

arts

Walterdale's appendix good for a couple of leisure hours

In celebration of national appendix (as in your tummy) week, Walterdale Theatre Associates opened their fifteenth season last Tuesday with their production of Joe Orton's comedy, *What the Butler Saw*. Like your everyday, normal, healthy vestigial organ, the production of this play exists, however flabbily, offending no one greatly and offering a nice way to pass a couple of leisure hours. A little frustrating if you are an ambitious and bursting kidney but light headedly humorous if you are a bored ovary.

In the same style as *Not Now Darling*, *What the Butler Saw* centres around the predicaments of an English psychiatrist after he attempts to seduce a prospective secretary and the resulting action can be described with an assortment of catch-alls and come-ons like bawdy, naughty, farcical, etc. Within the melodramatically twisted structure of the play, Joe Orton has written many damn funny lines.

A comedy as farcical and witty as Butler can give an audience a pretty good after feeling of being entertained, especially if that's what it is looking for. Unfortunately, in the process, a production can almost be made up of incurable stutters who remember a few lines, directed by a heroin addicted train conductor, and lit by the goal lights of table hockey game.

Inside information gives me reason to believe that Walterdale's production did not come off this way though personally, I never felt I would be delayed from leaving the theatre at the end of the show because I need to pick my guts up of the floor after having laughed them out. However for those theatre go-ers who like to take a heroin approach to the theatre (enjoying the momentary ecstasy but not able to realize why more and more of the same junk isn't giving you the same rush it used to), here follow some assorted hints for mindless but enjoyable entertainment.

Disregard the aurora-borealis-in-a-shoe-box lighting of the small Walterdale which tends to wash the nipples of doorknobs in a number of areas. Do not scrutinize the set too closely or you will notice strange dissonances between luxurious furniture and shabby rugs and doors. Blame me one for the number to backs given to the audience members on the sides or for the frequent playing of scenes with the bell boy in an extreme and awkward upstage position. Forget that director Marjorie Knowler should have got on actors tails for letting their characters at times become stand-up comedians of line reciters rather than comedic facsimiles of 'ordinary' people.

Commend actors for mastering and maintaining English accents or for being born in their native England. Cheerfully note the excellent casting of Ron Wigmore as the comically naive sergeant Match

who brings forth all the innocence and officiousness present in his character. Given Warren Graves high marks for his fine timing and dead-pan throwing out of lines as the victimized but slightly sly Dr. Prentice. Bless John Butler (as Nicholas the bellboy), as well as Joan Milroy (as Geraldine Barclay) for some grasp of their characters and for adequate timing, though the latter may have at times over-played the innocence of her character. Forgive Vivien Bosley for underplaying her role of the elitist and snobbish Mrs. Prentice to a point of pre-rigor mortis and for engaging in remarkably fast and unsignalled mood changes such as towards drunkenness and hysteria. Go deeper into your heart to forgive Maurice Brand as Dr. Rance who drove his character into the hells

of a bori stereo type of an over-analytical and cold Freudian psychiatrist by acting and reading through his lines with repetitive rhythms and a Concorde jet pace and by gesturing with an abundance of cliches. Go deeper still to you; left ventricle to absolve Mr. Brand for the occasional stumble over a few lines.

For those of you who are fortunate enough to have tickets for this sold-out Walterdale production, three final suggestions: one - laugh it up; two - take six harem girls to fan you while you sit in an overly warm theatre and three - take some friends to yell fire during intermission to give you some elbow room and breathing space once you make it out to the cooler but smoky and drowded Walterdale lobby.

Laurance Wargrave

Record quality deteriorating

(Earth News)

A survey of San Francisco-area record stores has revealed that a growing number of new albums are virtually unplayable, due to warpage or scratches.

Dealers in the area report that up to 50 records a day are being returned to some stores because of defects. They generally agree that the worst products seem to come from Britain, or from the American labels Columbia and Motown.

The problems, they say, are usually associated with the way the albums are packaged, shipped and stored. Those clear-plastic "shrink" type wrappers are also responsible since they cause warpage within 60-days of packaging.

Another possible explanation may be the use of bad vinyl - a holdover from the vinyl shortage that resulted from last winter's petroleum shortage.

