

Theatre UNB on trial

The Private Ear & The Public Eye

by Nicola Benjamin
Brunswickan Entertainment

Running last week in compliment at the Memorial Theatre on campus were two one act plays by Peter Shaffer, *The Private Ear & The Public Eye*. One has a rather tragic ending, and the other a more hopeful one. The tragedy has its comedic moments, and the comedy its serious ones. Both explore different aspects of the interactions between man and woman as they try to forge relationships with one another. Each play has two men and one woman; love triangles of sorts, as it turns out.

The Private Ear is about a lonely young man, Bob (played by Kumar Sivasubramanian), who thinks he's finally found his ideal woman, (Doreen, played by Tracy Carr), who in his eyes is a Madonna (the mother of Jesus, not the rock singer). Unaccustomed to handling matters of the heart, he calls upon a co-worker, Ted (played by Paul MacDonald), his office's version of a Casanova, to lend him a hand with his dinner date. But all does not go as Bob plans; Doreen proves to be human, not a goddess, complete with human weaknesses, and Ted...well, Ted just can't resist doing what he does best. Ted proves to be as shallow as Bob is deep. While Ted can effortlessly carry on a surface rapport with Doreen, despite very little substance beneath, poor Bob (who thinks passionately of life, complete with quirky insights) fails miserably to make a good impression. The actors did well to portray this sad tale, although a little less fidgeting on Sivasubramanian's part would have been better. A certain amount was necessary, especially at the beginning, as poor Bob is beside himself with nervousness. But after a while it got distracting, and near the end, simply did not fit, as Bob's state of mind changes with the progression of the play.

The Public Eye began wonderfully, with Corey Scott playing an eccentric

private detective. His comedic antics, complete with marvellous facial expression, had the audience in stitches. He has been hired by Charles, played by the stiff and proper (intentionally so) Jamie McDonald, to follow his wife (played by Erin Fellows). When Julian (Scott) appears suddenly in Charles' office on a weekend to report on Belinda's movements of the past three weeks, an interesting chain of events follows, as Julian finds he has talents beyond serving as the 'public eye'. Julian sees all; able to make as many interesting insights about others, as Bob was able to make about himself. Once again, the acting was good, but both plays suffered from being too long. Much



of the dialogue was redundant and could have been trimmed down considerably, especially on *The Public Eye*, which ran for an hour and a half. On top of the one hour run, this made for a long evening of sitting on an uncomfortable chair. But the fault for this belongs to the playwright, not the players.

The sets were simple but functional. Some of the costume choices were questionable. The lighting needed work, with some of the cues rushed and the levels not right. The actors were 'caught' on stage a couple of times. And if you were hoping for some actual information about the play and its program, I fear you shall find it to be a lot like Ted, good surface impression, but very little substance.

The Odd Couple

by Ajit Chordia
Brunswickan Entertainment

Encore! That is an appropriate reaction to this play, and the audience couldn't have agreed more. It's not very often that one comes across a play that is so vibrant and yet has a theme that is so realistic that everyone can relate to it.

The Odd Couple is an adaptation of the originally male-dominated play of the same name which went on to become a classic movie hit with Tony Randall and Jack Lemmon. The play centers around the relationships of six friends in their mid 30s.

This play was genuinely entertaining (more so if you've been watching *Seinfeld* everyday), and held the audience's attention throughout. Though there were a few jibes at the "other sex" when some of the friends commented on their husbands, the play was full of healthy humor and was excellently acted.

Of particular mention is Tanya Atkinson (Florence/Flo/Flozie!), in her first major role on stage and Hilary Stephenson for her portrayal of Olive, the mid 30s single woman who is tired of living all by herself. The two Spanish cassanovas played by Jamie Brewer (Manolo) and Kenny Fitzpatrick (Jesus - pronounced Heysoos in Spanish) were excellent! Kudos to them both! Katherine Atkinson, Janet Coates, Jennifer Coates, and Jill Beardmore were all worthy of mention for their roles in the supporting cast too.

The play, as Siskel and Ebert would say, gets two thumbs up!

Afterwards, I sneaked down into the dressing rooms for a quick interview with the budding director- Jennifer Brewer and a jubilant cast. This was Jennifer's first direction, and she did a fine job. Jennifer is a 4th year Fine Arts student at UNB and is planning to make this her career, and nothing could be more appropriate for her I'd say. I wish her the best of luck with that decision.



by Little Billy Traer
Brunswickan Entertainment

There's nothing better than having a TV show start out with a sister pushing her sibling, who's in a wheelchair, out into the path of an oncoming truck. The best part is that it's not a cop show.

