

# Up for feast of farce with Comedy Asylum

by Maven Gates

Would you like to have the unique opportunity to 'dine laughing'? You can. *The Comedy Asylum* has embarked on another tour of Maritime Wandlyn Inns with their latest production, *A Feast of Farce*.

*A Feast of Farce* is an evening's entertainment comprised of two hilarious one act plays: *Wooded and Viewed*, by Georges Feydeau, and *The Lesson*, by Eugene Ionesco. These, combined with a surprise dinner interlude (a short comical sketch between entrees and desserts), an all-you-can-eat buffet dinner, and a generous serving of antics from a cast of energetic and talented young actors, provide a total immersion entertainment package for only \$22.50 per person.

Marshall Button grew up in Dalhousie, New Brunswick, then travelled to Lennoxville, Quebec where he later graduated from the Theatre Department of Bishop's University. He has performed on stage in Theatre New Brunswick's *A Christmas Carol*, *Equus* with Theatre London and made television appearances on CBC's *Homefires* and *Judge*. As co-founder and artistic director of *The Comedy Asylum* Marshall has acted and directed in all its productions to date.

*The Lesson* and *Wooded and Viewed* are two plays which differ greatly from each other, but are very similar in their absurdity of situation. *The Comedy Asylum* will be embracing their favourite dramatic theme: Madness.

*The Comedy Asylum* includes the following 'committed' people:

*Elizabeth (Liz) Goodyear* is the quiet member of the troupe. A native of Nova Scotia, she now lives in Fredericton. On her way to a meeting with another theatre company Liz stopped at a gas station. There she bumped into *The Comedy Asylum's* Jenny Munday, who is not shy, out recruiting a pianist. Liz plays the piano so Jenny snapped her up.

In the meantime someone else had found a pianist. Fortunately, Liz was hooked and stayed with the company where she has served as stage manager, technician, and, in an ever increasing capacity, as an actress.

*Yves Mercier* was raised in Welling, Ontario, but has spent much of his time travelling. Yves studied theatre at Niagara College, the National Theatre School, and Bishop's University. While at Bishop's he met Marshall Button. Later Marshall was able to catch Yves during a stay in New Brunswick and convince him to take part in a show. Before making his debut performance with *The Comedy Asylum* in *Private Lives* Yves had appeared in the Shaw Festival and had worked with Theatre London and Theatre Action in Ottawa.

*Jenny (peripatetic Jenny) Munday* refers to herself as an adopted Maritimer. She received an honours degree in Political Science from UNB and worked for a year in Ottawa in the employ of an MP. Shortly after beginning graduate studies she realized that Poli. Sci. was just one of her many interests and it, for her, was just not suffi-

ciently motivating to sustain a life-long vocation. *Jenny* has been with *The Comedy Asylum* since its inception and has tried her hand at acting, directing, designing, and slaving as company manager. She gained theatrical experience in Quebec and with Nova Scotia's Ragweed Players.

I had an opportunity to talk to

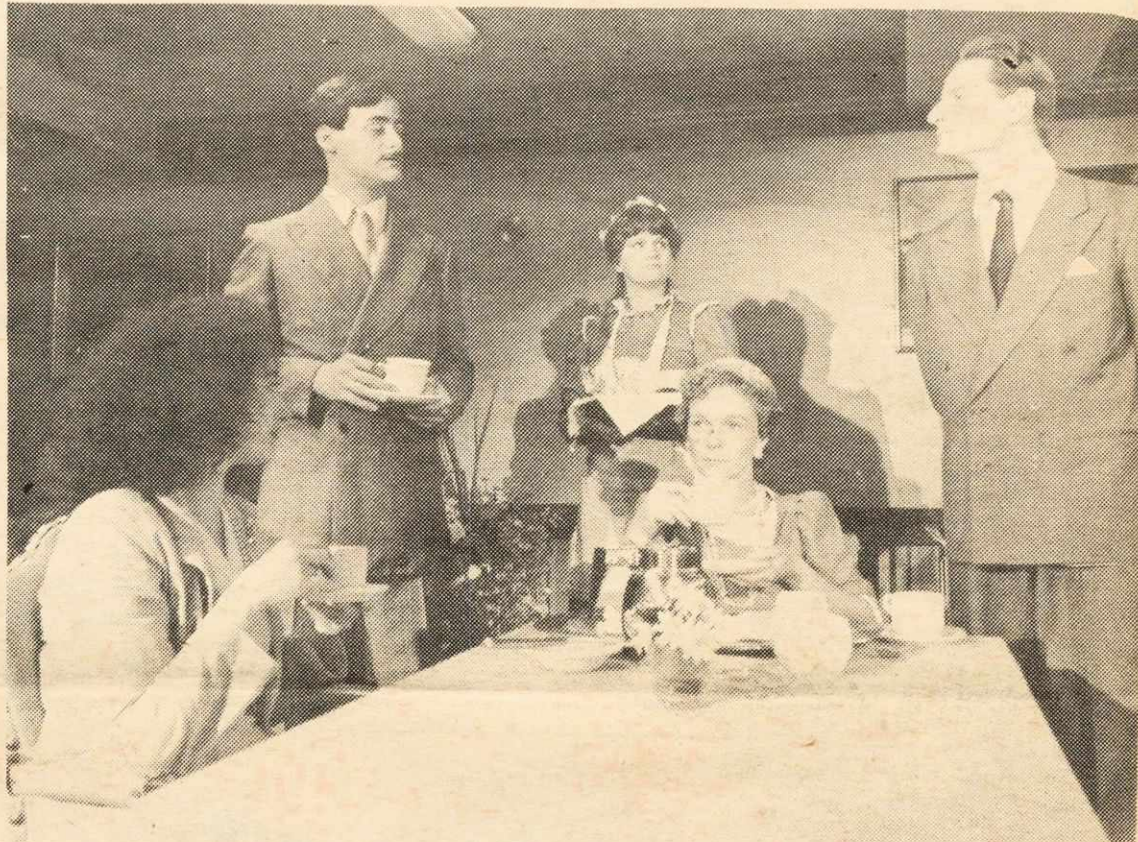
*The Comedy Asylum* when they toured Halifax last November with *Private Lives*. I asked them how the whole thing started.

