

# ENTERTAINMENT

## Dancers get Royal Danish treat

Judith Popeil

This past week, students of York's Dance Department were given a real treat. Three of Denmark's top mentors in dance, Eric Auschengreen from the University of Copenhagen, and Niels Bjorn Larsen and Ole Norlyng, from the Royal Danish Ballet, were wisked up to York to give a lecture and demonstration and to talk specifically about the *Ballet Napoli*.

The National Ballet, for its 30th Anniversary Season, is staging *Napoli*—a 140-year-old classic from Denmark. The dance is a love story about a

young girl, Terasina, who falls in love with a young fisherman, Gennaro. She is swept away on a boat and captured by the evil god Golfo, who eventually takes her to the Blue Grotto. She eventually makes her way out of the Grotto and is reunited with her lover Gennaro.

What makes *Napoli* special is that it was authored and choreographed by August Bournonville, a Ballet Master in Denmark in the 1830's, yet has never been staged by any company other than the Royal Danish Ballet, although it still remains a favourite amongst Danes.

Eric Auschengreen, a Dance Historian at the University of Copenhagen, talked about the unique aspects of Bournonville's style. Bournonville believed in the importance of mime in ballet. The mime was to assist in telling the story.

Auschengreen pointed out important features of the technique. The dancer is exhibited in a more graceful and delicate manner than what was typical of the Russian style of the period. The upper part of the body is used in enchainements. Bournonville took his inspiration from sculpture. Intricate, rhythmic footwork is an important detail to be noted about the technique.

Niels Bjorn Larsen gave a demonstration. "You use your face and your body and you use

your eyes, you never look directly at a person but always look over them. The force of the body is built up from the centre and then thrust out to the audience."

Larsen will be appearing in the first act of the gala performance. Also appearing in the ballet as a Guest Artist for the Gala performance on Thursday, November 12 will be Yves Cousineau, chairman of York's Dance Department, a trained mime and former member of the National Ballet of Canada. Cousineau will play the part of the priest in the second act.

Ole Norlyng collaborated with Peter Schaufuss who is directing *Napoli*, to create an original score all taken from original sources. Norlyng explained, "Ballet music at the time was not repeated by the great composers. It was too lyrical and dramatic—not symphonic like." An Italian folk tune, is played throughout the three acts to show Terasina's love for Gennaro. This brings familiarity to the audience and Bournonville believed that in using music in this way he would create a more memorable effect for the audience.

*Napoli* is a graceful ballet—ending happily. As Auschengreen said, "If you don't come out of the O'Keefe Centre humming and trying to dance the dances of *Napoli* feeling your spirits have been uplifted then either something is wrong with the ballet or something is wrong with you."



Jim Agnelli

## Personal vision in art

I.E. Necakov

Even though both Karn Kazmer's pieces and Maarten Lampan's photographs require the spectator's personal experience, a common investigation permeates both exhibits. Both deal with the presence of 'manufactured' images and how they intrude into our daily lives.

Kazmer's pieces seem analogues to a conflict arising between the 'natural' world of 'survival' and the plasticity of human endeavour.

Maarten Lampan's photographs also examine this conflict. However, Lampan's exhibit seems to be more a compositional and textual examination of colour photography. His use of 'blues' and underdeveloping seem to indicate this.

Although this exhibition may initially evoke questions in the mind of the observer, be assured that the end result will not differ greatly. Taking into consideration the work and devotion put into this exhibit, it is unfortunate that an explanation by the 'artist' is required for any sort of understanding.

Personal vision permeates that which is presented as 'art', the question remains, how valid is it to impose one's personal view through 'conceptual art' upon an unsuspecting audience. Thus how informative is this experience for the viewer?



## Looker sees through you

LOOKER

— written and directed by Micheal Crichton

If the film 'LOOKER' does anything for Micheal Crichton's directing career it will serve to further trench his reputation as the master of technological thrillers. A bestselling author, Crichton's previous films, *Westworld*, *The Great Train Robbery*, and *Coma* have all had their roots in some form of technology.

In the film 'Westworld' the technology was that of the future. In 'The Great Train Robbery' it was a fast technology a historical fascination with trains. And in 'COMA' present medical concepts. Now with 'LOOKER' starring a weary Albert Finney it is a void steeped in today's microchip reality and

tomorrow's impersonal fears. 'LOOKER', however, suffers from near terminal problems and a lack of Crichton's originality which has marked his eclectic record.

'LOOKER' concerns a Beverly Hills plastic surgeon (portrayed by Finney) whose most recent patients, commercial models, are being systematically murdered. With the police suspecting him of the murders he sets out to find the killer. In his search he becomes involved in a multinational corporation who, in the pursuit of controlling the masses, have found a way to create holographic physically perfect human images for use in television commercials. Because they can transmit hypnotic light pulses from their eyes these holograms are to be

used in creating a new breed of supercommercial.

In his hand Finney comes up against corporate forces who are armed with 'LOOKER' guns, inventive devices which disrupt their victims' perspective of time. If Crichton's premise is original his delivery is not. Although it does not diminish the film itself the stories theme of paranoia, silent killers and corporate evil owes more to his last film 'COMA' than to its own steam.

