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**ESTHER WARKOV
DRAWINGS**

**TO
November 11**

A Strindberg undreamt of

By Michael Christ

August Strindberg was a man of imaginative brilliance whose dreams and insights were the source of both his art and his torment. In *The Dream Play* (1902), he allowed his dreams to dictate not only the content but the form of his drama. Confronted in his time with a theatre whose fervent commitment was to overstated realism, the scenic demands this play seemingly requires have been sufficiently intimidating to make its stage appearances few and far between.

In the brief time we have had a record of all plays professionally produced in Canada, a slight three years, the play has never been presented, yet it is on every reading list of modern drama. For this reason the present Tarragon Theatre production of *The Dream Play* should be recommended; if only for the novelty.

Apart from historical interest, the Tarragon production offers a valuable lesson on how *not* to utilize puppets in the theatre. The conception of using puppets was brilliant. The stage has nothing as surreal, as dream-like, as the puppet. The puppet exists only to serve the fantasy of the playwright. It can be modelled to perfection as a sculptor models clay. It has no imperfection, no human emotion, to revolt against the playwright's will. It does not spit when it speaks, nor does it sweat under the spotlights: it is the perfect habitant for a dream.

The Japanese have long known the potent theatricality of the puppet as it has been enshrined in their Bunraku theatre. Jean Herbiet and Felix Mirbt, directing the Tarragon production, have been poor students of the Japanese art.



l to r: poet, Agnes, officer

The Japanese puppeteers, dressed inconspicuously from head to toe in black, are the puppet's servant, they respectively melt into the background. (Remember the emphasis.) Our Canadian puppeteers aspire to be the puppet's master; egotistically, vying for attention, they are dressed in formal tails and ruffled shirts. They look like self-conscious waiters serving crêpes suzzettes. The actor infringes upon the domain of the puppet and the effect is irritating distraction.

Strindberg's play is a subtle surreality of Nordic, Classic, and Hindu mythologies. The most obvious reference is to the latter tradition and for this reason the directors have supplemented the play with Indian music and have dressed the narrators in exotic Indian finery, roughly in the manner of a Kathakali dancer. Not content with this interpretation, they have interpolated Western music at points of dire significance till I was giddy with the stylistic drift. The play further sought to confound by changing the narrator at that very instant I was becoming accustomed to the individual voice, costume, and manner of page turning of the previous narrator. With one's eye on the narrator one can not possibly tell which puppet is talking to which. Cultural sophistication reaches near absurdity when the revolving panels of the set solemnly turn at intervals to reveal different colors. The colors

were obviously expressive of a code, but which: Bunraku, Kathikali, Morse, or was it just a further demonstration of good taste?

The Dream Play, with its complex of thought and structure, required a staging of utmost simplicity: chaos is most sharply counter-pointed by order. Jean Herbiet unfortunately diminished the poetry by abridging Strindberg's text and by expressing it in a confused style. This confusion is bound to continue as long as directors and playwrights continue in an eclectic approach to drama. Drawn to the sheer theatricality of Eastern techniques, few realize that these techniques become disharmonious outside the traditions that fostered them. Rather than borrow techniques we must study them and find the common denominator that will render the most potent theatrical equation for the Theatre of Man.

Having been found, it will not be only aesthetically truthful, its truth shall be evident in the playgoers' pulse.



Auditions for Waiting for Parot: Fine actors are wanted for original existential satire on waiting for OSAP loans, to be produced in Cabaret December 1 and 2. Ability to handle difficult lines with humour is essential. Some singing required.

Interested? Come and audition for Brenda Gladwish next Tuesday or Thursday from 6 to 7 pm in Bethune Studio, or contact Cabaret's artistic dancer, Kate Lushington (210 Burton, -3775).

At the galleries: *Caravan*, the International Handicraft sale is at Winters College Gallery from November 7 to 11, 10 to 9 daily. Tomorrow is the last day of the Native Arts exhibit at Zacks Gallery in Stong, 1 to 7 pm.

Works of visual arts profs Tim Whiten and Claude Breeze likewise end their stay at the Founders Gallery tomorrow. The gallery opens at 10 am and closes at 9 today and 4 Friday.

Helen Lawson and Phillip Sweeney's *Micrographs* show end Saturday at the IDA, noon to 5 pm. *Esther Warkov: Drawings* is at the AGYU, N145 Ross until November 11.

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Grandma Cuzner's soup

By Susan Grant
This week I'd like to share a family recipe with you.

CKRY-FM

John Thomson's November 2 Bearpit, from noon to 2 pm will feature: Kate Lushington, artistic director of Cabaret with the cast; Norm Ritchie will be interviewed on his CKRY interview series on the President's Commission on Goals and Objectives; CYSF President Paul Hayden; the Vibrators, a new wave band from Britain; Harry Posner, founder of Dream Weaver, sleep and dream research; and a special interview with John Marshall, coach of the Hockey Yeomen. CKRY brings you live hockey coverage from the U of T Tournament as York meets Waterloo. Friday at 9 pm. The Tournament's outcome will be announced early Saturday evening.

On Saturday November 5 at 8:10, Ian Wasserman provides the coverage of the Laurentian vs. York game, live from the Ice Palace.

My grandmother invented this recipe some time during the depression to feed my uncle, numerous aunts and the many others who happened to be around at dinner time. This soup is very economical and tastes great.

1. Peel and grate one large or two medium potatoes.
2. Chop fine: one medium onion and one stalk of celery.
3. Put these vegetables together in a pot and add enough water to cover them barely. Add salt (you'll probably need a lot of it) and pepper, as well as two tablespoons of chopped parsley, dried or fresh.
4. Simmer this for 20 to 30 minutes, or until all the vegetables are soft. Then mash them together with a potato masher.
5. Stir in one tablespoon of butter and three tablespoons of milk; mix and serve.

This soup is almost fool-proof (unless you happen to burn it) and is delicious on a cold day. It makes a satisfying meal served with bread and cheese.