And, according to one major retailer, Bob Tolifson of the Record Factory, "No record is flat anymore, no matter how well it's made."

Get ready - Rare Earth is coming!

by Nanker Phledge

The Edmonton Gardens will be the location; the sound system will be Tychobray; and the headliner band will be Rare Earth, with the funky uptown sound that has netted the group four gold albums and as many gold singles.

Rare Earth will make their first Edmonton appearance november 25 at 8:00 p.m. in the Edmonton Gardens. They were hot enough to sell-out Madison Square Gardens in their last New York performance; by the time they hit Edmonton, they'll be even hotter.

John Ford lets Hurricane loose

The Hurricane (Edmonton Film Society, Wednesday, Nov. 20, 8:00 p.m., - Tory Lecture Theatre.)

For some reason this film has been unaccountably neglected by critics. In fact, I believe it to be one of John Ford's undiscovered masterpieces, a gem of glowing romanticism.

Set on the island of Manikura, it tells of the conflict of European ways and ideas with



Dorothy Lamour clings tenaciously to Jon Hall as the wind machines are turned on. The film is John Ford's masterful *THE HURRICANE*, a look at how civilization erodes primitive character, and a triumph of special effects. 8 p.m. Tory Lecture Theatre, Wed. Nov. 20.

TV Highlights

WED., NOV. 20
Musicamera - The Ecstasy of Rita Joe - This is The Royal Winnipeg Ballet's production of the ballet on George Ryga's searing stage play about the tragedy of a young Indian girl in the white man's city. Channel 5

A Third Testament - Pascall (1623-1662) "He a man of the Renaissance par excellence himself, avid to extend the fr frontiers of knowledge, standing on the threshold of science as we know it today and aware, as no one among his contemporaries was, of the fabulous potentialities. Channel 5.

First Person Singular - Pearson: The Memoirs of a Prime Minister Part 5 - The Apprentice. Channel 5.

the traditional ways and simple emotions of the islanders. It deals with an imprisoned native who, in his longing for home, tries again and again to escape and each time his sentence is extended.

The film is justly famous for its lengthy hurricane sequence, devised by that master of special effects, James Basevi. He received a budget of \$400,000 to do the storm. He spent

\$150,000 to build a native village. The other \$250,000 went to destroy it.

Made in 1937, *The Hurricane* retains its power to awe, and to emotionally involve its audiences. It's part of Edmonton Film Society's series of John Ford movies, and tickets are available to the rest of the series at the door of Tory Lecture Theatre.

R. Horak

Breau disappointing

There must be two Lenny Breau's. Having read the Journal's coverage of the SUB Theatre's concert I am convinced Wyman Collins attended a different concert. He spoke of a delighted audience that was being wowed by Canada's finest guitarist. Maybe he was sitting in the front row and never noticed the two dozen people that left during the first song and the two dozen more that left before the first break.

Thursday night I witnessed a contest between four musicians that was originally intended to

be laid back but came out chaotic. I would have used the word unorganized but the look of panic that was apparent in some of the player's faces demands the use of the former.

Having seen Moe Price (of Jury fame - at the Old Bailey) perform many times and being aware of his competence, it was a frustrating experience to see him attempting to follow this guitarist who thought his time was being communicated by ESP. John Toulson, another local musician, spent most of his time showing the audience his bass licks; not that I blame him, the technical structure of the songs I'm sure even escaped this guitarist known as Lenny Breau. Woodwinds man Pete Thompson did his best considering who was happening behind his solos.

The sound was bad - a distorted guitar reinforced through the PA and microphones not suited for picking up the mellow and shrill pitches of saxophone and flute respectively. I used to know a Lenny Breau who was a fine guitarist: his chops were always up, he was an excellent technician and his interpretations were respected by his contemporaries. And fans alike. The guitarist I saw Thursday night could have been his student but definitely not his teacher.

Maurice Fritze

themselves as leading individuals in the rock and roll industry.

Rare Earth originated in Detroit as the amalgamation of Motown's leading recording session musicians. Their fame is the result of many concerts, recording sessions, and club dates over a period of five years. And because they do only their own material, and only record on their own label, Edmonton rock fans should remember this concert for a long time.

Tickets are available from Woodward's Ticket Wicket and Mike's News, \$5.00 in advance and \$6.00 at the door.