

'Head, Guts and Soundbone Dance'

By John Lumsden

Last Monday *Head, Guts and Soundbone Dance* opened to a one third full Playhouse. If some of the faces in the play looked familiar, it was because Henry Beckman and Doris Petrie were both in *Death of a Salesman*, and Walter Learning, who also directed this and *Death of a Salesman*, had a short part on stage. The play, briefly, was the story of two old Newfoundland fishermen who had outlived their time.

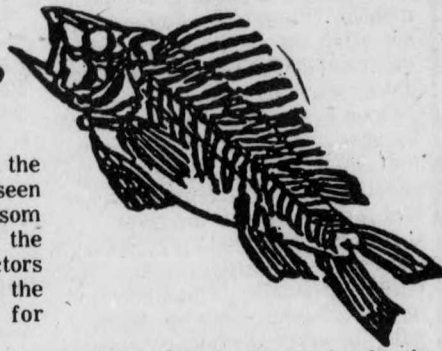
The setting was a stagehead, a structure built over the sea and was extremely well done. It looked very authentic to one, though admittedly I've never seen one. The effect of being over water was well managed through a trap door in the stagehead, through which water was drawn up. Outside in the lobby was an excellent collection of prints and artifacts, which complemented the authenticity of the stagehead inside.

The play was not really what one's classic concept of a play ought to be: it was more a pageant to present ideas. Said Walter Learning in his director's notes, "However, the story is not the important element. The play is a

mood piece which contains the seeds of a hundred dimly seen ideas which can nag and blossom long after you have left the theatre." Therefore, the actors could afford to characterize, the plot was not tailored for credibility.

Beckman's portrayal of The Skipper seemed to borrow on two of his previous roles, Willy Loman from *Death of a Salesman*, and Capt. Clancy from the T.V. series, *Here Come the Brides*. His Newfoundland dialect seemed to degenerate into an Irish brogue, and sometimes that lovable old salt from the boob tube seemed to break through. When not directly involved in action, Beckman would set his face in a paragon of tired resignation, reminiscent of the same pose struck many a time as Willy Loman. Indeed the roles were somewhat similar, as the Skipper lapses back into the 'fantasy world of the 'good old days' that never were.

Sean Sullivan, as Uncle John was another perfect crusty old salt. The dialogue didn't give any chance for the development of a real character. The opening conversation was a commentary on the



relative merits of each day for the past two weeks. Doris Petrie as Rachel was excellent, a barb to puncture the false world around them.

Learning, in his director's notes, warns us not to expect anything too much from the play itself, but to relax and let the play unfold before us. At some unspecified time later, new ideas will erupt which will enrich our lives. I myself, am still waiting. The two major themes of the play seem to be the agony of one who has outlived his time, and the restricting effect of our morals on us. Now while English texts will tell us the essence of drama is conflict, which there certainly is lots of in this play, the essence of a good production is the capacity of the play to entertain and involve the audience. To me, the "new" ideas introduced weren't worth the price tag of watching a night of poor drama.

Thawed cod-- a 1200 lb. problem for TNB

Want some?

What do you do with 60 pounds of freshly-thawed cod? That's sixty pounds every day, for three-and-a-weeks, and the problem belongs to Theatre New Brunswick and their production of *THE HEAD, GUTS AND SOUNDBONE DANCE*.

The play calls for three fishermen to split and clean six cod, averaging eight pounds each, on stage. The fish are pulled from a freezer chest packed with a total of twelve hundred pounds of fish, and thawed each morning for the day's rehearsal or performance. The fish are top quality, and with food prices the way they are, no-one can conceive of simply throwing them away each night. However, so far

no-one has been able to come up with a good suggestion for using them up. TNB staff members have been toting them home each night for friends, neighbours, and many chowders, but feel quite incapable of keeping up with the supply.

Inquiries are being circulated, and anyone with a suggestion for use of the fish has been asked to contact TNB stage manager, Martin Bragg, at the Playhouse. The fish will be available nightly at the Playhouse for the run of *HEAD, GUTS AND SOUNDBONE DANCE*, which closes there on October 26, and at each town on the tour circuit, from October 28 to November 9.



Specialist in dream research to examine importance of dreaming

and it is the period of sleep during which most dreams occur.

Prof. Koulack is trying to determine how important dreaming is, after all, one third of a person's life is spent dreaming. What happens if a person is deprived of REM sleep? He has also been examining how everyday life situations as well as specifically induced external stimuli affect one's dreams. Dreams was prepared by Winnipeg freelance writer Frances Arnold-Tremback.

