

Dancers Impressive

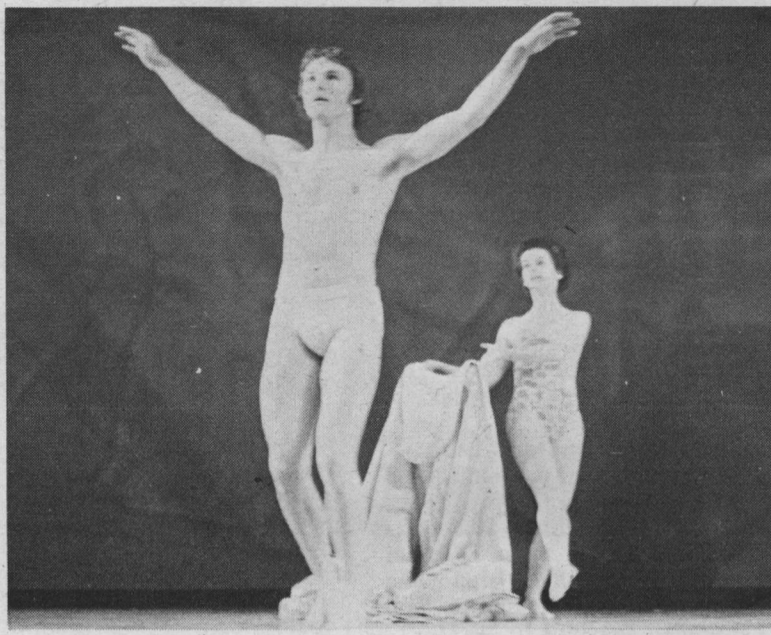
There was no standing ovation following the final performance of the Alberta Contemporary Dance Theatre's spring concert last Sunday night at SUB Theatre. Yet the relatively polite applause generated by the approximately 400 in attendance seemed small reward for the exceptional aesthetic quality demonstrated by the members of the troupe.

Enduring both the poor technical quality of the music and the unfortunate loss of dancer Robert Fleming, the dancers turned in sound performances, with particular note to sequences in "Alberta Suite", "Circles of Silence", and "Parmi Les Reves". Special mention must go to Catherine Geddes, Ronald Holgerson, and Oscar Riley, who performed superlatively throughout the program. The fluidity and control possessed by these three dancers contributed much to the success of the show.

Other selections from the program included some delightful adaptations of the poetry of Ogden Nash, in which the audience could especially appreciate the ability of the dancers to use stage space and facial expression.

"Reflections II", the first dance on the program, and "Moods", the final dance, rounded out the evening's entertainment fare. "Reflections II" contained the only major flaw, a technical problem with the sound system. The volume of the music increased abruptly shortly after the dance began and remained uncomfortably loud for its duration.

While I'm on the topic of music, I should now offer the only suggestion at hand for improvement. There was nothing wrong about the choice of music, but rather the quality. I have a strong feeling of aversion to scratchy records and regrettably, scratchy records were apparently used to provide the music for the program. Shame, shame. One further complaint could be made of the sequence in "Circles", in which the music was cut off for a length of time. Instead of chopping the music out as brusquely as it was, a much superior effect would have resulted by fading the music out and then fading it back in again, as slowly or as rapidly as deemed necessary.



But enough of these antagonizing remarks. Everything considered, the performance was extremely well done, from choreography to costumes to the exclusion of "Pendulum of the Mind" from the program in tribute to Robert Fleming.

In conclusion, it is best to

say that contemporary dance is a medium that must be seen to be understood. If the Alberta Contemporary Dance Theatre's spring concert is a fair indication of what the group is capable of, future performances should not be missed.

Saxby Philips

Queen lacks royal style

Wednesday evening brought one of the supposedly biggest acts from England and one of the biggest acts from the middle of nowhere to Edmonton. Queen and Kansas swooped into leave behind a very pleased audience of high school kids and the odd older audience member.

Perhaps the composition of the audience explains why Queen's first concert in Canada was such a success. From my experience with high school audiences, I have found that they have even worse musical taste than university audiences. No wonder Queen was a success.

Musically Queen is disgusting. They are terribly loud, weakly arranged, and repulsively too high thinking of their own talents. The only musician I give credit at all to is the singer, Freddie Mercury can sing and is one hell of a performer. He is the power of Queen, for he knows how to get an audience whipped up to a frenzy, keep

them there and have them calling for more, even though what they call for is bad music.

The best part (and frankly the only really good part) of their act was their introduction. It was an excellently choreographed piece of theatrics. They utilised a fine mixture of a blackout, smoke, occasion shots of light and very little music. Then the lights came on full force and so did the amplifiers. Oh, our poor ears; not only was it too loud, but it was poor music and put through a bad sound system. (Is Edmonton immune to good sound systems?)

Anyways, Queen rocked through a whole pile of junk off their most recent album then went back to some material the audience knew better, and still it was poorly played. Then horror of all horrors, the guitarist, Brian May, did a five minute solo, alone. I can now say, in all honesty that I have seen some of the best guitarists in the business and now some of the worst. Brian May should have

Humorous Frankenstein

Young Frankenstein is a parody of those 1930s B-thrillers which chronically appear on late night television every summer. Directed by Mel Brooks (*Blazing Saddles*) and starring Gene Wilder the movie offers a full course in comedy, from slapstick to one-line gags to clever, biting satire.

