

Entertainment

Editor: Warren Clements

Absurdity of apocalypse

Fire Raisers uses alienation to instruct

By BOB McBRIDE

The Academy of Theatre Arts has good taste. Their newest production, *The Fire Raisers*, by Swiss playwright Max Frisch, is an interesting play, a play which is most of all "theatrical".

The *Fire Raisers* makes use of music, summations by a chorus, and speeches addressed directly to the audience to remind them that they are indeed in a theatre. Such techniques, developed by Bertolt Brecht and furthered by (among others) another Swiss playwright, Freidrich Durrenmatt, alienate the audience from the play's events in order that they might better intellectually evaluate those events.

Frisch's play is a contemporary parable written partially in metrical verse, involving the attempts of a number of arsonists to insidiously destroy various bourgeois strongholds. Two of these proletariat fire raisers arrive at the household of Gottlieb Biedermann, a modern day *Candide* who believes, though with nagging doubts, in the goodness of mankind. Before his self-deceiving eyes they kindle his house and conclude by burning it down.

The activities of the fire raisers are observed by a mock Greek chorus, composed of a regiment of firemen, who unsuccessfully warn Herr Biedermann of his impending demise.

The incongruity of a group of firemen warning a bourgeois businessman, (a far cry from a tragic hero) of his "tragic" flaw cleverly makes the laughing audience realize that there are no longer tragic heroes, and that the Greek sense of community is long since dead.

Frisch reminds us, through his central symbol of the fire raisers, of the

The Balcony

The York theatre department presents its year's production next week: Jean Genet's *The Balcony*, with third and fourth-year performance majors as actors and St. Lawrence Centre artist Kurt Reis as guest director.

Tickets are free from the Burton auditorium box office. The show is being held in the Atkinson Studio at 8 p.m. from Tuesday to Saturday.

inevitability of social chaos, and even of apocalypse. His techniques underline the absurdity of the world which is about to go up in smoke.

Each member of the chorus brings personal quirks of eye and body language to his part: exaggerated gestures, raised eyebrows, and mock-stern voices in mock-poetic unison.

And William Tkachuk, as the baffled Gottlieb Biedermann, grows as the play unfolds into a winning character, overcoming an early tendency to garble his lines as he gains a certain familiarity with the metrical rhythm of his speeches.

This production only begins to exploit the potential of Frisch's play. The Academy, composed of theatre students, operates on a limited budget, and produces its plays in a building which, to say the least, has poor acoustics.

But through such efforts as this, they point the way to other larger theatre groups. Their choice of scripts, acting skills and technical competence in handling both music and lighting, set a fine example.

The Academy of Theatre Arts is in the Ward Price Building at 23 Gren-



The cast of the Academy of Theatre Arts' *Fire Raisers* relax after hot performance.

ville St. Student rush tickets are \$2, and the play runs Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights until Feb. 23. Phone 964-9616 for details.

Renaissance to hatch, courtesy of fine arts

York is in line for a renaissance one week from today.

Authentically costumed fine arts students will present three evenings of renaissance music and dance in the manner of a 17th century Italian court, from February 14 through 16 at 8:30 p.m. in Burton.

Julia Sutton, former dance director for the New York Pro Musica's version of an Entertainment for Elizabeth, is co-ordinating the event, and dances are being choreographed from originals by Negri, Caroso, Arbeau and Cavalieri.

Music students will provide accompaniment on early instruments, drawing on Monteverdi, Gastoldi, Jannequin, Da Nola and Vecchi.

Costumes are being stitched from original models, and the intermission music will be provided by consorts of viola da gamba and recorder.

At the same time, theatre class 209 will give a Renaissance poetry reading from 2 to 3 p.m. on February 14, in the graduate student's lounge, S783 Ross. Works by such poets as Sir Walter Raleigh, Christopher Marlowe, Sir Philip Sydney and, of course, William Shakespeare will be read.

