

## arts

## Show fires two barrels

Shawn Phillips

It was a case of a double barrelled concert with the warm performance being of a calibre equal to the main attraction. From the response he received throughout the evening, it was easy to see that Shawn Phillips is a large and very strong presence in Edmonton. Many will remember him from about four years ago, complete with long hair and a perennial hat.

Phillips, who is now 36, has matured a lot and now has a different outlook on his music and the way he performs it. "I don't have any pretensions and I don't fuck about. I did the opening at tonight's concert because I'm in debt and need the bread. I don't care if the audience comes while I'm doing a sound check they did tonight because it gave me a chance to talk with them."

The audience at the Jubilee Auditorium Saturday night gave Phillips overwhelming ovations nearly every number. He sings angry songs and although an excellent performer, the concert seemed to drag and was somewhat boring. While Phillips is a master guitarist and has a credible vocal range, he did not play it as well as he might have. Afterwards he talked about when you are doing a warmup you can't do a full range of songs.

You have to get out there, and get them going and get off." (The audience called for an encore, but the house lights were turned on before Shawn could get back out on stage.)

His performance ended with a display on the six and twelve string double guitar. After a 10 minute fantasy he used his special acoustic effects and set up the machine so that it continued to play while he stood up, walked to the front of the stage and took a bow.

Shawn likes to sing and play jazz and in the future his music will tend to go in this direction. "I'm trying to create an art form in a business world. It's hard. I'm on the road for nine months of the year, and three months are spent at my home in Naples, Italy. I plan on changing record companies. There won't be any more commercial compromises just for the sake of selling albums."

If Shawn Phillips is able to do all of these things, and there is no reason why he shouldn't, he will become a unique entity in the music world. He will be a musician dedicated to improving the art as he sees and understands it. By then, with nearly two decades of experience behind him, a full evening of music with him, will be an experience indeed. Don't miss it.

## Murray McLaughlin

by Brent Kostyniuk

From the time the Farmer Song first came on the air, it has always been associated with my Uncle Alex. The image is so real that the question had to be raised. What inspired the song? "I met your uncle."

Big city kid Murray McLaughlin writes about a lot of things, but unlike a lot of other singers, he writes about things he has experienced. During his performance on Saturday night it became very clear that there is no false feeling in his music. Many of his songs tell of the troubles of alcohol abuse. "A lot of the people I know drink to excess because they have gotten into situations they can't get out of. The only solution they see is drinking. There are a lot of Saturday night drunks who go out and punch the shit out of someone. That's dangerous. More likely though is that he'll go out and get the shit beaten out of himself."

Train Song, one of the numbers Murray did on Saturday night is about his experience travelling with a friend in years gone by. That was back in the late sixties and many things have changed since then. "The economy was different back then. There were a lot of people dropping out and it wasn't so hard. I never panicked because I don't believe in that kind of think. I always worked for whatever I got. A lot of things helped me decide to get out and travel around. Things like Travels With Charlie by Steinbeck. They give you that sense of romance and adventure that you want to get out and try for yourself. But kids are different now. They just want to get out and make money as soon as they can. They don't even want to go to university. They're just like Californian kids, healthy, into fashion..."

There has been a good deal of talk about a supposed conflict between McLaughlin and Canada's folk hero, Gordon Lightfoot. Murray explained that the entire matter was the fabrication of an over zealous reporter. "Gordie and I are friends and will continue to be unless something unforeseen happens. The whole thing started when we did the Olympic Benefit concert together. Somebody wrote that I stole the show and then started to build up a story out of nothing."

Another myth which has grown up around Murray McLaughlin is that he is trying to promote a 'Big Bad' image. Once again this is the work of creative writers. "Sure I went through a lot and learned a lot on the street. I suppose I could find you a drug dealer here in Edmonton. I could probably have you killed. But that isn't very hard to do. Everybody learns how to do it now watching Telly Savalas."

Murray McLaughlin sometimes seems colorless, but in reality his character of today is one which has been shaped by having had real experiences, something which most young people are unable or unwilling to do. "I like to try out experiences, and travelling around was a part of that. But you can't do it now because its not that groovy anymore. My stance on music is hard-nosed realism."

## CLASSIC NOTES

by James Leslie

Many composers have written musical scores to literature, especially poetry. Claude Debussy wrote such a score to the poem of the same name — *Prelude a "l'Après-midi D'un Faune."*

The composer is faced with an awesome problem. Debussy, by choosing this particular poem, found it necessary to describe both the Faun's thoughts and the many objects they centered on. He accomplished his task by using a curious blend of romantic and impressionistic devices.

