

Get Classical

by Paul Campbell

WHERE TO HEAR IT is the question. While last week I discussed the many possibilities for you to abandon yourself to the muse of music as a participant to musical activities on campus, this week I want to tell you of the tempting array of concerts which will give you a chance to have your ear-drums tickled in a most pleasant, and perhaps, sophisticated way.

The Creative Arts Series is the flagship of the concert series on campus. It is the baby of the Creative Arts Committee, and is made up of two separate series. Both are exciting. The Playhouse Series is for those of you who enjoy seeing people fling themselves about stage in (sometimes) unseemly by (usually) graceful manner, or want the big names in music. The dance oriented there are two excellent troupes coming: The Montanaro Dance Company will kick (literally?) the series off on Wednesday Oct. 24, and the Desrosiers Dance Theatre will close it on Sunday Feb. 24. Both are highly acclaimed troupes that present dance in it's modern and most sinuously interesting garb. The second event in this series is actually not to be held downtown in the Playhouse as intended, but because of scheduling problems has been expanded to a pair of concerts at Mem. Hall. This is good because Jon Kimura Parker, Canadian pianist of international repute, is a really nice guy to meet, and the more intimate atmosphere of Mem. Hall I expect that you will better able to be with him. Prepare to enjoy this concert; Jon is a spectacular pianist. Sunday and Monday evenings, Nov. 4 and 5. And last but not least in this series, the famed and much recorded I Musici de Montreal (a crack chamber orchestra) will be at the Playhouse Monday Feb. 18. As a student, you can buy a series ticket for all of these events for a mere \$16. A bargain of the highest order, since in Montreal, say, you would expect to pay at least that for any one of them!

The Mem. Hall Creative Arts Series runs chamber music concerts on Sunday evenings. It will open with a piano/accordion concert by Joseph Petri, leading proponent of the button accordion and astonishing virtuoso, and Guy Few, who also gave a trombone concert here last year. They will play on Oct. 14. Nov. 11 will see a concert by the Manfred Trio, a clarinet, 'cello, piano combination which promises to be good. Dec. 2 I will be joined by pianist Paul Stewart, who delighted and astonished those who heard him at my noon-hour concerts last year (more about that later), and 'cellist Rick Naill, who used to be 'cellist of the then resident Brunswick String Quartet, in a program of piano trios. For those who thrill to the sound of the human voice brought to perfection the Fortin-Margison-McMahon (soprano-tenor-piano) concert will prove a satisfaction on Jan. 13. Pianist Michelle Mares will tickle the ivories and your sense of what is beautiful on Feb. 10, and the Abraxis Trio, made up of two flutes and bassoon will probably expand that same sense on Mar. 24. Finally Resident Musicians Arlene and Joseph Pach as the Duo Pach will close off the series with a concert on Apr. 7. Cost for the series is only \$12.00! . . . less than \$2 per concert if you are a student. But wait. . . if you buy both series you save you save another \$5 and pay only \$23. an incredible bargain. And a great opportunity, if you don't know much about classical music, to find out whether you do or not. Run, don't walk, down to the Arts Centre and grab up a double Series ticket. I can guarantee you will not be disappointed.

There is another "premium" series in town, the On Stage Series, with all concerts in the Playhouse. Their subscriptions are sold out, but individual tickets are still available for at least some of them. Tonight, Sept. 21, and tomorrow night the National Ballet will mount sumptuous (you can count on it) performances. At last knowledge tickets were still available, so at least try for them. Nov. 13 the Kitchener Waterloo Symphony will ravish the ears under the baton of Raffi Armenian. On Nov. 28 the Toronto Dance Theatre will delight your eye and prepare you for the coming season with a joyous Christmas show. Mar. 14 Sandra Reaves-Phillips presents "The Great Ladies of Blues and Jazz"; and the greatest living Irish tenor, Frank Patterson (maybe you have seen the ads for his CD's on TV), will warm your heart Apr. 9 if you can manage to get tickets. The Playhouse box office sells tickets for all events. The other two concert series you will want to know about, those presented by the Resident Musicians here at UNB, I will deal with in my next column. So give this space a glance next week for news of the best bargain of them all!

