

Fourth-year students' display boasts diverse sculptures

By JANICE McLAREN

The human form is the basis of many of the works being exhibited at the Winters Art Gallery (Room 123, Winters College). The show, a display of fourth-year student sculptures, boasts a diverse range of ideas, and indicates the artists' individual preference for materials and subject matter.

Some figures, such as the sculpture of a seated, old woman, appear distorted. The small body and oversized head illustrate a playful, impish quality reminiscent of an Alice-in-Wonderland character. Other works portray the human body in a set situation, such as the plaster-cast figure laid down in a mound of sand-like substance with remnants of the cast placed randomly about it.

One of the more successful pieces in the show combines the human form with nature. This work, which hangs on the wall of the gallery, consists of small faces molded in wax and cloth which have been attached to dried weeds. The work does not appear cluttered or weighted as

some of the other pieces in the show. Each face seems to have its "place" amongst the weeds. Consequently the sculpture breathes as it interacts with the space around it.

Some of the sculptures appear more simplified and abstracted. One of these works, an organ-shaped piece of wood, although technically impressive, is sterile in terms of its emotional stimulation to the viewer. The sculpture of a wolf/dog's head, however, emotionally stirs and distances the viewer with its seemingly sacred and symbolic meaning.

The gallery set-up is disappointing. The works appear to be placed rather haphazardly about the room, and the smallest sculpture is given such an insignificant amount of space that it is easily overlooked. It is also frustrating that none of the pieces have been credited with the artist's name or the title of the work.

The show closes tomorrow at 5 p.m. Don't miss the two inconspicuous works in the courtyard, just outside the gallery window.



What kind of experience do you need to get work, asks new British movie.

Off-beat British experience

By PAUL PIVATO

From the renaissance of the British film industry has come another tender, off-beat comedy. Director Peter Duffell's *Experience Preferred... But Not Necessary* is about a student's experiences on her first summer job away from home. Anne, shy and naive at first, develops into a self-confident woman with some boy-meets-girl story line and rites of passage along the way.

Annie works as a waitress in a resort hotel on the coast of Wales. The hotel staff are characters out of a Fellini film: Ivan, a homosexual waiter, hyperventilates while sleepwalking in the nude; Hywel, another waiter, makes love to Paula every night in the same bed she shares with fellow waitress Coreen, who simply rolls over and yawns; and Arlene who "ran away" from home at 34, is continually brooding over her balding, 60-year-old boyfriend.

The film has many of the delightful absurdities found in director Bill Forsyth's films *Local Hero* and *Gregory's Girl*. Like Forsyth, Duffell focuses on the small eccentricities that lurk in normal people. His camera captures the bizarre and ludicrous in the ordinary and everyday. Duffell uncovers comic

brilliance in seemingly mundane situations, always striking laughter where least expected.

Amidst all the charming lunacy, Annie gropes towards maturity. The understanding she gains along the way is not tainted with cynicism, and Annie retains her child-like innocence. Mike, the Scottish chef and resident wag, is the man who tries to win her heart, while Annie forms a bond of camaraderie with the other waitresses, who slave "at the trough doling out swill."

The film remains heart-warming without being overly sentimental. It is an unpretentious, simple movie. However at times it is too simple, annoyingly facile: Duffell's comic universe is a place where nothing really goes wrong and where nothing is taken too seriously. Conflicts that end happily-ever-after give the film a strained air of sugary optimism, a Leave-It-To-Beaver faith in the world.

Although Duffell exhibits none of the subtle irony and outlandishness of Bill Forsyth, the film is nevertheless highly entertaining. The oddball characters and frequent doses of comic madness make *Experience Preferred... But Not Necessary* one of the funniest movies of the year.

The film opens Friday, December 23.