The plot is built around one young Dr. Frankenstein (pronounced fraank-en-steen), the grandson of a more infamous doctor, who rediscovers his relative's secret of giving life to matter. A grave-raid-for-a-body later and the movie goes right off the tracks.

There are sections in the film in which the laughs seem

forced, or the comedy doesn't seem funny; and there are several points at which a scene change is rather bluntly made to keep the whole thing moving. These weaknesses, though, are blanketed by a well delivered tone of humour throughout the rest of the film. Unskilled scene changes are characteristic of the B-films, too, so my last criticism could be uncalled for.

Young Frankenstein, then is good (or fair at least), pure escapism, and without the blood and excess displayed in 3D by Andy Warhol's *Frankenstein* several months ago. It is playing at the Londonderry B.

Kirk Lambrecht

Last free concerts

The University of Alberta's department of music will sponsor five free evening concerts in April. The concerts, to be held in

Convocation Hall in the Arts Building on campus beginning at 8 p.m., will conclude the department's concert season.

On Friday, April 11, Beethoven's Sonatas Op. 12, No. 1; Op. 23; and Op. 96 will be performed by Helmut Brauss, pianist, and Lawrence Fisher, violinist. The University of Alberta Madrigal Singers, conducted by Larry Cook, assistant professor of music, will be in concert on Saturday, April 12. Soprano Jacqueline Preuss, a master of music candidate, will present her graduate recital on Sunday, April 13. Master of music candidate Peter Rudolphi, cellist, will present his graduate recital on Tuesday, April 22.

Brian Johnson, percussionist, will be the featured performer at a staff recital on Wednesday, April 30.

Craft session

Registration opened yesterday for the Students' Union Arts and Craft spring session. The session, which will take place from May 1 until June 20, will offer courses in beginning and intermediate ceramics, floor loom, table loom and off-loom weaving, macrame, copper enamelling, batik, screen printing, basic art and design and primitive weaving and spinning.

by David Garrett

Frank Moher - a promising playwright



You might not notice anything special when you see him on campus but Frank Moher is not your everyday U. of A. student. Last year the 19 year-old drama major won the Alberta Adult Playwriting Contest and the Edmonton Journal's Literary Award Competition with his play *Pause*.

Born in Edmonton, Frank Moher moved to New York with

his parents at the age of 12. In 1972 he returned to Canada, to Calgary to be more specific, "just like Mordecai Richler, an ex-patriot who came back." He has attended this university since 1973 and is enrolled in a drama honours program which he finds "sort of a hard thing to define because drama is really more a practical or creative thing rather than it is an academic endeavor."

His playwriting career started at the age of sixteen in a Calgary high school where he wrote a play called *Damn You Shakespeare*. Since then, he has written four one act plays.

The award-winning play *Pause* originated as an assignment for an English class.

"I had read the book of revelations in the Bible and there is the character of the great whore of Babylon who is poetically the personification of all that's evil with the world. I read this and I thought 'boy what a great character.' So I

decided to write a play around this character.

"At the same time I had just seen a play that involved just two characters and I was reading 'Waiting for Godot' so all those things combined, especially in someone who is young and really wide-open to being influenced by other things. Hopefully you combine those things into something personal."

Frank feels that *Pause* "got completely out of hand. I entered into some contests and, the competition being pretty lax in Alberta, it won. Then the play started getting produced which meant I had to re-write it and think about it more. The fact is," he adds laughingly, "I'm sick of it. It was fun though."

Frank was very satisfied with Walterdale's production of *Pause*. "The guy playing Krutu, named Ray Hunt, was especially good. I really enjoyed his clowning, he was a good farce comedian and that strengthened the play an awful lot."

Unfortunately *Pause* was not very well received at Walterdale although "some people were enthusiastic and I got a couple of laughs here and there." The young playwright attributes this relative failure to the weaknesses of the play and to the fact that it was "a little out of the realm of the kind of thing Walterdale usually does." The play was better received in Calgary because, as Frank explains, "it ran long enough and the publicity was such that it attracted the audience proper to it."

Frank is amazed at the development of theatre in this city. "There are eight or nine different production companies operating in this city and that's phenomenal for its size, for a city with little cultural or theatrical background. Maybe it's because of the isolation, and that the only way we can keep track of the rest of the country is by the plays they write."

Frank is currently working on a full-length play which will

incorporate some of the themes of the one-act plays he has written so far. Asked whether he wants to pursue playwriting as his professional career, he hesitates for a moment and says:

"I'd really like to support myself by writing but there is only one playwright in Canada who managed to do that at least for one year, and that's David French who wrote *Leaving Home*. His income from that was \$20,000 because it came around when Canada wanted its own play."

"The situation is sure improving; people are beginning to be more interested in their own playwrights. Francis Hyland said on TV recently that it is no longer just a matter of being fashionable to do original work by your own playwrights."

"It's getting easier and maybe there is a chance that writers might be able to support themselves. But to say that I want or that I could would be pretty presumptuous."