Jenny: Basically it started with Marshall. He was a waiter at the Wandlyn in Fredericton and Lew Rolston, the manager, had the idea of starting a dinner theatre in the back of his mind. He is European

and has seen this kind of thing before, and noticed on Button's resumé that he'd been very involved in acting.

Marshall: I had applied for about 15 different jobs but no one would take me because I'd worked as an actor and they didn't think that I was serious enough to work

continued to page 14



Comedy Asylum take their turn at the table.

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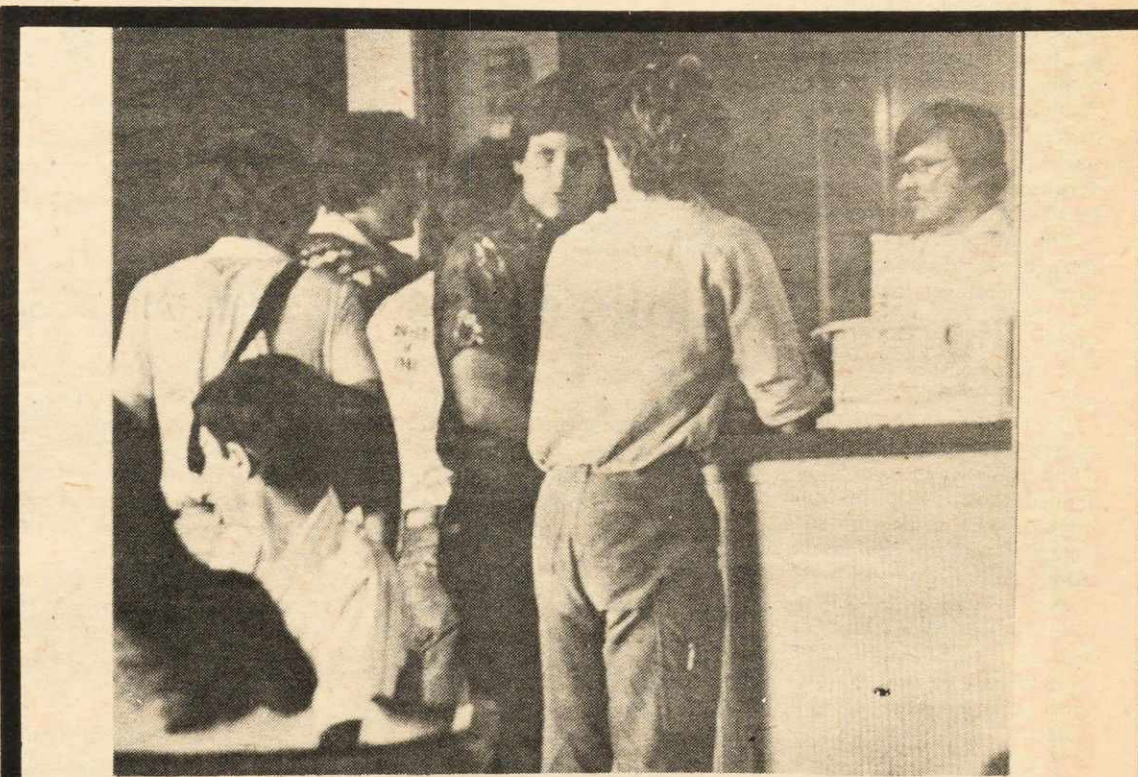
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