Not the doctor

Bruce Cockburn - LIVE
by Victor (not the doctor)

It was about time Bruce. . . after having a countless number of albums, & 2 "greatest hits", it was time for a live recording. When I first heard the album was to be released, I was kinda skeptical, thinking it would only be live versions of the songs on "Waiting for a Miracle". Not so. Of the 14 songs on the album, only six were on the previous greatest hits collection. However, some songs are noticeably missing, those being "If I Had a Rocket Launcher", "Coldest Night of the Year", "If a Tree Falls", and "Lovers in a Dangerous Time".

But enough diatribe, despite this, the album is quite excellent. The songs are performed virtually flawlessly, and the sound isn't bare or empty as some live albums tend to sound. The most amazing thing is that there are only THREE people playing these songs, and there are no sequenced keyboards, overdubs, or other methods of "cheating". Yes, these 3 guys are VERY talented: Bruce plays a very mean acoustic guitar (better than most). The drummer, Michael Slocki, is also quite good at what he does; no boring drumming here. The most unusual thing here is the bass player isn't playing a bass, but a stick, an unusual 10-stringed instrument which allows him to play the bassline and keyboards on different strings. This all for a very complete sound. Check out the stick solo on "Tibetan Side of Town".

The songs themselves were well chosen, despite the aforementioned omissions. "World of Wonders", "After the Rain" and "Broken Wheel" which should have been on the greatest hits, fit nicely into the song list. Old songs "Rumours of Glory" and "See How I Miss You" have been reworked and now sound much different than before. Also different are "After the Rain" and "Call It Democracy", performed only by Bruce a la guitar solo. Great stuff. The real guitar virtuosity shines through, especially on the former.

Some songs sadly enough, just didn't turn out up to snuff on this one. "See How I Miss You" did not improve in its reworking, and "Wondering Where The Lions Are" seems to meander along leaving us to wonder "will it ever end. . ." New song "To Raise The Morning Star" is also below average. In "Stolen Land", Bruce hammers away on a bodhran, half-rapping the lyrics; an interesting idea, but it just doesn't work.

This album was worth the wait to hear. It is indeed a showcase of great songwriting and incredible musicianship; despite its shortcomings, it's still great to finally experience the Cockburn live show. If you're a Bruce C. fan, or you just want to hear him do a rousing version of the Monty Python classic "Always Look on the Bright Side of Life", then grab an earful.



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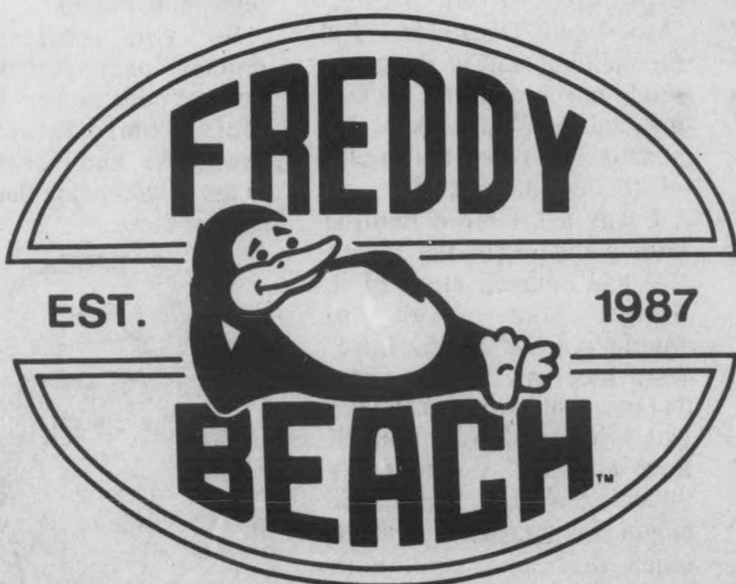
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