

MAUD'S COLUMN- or, Maud charges obscurantism, R... reveals Rubber Soul

by Richard Levine

R (aside): I was playing Rubber Soul when Maud rushes in, mauve hair mussed up, waving her lissome arms all about . . . MAUD (slightly hysterical): No, oh no, this is just too absurd. The records you review . . . why . . . I've never heard of them. The Free Spirits . . . really! Your friend A . . . is whispering behind your back: 'R . . . practices obscurantism.' (spluttering) Really!



MAUD?

R: calm yourself, Maud. Here, sit down on this pin-cushion. This week I'm playing the Beatles.

You know, with all the excitement over Revolver and Sgt. Pepper's, you've forgotten Rubber Soul. While it's not electronic, it's just as revolutionary. It started the sitar rage (with George on Norwegian Wood). I think CKFH soul music is passive, just

emotional wailing about things a singer is too upset about to change. But the Beatles are dynamic. In one song they are bitter, frustrated (I'm Looking Through You). Yes, this is passive soul. But in another they take a stand, break up a relationship (Think For Yourself). This is fighting-back soul. This is rubber soul.

MAUD (smiling): I still say it means rubber sole, the fish.

R: Sometimes I get the feeling you don't take this seriously.

MAUD: Oh, R . . . that's not true. I like this:

Say the word, and you'll be free. Say the word and be like me. It's so fine, it's sunshine, it's the word, Love.

R: Yes. This song, The Word, is the first example of the Beatle eastern philosophy, and it's better than the electrified All You Need Is Love.

The whole album features a fabulous interweaving of guitars plucking out consistently evocative melodies, like Michelle. They prove again and again they are the greatest. This is truly music, not those psychedelic noises glorifying the electric plectrum and...

MAUD (screaming slightly): Oh, oh, be quiet, it's Paul, it's PAUL McCARTNEY! He's singing Girl!

She's the kind of girl who puts you down when friends are there, you feel a fool. When you say she's looking good, she acts as if it's understood, she's cool, oooooh.

R (tapping her hand): Maud, that's John. MAUD: I don't care, I love you, Beatles, I love you, Beatles, I . . .

R: A . . ., Clare, help! Maud's got beatlemania!

ADAM APPLE, CLARE POTITE (rushing in): Maud lives in the past. Fresh air, someone, fresh air. We'll see you next week.

—ASSASSINATION GENERATION—

Ain't bad for three pennies

by the October Revolutionary

The Assassination Generation zoomed into Burton last Friday with 'A Three-Penny Poetry Reading', entrance fee at 3 cents.

The program got off to a smashing start with 'Fantasia', a Disney cartoon about prehistoric beasts. Recorded music, moving lights, and dry-ice smoke produced a unique effect and set the mood for an exciting evening.

The poet of the evening was Douglas Wanken. His poems were sharp and sensitive, and he read with clearness and thought. His long poem, 'Ashes of a Second Child', read to the accompaniment of Phil Schreiber on the electric piano, was the highlight of the evening. The lights, music and poetry meshed perfectly to produce a beautiful effect.

Elia Jacov Katz, a storyteller from Baltimore who lives across the street from Edgar Allen Poe's tomb, and is about to be published in New Directions, read two of his works. The first, 'Oranges', was read rather hurriedly but the second, 'Busters', was

clear and witty.

The only unfortunate part of the whole evening was a girl poet from Ottawa. Her presentation was about as energetic as a wash rag, proving my long-held belief that poets shouldn't attempt to read their own poems. The singers, Sandy Patton, William Hawkins, and David Wiffen, were good but variation would have made their performance less tedious.

William Hawkins writes very impressive songs and sings with feeling and rhythm.

The evening ended with a strange little film by Michael Hirsch, 'Chinese Ball Game'.

Founders and Vanier councils must be commended for sponsoring the creative and ambitious York students who staged the 'happening'.

I hear that on the strength of their presentation at Burton, the participants in 'The Three Penny Poetry Reading' have been invited to appear in Ottawa and Montreal. York needs more stimulating events like 'The Three Penny Poetry Reading'. I hope the Assassination Generation surfaces again soon.

Oh! Theatre Toronto, what have you done?

by David McCaughna

Jules Feiffer once wrote a very funny play called CRAWLING ARNOLD, which was built on the premise of one asocial character as hero, who is placed amidst socially-oriented minor characters. Slowly the truly social nature of the hero becomes apparent. In Little Murders the same pattern is evident.

Feiffer's talent as a dramatist has developed, however, and his new play is much more tightly knit, more relevant to his theme and more artistic—although he will never be considered 45th Street's answer to Moliere. Sometimes, however, this more responsible approach detracts as he has lost some of the free-wheeling sacrilege which as a novice to the theatre, he revelled in.

Little Murders is, nevertheless, an extremely good play. It is funny, vicious satire merged cleanly with the absurdist's penchant for reducing everything to anarchy. The play is ingeniously written, and shows evidence of being cleverly and carefully planned. Feiffer himself is seen as an excellent satirist and a shrewd observer of the human condition. He is, perhaps, one of the few hopes left for theatre.

But Theatre Toronto—OH, THEATRE TORONTO!

what have you done to poor Mr. Feiffer's play? You have mutilated it and made it a weak, quivering ineffectual mass.

Never in my life have I seen such a dreadfully amateurish production. It was produced sickly, not slickly.

The sparse set, in theory a brilliant idea, (especially the first time when it was used in The Glass Menagerie on Broadway 20 years ago), turned out as a touring company's futile attempt at artiness.

The lighting could be described as clever, but then you see better stuff at the Deva Loka Sideshow concerts at Cinecity. But these technical faults are minor in contrast to the acting and direction.

The director's main claim to fame is a ridiculously heavy hand. And this hand is employed to the fullest in slowing the pace down to a slither. He deserves an award for master of the theatrical miscast.

Maureen Fitzgerald as Patsy Newquist has to be admired, not for her acting talent, but for her bravery in tackling a part for which she is temperamentally completely unsuited, despite her physical excellence for the part.

Eric House as the father and Amelia Hall as the mo-

ther are both extremely weak, and Richard Monette, a man big enough to tackle Hamlet, is very disappointing as the homosexual son. Gerard Parkes as a New York detective is uncertain whether his accent should be Brooklyn, Cockney or CBC.

There are, however, two extremely well-portrayed character vignettes presented by Hugh Webster and Joseph Shaw.

The only good actor I saw on that stage was Colin Fox as the hero, Alfred Chamberlain. Feiffer's heroes are always presented as simple, unencumbered characters, but portraying them is not as easy as you might think. I admire Fox for his expertise in handling a character in a difficult situation.

But you think I've been too harsh. Believe me, as one of those who hope and pray for a brilliant future for theatre in Toronto, I had to subject myself to a great deal of soul-searching before writing this review. I finally decided I would be doing you an injustice if I did not write this the way it now reads.

I apologize to the reader who is offended by what I have written, and I apologize to Theatre Toronto for what I have written. But please don't blame me. After all, no matter how you slice the cake, it's Theatre Toronto who made it half-baked.

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