



"I think, therefore I am," declares the long-time Descartes groupie.

Entertainment

"Man, that cat is gone."
-Bill Haley-

Plastic Bertrand From Brussels sprouts...

Stuart Ross

A couple of years ago, I picked up an album with a pouting young punk on the cover. It was practically all in French, and so I understood almost nothing. But I wore that record down quicker than Lesley Gore's career. The album, Plastic Bertrand's *An 7*, with its hit single "Ca Plane Pour Moi", was followed by a second, *J'te Fais un Plan*, as good and as fun as the last. And then came Bertrand's third slab of vinyl, *l'Album*, and I

thought, 'The kid's been swallowed by stardom, another casualty of the disco scene.' After some painstaking translation, I discovered typically weird lyrics, but the music lacked humour and that irresistible pop appeal.

At age 22, Brussels-born Plastic Bertrand, decked out in his pink disco pyjamas and scarf, looks like a cross between Paul Cook and Rene Simard. He carries himself with an air of self-assured arrogance, but he seems friendly enough, explaining how he uses us interviewers.

The Plazz with his fame is like a child with a new toy. But he seems fairly sensible about his future and his music. As he spoke, his baby-fat-infested face emitted a thick French accent that would challenge even Louis Jourdan's suaveness.

I asked him about the fact that many of his fans had no clue as to what he was saying. "For years and years in Europe," he explained, "we received the words in English and did not understand. The lyrics is not important. The sound is important. 'Satisfaction (I Can't Get No)'—nobody knows what it means. It's just the sound—no more."

Still, Plastic would like to record albums in Spanish and English. Up until recently he wouldn't have considered it: "Two or three years ago, I would like to stay in *francais*, like Maurice Chevalier, no? It is that kind of image I would like."

Onstage, Bertrand feigns ignorance of the English language. He is very careful about his image. The Plastic Bertrand the public knows is very plastic. Emulating an old influence, David 'Rodan' Bowie, Plastic Bertrand is merely a creation. "The people who write for me are all people who are very

close to me, who knows me very well. That's important. Maybe the people who write the song are more 'Plastic Bertrand' than Plastic Bertrand. It's clear that when I appear on stage or TV, it's just a part of me. The people who knows me very well feel the true part more than the audience."

Says Bertrand of his surprisingly diverse audience, "I think people react very differently. It depends what is their social attitude. There is no truth in my songs. Everybody has got his own truth. I don't want to play music for a kind of elite. I just want to play for the people. I must be spontaneous, yes? And popular. Like rock and roll."

Someday, Plastic Bertrand would like to achieve the position of the Frank Sinatra of Europe. "I think onstage, Plastic Bertrand is just like Frank Sinatra. I think exactly the same, he and me. His roots are jazz and mine are rock and roll, and that's the only difference."

These days he seems a little too healthy for the role, though. In front of an audience, the resemblance to Rene Simard is embarrassing. But his show is fun, and Plastic is definitely having fun on the stage. Otherwise, he wouldn't be there.

Roll over, Dovzhenko

Natalie Pawlenko

Alexander Dovzhenko has been called "the first poet of the movies." His 1930 film, *Earth*, was shown yesterday in a Curtis Lecture Hall, together with a lecture by guest speaker Marko Carynyk, as part of York's Ukrainian Week celebrations.

A Ukrainian film-maker of the 1930's and 40's, Dovzhenko shared the montage methods of Kuleshov

with Sergei Eisenstein and Vsevolod Pudovkin, but his style was definitely original. Having been a poet, painter, book illustrator, cartoonist, playwright and short story writer, Dovzhenko was able to develop a distinct lyrical cinema. His films abandoned linear construction and realism more completely than Eisenstein's or Pudovkin's.

Characterized by visual

metaphors and vignettes, Dovzhenko's films explore Ukrainian life; its customs, folk-legends, spirit and poetry.

The main theme of *Earth* is the clash between life and death. Rich with imagery and true poetry, the film revolves around the death of an old man, the murder of a young man and the birth of a child. Dovzhenko's portrayal of the universal themes of love, death, life and the fruitfulness of the earth are set against the background of a Ukrainian village in 1929, collectivization and kulak defiance.

