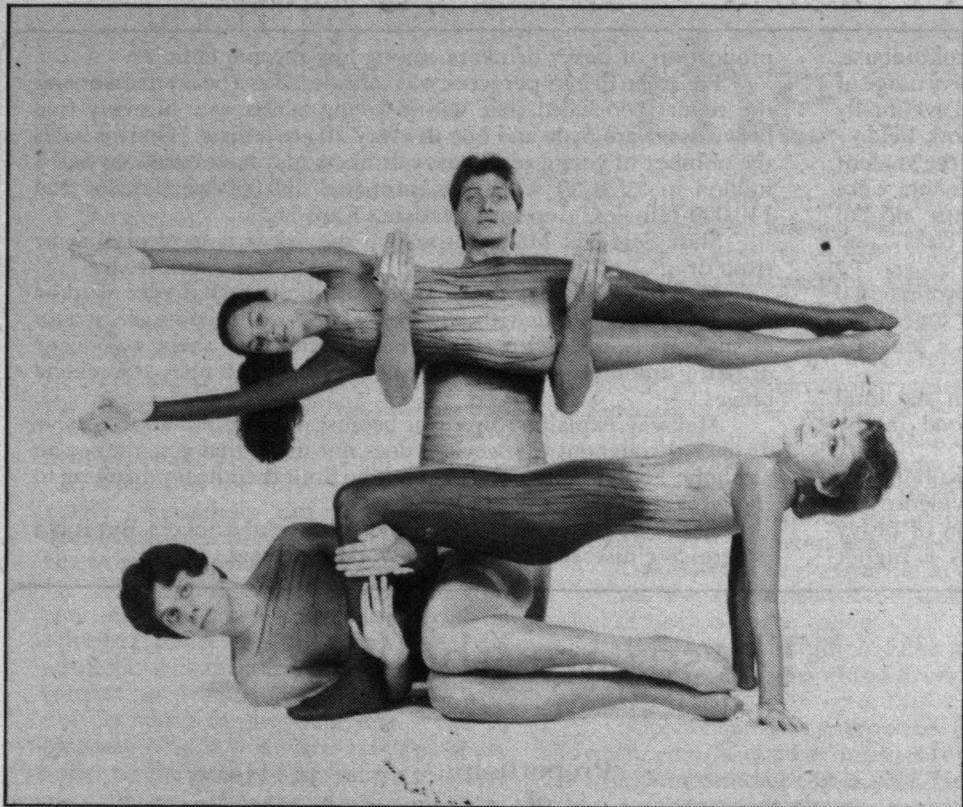


ARTS



Les Ballets Jazz de Montreal square off during a performance.

Bodies gyrate pleasingly

review by Peter West et al

Two fine displays of dancing appeared in Edmonton last week: Les Ballets Jazz de Montreal at SUB Theatre, and the Shumka Dancers at the Jubilee Auditorium.

Les Ballets Jazz wowed a large audience at Sub Theatre. This group of ten dancers treated us to an amazingly energetic display of jazz ballet-precise in timing, bold in choreography and costume, and diverse in dancing styles. Its refreshing to see a dance company use humour so devastatingly: some of the gestures and expressions had the punch of a throwaway comedy line. An outstanding comedy number was the final one, "You Don't Love Me Anymore", which was consistently funny in a variety of ways.

Bar one or two tiny lapses in timing, from which the dancers instantly recovered, this troupe was faultless. We enjoyed ourselves hugely and so did the

audience, which clapped in time, whistled and roared their encouragement. Later performances were sold out. Stiff cheese, folks: try to see them next time, eh?

The Shumka Dancers put on another energetic display in the Jubilee Theatre on Sunday night. For some reason they seemed a little self-conscious initially, but quickly warmed up as the program continued. They saved their most spectacular displays for the segment after the intermission, when unbelievable feats were performed, mainly by the men. After a standing ovation from a clearly supportive audience, they repeated some of their most impressive numbers.

This group never disappoints. The bright colours, flashing swords and mind-boggling acrobatics they present are a sure antidote for the February blues. We hope to see them again in Edmonton real soon.



by Geoffrey Jackson

I'm fed up with papers, notes, projects, ad infinitum! The only thing to do is to lose myself within the dark maze of a good mystery. Of the genre there are few finer than Raymond Chandler's *Farewell My Lovely*.

