

# Arts & Entertainment

## Dolha takes on David for Queen

interview by Patricia Badir

Since its inception in 1978, Catalyst theatre has gained a reputation for its work in social action theatre. In its mandate, the theatre insists upon doing drama that will provoke inquisition into problem issues in order to encourage community action. Three years ago, Catalyst Artistic Director Ruth Smillie began a project which would attempt to explore homosexuality from an adolescent's point of view. She and Lorna Thomas, also a Catalyst, began research into the area, interviewing gay teens and documenting their experiences. Canadian playwright John Lazarus, inspired by the research, wrote *David for Queen*. The play opened last week in a co-production with Theatre Network, a company which shares in Catalyst's desire to produce accessible and relevant drama.

Andrew Dolha, a graduate from the University of Alberta B.F.A. program in Drama, plays David, a young gay man

who is the focus of the play. His is a sensitive role which challenges an actor's ability to perform with honesty and clarity which will reach out and move an audience to a new understanding of a very real problem. Dolha consented to be interviewed by *The Gateway* on the subject of *David for Queen*.

**Gateway:** You are working on a project that has been a meeting of two minds: Theatre Network and Catalyst Theatre. Both are concerned with initiating a dialogue on issues which are perceived as problems within the community. Why is this kind of work important to you?

**Dolha:** Theatre like *David for Queen* brings out questions that people like to leave in the back of their minds, in the storeroom at the back of their house. It makes people aware, it challenges them. Whereas "socialite theatre" is "let's go and show off our furs...how 'bout a drink in the lobby...and yes, wasn't that a nice play" and that is all. There is no mental process

## Perillo's career on the rise

by Darren Salyn

It is not uncommon for people to imagine what it must be like to walk on stage as a solo performer, and have within their power the ability to capture their audience's undivided attention. To imagine this is easy, but to experience it, however, comes only to a gifted few. One of these gifted performers is soprano Linda Perillo, a native Edmontonian whose future as a singer is looking brighter every day.

Perillo has trained in Alberta and performed here as a professional piano accompanist and singer since 1977. She learned to play piano by ear at age four and at eight began singing in her church choir. After starting private singing lessons at age nine, it was discovered that Linda had perfect pitch. More training followed and she started what has turned out to be a very promising career.

Since then Perillo has done studio accompaniment for many of Edmonton's top educators and performers. She has worked as a studio musician, has sung and recorded with ConSept and Pro Coro Canada, and fills her busy schedule with vocal adjudications, coaching and private students. Despite all of this, she always seems to find time to do a variety of solo vocal performances which is where her career is now going.

Perillo's vocal medium focuses on the music of the Baroque era, her favourite in performance. Linda also enjoys contemporary music because, like Baroque sing-

ing, it presents a challenge to her.

One of the reasons the music of the Baroque appeals to Perillo is that "it's spiritual music... a total escape from the real world" and just the sheer fun she gets out of it makes performing a very rewarding experience.

This enthusiastic attitude towards her music prompted many of Perillo's contemporaries to urge her towards a career as a soloist. This spark has led to many encouraging results over the past couple of years and for that Perillo feels very lucky to have the support of the people around her. She recently returned from a series of auditions in Toronto and will be returning for more auditions in January. This is all courtesy of a recently awarded grant from the Alberta Foundation for the Performing Arts, which will also enable further audition tours throughout Europe. Perillo also has plans to study at Stuttgart Bach and to train with John Elliot Gardner next summer.

Perillo feels that she has enough professional background to strive for bigger goals now that she has reached maturity both personally and as a musician. She has already landed her first solo performance of Handel's "Messiah" this Christmas with the Lethbridge Symphony under the direction of Dr. George Evelyn.

Perillo's biggest goal is to perform Baroque works with the leading scholars and ensembles of early music. The way things are going for her, that goal should be quite attainable.



Local singer Linda Perillo, who specializes in music of the Baroque era, is riding towards success.

going on there. There is nothing wrong with entertainment but you can do so much more.

**Gateway:** What kind of audience has been targeted for this production? Has a special attempt been made, considering the subject matter, to get high school kids

in to see the play?

**Dolha:** Regarding school matinees, the feeling was that it was best not to have them. First, the schools themselves would probably reject the play. Parents would have to sign permission forms for little

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Mike Spindloe

Rod Stewart, looking dapper and fit at 43, entertains Friday night at the Coliseum.

## Stewart show really nostalgia

Rod Stewart  
Northlands Coliseum  
Friday, November 18

review by Mike Spindloe

Everyone's favourite bleached-blond (okay, *second* favourite) was back in town again Friday, and Rod Stewart didn't disappoint the virtually sold-out crowd, which came ready and willing to cheer his every twitch at the Coliseum. Backed by an eight-piece band, Stewart played virtually the same show he has the last, say, four times through town, varied only by the addition of a few of his most recent hits.

The crowd didn't mind a bit, though, and what would a Rod Stewart concert be without "Hot Legs", "Tonight's the Night", and "Maggie May", et al. Stewart gave the people what they wanted, seemed to have fun doing it, and somehow managed to make the whole thing seem like more than the nostalgia show that it really was.

Stewart played a generous two sets plus encores totalling almost two-and-a-half hours of music; there was no need for an opening act. Although he is now in his mid-40's, he obviously stays in shape; Stewart seemed as fresh at the end of the show as he did at the beginning, hoofing soccer balls halfway across the Coliseum and dancing around the stage at only a slightly less frantic pace than during past

concerts.

His backing band failed to distinguish themselves, with the exception of the horn section, who mugged their way cheerfully through the entire performance. Otherwise, it was predictable guitar heroics and a really tacky drum solo for instrumental filler behind the star of the evening. That, of course, was Stewart's vocals, which sound amazingly like he has a perpetual case of incipient laryngitis.

The atmosphere was in direct contrast to Stewart's last appearance in Edmonton, when Jeff Beck's disappearing act marred the show, and Stewart accused the audience of being on quaaludes. This time it was all upbeat, perhaps because, as Stewart suggested, he owed us something for missing his summer concert date here, or perhaps because from the first notes of "Hot Legs", which opened the show, a good part of the audience was on its feet offering wholehearted support.

Overall, it was an evening of no surprises, but no-one minded since they got what they came for: effectively, a two hour medley of Rod's greatest hits. It was classic escapist entertainment, with no heavy messages, which is why Stewart can still fill the Coliseum despite the fact that he hasn't made a decent album for ten years or so.

And he'll probably still be filling it even if he doesn't make a decent album for the next ten years.