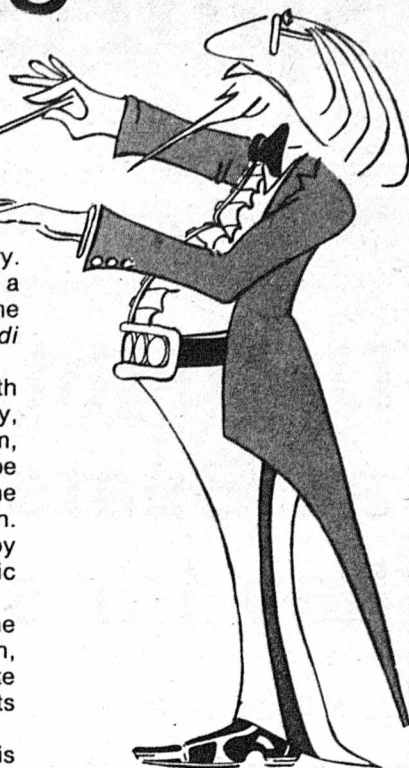
The work opens with the awakening of the Faun. The faun, a sensitive and passionate creature, tries to recall the events of the previous day.

The awakening of the faun is carried as the principle theme by the flutes. Groping for yesterday, a vision of nymphs or golden goddesses comes to him on the delicate string phrases. After a time, the faun loses the vision in the fury of a full orchestral passage.

Again, a vision appears to the faun. This time the flutes bring ideas of a serene lake with oboe guided waterfowl gliding across the lake. A short harp phrase carried this fleeting vision away from the faun, only to be lost in another tumultuous orchestral passage.

The faun struggles to remember the past day once again. The flutes return, bringing visions of fields and flowers. Horns and woodwind ripple across the field like a gentle breeze. The breeze becomes more and more intense until this vision is lost in a gale.

The faun now drifts back to sleep, only to awaken to the



principle theme of the flutes once again. No new vision appears, and as the faun struggles to remember, the strings enter and confuse his thoughts. The strings abate suddenly, and as the flute returns to slowly fade, the memory is lost forever.

Debussy uses the impressionistic technique of grouping his descriptive instruments extensively. He ingeniously used those groups not immediately involved in describing the thoughts of the faun to confuse to terminate the visions. The uncertain, wandering characteristic of the work is directly related to tonality patterns originally explored by Brahms. Debussy allows the key to wander in and between E and C major, thereby creating a very indecisive, wandering atmosphere.

*Prelude a L'Après-midi D'un Faune* is recorded on Deutsche Grammophon 138 923.

## But is it innocent?

by Alan Filewod

In all fairness, I must admit my response to Walterdale's current production William Archibald's *The Innocents* is jaundiced. I fled during the intermission.

*The Innocents* is not a good play. I am at a loss to understand why anyone would even consider producing it, when it may be enjoyed as a feature film, and in original form, as Henry James' novel *The Turn Of The Screw*.

With all due respect to Mr. James, it must be noted that *The Innocents* has little in common with his novel. James wrote a disturbing psychological horror story of spiritual possession. He wrote it with meticulous care. Archibald has reduced the novel to a trite and unbelievable melodrama. In his artless hands, the character has become caricature, and if the actors in this production were unable to extract any breath of life from their roles, it is not solely because they did not seem to try.

I hope I shall never again have to see an eight year old child deliver her lines upstage with her back to the audience.

It is too easy to write a scathing review of such an inept play, of course, and I expect that readers will justly question the value of such a notice. I have been informed by a colleague that nobody takes Walterdale seriously, except for those involved in its production. The group is no different than many amateur companies across Canada who produce mediocre work under the benign gaze of critics who feel that amateur work is excusable in any circumstance. Critics and audiences patronize the amateur theatre out of a sense of obligation rather than delight, just as distant relatives will politely

applaud the first steps of a retarded cousin.

This false standard is unnecessary, and too often the fault of the amateur company. Yes, the faults of *The Innocents* are excusable. The group lacks competent directors, designers, actors, and technicians. So much is obvious. But I would like to question why we so readily permit the amateur theatre in Canada to assume a third-rate standard. It was not so long ago when amateurs provided the best and most exciting theatre in this country, through the groups affiliated with the Dominion Drama Festival in its heyday.

Amateur theatre was considered a potent force, and a valuable alternative to the suffocated professional drama of the day. Amateurs recognized the fact that drama and theatre belong to the community, and that the standards of success were not only the standards of the Samuel French catalogue. (For those unaware of that catalogue, Samuel French Inc. holds the rights to many hundreds of second-rate plays, available at nominal royalty rates. They will even supply production kits with diagrams of the set, appropriate recorded music, costume hints — in short, anything they presume the amateurs incapable of creating. It's the Muzak of theatre.)

There is no excuse for a play like *The Innocents*, which should never have been written in the first place. But more to the point, there is no excuse for this sort of anti-art that Walterdale perpetuates. I hope that there is some faction within the Walterdale organization that recognizes the theatre as a lively and exuberant art which can be meaningful for participant and spectator alike. There is no

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**Leon Ledbone**

8:00 PM SATURDAY DECEMBER 4  
 Tickets at SUB Box Office (HUB Mall)  
 SUB Theatre Tickets \$5.00  
 a SU Concert presentation.

**CINEMA**

STUDENTS UNION / UNION DES ETUDIANTS

THURS. NOV 25

FRI & SAT NOV. 26 & 27

**The Man Who Would Be King** Adult

SUN NOV. 28

SCENES FROM A MARRIAGE Adult NSFC

STAVISKY Adult

SUB. THEATRE SHOWINGS 7 PM / 9:30 PM  
 DOUBLE FEATURES 7 PM