This novel was written in 1940 and became a classic of mystery fiction. Some pundits get so enthusiastic about Chandler's abilities that they proclaim him the finest American novelist of his time. Not bad for a writer of detective books.

Farewell My Lovely features Chandler's great detective, Philip Marlowe. Marlowe is the sort of detective who has a ratty office in a dingy part of Los Angeles. And who has beautiful high-society women for clients. And who smart-mouths the cops. He's the sort who would rather get beaten by thugs than betray a confidence. In short, Marlowe is the original, the first and the best, lonely L.A. gumshoe - tough on the outside but compassionate on the inside.

The book begins with a giant beer-truck sized ex-con named Molloy who is looking for his girlfriend Velma. The simple minded Molloy, dressed as "inconspicuously as a tarantula on a slice of angel food", kills a negro club owner, mostly because he doesn't care for his looks. Marlowe is the unwilling witness to this crime and out of curiosity he soon gets far

more involved than he ever intended.

Marlowe figures the best way to find Molloy is to find Velma and sets out looking. What starts out simple unfolds into a complicated case of blackmail, old grudges, and civic corruption; all set in the steamy city of Los Angeles.

Los Angeles becomes an almost mythical land through Chandler's writing. You get a keen sense of the heat, the rainy nights, and the dusty hill roads that surround the city. The atmosphere of the depression is just right too. The people are generally poor and hungry, with the glittering exception of the socialites, the gangsters, and the city officials.

In this seedy, corrupt world Marlowe is a solitary figure of integrity and honour. That's not to imply that he's some saintly character; he's tough, sarcastic, and very stubborn. Yet his intelligence and sense of justice subtly underly all of his actions.

Chandler's style is tough, and clever, using more hardboiled similes a chapter than you'll find in a score of lesser books. Voices "grow icicles", faces appear "to have no more eyebrows than a french roll", a woman is "Pretty, but not so pretty that you would have to wear brass knuckles every time you took her out".

Yet just what makes Chandler so very special is hard to define. There is a balance and sense to his best work that feels very good. Marlowe is a big part of this sense. He is very fine character, a figure so unique and commanding that I never read this book without developing admiration and respect for him. Philip Marlowe is the sort of man I'd like to meet just to shake his hand.

And when the gibberish entailed in a university education begins to overwhelm one, the company of Mr. Marlowe can be a very fine thing. Be self-indulgent and walk the rainy streets of L.A. with him, I assure you the experience is very satisfying.

Up and Coming

FILMS

Bongo Man: Princess Theatre; Feb. 18-20; 9:30 p.m.

See Jimmy Cliff. See the Jamaicans, South Africans, Germans and Americans. See Jimmy play reggae and lively everybody up. See spiritual cultural music power liberate the people. No woman no cry. See the happy concert-goer, overcome by the music, bowing down on stage and hugging Jimmy's feet. Etc.

Definitely a film worth seeing. It is even Family-rated, in spite of all the pipes and spliffs in evidence.

The Shop On Main Street: National Film Theatre (Citadel); Thursday Feb. 18, 9:15 p.m.; Feb. 19, 21, 7:00 p.m.

This film, dealing with anti-semitism in Nazi-occupied Slovakia, is recommended by Peter Melnychuk, reviewer for *Student*, Canada's newspaper for Ukrainian students. His review would have appeared here had space permitted. The film also won the Academy Award for Best Foreign Film.



MUSIC

Connie Kaldor: Provincial Museum Theatre; Saturday Feb. 20; 8:00 p.m.; tickets at Mikes and SU Box Office.

OTHER ARTISTIC EVENTS

Kid's Book Fair: Common Woman Books; Saturday Feb. 27; 1 - 5 p.m.; music by Brandywine.

Common Woman Books is located at 8208 - 104 St. Balloons, food and refreshments will be served.

J. A.

LOCAL RECREATION

The Syndicate: This five-piece Rock & Blues Fusion band, back in town from a highly successful long tour of the B.C. interior will be at R.A.T.T. Thurs., Fri. & Sat. Their highly energetic unit really knows how to put soul back into music. A treat for blues fans and anyone that loves high energy music.

