



Step up, you're Next at Neptune

by Chris Morash

"Next!" You've been standing in that line for over an hour, and now you're ready to step toward the stale smile that looks like it's been switched on for too long.

"Next!" You approach the wicket, and are promptly processed by the smile, who sends your vital information into the chewing faceless jaws of the cubicles within.

"Next!" You've been regarded, reported and registered, and already the cubicles are hungry to get on with the next batch of data.

Next, the first Neptune Lunchtime show of the season, is a product of the Sixties, dealing with a less-than-heroic middle-aged man undergoing a medical examination after being drafted into the American army to serve in Vietnam. Yet, in spite of its subject, the play does not come off as a Sixties period piece, because its real subject matter is more relevant today than when the play was written—the cold, inhumane treatment of individuals by systems interested in efficiency, not people. Playwright Terrence McNally tackles his subject with the best weapon yet discovered for dealing with impersonal pomposity—comedy—adapting the basic comic Vaudeville duo, the straight-man and the funny-man, to a realistic situation.

Joan Orenstein plays the character who is the epitome of unsailable officialdom, Sgt. Thech (pronounced "thick"), an army medical examiner. Orenstein is the sort of actress who can come out of virtually any play looking good, even Neptune's Christmas turkey *u* Better Watch Out, You Better Not Die. In Sgt. Thech she's not given a particularly demanding role, but neither is it a poor role. Sgt. Thech is a character who is switched into a single mode—one-track efficiency—using her wealth of human insight for the most unsympathetic purposes, only once letting any true compassion leak out from under her true-blue hide. Orenstein's strong sense of her character makes this fleeting glimpse of humanity believable,

and saves the character from being a caricature.

In spite of Orenstein's strength, Next is Denny Doherty's show. Doherty, portraying the unwilling draftee Marion Cheever, is one of those performers who is stuck with the stigma of having achieved an overshadowing success in one area of show business. He is more than "Denny Doherty of Mammals and Papas fame," he is a good solid actor in his own right. He has a sure sense of comic timing, meeting Orenstein line for line in the verbal cross-

fire, as well as hitting the vein of bitter frustration that lies behind the laughter.

It is this feeling of pent-up remorse and impotent frustration that grows steadily as the play goes along. For almost the first half of the play, it's basic laugh-til-it-hurts comedy, the sort that seems to thrive on its own energy, building up more momentum as the situation develops. However, as these darker undertones begin to surface, the comedy begins to lose some of its gusto, and the pace

Girls like Tracy never tell their parents about guys like Rourke.



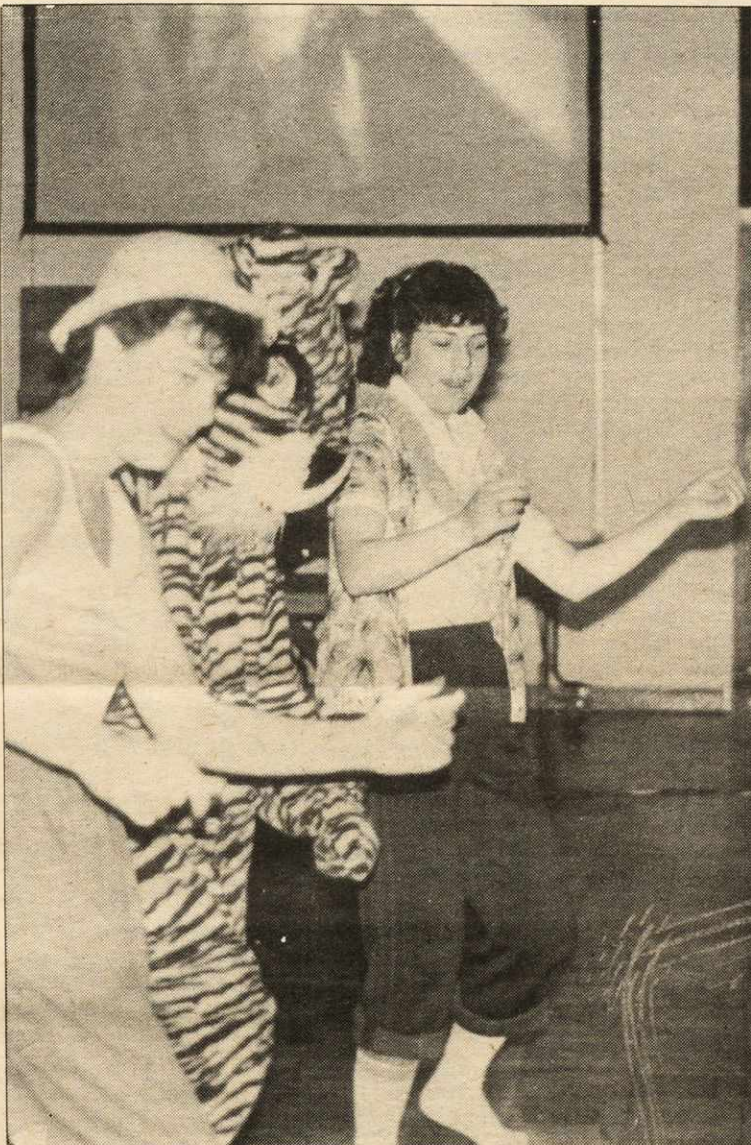
Reckless

AN EDGAR J. SCHERICK/SCOTT RUDIN Production "RECKLESS"
 AIDAN QUINN DARYL HANNAH KENNETH McMillan CLIFF De YOUNG Written by CHRIS COLUMBUS
 Produced by EDGAR J. SCHERICK and SCOTT RUDIN Directed by JAMES FOLEY

STARTS FRIDAY
 FEBRUARY 3rd.

paramount 2
 1577 BARRINGTON ST. 423 6054

downsview 1
 1000NSVIEW MALL 865 1661



©1984 Steele/Dal Photo

Do you see a Tiger in this photo? These people danced for hours before they imagined him there.

<p>LAST WEEK, Noot '84 LEFT US WITH THE GAZETTE PERSON FLYING TO TORONTO WHILE THE GRIM REAPER SCREAMED FOR MOMMY.</p>	<p>TORONTO: city of buildings... Later, Reaper... and secrets... RCMP GRC NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS</p>	<p>Now what? Why did they take the flats? Got to go in... I'm just going to have to brazen it out!</p>
	<p>SOMETHING'S WRONG...! They didn't try to stop me?!?</p>	<p>WHAT NOW?!?</p> <p>A GAZETTE PERSON KNOWS THE STORY!</p>