

Play explores women's voice

BY LISA DELONG

"You are even more beautiful in your silence!"

This quotation perhaps best summarizes the central conflict in Dalhousie Theatre Department's current production.

Timberlake Wertenbaker's *The Love of the Nightingale* is a play which explores the literal and metaphorical suppression of the female voice. Based on the ancient myth of Procne and Philomela, the play deals with the power struggles between genders which ultimately result in violence and suppression. Although the myth takes place in ancient Athens and Thrace, Wertenbaker confronts her contemporary audience with questions pertinent to today's society. This device is maintained in Dalhousie's production of the play.

The production of *The Love of the Nightingale* is visually impressive, with a sparse and versatile set bathed in evocative lighting. Director Patrick Christopher has chosen to give his actors a great deal of freedom to create the images in the play. The actors breathe life into the few objects which are present on the stage. The elements of the set are magically transformed; a parachute becomes a ship, water, clothing, and a puppet so convincingly that it is impossible to see it as a parachute! A screen is used to divide the rites of men and women, to create an alternate reality and, in some instances, to distance the audience from the action. The enduring relevance of the myth of Procne and Philomela is cleverly revealed through a visual representation of the suspension of time. This is achieved by the amalgamation of contemporary images (a glow stick, an umbrella, 20th century army garb) with those from ancient Greece (parachute "costumes" reminiscent of



The aesthetically enthralling *Love of the Nightingale*

the artwork of Alma-Tadema). Dalhousie Theatre Department Productions has chosen to divide the cast for *The Love of the Nightingale*. The audience will, in effect, be presented with different shows on different nights. This has given the actors a great deal of leeway for character interpretation. Many distinctions can be seen in the separate performances and there are some vast deviations in the actors' portrayals of characters. Kristen van Ginhoven's Procne is bold and assertive, while Michelle McIntyre's is timid. Ginette St-Germain's Philomela is a child-like character with youthful en-

ergy; Meredith MacNeill's is more mature and sensual, overshadowed by an element of instability. Matthew Witherly's Tereus is sensitive but has the capacity to be merciless when he has not been pleased, while Christopher Loane's is insecure and lashes out in fear of losing power. Ben Stone's sea captain is sweet but a little shy; Andre Davey's is more forthright. Both actors playing Niobe have represented a wise and caring woman, but Sydney Thatcher's is deeply passionate while Lois Tucker's Niobe is somewhat brusque. Child actor Kyle Boulet, whose character Itys personifies the liaison between genders, brings an element of mischief to the stage.

The Greek chorus (which participates in the play and also provides the audience with a commentary on the action) is the same for both casts. In the chorus, however, there is also a distinct element of division. The male chorus often appears independent of the female chorus, and vice versa.

Anyone attending Dalhousie Theatre Department's production of *The Love of the Nightingale* is guaranteed to be visually stimulated and emotionally captivated. The tale is both moving and unsettling — Wertenbaker has stated that "theatre should be used to reveal, which is to disturb." The production handles the text sensitively, enabling the playwright's objectives to prevail. A useful dramaturgical supplement, compiled by students Dorianne Mullin and Scott MacDonald, provides a study of the cultural, theatrical, and historical background of the play. Aesthetically, Dalhousie's *The Love of the Nightingale* is enthralling.

Dalhousie Theatre Department Productions has successfully and inventively created theatrical magic.

A double-oh experience

I caught the all new 007 in action last weekend and he was in fine form. *Goldeneye* has it all — fast cars, tanks, bungee cords, beautiful women, and of course, the "charming, sophisticated secret agent." In short — pure escapism. There are a few moments when James Bond seems a little bit larger than life (for instance, in his Stallone-like ability to dodge bullets), but on the whole you cannot help enjoying yourself as you cheer on double-oh seven as he outwits the bad guys.

This time around, Bond's old partner — 006 (Sean Bean) — has joined up with two Russian military types, the ruthless General Ourumov (Gottfried John) and the icy fighter pilot Xenia Onatopp (Famke Janssen). That's right, Onatopp! Onatopp is a bit of a black widow, and boy, does she have strong legs. The threesome has stolen an experimental Russian weapons system, called *Goldeneye* (sounds Russian to me), and are planning to use it to destroy London while stealing billions from the Bank of London by computer. All that stands between them and their objective is our hero and his brilliant and beautiful companion, Natalia (Izabella Scorupco), an expert computer programmer who worked for the Russian military before she was almost killed by the baddies.



FILM

Goldeneye

Directed by Martin Campbell
starring Brosnan, Pierce Brosnan.

Fans of classic Bond are sure to appreciate this movie. The producers went to a lot of trouble to rekindle the mystique that the Timothy Dalton flicks were utterly lacking. Pierce Brosnan IS Bond — he easily wields the cavalier British cockiness we all love in 007. Other Bond traditions are present — the characteristic change in locale, from Russia to Monte Carlo to Cuba; Q and his wonderful gadgets; vodka martinis; the music and female dancers in the opening sequence; and, of course, James Bond's way with the ladies. However, the new Bond is a bit more up to date. For instance, his boss, M, is now a woman (Judi Dench).

