

# Treading the line between comedy and tragedy

By LEO MACDONALD

*Moo*  
Directed by Jackie Maxwell  
The Factory Theatre

*Moo*, a comedy written by Sally Clark, is actually very serious. As she recently noted in *NOW* magazine, "... my plays sit on the seam between the comic and the tragic."

Even with such themes as self-deceit and misanthropy, there is still room for humour. Moragh (Moo) McDowell, played by Patricia Hamilton, is a witty, rebellious, rifle-toting woman who refuses to conform to social conventions (i.e., marriage), until she can find a man who is a better shot than she.

Just as these words are spoken, Harry Parker (Richard Donat), a handsome, womanizing scoundrel who is a better shot than Moo, takes aim at her with his good looks, and emotionally wounds her for life.

After they elope, what follows is not a contest of the sexes, but a lopsided, consuming love affair, where

Moo does most of the ingesting. Although Harry admits to the audience that he really does love Moo, he has an odd way of displaying affection. At one point, he accidentally grazes Moo's head with a gunshot, steals her money, and has her committed to an asylum.

## Theatre Review

Moo shrugs off Harry's conjugal foibles by saying that it is just Harry's way.

Regardless of what Harry does, Moo remains passionately devoted to him.

Although their affair is laughable, the playwright reveals some sad and sobering ideas, the most obvious one being that nobody really loves anyone. And for those who think they are in love, Harry reminds us that it is all self-deceit. When Moo asks Harry if he lies, his answer is "Yes, of course I lie, and especially to you."

Throughout the play, Moo's pas-

sion and obsession for Harry is contrasted with her sister Sarah's marriage. Sarah, who is not in love with her husband, tells Moo that she will grow to love him, even if he does like cars and playing golf.

Moo's desire for Harry is enough to propel her half-way around the world looking for him, but that in itself is not enough to sustain the story. The only option left for the playwright, it seems, is to chronicle Moo's downward spiral, and this leads to some grave mood shifts.

Accompanying the major shift is a stage set of sombre colours. The backdrop is a depressing greyish-blue with an enlarged postcard of an exotic island. However, the colours in the picture are muted. The white, sandy beach has been tinted to a urine colour and the clouds are a slate grey and green.

This bleak tone might agree with people like Harry who say that every lover is a liar, but it is Moo's position to prove this wrong.

*Moo* continues at The Factory Theatre until January 29. For more information call 864-4971.



WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE? A scene from *Moo*.

## Sons of Freedom "kicks ass"

By MARY JANKULAK

Sons of Freedom  
*Sons of Freedom*  
Slash Records

First: what this record is not: boring, insipid, uninspired. No semi-clad women in chains on the cover or in any of the song lyrics.

Is *Sons of Freedom* a great album? You bet. It kicks ass. It is impossible to pin these guys down to any one influence. The record reminds me of Gang of Four, Joy Division, 54-40, Leonard Cohen, and the Stooges, when Iggy was still young, brash, and snotty, but with something to say.

## Record Review

These guys do have something to say, and glory be, they say it, using music and vocals together to achieve a perfect balance. The music is not just backdrop, but neither does the voice drown out the guitar.

Sons of Freedom hail from Vancouver B.C., and this debut album (co-produced by the band and Mike Wallace from San Francisco, who worked with Faith No More) does the Western music scene proud.

All band members wrote the music (Don Harrison: guitar, Don Short: drums Don Binnis: bass/vo-

## SONS OF FREEDOM

cal, and Jim Newton: vocals/guitar), and vocalist Jim Newton wrote the lyrics. The scope of these songs varies immensely, from the political implications of "Fuck the System" (which has been getting a lot of air-play on college radio) to the plaintive "Mona Lisa". Talk about a love song: "Mona Lisa" has one line that expresses desire so perfectly; "I love your rhythm." There is a wistful tone to the chorus: "Nobody sees your mind/ Just make sure you don't sell your soul."

What's more, the band can do hard rock, as well as ballads. "Super Cool Wagon" is just guitars, bass, drums, and a whole lot of yelling, reminiscent of Gang of Four's "To Hell With Poverty." Even though Sons of Freedom has something to say, their songs don't preach. A song that begins philosophically, "Is it a bad thing to hate somebody?" has the chorus, "Dead dog on the highway", just to remind us that life is not so dead serious that you can't see a bit of humour, or poke some fun at yourselves.

And finally, these guys have integrity. The quotation on the cover of the album reads: "Never retract, never retreat, never apologize, get the thing done and let them howl." This is taken from Nellie McClung, the great Canadian feminist/activist in the early 1900s. If four guys in 1988 can quote Nellie McClung on the cover of an album of great stuff, there is hope for the future!

## Some art of the irrational mind

By G.H. MARR

Linda Besner's *L'aquarium dans le desert et Poesie Urbaine* is a complete assault on the rational mind, but lives on in the abstract, artistic mind.

The exhibit, now showing at Glendon College's La Maison de la Culture, is exemplary in its creation of nothingness. Various oversized papier mâché posters have been organized to create a mini-maze that does little to add to the excitement of the exhibit.

The pieces — which are 57 cm x 76 cm and composed of rag paper, collage, sand clay, and gold leaves — leave plenty to the imagination and nothing to the artist. Each piece sells for \$300.

"Each year, Glendon offers a young artist a chance to create his or her own exhibit," said gallery curator Jocelyne Benedek. "This year, Linda Besner chose to create her own medium."

Besner works principally in fibres and paper, but painting, sculpture, and art print also find their way into her work.

The Montreal resident received a three-year diploma in graphic design from CEGEP Ahuntsic in 1986. She also studied Fine Arts at Concordia University, majoring in Fibres from 1987-88.

Exhibitions by Besner have included "Fibres," and "Fibre," both group exhibits at Concordia.

Her work also includes "Duo" at le café le petit peu and "Splash" at the Bar Lezard. In 1986, Besner placed a group exhibition entitled "A La Recherche Du Point G" at CEGEP Ahuntsic.

Besner's Glendon exhibit, running until January 26, truly tests the imagination. Somewhere in the malaise exists an artistic point.

But it is too hard, too abstract. Dead goldfish wrapped in string and gold leaves are contrasted with a live goldfish captured in its native urban bowl — suspended by wire in the centre of the exhibit.

It's the highlight of the show. Beyond the goldfish, this exhibit is strictly for the avant-garde or the irrational.

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