Brecht writes a good story, York Graduates blow it

Lackluster production of *Caucasian Chalk Circle* is an unbalanced attempt at group acting

By MICHELLE AUNG THIN

The easiest way to tell a story effectively is to rely on the story itself. In the case of Brecht's *Caucasian Chalk Circle*, this is especially true. Its greatest strength is its simple, engaging story line. As a play, it is well suited to an ensemble style of acting, a bare bones set, minimal costumes, and a cozy playing space. The York Graduate Theatre Company makes an attempt at all of these things, but is, unfortunately, not entirely successful.

The show's main difficulty is the unbalanced attempt at an ensemble performance style. Individually, the actors are engaging, amusing, and often funny. However, as a collective performance, *Chalk Circle* misses the mark. The show lacks a unifying rhythm and energy. The actors, whose performances should, but don't, interconnect, make brave attempts at pulling the show together. They are unsuccessful and audience members are left looking forward to the entrance of some, while dreading that of others. This unevenness makes for an edgy evening.

It's unfortunate that this production doesn't fall into place. There are a lot of interesting things going on in the Adelaide Court setting, such as the performances of Ellen Cohen and Robb Hutter. The pair work well together and both are charming and funny in their various roles. Of particular note is Cohen's portrayal of a proper lawyer. She combines legal jargon with illustrative gestures to create sly humor. Hutter's hen-pecked husband, replete with hang-dog expression and whiny voice, is also highly entertaining.

Brecht's play provides an efficient safety net for what seems to have been an off night. If the actors had relied more on Brecht's lines rather than trying to rescue things with needless embellishment, the evening would have been much more comfortable. Instead, we are left with what would seem to be frenetic panic and, as a result, bad timing.

Simeon Posen's set is perplexing. He has festooned Adelaide Court with ropes, some of which cut off the audience's sight lines during the prologue. If there is a symbolic meaning intended here, something like a rope signifying story line, it is defeated by the set's artsy feel. With its blue-gray walls, Adelaide Court looks like a minimalist's parody of a ship.

The production really does nothing wrong, but something is missing. Perhaps it's the strain of an over-effort, or the phases of the moon. Whatever it may be, the result of it is an unsatisfying, lackluster production. And that is a shame.

Caucasian Chalk Circle runs until December 11.



The York University Jazz Orchestra, under the direction of Professor David Mott, played the Winter's Junior Common Room Tuesday night. The 18-member band's performance was billed as the "Jazz Policeman's Ball."

Audience is teased

By MARY-LOU ZEITOUN

Who is Mrs. Watson and why are they teasing her? *Teasing Mrs. Watson*, a cabaret written and directed by York students Gary Dewar, Anne McLean, and Marium Carvell, played Vanier Dining Hall last weekend, and, aided greatly by the licensed flow of affordable beer and wine, the show garnered both laughs and groans from the enthusiastic audience.

The cabaret opened slowly, perhaps not the best way to start a short comic show, with Marium Carvell's singing. Her rendition of "Frankie and Johnnie" was delivered with her own brand of personable humor and showmanship. We were then treated to 20 minutes of the excellent house band. However, the formal introductions before each piece upset the continuity of the show and detracted from the relaxed atmosphere.

The skits ranged from energetically comic to simply energetic. Highlights included an interpretive dance to the theme song from *Hawaii Five-O*, a piano duet by Andrew Tibbets and Fred Thury, a Brady Bunch sketch, a reproduction of the Michael Jackson video *Beat It*, and a couple of skits which explored the varied uses of the York Student Discount Card.

Throughout the show, Mrs. Watson made surprise appearances and was teased. Clad in blue housecoat and pink curlers, she shuffled through the sketches winning and losing money, having not only her Tide but her cheese balls taken away and getting a Palmolive hand-soak in carboic acid.

All cabarets seem like they are characterized by blatant mistakes and inside jokes. But somehow, they're capable of pulling this sort of thing off. Even the hopeless mugging to the audience gets to be amusing. You won't see entertainment like the York cabarets unless you see Cabaret.