

## Comin' At Ya!

### "Real rats in your laps"

Roman "Shades" Pawlyszyn It's 1953. Outside the movie theatre, the gaudy poster promises "a lion in your arms, a lover in your lap", or something like that. Inside, it's packed and every member of the audience is wearing a pair of paper-framed glasses for which each paid an extra dime. All lenses are glued to the action on-screen: a rattlesnake is coiling his way towards our sleeping cowboy-hero. Suddenly, the rattler lunges out directly at the audience and the bespectacled faces duck in unison under a chorus of gasps.

Scenes like this will again be common if Bill Bukowski has his way. And it looks like he might. The 29-year-old graduate of the NYU film school has spent the past seven years developing a modern process for the production of 3-D films; he's now watching his invention translate into box-office success. The film is *Comin' At Ya!* and it opens in Toronto today.

In his pursuit of the third dimension, Bukowski found himself in quite an uphill struggle. "When I first started, there was nobody to learn from," he recounts. "I had to track people down in nursing homes."

Unlike the cumbersome, unreliable methods used in 3-D's golden age, Bukowski's new system can be attached to any camera with a minimum of fuss. However, Bukowski has not managed to dispense with necessity of special glasses for the audience.

"The Russians have developed a system that requires no glasses," he explains, "but only three people can watch it at once and get the 3-D effect, and it does require that you sit with a neck brace keeping your head absolutely still. It's sort of the 'you move, you die' principle."

Plot-wise, *Comin' At Ya!* is pretty lame—a weak spaghetti western interrupted occasionally by striking 3-D effects, and that's its problem. *Comin' At Ya!* is a special effect in search of a movie.

Bukowski agrees, but was unable to influence those in charge of the aesthetics, being limited to his role as "3-D Technical Advisor": "I had so many arguments with the scriptwriters it got to the point where all I could do was throw my arms in the air."

It seems shortsighted not to utilize more of the possibilities of 3-D than just thrusting rats into the laps of viewers, especially since that was precisely the reason 3-D's novelty wore off so quickly in the '50's. At that time, 3-D became synonymous with junky, gimmick-ridden 'B'-movies. With the upcoming follow-ups to *Comin' At Ya!* bear-

ing such titles as *Rottweiler* ("Starring ten of the deadliest dogs in the world") and *Louistana Swamp Murders*, it's not hard to envision the 3-D renaissance joining the electric back-scratcher revival in renaissance heaven.

Which would be too bad for Bill Bukowski. In the future, he'd like to try combining 3-D and IMAX (the 70mm system used at Ontario Place's Cinesphere), and he'd also like to perfect the system used in *Comin' At Ya!*, which he insists was merely a prototype. If you'd like to hear about the cinematic possibilities of 3-D, talk to Bill Bukowski. If you'd like to see some amazing technology, go see *Comin' At Ya!* And maybe, someday, Stanley Kubrick will make a 3-D film.



Raunch Ric Sarabia pores over the latest edition of Swedish Theatre Review.

## Theatre screams

Robert Fabes

Ric Sarabia has a mission. The artistic director of the Samuel Beckett Theatre wants anyone and everyone who is serious about drama to use his theatre. Actors, writers, and directors who want to put on a production need no longer worry about where to do it; Beckett is the place, and the place is on the first floor of Stong College. The theatre offers the chance for non-theatre majors to put on their own productions. Sarabia, of *Despite Straight Lines 'fame'*, is willing to help serious students stage their own productions.

Last year was a good one for Beckett, and Sarabia hopes that this year will be better. Last

year's production of Woody Pecker Allen's *Death*, with its cast of tens, packed the house every night and Sarabia is planning on having more of the same this year. A production of Alfred Jarry's *Ubu Roi* is being planned.

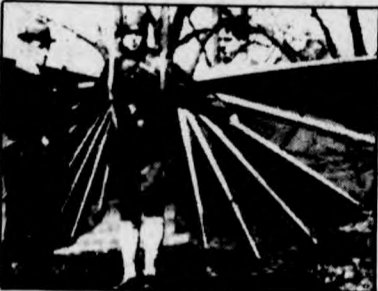
"It requires a large cast and will give a lot of students the opportunity to perform, an opportunity they would not otherwise have," says Sarabia. Also, a production of *Kennedy's Children* is now being rehearsed and will be performed November third through the seventh.

The Beckett Theatre is for the students. If you have an idea, go ahead and do it, the space is there for you to use. Anyone interested should contact Ric Sarabia at 667-6047.

