

Big letdown from National Ballet

Don Quixote is bad taste for fun and profit

W. Hurst
The prestigious National Ballet of Canada opened its fall season with a production of *Don Quixote*, which could be a huge box office hit. Unfortunately, this new production is a disastrous hodge-podge of little artistic merit.

The ballet's story is so loosely based on Cervantes' 15th century tale that the heroic Don is only an aging stranger who wanders in and out of

the production. The plot, therefore, hangs on the love affair of Kitri and Basilio, the village barber. Although Kitri loves Basilio, her mother wants her to marry the pompous, wealthy Gamache; there is no dramatic tension, however, as the outcome is obvious.

Unencumbered by literary references or a strong story line, a ballet company can showcase prodigious dancing and opulent

production values, as when the National presents *The Sleeping Beauty*. However, this is not possible given the choreography, costumes and sets of this *Don Quixote*.

The choreography is both sparse and poor. Arched eyebrows and snapped fans do not turn mundane turns and tidy lunges into Spanish dance. When they crack whips, clack castenets or slap the ground, the dancers look embarrassed not exotic.

Simplistic steps are constantly repeated and much use is made of arm movements because the feet express so little. Faces go blank when out of the spotlight.

The choreography for Kitri and Basilio consists of three pas de deux, one in each act. Intended to be show-stoppers, these are little more than a jumble of tricks and lifts, with no dramatic reference to the character or plot.

The sets and costumes of *Don Quixote* hold attention because of their unsurpassed ugliness. Gypsy women, in loud orange and black dresses, look like Hallowe'en candies spinning across the stage. In the opening scene, Kitri wears a garish dress trimmed with black pompoms. In the final scene, her tutu looks like a peppermint wafer.

Visual assault aside, the sets and costumes lack the logic of unified style. A street dancer changes from a knee-length dress to a classical (short) tutu, yet her paramour wears the same bolero jacket in the market-

place and at the wedding party, and the design of that jacket is reminiscent of a Wild West show. Four dancers sport point shoes dyed to match their costumes, but no other shoes are co-ordinated this way.

The sets, especially at the opening, are as cocophonous as the costumes.

Beneath the confusion of design, *Don Quixote* has another peculiar quality: the effete Gamache is physically abused and ridiculed by the peasants. Although the pompous wimp is a recurrent character in many ballets, his mistreatment in this production is a singular aberration.

Disturbingly, the cheering audiences remarked "it's good to see a traditional ballet" and "I do love a real ballet." This ballet is neither. This *Don Quixote* is a colossal entanglement of poor choreography and production. One wonders how audiences react when offered a ballet equal to the exceptional talents of the dancers in the National Ballet of Canada.

Rhyming couplets too risque?

In a totally unexpected move, the Ontario Censor Board has slapped the award-winning film, *Poetry In Motion*, with a restricted rating.

The film, scheduled to open tomorrow at the Carlton Cineplex, is a documentary about contemporary North American poetry made by 24-year-old Ron Mann, a former York student.

According to Mann, the Censor Board found the film contained 'excessive amounts of offensive language'.

May have made a mistake

"I'm more suprised than anything else," says Mann. "I phoned Jay Scott (the Globe and Mail film critic) and he called Mary Brown (the head of the Censor Board). She said that she might have made a mistake and agreed to take another look at it tomorrow."

The film will be screened tomorrow, as scheduled and the *Poetry In Motion* Party, featuring rock-poet Jim Carroll will be begin at 9 p.m. at the Ontario College of Art, 100 McCaul Street. The party is open to the public.



Ed Sanders: One of the many well-known poets who will host the Carlton Cineplex screenings of *Poetry In Motion*.

For you canna write a word even, but you show yourself --in the word you choose, and the shape of the letter and whether you write tall or short, plain or flourished...

Prudence Sarn in *Precious Bane*

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LETTERS continued

RADIO YORK...

I would like to state a few things concerning Radio York, our own campus Radio Station. Though many people may still not have heard of it yet, I feel accolades must be given to the two people responsible for the state the station is in today: Andy Holowaty and Kevin Kelley. Of course, they alone are not solely responsible, but it is clear that without their past and present efforts, the station would still be what it was like: a useless husk of a radio station.

These two people have, through the last two or three years, turned the station around. They have spent their own money, summers, and a good deal of their academic time planning, repairing, and running the station. Only now are they receiving payment for their efforts. The station was a messy, deserted room, full of old records that were never played. Now, there is regular programming for six hours a day, five days a week. The direction is progressive and the content is varied. To state it briefly, the station is very near a professional level. Perhaps the only thing the station is lacking is a wide audience. This can be changed.

Actually, changes are being made now. The station reaches its audience through a speaker system. Through abuse, misuse, and lack of use, the speaker system, reaching most JCR's and cafeterias along with some other locations) has fallen into disrepair. New speakers are being added to different locations

on campus--Central Square Bearpit for one. Yet many more repairs are needed. If this station is to be York's, it must reach York students where they congregate. It would be ideal if various administrations, in particular - College Councils - felt it necessary to be tied together by one voice that spoke for the campus - a radio station run by students. Financial assistance would then follow and the station would be thriving with the wider audience. The audience, that is York, would then thrive on what the station could offer, and does offer, music, news, campus events, interviews, and so on. Politicians could use it during their campaigns (maybe that will get the ball really rolling). In any event, I hope that people will consider aiding the expansion of the speaker system as it, the expansion of the station, could invigorate campus life at York.

Greg Kelly

LEGAL FROLIC

Notwithstanding the breakdown of the nuclear family, most of us were raised to show respect to certain institutions, and the individuals associated with them. The police, firemen, and busdrivers are respected because of the obvious services they provide us with. Doctors and lawyers supposed by garner more respect, due to the greater services they may provide as well as the increased prestige connected with their professions. However, many of us find that when

we enter university, and begin to interact with persons holding views radically different from our own, the social auras of certain professions become reduced in our eyes.

It is the case that the touch football league being run by the Student's of York's Osgoode Law School is run in a way so contrary to one of the basic tenets of our society--respect for public or other people's property--that one could hardly imagine that they well soon belong to a group of people we are meant to respect. Their slavish desire to conduct their petty amusements in an unsuitable area which however provides for their optimal convenience has resulted in destruction of several hundred dollars worth of sod, not to mention the appearance of the public part of the campus. The sod had been laid down only in late August, and that it would be an unsuitable area for such games as football was readily apparent in September. After a week or so of destructive play, this unsuitability is even more apparent.

If the young lawyers attending Osgoode are interest in receiving the prestige and respect, as well as the income associated with a profession in law, I would suggest that they begin studying "responsibility" and "consideration" now, and take their games to an area of campus already set aside for this purpose. Convenience and sport are concepts which provide a weak defence for cases of avert vandalism.

Yours,
Andrew Hinshelwood
Geography.

Mirror, mirror
on the wall
who wreaks havoc
on us all?



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