Earth was denounced as "counter-revolutionary" and "defeatist", and Dovzhenko became a notable target for the Stalinists. With its artificial famines designed to stop the peasants' resistance to collectivization and its upheavals of industrialization, Stalinism put an end to the immense rise of poetry, drama, cinema and intellectual thought of the 1920's. Dovzhenko's innovative mind was suppressed by the state's continuously narrowing boundaries of art.

Kinnell's vital parts

Peter Robinson

Mortal Acts, Mortal Words by Galway Kinnell. Houghton Mifflin Co., 1980, \$4.95.

"no matter what fire we invent to destroy us,
ours will have been the brightest world ever existing..."
—"The Last Hiding Places of Snow."

Galway Kinnell's new book—his first since *The Book of Nightmares* (1971)—is likely to leave the reader feeling good. Kinnell doesn't dazzle with technical virtuosity or obscure knowledge, but neither does he avoid difficult issues. He confronts estrangement, death and despair without resorting to easy aphorisms or facile sentimentality.

Many of the poems deal with family life. "After Making Love We Hear Footsteps" tells how the poet's son always responds to "heavy breathing/ or a stifled come-cry anywhere in the house" by appearing in the bedroom to ask "Are you loving and snuggling? May I join?" As Kinnell puts it, he is the one whom "habit of memory propels to the ground of his making". It is a narrative told with both warmth and humour.

"The Sadness of Brothers" deals with a dead brother the poet feels he never really knew: "But this morning, I don't know why, / twenty-one years too late, / I imagine him back". Both "Goodbye" and "The Last Hiding Places of Snow" confront the death of his mother, yet even this painful experience leads Kinnell to conclude:

...I have believed
I could wander anywhere,
among any foulness, any contagions,
I could climb through the entire empty world
and find my way back and learn again to be happy.

There are poems on the difficulties of love and friendship, such as "The Apple", "Brother of my Heart" (for the black poet, Etheridge Knight) and "Wait", which takes the form of advice to a friend:

And the desolation
of lovers is the same: that enormous emptiness
carved out of such tiny beings as we are
asks to be filled; the need
for the new love is faithfulness to the old.

Several of the poems in Part II of the book look towards the world of nature. There is a sense of awe and mystery about "The Gray Heron", "Blackberry Picking" and "Kissing the Toad" and one of the most striking, "Daybreak", is an almost magical observation of dozens of starfishes crawling on tidal mud. Kinnell sees them as "enormous, imperfect stars":

all at once they stopped,
and as if they had simply
increased their receptivity
to gravity they sank down
into the mud; they faded down
into it and lay still; and by the time
pink of sunset broke across them
they were as invisible
as the true stars at daybreak.

There is, of course, much more to the book than a short review can possibly cover. Kinnell takes his material from everyday life—family, fishing, memories, friends—and fashions from this a poetry that convinces the reader, through its humanity and intelligence, that whatever "tiny beings" people may be, they matter. Such unqualified optimism may seem naive in today's world, but as long as man survives, Kinnell's values and insights, expressed through his poetry, remain vital.



L to r: Loraso, Lett, Zucker, & Hughes talk Warhol.

Pro show, you know

Roberto Fabes

York's Theatre Department's first production of 1981 was a raging success. *Hide and Seek*, by Lesley Havard, proved itself a solid suspense thriller with screams coming from the audience at the intense moments.

Ron Singer's direction brought out the best in the script. The staging of the play was one of most important aspects of its success, suiting the actors well and doing much to enhance the subtle moods and emotions.

The actors, though, had a hand in the play's success. Their performances maintained an intense energy level, making them appear believable.

Dan Lett does a fine job as Richard Crawford, the man who is fed up with the city and has moved

his family to the purer life of the country. Tony Loraso, as his wife, was somewhat inconsistent. As the pregnant wife who is the victim of the dark secrets of the house in which she lives, Loraso suffers in characterization. Her lack of intensity and concentration rendered her character unbelievable.

It was Mimi Zucker as Vicki Bennet, and Stuart Hughes as Tony Crawford, who stole the show. They performed with such zest and energy, and with such exacting characterization that the audience had no trouble believing them. There was a degree of professionalism in their performances rarely found here at York.

As one of my colleagues said in his review of *Death*, "If you missed (it), you are just a poor square."

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