

## Creative Cockburn

Bruce Cockburn's concerts at the Students' Union Theatre two weeks ago once again demonstrated the tremendous following Bruce enjoys in Edmonton. He played to a sell out audience on both nights. That he has incredible appeal was very apparent to anyone who sat in eager silence as one song flowed to another throughout the 2½ hour concert. Bruce seems to capture the attention of his audience in a way that few performers ever do. He invites them on a special journey to explore the many dimensions of his creative world. And they respectfully follow.

One wonders what it is that his listeners are captivated by? Firstly he seems to have discovered a poetic style which appeals to the imagination of many Canadians. Though sometimes abstruse in the intent of his lyrics, as in the song "Clocks don't bring tomorrow - knives don't bring good news" the meaning is, by and large, understandable, though definitely intellectual. His talent lies in his ability to capture in a

song a variety of moods, whether they be man-made or natural. He expresses through his melodies and lyrics whole experiences which are sometimes light or solemn, joyous or painful. An example of one of his lighter inspirations is the tune "For the Birds" in which he is simply celebrating in song a memorable moment through the use of round-like repetition and very simple lyrics. To have struck upon such a perfect combination demonstrates the fine artistry within Cockburn's reserves.

This same talent appears in a different form when one looks at his more serious writing. While he is like many other current folk-song writers in that he is often speaking about the "What's wrong with the world" issues he is distinctively different in that he provides the listener with an answer. Of late Bruce has experienced a spiritual rebirth; he has rediscovered God and Christianity. Several of the songs he sang at last week's concert reflect this rediscovery. "The Christmas Song"

"written," he said, "last Christmas night" expresses very beautifully some of the emotion Bruce felt on that exciting day in the Christian year. His song "Joy will find a way" speaks of death as being a glorious passing on to that place of eternal life, something which is of fundamental importance to the Christian doctrine.

Bruce's distinct musical style is of course the most predominantly re-occurring theme in his writing. As his style has evolved, his technique has improved, thus making music richer and shaded with many more colors. His bright jazz harmonies, progressions, and rhythms are infectious and probably more than anything else account for his rising popularity. His first interest, however, is to communicate with people. Whether that be through his music or his lyrics is not important to him though he would of course prefer a combination of the two for the two go very much together.

As to the future, Edmontonians can feel proud of the fact that it is here Cockburn will be involved in the making of



a documentary on his song-writing career. Film West under Tom Radford's direction have already begun some of the filming. Bruce is also entertaining the possibility of tapping the great money market to the south as a result of a very successful appearance this year at the Philadelphia Folk Festival. But of even greater importance to his Edmonton following is the promise of more songs following in his characteristic Jazz-Blues vein. He speaks of a keen interest in introducing certain features of African music into his songs. Last week he and his creative partner and back-up guitarist Gene Martynec demonstrated the form this new dimension might take in his song-writing when they performed one of Bruce's new tunes which had a distinctive

Ethiopian rhythm.

There seems little doubt Bruce is well on the road to stardom in the national if not international context. In four short years he has established himself as an artist of significant note. That he has not allowed himself to become carried away by the egotistical excesses made possible by such fame and fortune speaks well for him as an artist and as a Canadian. Bruce is a very real person who thinks about things a little bit more than most. The hope is that he will not lose touch with this reality which is the source of his inspiration and become a money-making mechanism in the world of commercial music where business, not artistry, dictates the direction it will take.

Peter Wood

## Clifford E. Lee Award

The Department of Drama of the University of Alberta has announced that the deadline for script entry for the second annual Clifford E. Lee Award will be on February 1, 1975.

The Clifford E. Lee Award is a National Playwriting competition and playwright-in-residence program, designed to encourage Canadian writing of importance to the Stage, while at the same time affording the playwright in-depth experience of the process of stage production. The program is sponsored by the Clifford E. Lee Foundation and in its first year of operation received support from The Canada Council and the Alumni Fund of the University of Alberta as well. The program is administered by the Department of Drama at the University of Alberta. The Department will arrange for production of the winning script or will produce the play itself; in either case, every effort will be made to ensure that it receives professional treatment.

A prize of \$1,500, plus travel and in-residence expenses, will be awarded to the playwright whose script makes, in the opinion of the judges, the

### Harrison knocks Fab Four

George Harrison told a news conference kicking off his U.S. tour that he enjoys working with John Lennon and Ringo Starr, but will not work with Paul McCartney. Said Harrison, "Ringo's got the best backbeat in the business... I'd join a band any day with John Lennon. But I wouldn't join a band with Paul McCartney. That's not personal; it's from a musician's point of view." Harrison also surprised

most significant contribution to the Canadian Theatre, and which satisfies the selection criteria. The winning playwright is expected to be in residence for rehearsals and performance of his play.

The results of the competition will be announced on March 31, 1975. For information on regulations, write to

Ben Tarver, Administrator  
The Clifford E. Lee Award  
Department of Drama  
The University of Alberta  
Edmonton

newsmen by saying, "Having played with other musicians, I don't even think the Beatles were that good."

### Yes' newie

YES' next album will be a single set released in time for the Christmas buying rush. One side is a suite based on a war versus peace theme with the flip side a collection of shorter tunes.

### Lennon

John Lennon recently said in a radio interview that if he is kicked out of the United States he probably will move to Toronto, Canada rather than going back to Britain. Lennon's comment was made in an interview on CHUM-FM Radio in Toronto.

### Poco's latest

POCO's newly-completed album has been titled "Cantamos" and features the most countrified sound Poco has done since its early days as a Buffalo Springfield offshoot.

### Gold Rush

It's not yet "after the gold rush" for Neil Young. Neil's current album, "On The Beach", on Reprise has just been certified gold. It joins "Everybody Knows This is Nowhere," "Harvest", "Time Fades Away," and "After the Goldrush" in Neil's collection of million-dollar records.

### Moody Blues anthology

Threshold Records is releasing a double disc anthology of the Moody Blues titled "This is The Moody Blues." The L.P. includes such Moody-greats as "Tuesday Afternoon," "Nights in White Satin," "Ride My See Saw," "Question," and "Never Comes The Day."

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