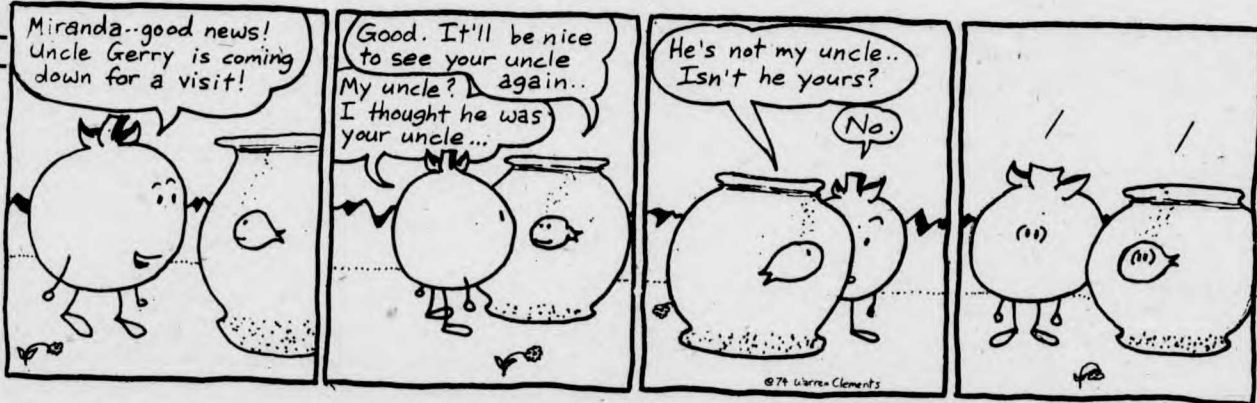
The reading will be directed and staged by Joanne Shearer and Sandy Vale.

Student tickets for the music and dance evenings are \$1.50. Phone 667-3365 for tickets.

The poetry reading is free of charge.

Comic Section

Hemorrhoids Ambrose the Apple



The Humanoids



Sight and Sound

Rotunda Mimists at Cabaret

The Cabaret, which has been running those obnoxious ads on Radio York promoting their show (why do they have to use Richard Nixon for a Canadian cabaret?), is fortunately a lot better live than over the airwaves. Tonight and tomorrow night at 9 and 10:30 p.m., they are presenting Rotuna Mime, which offers mime and other delights. This is in the Vanier Open End, and the group Fair Dinkum will appear as well. All free.

America, America in Curtis

Elia Kazan's *America, America* will be screened tonight at 8 p.m. in Curtis LH-1 by the Environmental Studies film society. The film portrays the trials of a group of Greek immigrants arriving in the "home of the free": Amerika. Kazan blew his bankroll making this, but it is rarely shown anymore. Admission is \$1.

Hebrew folksingers sing in Stong

Folksingers Mark and Geoffrey Clarfield and folkdancer Zvi Rogul will provide an evening of Hebrew, Yiddish and contemporary music Saturday at 8:30 p.m. in the Stong Junior Common Room. The Jewish Student Federation is charging 75 cents for the performance.

York gallery shows Henry Moore

Henry Moore's drawings, bronzes and prints, imported from Toronto's Feheley Collection, will grace the York Art Gallery in Ross N145 until March 3. The gallery lets in visitors from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, and from 2 to 5 p.m. Sunday. No-one is allowed in Saturday, because that's when the bronzes climb off their pedestals for their weekly meal.

Birth of a print exhibition

The students of the Calumet print-making workshop are pleased to announce the birth of an exhibition of their prints in the Calumet Common Room in Atkinson College, running until Feb. 11.

O Lucky Man shines in Bethune

O Lucky Man, probably the most entertaining film of 1973 (critical readers might detect a slight editorial bias), comes to Bethune Saturday and Sunday nights at 8:30 p.m. in Curtis LH-L. Malcolm McDowell, Ralph Richardson and Rachel Roberts have a lot of fun moving through different countries and roles in this modern Tom Jones, directed by If director Lindsay Anderson. Humour in epic proportions. It's a fun film, with great music by Alan Price. Keep an eye out for the sheep in the hospital scene. \$1.25 general, \$1 for Bethune students.

More news on the hip Hamlet

The hip *Hamlet*, postponed for last week's El Topo screening, has been rescheduled for Feb. 14. Regular readers may remember this film as an amazing four-hour version of a Bathurst Street United Church production of *Hamlet* in blue jeans. It was filmed over two years ago by photographer Richard Leiterman and director Rene Bonniere, and, since it is four hours long, hasn't been distributed. The film department will show it once, with a break for dinner. More details next week.

Poseidon Adventure afloat at York

Winters takes you on a boat ride with a twist this weekend. Shelley Winters, Gene Hackman, Ernest Borgnine and Carol Lynley are a few of the guests who find their rooms have more than running water in *The Poseidon Adventure*. "There's got to be a morning after", with a Christ figure hidden somewhere in the cast. Paul Gallico wrote this. (He also wrote *The Snow Goose*, a tale of wintertime foreplay.) The show's on at 8 p.m. in Curtis LH-L, Friday and Sunday. \$1.25 general, \$1 for Winters.