Alex MacDonald

DIRECT DRIVE

by James L. Stevens

Architecture & Morality (LP.)

and

Joan of Arc (12-inch 45 rpm.)

ORCHESTRAL MANOEUVRES IN THE DARK (DinDisc Ltd.) PolyGram LP.-VL2231 45 - DIN 36-12

Another excellent and strong entry from OMD. *Architecture & Morality* showcases the progressiveness of the band. The music on this album is polished and flows smoothly, backed by solid rhythm and percussion. They have used a different approach from their two previous albums to the treatment afforded some of the vocal tracks. It is an improvement for the most part, but the vocals do tend to float away on occasion.

The album begins with the instrumental "The New Stone Age", which leads directly into "She's Leaving." The latter is what I consider to be the best cut from the album. It has a surprisingly fast keyboard track that really keeps the song moving. This is coupled with a classic OMD drum track that is simple yet effective. The tune is fine-finished by a strong wall-of-sound synthesizer track.

The album then winds into a light piece called "Souvenir." It is in this song that the vocals occasionally drift off, leaving the song sounding rather weak. Last on side one is "Sealand", a moody, brooding number. There is some experimentation with drums and percussion in this track. It is effective and managed to hold my attention.

Side two is lead off with two "Joan Of Arc" tunes. Both are good songs, but not quite up to the calibre which I know the band is capable of. The second version, "Joan Of Arc (Maid Of Orleans)", has a distinct Scottish sound and cadence, which imparts an extra little dimension to the album. These cuts are followed by the title track which is an instrumental. It is quite a strange number, but it is still very listenable. Then comes "Georgia", a typical OMD style song, one that is reminiscent of their earlier work. Side two ends with "The Beginning And The End", which is similar to side one's "Souvenir".

The separate release 45 rpm. from OMD entitled "Joan Of Arc" has a remixed version of that song on side A. It is a better recording of the song than the original found on the LP. On side B of the 45 is an unfinished cut, "The Romance Of The Telescope". In my opinion, this tune is the best song between both the album and the 45. A quick note though; the 12 inch 45 is only available as a British import at the

moment. If you are interested in a copy, you will have to go to S.U. Records in HUB Mall.

Non-Stop Erotic Cabaret SOFT CELL

(Some Bizzare) PolyGram VOG-1-3309

The "one-hit-wonder" strikes again.

Non-Stop Erotic Cabaret, for the most part, had me gagging and calling for less. From the flaky Donna Summer disco whistle (on the cut "Chips On My Shoulder") to the constant unoriginality throughout (I felt as if I had heard much of the material before), this album was one disappointment after another. This plastic effort by Soft Cell comes up flat against what bands like Japan, Human League, and Simple Minds offer the music listener. This album as a whole came across as listless, having only two songs that I really enjoyed listening to; "Tainted Love" and "Sex Dwarf." Other than these two cuts, I thought the album was little more than boring, bland and lifeless.

"Tainted Love," the hit single, is, in my opinion, a great piece of electro-pop. It is by far (very, very far) the best cut on the album. It has a sense of intrigue and seems to possess an air of smutty sensuality. (I know; you thought it was only music.) There is a good balance of percussion and electronics on this cut, and it holds up from beginning to end. But, "one good song does not a good album make."

The other tune that I thought was good listening was "Sex Dwarf." This song has fairly amusing lyrics and, near the end of the cut, has a very suggestive vocal track that should get your ears up. It is one of their more original sounding songs. It could be partly for this reason that I liked it more than the others. Do not expect to hear it on the radio, though, as its smutty lyrics give it zero potential as a hit single. It just is not that type of tune.

As for some other work offered on the album - the songs "Seedy Films", "Frustration" and "Say Hello, Wave Goodbye" are all basket cases, to say the least. The cut "Entertain Me", after an absolutely horrible intro, builds itself into an only slightly offensive mediocrity. And although the album's single is upbeat and attention grabbing, it is the exception rather than the rule.

If you really like their hit (being "Tainted Love"), my suggestion is that you purchase the single and save yourself the agony of the album. Either that or wait until you find the album on special before you buy it.