Albert Finney is an accomplished British actor well known for his roles in 'Tom Jones' and 'Murder on the Orient Express' where he portrayed Hercule Poirot. 'LOOKER' is one of several North American films he has recently acted in to introduce himself to a larger audience. He will soon be seen in the John Huston musical spectacular 'Annie' where he portrays Daddy Warbucks. We can hope for better things in 'Annie' but in 'LOOKER' he gives a dry, unenthusiastic performance. He is given necessary support by Partridge Family grad Susan Dey who gives a lively performance as one of Finney's 'living' patients.

'LOOKER' is almost dealt a fatal blow by the dismal, laughable performances of Finney's gorgeous (LOOKER'S ALL) but brainless patients. Furthermore the screenplay is rife with loose ends. We are never told why the corporation is out to silence the models though their guilt is plain to see from the start.

'LOOKER' is a directors film. Much like one of Alfred Hitchcock's creations it owes more to the visual ideas of Micheal Crichton than to inventive character and step by step plot. Crichton deserves credit for creating some truly awesome images and setpieces including the computer technology that perpetrates the corporate plots as well as a dazzling conclusion.

'LOOKER' is a popcorn film for escape devotees. It is an exercise in style and technique, a tribute for Crichton which borrows from his other films. It may be his last film of this mold as Crichton has expressed interest in moving on to neverground. This may be fortunate for him for though 'LOOKER' gets passing marks another Crichton repetition will not.

Ian Bailey

## Rock 'n Roll smashing

Al Locke

Toronto's third Front Street playhouse, The Young People's Theatre, is currently presenting a bona fide smash hit, John Gray's *Rock N' Roll*.

Set in the mythical town of Mushaboom; Nova Scotia, director/playwright Gray's work offers a pleasing look at small town Canadian rock and roll.

The play's emphasis is on rock and roll as a lifestyle, existing as a bond between unlikely groups of people, while providing an escape from the day to day humdrum of small town life. Chink, the anemic loser in the play, fights cooantly with Alec Willow's Manny ("Back pain? It's from all the money you've got stuck up your ass"). Brent is the dull sick kid who learned guitar while recuperating from disease, and Parker is the fat kid nobody wants around. They are a gang of misfits who develop friendships through their music.

The premise of the play is a reunion of their band, the Monarchs, for one last gig, eighteen years after they last played. The focus is the series of

events which led to their formation, and emergence as the best band in, "all of Nova Scotia!"

Any weaknesses in such a hackneyed plot are dispelled with the sheer energy of the performance. John Gray's talent lies in the sixteen original songs he composed for the play. All songs in the first act are representative of adolescent problems; "Never Did Nothin'" focuses on teenage ugliness, as does "The Fat Boy".

The shift in the play, and the music, occurs when the boys mount the stage for their rock and roll shows. With the guidance of Screaming John, the town hood and Future ghost of R & R, and such songs as "The King of Friday Night", "Rock and Roll" and the "last waltz" song "Your Baby", the theatre explodes in a rock celebration. Suddenly, we are back in the Fifties, watching a hot band have a great time on stage; a great time rewarded with loud, prolonged applause.

John Gray has managed to recreate all of the nuances of the time of our lives. Rock and roll: I like it, ROCK N' ROLL: I love it!

## Spring Awakening is universal, timeless play

Laurie Kruk

York's Theatre Department is presenting Frank Wedekind's play, *Spring Awakening* next week, November 16-21, at the Atkinson Studio, and if the enthusiasm of those involved is any indication, it should be a direct hit.

Wedekind, a forerunner of Bertolt Brecht and the expressionistic style has written a compelling drama set in Vienna at the turn of the century — although the time and setting have been diluted considerably, to allow the universal theme of the play to shine through in 1981. It's about a group of adolescents growing up and discovering themselves as sexual people, beneath the tyrannical moral framework established for them by their elders. And with tragic results, according to actor Ric Sarabia.

Although *Spring Awakening* was directed by Alan Richardson, York drama students Sarabia and Shawn Zevitt each acted as co-directors, while playing their own parts, as well. Both speak of their accomplishment with excitement and pride. According to Sarabia, the subject of *Spring Awakening* translated from German by Edward Bond is timeless and universal, rendering the original time period insignificant.

"The time isn't that important" he affirmed, "as there are no political details of 1892, or whatever, in the play." Sarabia then added, "I think Bond (the translator of the play) has almost rewritten it, making it less didactic, or preachy. The characters talk to each other — which makes it a better vehicle for the actors."

Zevitt agreed. "It's really not dated at all, even though it was written a hundred years ago. It's basically about adolescence and how kids cope with it. That problem is still around today. And, with a Wedekind play, you're always seeing the actors acting. You never forget that, like you might with a Neil Simon play. And Wedekind doesn't use a lot of character development. He uses the characters to say what he wants to say."

"I think the cast is working really well together" Sarabia added, "considering we've only had four weeks to rehearse, and this is our last week. The set is magnificent. Sort of stylized. There are crosses hanging from the ceiling, and even they are stylized, looking like t's...I think you'll enjoy it."

Tickets for *Spring Awakening* are just \$1.00. For further information and reservations call York's Dept. of Theatre at 667-2247.