

Freshman Christina Hofstetter gets some extra help from Dr. Cynthia Lucia. Outside of teaching Lucia is the co-editor of a film magazine called Cineaste.

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