

ARTS

BLACK CHILLS AND THRILLS

by Sally Teodoro

THE WOMAN IN BLACK
adapted by Stephen Mallatratt
directed by Peter Moss

The Woman In Black, based on the novel by Susan Hill, opened October 10, at Young People's Theatre on Front St. East. While the audience waited to see if the play would live up to its reviews, my biggest worry was whether I was in the right theatre. Thankfully, I was.

The Woman In Black, a chilling Victorian melodrama, opens in a small theatre where

an aging solicitor, Mr. Kripps, hires the services of a young actor to coach him in retelling—thus re-living—a ghostly event which he experienced many years before.

Mr Kripps, with no theatrical flare, mechanically starts to read directly from his script.

The unidentified actor, mostly out of pity, takes on the role of the younger Mr. Kripps. While the other characters are played by the older Mr. Kripps.

The younger actor is then sent north, by his London based firm, to a remote town called Crythin Gifford, to settle the estate of the late Mrs. Alice Drablow, an 87 year-old

widow.

The story itself is fairly simple, but the overall performance and direction of the play (by Peter Moss) is extremely well done. He uses the entire theatre and recorded sounds, such as flowing water and blood-curdling screams to create chilling effects.

John Ormerod, making his first appearance with YPT, brings enthusiasm and excitement to the characters of "the actor" and as the younger Mr. Kripps. The shift from these two characters is extremely well executed.

Roger Rowland, who recently moved from England and makes his Canadian

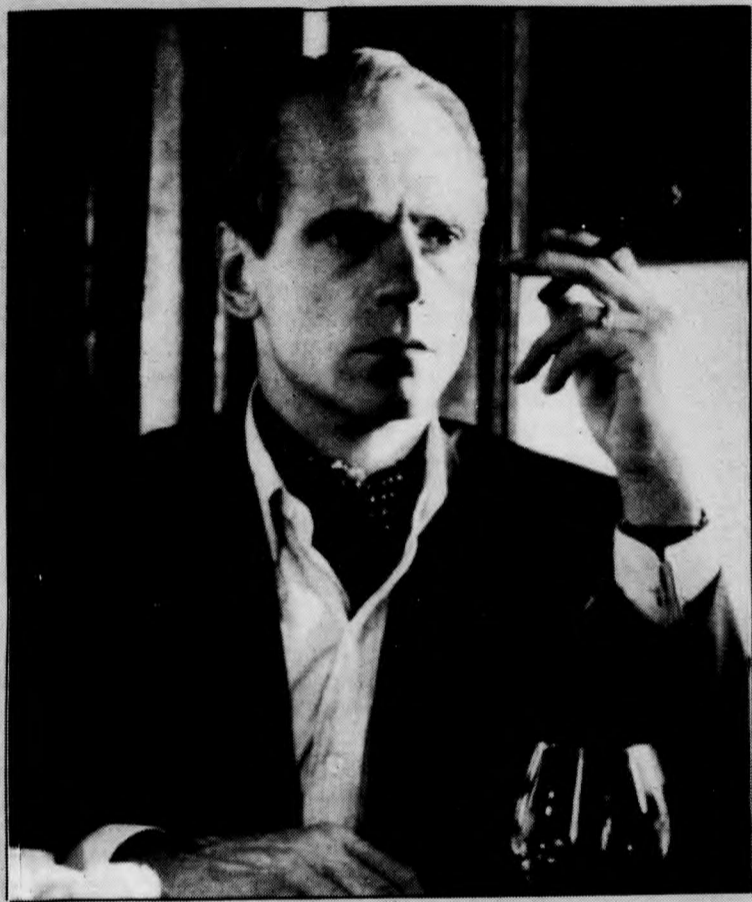
debut in *The Woman in Black*, is excellent in his portrayal as the old Mr. Kripps, as well as the other characters he portrays. Rowland effortlessly moves from one character to another and gives each one its own personal identity.

This year marks the 25th anniversary of Young People's Theatre with *The Woman In Black* as the opening play.

The brilliance of Moss, blended with the brilliance of Ormerod and Rowland gives the audience a deliciously frightening and memorable experience that should not be missed.

