

Droover's Christmas plays at Cohn

Many Halifax families will soon be looking forward to the opening of Seaweed Theatre's new Yuletide production of **Droover's Christmas**.

Led by Droover the Mover and Macuzzi Suzi with stories, songs, dancing, poetry and music, the troupe will keep Canada on the move during that most special season of the year.

Created and directed by Nova Scotia's well known television producer Rosemary Gilbert, the play is primarily for the enjoyment of youngsters and their families. The presentation introduces many new concepts into the production of children's theatre. Throughout the hour-long show the audience is encouraged to participate fully with the action on stage, all with a view to promoting new skills and growth for those in attendance.

During the play the youngsters will be prompted to foster knowledge of healthy living and nutrition, self understanding, motor skills development, a grasp of the patterns of our environment, problem solving techniques and even a familiarity with the

geography of Canada. Beyond anything else though, **Droover's Christmas** will be just good active fun for everyone.

Further, the play will appeal to a large public, as it will include the talents of a wide range of Nova Scotia's finest young theatrical workers. Featured for example, are Tom Miller's puppet creations, and innovative set designs by Lesley Preston. Also featured will be a lively team of musical movers, better known to Halifax audiences as Miller's Jug.

Droover's Christmas is based upon a concept for television production commissioned by the Canadian Association for Health, Physical Education, and Recreation (CAHPER) and developed by Rosemary Gilbert and Dr. Norman Watts of Acadia University.

Doover and friends will also appear in the new year in a T.V. pilot to be broadcast nationally.

Come and enjoy **Droover's Christmas** at the Rebecca Cohn Auditorium on December 7 and 8. Please contact the Dalhousie Arts Centre for ticket information at 424-2267.



Dal Photo / Dayal

Book damns, praises Smallwood

by Darrell Dexter

Smallwood: The Unlikely Revolutionary by Richard Gwyn is a masterpiece of biographical sensationalism.

The author approaches the Smallwood era with tacit emotionalism designed to cre-

ate a fuller understanding of the man and the time he lived in. Starting with Newfoundland's stormy heritage and the role of its participants, Gwyn insists the reader understands the world that Joseph Roberts Smallwood is to inherit.

He pieces Smallwood's past together with the influences that made Smallwood what he was; a socialist, a populist, a tyrant, a benevolent dictator, and a man of the people. He shows Newfoundland's "JOEY" as an aggressive

newspaper reporter with a zest for the impossible dream and the ability to make it come true.

From the influence of William Ford Coaker, Newfoundland's outport hero of unionism, to Smallwood's luncheons at the rendezvous restaurant which billed itself as "a center for Radicals, Liberals, and Those Who Enjoy Good Eating" the picture is made complete. This scenario is one that Smallwood never rejected and Gwyn points out that at age 67 when Smallwood was asked if he was still a socialist he replied: "I still believe the socialist ideal, more perhaps than I ever did, and I think I will go to my grave with that belief."

Gwyn shows the conflict between the Smallwood ideal and the real consequences of his actions. He says, although Smallwood believed himself to be a socialist, he was in fact a populist and an idealist with the ability to think standing up and the gift to inspire others. The determination with which he fought on the confederation issue where he criss-crossed the island knocking on doors, making numerous speeches each day, to fishermen, loggers and all who would listen, Gwyn catches Smallwood at his best.

Smallwood's daring and determination is shown by Gwyn when he explains how New-

foundland was brought into confederation with only slightly more than 52 percent of the popular vote. Smallwood is pictured as a man of the people who would allow journalists to be upstaged by an outport fisherman with a problem. Yet he, as premier, Smallwood wielded power like a club, handing out patronage where and when he pleased.

Smallwood was an iron-willed mechanic of the future who refused to let facts stand in his way. And when the time came, one who would not let people stand in his way either. Even when times are darkest Smallwood is shown as a believer and it seems that even his mistakes are successes.

Finally we see Smallwood as the compassionate loser who is destroyed by the very society that he creates. Only the outport people, the people who remember the Smallwood of old, come to his rescue and save him from being humiliated at the polls.

Whether or not Smallwood deserves the praise or the criticism that Gwyn lavishes on him in equal measure is a question of history and the agile mind. The author presents a case and argues each point as well as possible.

The end product is a book, although tempered with sensationalism, that is one of a kind about a one of a kind man.



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