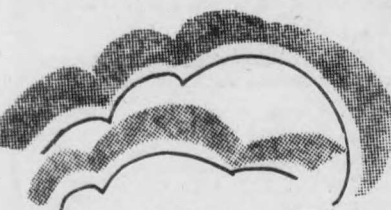
Writer-broadcaster Bernard Clark of London recently attended a real exorcism, conducted by the Rev. Chris Neil Smith, Vicar of Hampstead. Clark recorded the events of the exorcism as they occurred.

Thousands of Canadians have been turning from western philosophy and religion in recent



years to more ancient ideas springing from the east. Among the more popular figures in this movement to transform individual life styles here has been Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, with his technique of Transcendental Meditation; and issuing from this a new western oriented science...Creative Intelligence.

Montreal freelancer Penny Williams attended a recent symposium on the subject at McGill University, and prepared from her interview there, a report for this Concern.



David Koulack, a psychology professor at the University of Manitoba, who is involved in research on dreams, discusses his work on Concern, Wednesday, October 30, at 8:03 p.m. EDT on the CBC Radio network.

This week's program also includes an on-the-spot recording of an actual exorcism and a report on a new western-oriented science, dubbed by its followers, the Science of Creative Intelligence.

Professor Koulack's work is based on examining the psychological function of "REM" sleep. REM means rapid eye movements

Wrack n Roll

by Alex Varty

As you may remember, this week's column was originally intended to survey "intelligent country music", i.e. Jerry Jeff Walker, John Prine, etc. However, I wasn't able to procure the necessary records in time to produce this review, so I shall concern myself with two or three new L.P.'s which have come to my attention.

A new issuing from Little Feat, the connoisseur's rock band, is always cause for celebration, even if the product doesn't live up to expectations. *FEATS DON'T FAIL ME NOW* may not be successful as a followup to two brilliant records [*SAILIN' SHOES* and *DIXIE CHICKEN*], but it stands quite well on its own merits. The new album is mostly southern funk, but the band, as usual, is much more subtle than most other practitioners of that style.

Lowell George has become a much more regional songwriter, concentrating on the south. His diffuse view of society, especially noticeable on *SAILIN' SHOES*, is unfortunately lacking, but *FEATS* coasts through on sheer energy. This is music for the body, and only Sly and Stevie Wonder can work the genre as profitably.

If you are not tremendously familiar with Little Feat, I can recommend this quite wholeheartedly. The dozen or so initiated aficionados probably have *FDPMN* already, but I might caution about the redundant remakes on side two.

That late peculiar group of maniacs culled from English vaudeville stages and lunatic fringes, *The Bonzo Dog Band*, have finally bequeathed a suitable memento to a sleeping Canadian public. *THE HISTORY OF THE BONZOS* is a marvelous compendium, and will be of interest to three main types: 1] the comedy buff, 2] the esoteric record collector, and 3] the student of insanity.

For the comedy fan, the album will prove twice as funny as any Monty Python effort, mainly because this is a two-record set.

The record collector will note several uncredited cameo appearances by Eric Clapton, Paul McCartney and Keith Moon; much of the album's music, even sans superstars, is as enjoyable as the comedy.

As for insanity, suffice it to say that all of the band members have been in and out of institutions, and that there is as much scrutable gibberish on this as on any Firesign theatre album.

Don't let these sleeping Dogs lie. Am I at the end of my leash already? Another sentence, anyone? Yeah, Perth County Conspiracy will be here on the 30th, and that's definitely a show to catch. No promises for next week's column, but it should really be about sane music for once, right? Right.

'Born Losers' reviewed: not too hot

By DANIELLE THIBEAULT

Well if you think "Born Losers" is going to be as good as "Billie Jack", forget it!

It stars the one and only Tom Laughlin in his famous character portrayal but the movie leaves a lot to be desired.

The "Born Losers" are a gang of motorcyclists who go about terrorizing the good folks of a

small town. They go about their merry way raping and rampaging because one has the guts to do something about it. Until a bikini-clad motorcyclist named Vicki gets raped and Billie Jack comes on the scene to make the scoundrels pay. Oh, glorious hero! The dialogue is sketchy and badly cut up and many of the characters are a bit unnatural to say the least. Not worth the bother. Just be lucky you missed it.