The play runs until November 11, 1990.

Dead Skin, Toxins and Ice Water



Did he, or didn't he? von Bulow contemplates life behind bars

by Jim Russell

Reversal of Fortune
by Jim Russell
directed by Barbet Schroeder
produced by Warner Bros.

When I go out to eat, I don't want to be served Kraft Dinner. When I go to movies, I don't want to be shown television.

Reversal of Fortune is pure television, and bad television at that.

A cross between *Welcome Back Kotter* and *Lifestyles of the Rich and Disgusting*, this story is more suited for the movie of the week than the big screen.

A blend of a lot of fiction and a pinch of fact, *Reversal of Fortune* examines the story of Claus von Bulow (Jeremy Irons), a European aristocrat with ice water running through his veins, and Sunny von Bulow (Glenn Close), his self-centred, pill popping wife.

The story opens with Sunny's spirit taking us on a tour of the hospital that has custody of her brain-dead body.

That was ok, but when she begins the Vincent Price narration, I began to snicker.

Sunny explained, with words dipped in suspense, the circumstances that led up to her present condition.

The von Bulow case, which occurred in the late seventies, monopolized the pages of every tabloid in North America, and set many tongues a waggin'. Mrs. von Bulow, who accidentally, or otherwise, ingested enough toxins to kill off the population of most of the free world, never recovered from her second, final "suicide attempt."

Husband Claus, was tried and convicted of her murder and sentenced to a lengthy prison stay.

Reversal of Fortune picks up the story after his conviction and follows the effort of Harvard law professor and attorney Alan Dershowitz as he pulls out all the stops to overturn that conviction on the grounds that much of the initial evidence was fabricated by Mrs. von Bulow's children, who had no great love for their step-daddy.

Irons is stunning as the man America loved to hate, portraying the arrogant, amoral, sinister von Bulow with chilling

effectiveness.

Reversal of Fortune is supposed to be multiple choice whodunit.

It presents the "facts," and we, the viewers, are left to pick an answer.

I refused to play. Either Sunny killed herself deliberately or accidentally, through self-abuse or by her husband. Either way, the two of them are such unlikeable characters that nobody cares who did what to whom!

The technical level of this soap opera is dismal.

Either the cinematographer was in a real hurry to complete the photography or he got his camera operator's licence from a correspondence school.

The skin tones rarely came close to resembling live tissue, several scenes, including the opening "credit over" scene, were badly underexposed and his choice of camera angles was enough to cause a cessation of brain activity amongst the audience.

Unless you're a regular soap opera fan or a devoted reader of supermarket tabloids, give this dog a pass.

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Yard under too many shadows

By Bruce Adamson

Skin Yard
Fist-Sized Chunks
Cruz Records

Ever since Soundgarden attracted big label interest, Seattle has become a hotspot for underground grunge-o-matic garage rock. The latest band to rise from Washington state's sonic quagmire is Skin Yard, whose third LP, *Fist-Sized Chunks* is loud, nasty and occasionally seizure-inducing.

Guitarist/producer Jack Endino, who turned the dials on early Soundgarden sessions, is the guiding presence behind the Skin's dark music.

His playing is intense and oddly atmospheric given his affection for his trusty old distortion pedal. It also sounds a heck of a lot like the guitar approach of his former employers. Whether this is a part of the "Seattle Sound", or merely bandwagon jumping is open to question (although the inclusion of a telephone message from an A&R rep regarding Soundgarden would point to the latter).

The nasty twangin' gets solid support from bassist D. House



Chunking Down

and new drummer Norman Scott. The grooves are generally slow, hypnotic doom-and-gloom dirges which lean more towards early Sabbath than Metallica.

Ben MacMillian's vocalizing is pretty angst ridden, to say the least. His otherworldly yowl is a neat meld of John Lydon, Ozzy Osbourne and Lemmy, sans the

cognac-and-cigarette party damage. It's a great combination for a while, but MacMillian's five note range gets old fast. In addition, his lyrics are virtually unintelligible, due to the chaotic mix.

Fist-Sized Chunks is an interesting bash but falls a little too neatly under Soundgarden's shadow. For genre fanatics only.