During the past three years, Melrose Place has gone from a low-rated cheesy night-time soap to a slightly higher-rated cheesy night-time soap that sells one thing. Sex!!! Most of the characters have slept with everyone else, and some are going around for the second or third time.

What I really find amusing is the way the characters go from being good to bad and then back again, much akin to professional wrestlers. They probably have the same writers.

Take, for instance, Kimberly (who is presently married to Michael) who at the end of last season, went totally bonkers and blew up the apartment building everyone lives in, then got trundled off to the psycho ward. Now, she's cured and giving psychological advice to the other normal people on the show.

Sidney, an ex-hooker, stripper and cult member (who used to be married to Michael and wants him back for some reason) recently dropped drugs into her sister's drink which caused her to have a stroke, since she's trying to get rid of her by any means possible. Leaving a paralysed person in a wheelchair by the ocean with the tide coming in is not on my list of nice things. Mind you, it was an accident. Honest.

Jane, the sister (who was Michael's first husband, and definitely does not want him back), has been trying to figure out who has been trying to kill her. Could it be her partner (and former fiancée) who was going to throw her out of their company? After all, the pills showed up in his desk. Or was it her former best friend who stole her fiancée. Or was it Michael, who she found... nah, it couldn't have been him, he was too busy trying to sleep with her.

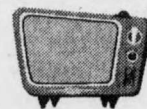
Michael, the doctor, has been married to three different women in the show. He divorced Jane because he couldn't keep his hands off Kimberly. He got blackmailed into marrying Sidney after he supposedly killed Kimberly in a car accident. He

dumped Sidney immediately after Kimberly returned from the dead. Kimberly, of course, was secretly trying to kill Michael for injuring her in the accident. Then he lost his memory in an accident and became a nice guy (for two weeks anyway). He then regained his memory, tied up Sidney and proceeded to save Amanda from a deadly disease, and then slept with her. But he lost her, and is now back with Sidney, though he's trying to get rid of her. He wants Kimberley back now.

Then there's Billy (who hasn't turned bad yet) who was about to get married to Allison, and got stood up on their wedding day, who then tried for a year to get her back. So he married Brooke, who just happened to be preventing Allison from getting back with Billy. Allison in turn marries Brooke's father (Haley), becoming her step mother. Definitely no mother-daughter conversations going on as Brooke believes Allison is trying to steal everything she has from her. Haley then committed suicide after secretly divorcing Allison, leaving whatever money he had left to Brooke and Billy's child; which won't happen because Brooke was never pregnant, and when she found out, neglected to tell him.

Then there's Amanda, played by Heather Locklear, no stranger to night-time soaps. Without her, this show is nothing. She goes out with this doctor, Peter Burns, who was only using her for money. Peter decided it's in his best interest for her to die on the operating table but he was caught and went to jail. Peter showed up this year after getting out of jail and started getting it on with Amanda again. After all, trying to kill her was a professional thing, not a personal one. Amanda has something to hide. When she was young, she got married to this mobster who abused her and faked her death. She moved to California so she could start a new life but Mr. Mobster showed up wanting her back. A 30 foot fall took care of that. Mobster's brother shows up to kill her, but instead falls for her. Mobster's father really wants her dead, and was just about to blow her away at the end of the last episode.

Miss one episode and, just like any other soap, it gets real confusing.



* Get your TV columns into The Bruns office as soon as you can. After all, everyone deserves at least fifteen minutes of fame...

(Editor's Note - we weren't joking about Star Trek.)

Climb every mountain...

The Banff Festival of Mountain Films stops off in town on February 4th in MacLaggan Hall at 6 pm. The programme includes:

Avalanche: This National Geographic short documentary explores how we experience the mighty power of one of nature's most dramatic and terrifying forces.

Child of the Wind: This is a short documentary based on the wilderness adventure legacy of Canadian Coast Mountain explorer John Clarke. Over the last 30 years, Clarke has made over 600 first ascents and traversed thousands of kilometres of remote Coast Mountain terrain on foot and skies. He has created a living heritage and free spirit like no other. This magnificent film captures the beauty and wildness of the Pacific coast of Canada.



Lynn Hill on Camp Six Pitch, Nose Route on El Captain, Yosemite, California

Tickets are available at the Help Centre in the SUB, the Radical Edge, the U.N.B. Indoor climbing wall on Friday 7-10p.m.

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