

# Late bluming Rip Van Winkle

By LEO MACDONALD

**THE LATE BLUMER**  
Directed by John Lazarus  
Alumnae Theatre

The *Late Blumer*, by John Lazarus, is a play about how hippie Howard Blumer (Arther Corber) comes to terms with the '80s, after having hibernated on a 17-year acid trip.

In 1967, Blumer drops a whole stick of candy acid, which takes him on a trip beyond the realm of hallucinations. When he comes down, he finds that not only will he have to

re-evaluate his karma, but — as they now say in the '80s — he'll have to "reprogramme his agenda." This new, computerized language — "I don't like being in a losing mode," or "I'm getting negative residual data" — is just as funny as the beatnik language which we all like to mock, man.

At first it seems that the Computer Age is completely at odds with the '60s kite-flying age (Blumer's main preoccupation). However, we soon find that the two decades share some similar ideas.

Fittingly enough, some of the play's other themes hinge on whether Blumer can be considered the legal owner of his old house. The problem is that Blumer's 17-year hiatus prompted his girl-friend, Elaine (Sandra Shulman), to declare him dead. The result is that Blumer is caught in a power struggle with Rex Fleeter (John Gazey), a high-strung executive who looks like Dan Quayle on Jolt Cola.

Rex is a neurotic who calms himself by chanting "I am the central being of my cosmos." Although his acting may seem stagey to some, his stammering and gesturing provide a charged foil to Blumer's mellow character.

The play on the whole is enjoyable. The first act moves smoothly with the help of burning incense and the appropriate mood music — "White Rabbit" by Jefferson Airplane. However, the second act crams in a lot of action and ideas, which creates some muddled moments. Nonetheless, the play is worth the \$6 admission.

*The Late Blumer* plays Wednesday through Saturday at the Alumnae Theatre until November 19.

## Blitzkrieg

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The Hitler portrayed by Greg Freir is a cold, morose figure from beginning to end. While Freir has Hitler's mannerisms down cold, he passes the point of overuse five minutes into the play. Hitler is reduced to a fidgeting, foot-stomping baby who suffers from chronic nasal drip. Unfortunately, this distorted character representation has permeated the entire cast.

Heather Hodgson plays Hitler's lover, Eva Braun, and while she is not plagued by distracting mannerisms, her character remains unchanged throughout the performance. She becomes repetitive and dull.

There are scenes that cry out for an emotional breakdown or some sort of inner change. In one powerful scene, Hitler forces Eva to spread her legs while he verbally berates her. While this scene should drive audience members to repulsion, I

fear that it only drives them to look at their watches.

The mediocrity of the play was compounded by a set that was dull and uninteresting. Attempting to create a black and white movie image, the director employed a plain, colourless set. Instead of giving a strong, stark image, however, the set gives no indication that we are peering inside Hitler's private chalet in the Bavarian Alps. If Hitler's madness and perversity are indeed as strong as Matheson wants the audience to believe, then the same tension should have been drawn into the set.

Despite flaws in character development and set, these actors have wonderful potential. As performers, they will improve dramatically if they stop acting and start reacting, stop talking at each other and start talking to each other. If the director and actors start taking some risks, they will assuredly mature into their craft.

*Blitzkrieg* runs until November 12 at Theatre Glendon, 2275 Bayview at Lawrence. Tickets are \$4.

## Dancemakers develop artistry

By ROSLYN ANGEL

*Dancemakers* is a group of dancers, choreographers, and directors, who explore, create, experiment, and literally "make dance." The company held a choreographic workshop November 2-5 in its studio at 927 Dupont Street.

A dance workshop, according to Cathy Kyle Fenton (dancer/choreographer), gives each company member "a chance to use their creative talents not just in dance but also in choreography." She stresses that a workshop "is a good way of developing another side to your artistry."

Fenton choreographed one of the pieces in the workshop entitled *Sleepless Night*. It featured Julia Sasso in a solo where she keenly expressed, through the dance, that her mind and body couldn't fall asleep. Just when you thought her body had tamed down, Sasso made a brisk sleepless movement, reflecting Fenton's concept of the piece. Fenton said, "when I'm choreographing, I'm out there with her. You're showing a part of yourself even if it's through another person."


Sasso had the chance to show another part of herself by choreographing *The Shepherdess*, which featured all the dancers excluding herself. *The Shepherdess* is danced to

classical music by Edvard Grieg. Dancers, dressed in light, pastel-coloured costumes, expressed fun-loving playfulness with lightness of step and with smiles upon their faces.

The piece was fun to watch until technical difficulties with the music tape caused an early intermission in the middle of the dance. But these problems didn't seem to detract from the dancers' performance. They returned to finish the piece, as strongly and expressively as before.

Elain Carol, the general manager of the company, says that the experimentation in this workshop is background work for the company's show in February. Now that the workshop is over, the dancers will continue to rehearse and experiment for the February performance.

"Bill James works in a very exploratory way and there will be a lot of experimentation happening in the studio over the next couple of months," says Carol. "It's going to be quite a show."



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