

Entertainment

"...death is freedom..."
-Dr. Rat-

Reliving the holocaust



Sokoluk, Black and Teri Austin: a confrontation

Mike Fisher

The Faculty of Fine Arts presents one of its most ambitious student productions in the premiere of

Marion Andre's holocaust play **The Sand**. Andre is the artistic director of Toronto's Theatre Plus and is currently a faculty

member of York's Department of Theatre. He originally published this play in the Spring 1979 issue of Canadian Theatre Review.

A semi-autobiographical work, **The Sand** is set in Nazi-occupied Poland in 1941 and concerns the plight of Jewish families living in ghettos. Andre was raised in Poland during the war period, and has written several works, including television and radio plays produced by the CBC, which deal with the Holocaust

"Theatre," he explains, "is a witness to the times. It poses questions. After going through the war, I began to ask many questions." The particular question which Andre evokes in his work concerns the personal relationship of man to God, the nature of faith. How can we sustain our faith in a god who appears to be merciless? Andre gestures contemplatively toward the script on his desk. "That is the

question. The answers are for others."

Having written the play, Andre finds his role as director encouraging rather than intimidating. "It is a disadvantage, being so close to it that the objectivity one requires is sometimes lost," he says. "On the other hand, who better than the writer knows what he wants to say?"

Over twenty-five upper-year students majoring in Theatre Performance auditioned for the handful of roles available in **The Sand**. Two students who read their parts well enough to be offered major roles in the play are Dianne Sokoluk and Neil Black. Says Sokoluk, "It's important who you've trained with. Working with Marion has been a great experience. He treats us as professionals." Black and Sokoluk each hope to act professionally after graduating from York, yet they are careful to downplay the professional opportunities which might come their way from appearing in this world premiere production.

"We don't treat this production different than any other," Black explains. "There will probably be people from outside the York theatre community coming to see the production whom we might have a chance of getting a job with, but then casting agents

usually come to see major productions at York."

The two actors play a middle-aged, married Jewish couple who struggle to preserve the innocence of their young son as their own world becomes invaded by terror. As the Nazis get closer, the characters become more vulnerable. Because the play is semi-autobiographical, Andre suggested that "my major problem in this situation is that the play is so much a part of my existence, at times I don't realize that the people on stage are completely remote from the actual experiences."

Accordingly, Black and Sokoluk found that the most difficult aspect of their roles was researching the milieu of the characters. Sokoluk admits that, "It's very helpful for us to have Marion direct this play. He has given us a lot of background — actual things that happened to him and his family — that are beneath the lines." In addition, Black and Sokoluk read books such as Jerzy Kosinski's **The Painted Bird** and viewed war films that mirrored a brutal reality.

The Sand will be presented November 12 to 17 in Burton Auditorium. Admission is free and tickets may be reserved by calling the Burton Auditorium box office.

This rocker delivers

Writer: Gary Action

Assignment: Interviewing the post office rocker. Sleet whipped down my collar: "I'm from Excalibur. Can I come in?"

Glascow born Dave Wallace: (emphatic pacing and gesturing, wiry and nervous) "You want a beer or something?"

The magnanimous Wallace works days locked up in the York mailroom. But with the five-piece rockband Shaker, Wallace transforms from bi-spectacled respectability to devilish whirlybird. Singing in the limelight with the band, he exorcizes his energetic persona. In a basement rehearsal recently, amid a snake-pit of electrical cords and empty beer bottles, I caught the suburban (Steeles and Yonge) soldiers.

With a sound that is just a little rough around the edges, Shaker is not that far from becoming a hard-hitting, frisky rock band. After a shaky Tap 'n' Keg homecoming week show their bass player quit. So they hired a new one and practised their tails off. The revitalized shaker hopes to play York again within a few months, promising to 'kick ass.'

At present band members include new bassplayer Jerry Buzzie, Oscar Savona on rhythm guitar, Bob Norrie on the drums, and Craig "Fly" Rovichaud on

lead guitar. The ensemble draws from amazingly diverse inspirations. Savona and Buzzie are confirmed hard rockers citing Hendrix as an influence. Roger Daltrey is a strong inspiration for Wallace. Norrie was once-upon-a-time a drummer for a swing band. While guitarist Rovichaud admires jazz-rock fusionists like Al Dimeola.

