PALS’ ‘HOONYAHAA’ HAS ENOUGH OF EVERYTHING

By CLAIRE PLUNGUIAN

“Hoonyahaa,” the annual PAL effort at terpsichorean prestidigitation, blends pretty faces, good dancing (even the freshmen are good), and echoes of Dylan Thomas for a unified and sparkling show. It definitely shows the improvement in polish that moving to Hamman Hall gives a production.

Ann Bartlett as the local lady of ill-repute does a very good job on her songs. Her solo about her past lovers done without accompaniment is very touching. Frank Dent, full of poise, as usual, makes advances to a mop with a lovely leer. It’s too bad he’s not allowed to keep his double standard of being a proper Englishman to his wife, and quite another sort to Bartlett, for he sings about his various paradises with such obvious gusto. Judy Cole, the other vertex to the triangle, holds down her corner with the proper amount of ladylike behavior.

Sophistication, Plus

Joan Whitten chases Don Coney with a little too much sophistication, but Coney makes up for this by his complete lack of it. He is completely abject in his number with the crew as he complains of his nasty captain. But he always says “Aye, Aye, sir,” no matter what he’s asked to do. The freshman chorus line in this number does one of the most well-coordinated dances I’ve seen on a Rice stage. Nancy Maxwell in the chorus is really a good comedienne.

Winsome and Shy

Fran Murphy, as the outcast daughter of Bartlett, is amazingly winsome and shy at the beginning of the show (how much direction did that take?). But she soon manages an affair with that dashing bounder, Mike Reynolds, and regains her pertness.

If you care for highbrow poetry, clever songs, good dancing, sophisticated sets, or some sexy costumes, you’ll find that the Burlesque has enough of everything in it to please all.