## Thingamajig flik not slik

Mark Lewis

*Gizmo*, now playing at the Carlton Cineplex, is a film version of *Real People*, circa 1910-1950. Unfortunately, while the movie is an entertaining look at this era's eccentrics and their inventions, the television show has the advantage of being free for the viewing at home. *Gizmo* would make a great television special.



What makes it good TV and only a fair movie? Firstly, the fact that television viewing is free and films are expensive to see should mean that we'll see something at the movies that television can't or won't give us with the same impact, be it complex human relationships, spectacular visuals, or more implicit depictions of sex and/or violence. Movies are expected to be artistically motivated as well as entertaining; our expectations for television are less demanding, and in expecting

less we usually get it. Finally, a movie should evoke a greater emotional involvement, by nature of the large screen and the presence of a large group of fellow spectators, than TV is able to generate.

Under these criteria, nothing about *Gizmo* warrants theatrical release. The film is made up of newsreel footage, and the visual emphasis is on reportage, not aesthetics. The content of the clips is for the most part non-editorial as well. The director of *Gizmo*, Howard Smith, makes it clear through the tone of the narration and the songs which are used to help glue together the clips into sequences, that a low-order entertainment is his main goal.

There is an undertone of admiration for the drive which makes these people do what they do, yet Smith goes out of his way in glibberish-filled opening and closing narrations to downplay the very thing which gives *Gizmo* the little thematic base it has. Smith tells us to just watch and laugh at the strange people and their inventions, and often we do laugh, but just as often we simply watch one invention paraded after another. And we wonder why they, and we, bothered with this *Gizmo* in the first place.

## New Crad in town

### Obscene tome hits home

Lloyd Wasser

*Human Secrets (Book One)*, by Crad Kilodney, Charnel House, 36 pp., \$2.00.

"UNNGHI! Swack! WHIP ME! WHIP ME HARDER!" Amy felt like fainting. She could hardly see for the tears in her eyes. She stepped down the stairs so fearfully that she almost tripped. Then she saw it! Oh, God! Oh, God! "MOTHER!" she shrieked.

Crad Kilodney has come a long way in the four years since he published and began to sell his first book, *Mental Cases*, on the windy streets of Toronto. In between, Kilodney has acquired a column in *Rustler* magazine, a wide-spread (and well-deserved) reputation as a first-rate underground writer, and has produced four more nasty

collections of perverse prose.

Even with all this success, Kilodney continues to sell on his favourite corners, and his latest creation is *Human Secrets (Book One)*, a madcap vision of our modern society in classic Kilodney style.

"Janitors and Kitchen Staff", the best of the four pieces in the book, introduces the reader to 11 slightly off-center personalities. There's Mr. Verdoold, who likes to cut out pictures of little girls in nighties or bathing suits from department store catalogues and go off into the woods with them every so often, and Mrs. Cooper, who's never had an orgasm in her life and lies in bed at night imagining she's being raped by gorillas, vampires or Frankenstein's monster.

The characters in "Bucky's Big Day" complement those of

"Janitors and Kitchen Staff" with a full range of wackos and loonies to laugh at. There's Amy, who arrives at her mother's house one night and finds her in the basement beating a teen-age boy with a whip, and Fred, the custodian, who claims to have been on the moon and to have invented an atomic bomb that doesn't make pollution. Bucky himself is the star of a razor commercial and is hopelessly in love with a girl he has never met. Bucky's father (perhaps the most colourful character in the book) is an inmate of an insane asylum and is convinced there are devils in the radiator.

The major theme of "Bucky's Big Day" is sex, and it's detailed in every way imaginable, from a romantic encounter between an ad producer and his Barbie doll, to a young secretary's infatuation with a porno star. This tale is so engorged with sexual situations it might have been better subtitled: "Whips, Chains and Freaks". At times it's hard to tell whether the tale is a selection from a smut novel or a work of satirical fiction.

Two other tales fill out this volume, and they're better left unread. Neither tale appeals to the funny bone like "Bucky's Big Day", and both stories only seem to serve as filler material for an otherwise first-rate collection of writing.

## Chas and Sue: Dislocated at hip

Robert Fabes

Last Wednesday, after a 50-minute wait, York students were exposed to the antics of Suzette Couture and Chas "Chuck the Security Guard" Lawther. The show—short skits joined by choppy dialogue—was well-received by the small audience. I, however, was not enthused. The performers' timing was off and most of the material wasn't funny anyway.

It was thanks to Couture that the evening was not a total loss. Her energy, facial expressions, and acting ability, all of which surpassed Lawther's, helped pull up the show when it sagged. Of special note was her portrayal of a pre-programmed, electronic geisha girl.

Couture should get her act together and take it on the road—without Lawther.

Clip 'n' save!