A Shaker set contains all but two original songs. Savona and Rovichaud write the music and Wallace delivers the lyrics. They do cover versions of 'Amos Moses', an old Jerry Reed number and the Small Faces' 'Tin Soldier' which they dedicate to the Mod movement and Keith "hotel room destructor" Moon.

With such eclectic tastes among the ranks, I wondered

aloud what kind of sound they would like to produce. Savona answers: "We want a really energetic type of rock. But we want to keep it clean as well."

In the near future Shaker hopes to cut an album. They've only been together since May, so it seems that they move fast.

"You know," says Wallace, "by rights Shaker should be playing some sleazy hotel bar up in Northern Ontario some place. But we've paid our dues. We've all been full-time musicians once and done that touring stuff before... We're ready now."

A band that is not disco, not punk, and not heavy metal. Just four suburban boys who want to rock.

Assignment completed.



Bob, Dave, Craig and Oscar brave rain and sleet

Welcome to the twilight zone

Gary Action

As people filed cautiously into the Hallowe'en gloom of room 012 in Steacie for an electronic music concert, they looked as if they didn't know quite what to expect. "You don't have to sit facing forward you know; you can sit anywhere," claimed a voice.

The evening was presented by students from an electronic music course.

Quiet now. Program One is about to begin with "Real Time" by John Pucheile. Unvaried except for dynamics, a single metronomic note is struck repeatedly throughout. It is joined

by a regular squeak and then by interspersions of unnerving crescendoes of sound which are then joltingly amputated. End.

Next is Reid Robin's "Polka." It is a humorous, mad and apocalyptic little ditty. An absurd, scratchy polka which sounds as if it has been tuned in from Warsaw.

Fred Gaysek's "Keen Dogs" was another Program One stand-out. It had the same terrifyingly funny quality as "Polka." A voice over as bland as porridge relates nasty little news items of mothers throwing their children over balconies.

More terrifying and less funny was Program Two. These pieces

were more "internal" expressions of the students. Jamie Yeotes' "Room In Space" was recorded in the bowels of Stong College. Bob Gumiela turned the volume way up in "E 21" subjecting the audience to brutal mechano-disco.

"Vortex" by Phil Werren capped off my most disturbing Hallowe'en ever. Like a sonic descent into a black hole the speed of the musical rhythm of evil increases and crescendoes. It was only slightly resolved by the end but I'm gonna fear that place for some time still.

And remember kids: tonight when your mom tucks you into bed, don't forget to shrivel up.

Off York

Theatre

"Success predominates." These are the opening words of the energetic play **Orders from Bergdorf**, now playing at the NDWT Sidedoor Theatre (736 Bathurst). This fast-paced production about the fashion industry grabs the undivided attention of its audience.

Julie, advised to leave her country home in order to become a star in the city, walks up the road to success in the garment trade. Stumbling through setbacks during her rise to stardom, Julie is an image of many successful people. From a small-time country girl, she gains entry into the fashion world and becomes a chief designer.

Through splendid acting and singing, plus Bergdorf's memoirs in video, the production is a pleasant assault on the senses.

Cindy Hellstrom

Film

A festival of contemporary Hungarian cinema: Discover one of the world's most interesting national cinemas. In the last few years, the new generation of Hungarian filmmakers has developed a style combining humanism, critical introspection and realism. For two weeks, November 9 thru 22, the Festival Cinema (651 Yonge S. of Bloor) presents a selection from recent productions of the Budapest Studios. All films have English subtitles. Nov. 9 **When Joseph Returns**, Nov. 10 & 18 **Hungarians**, Nov. 11 & 22 **A Quite Ordinary Life**, Nov. 12 & 21 **Happy New Year**, Nov. 13 **Holiday in Britain**, Nov. 14 & 17 **Angi Vera**, Nov. 15 **Journey With Jakob**, Nov. 16 **Just Like At Home**, Nov. 19 **Film Novel — Three Sisters**, Nov. 20 **Deliver Us From Evil**.

Bert Brecht has shaken hands with Sam Beckett...

Buddha Pest