Despite all their efforts, however, Hollywood still seems unable to come up with a good Bond script. *Goldeneye* does not have the same quality we found in the movies based on Ian Fleming's books. This movie is more a shoot-em-up, special effects based film. Still, the effects are great, and this movie is not as bad as the recent ones where Bond was just Arnold Schwarzenegger in disguise. *Goldeneye* is a lot of fun, and worth seeing, as long as you do not expect to think too much.

I was shaken, but not stirred.

JAMES WORRALL

REVIEWS & SPEWS

otherness and twinlights

Cocteau Twins
Mercury Records

After the winning *Four Calendar Café*, I expected great things from the Cocteau Twins' recent release of two four-song e.p.'s, *otherness* and *twinlights*, but I was disappointed. These sleepy little offerings are okay as background noise, but they are slower, moodier, and more sombre than the Cocteau Twins usually are, with the single exception of the airy but cliché "Rilkean Heart" (*twinlights*).

Diehard fans will be interested in the remake of "Cherry Coloured Funk." I know this song from *Heaven or Las Vegas*, and they've managed to omit everything that made that version so charming, notably cutting most of the da-da-like lyrics and all of the bubbiness.

The final three songs on *twinlights* are haunting and lovely, if a bit depressing, but the occasional moment of vocal beauty on *otherness* couldn't pierce my disappointment in the complete bungling of "Cherry Coloured Funk." The Cocteau Twins can do better than this.

JOANNE MERRIAM

Alice In Chains

Alice In Chains
Columbia

"You'd be well advised/Not to plan my funeral before the body dies." With these opening words, scene survivors Alice In Chains seem to be laying to rest the rumours of the group's demise. Hopefully they will stick around for awhile.

This is AIC's first full length release since 1992's *Dirt* and it was well worth the wait. While *Dirt* was a dark, claustrophobic journey through the human mind, this eponymous release is harder to describe.

This album is a culmination of the musical directions they took on their previous works; the music is more varied between heavy songs ("Dirt", "Facelift") and not-so-heavy songs ("Sap", "Jar of Flies"). Lyrically, it is more extroverted as the songs examine the world outside their heads rather than inside.

The stand-out track to me is the opening "Grind," which is also the first release from the album. From heavy, grinding Cantrell guitar riffs to the spooky Staley vocals, this song embodies everything I love about this group. From here on it gets a little

weirder and we get the more melodic side of the band with songs like "Heaven Beside You."

Other greats include "God Am" and "Nothin' Song." "God Am" is Layne Staley having a conversation with God. Hardly original, I realize, but it still works and is delivered in typical Layne fashion: "Dear God, how have you been, then?/I'm not fine, fuck pretending." "Nothin' Song" on the other hand, is an apparent stream of consciousness song which makes no sense, but is really catchy.

I have been playing this CD all week and I would recommend it to anyone. Just don't expect "Dirt II."

NEIL FRASER

III Temples of Boom

Cypress Hill
Sony

Call it a comeback. From the bad "Insane In the Membrane" (with the even worse video), to their appearance at Woodstock '94, to their collaborations with the likes of Pearl Jam and others, Cypress Hill somehow managed to lose the street credibility they had garnered with their critically acclaimed first album. Admittedly, I was a bit reluctant at having to review Cypress Hill's newest CD,



but I was pleasantly surprised by *III Temples of Boom*.

On *III...*, Cypress Hill do what they do best. B-Real kicks rhymes about marijuana, life on the west coast, and more marijuana; Sen Dog relegates himself to back-up duty on most tracks (where he is more effective); and, Dj Muggs gives us eerie, very RZA-ish (yet still commendable) production throughout the album.

Check out B-Real on the very first cut, "Spark Another L." "From the west coast to the east coast/Everybody be braggin', but I'm the one who be puffin' most." Noth-

ing significant or trend-setting, but B-Real has flavour, and Muggs makes it worth our while.

The album's best cut is the bold "Strictly Hip Hop." B-Real drops dope NYC-style, keep-it-real type lyrics while a voice-over warns against R&B flavoured 'hard-core' rappers and Muggs deftly scratches a Parrish Smith sample. But

the most interesting track is "No Rest for the Wicked," where Cypress Hill mercilessly do their former friend Ice Cube. Stay tuned for the payback.

While there is not one single song that matches up to the old Cypress Hill classics (i.e. "Phunky Feel One" or "Shoot Em Up"), *III...* leaves the grunge videos and the annoying call-and-response choruses behind. Instead, we see Cypress Hill concentrate on recapturing the hearts of the hip-hop faithful. Successfully.

SOHRAB FARID

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