

screams. With a lot more success than your average three year old, I might add. Things break. Glass, that is; he blows the stuff all to hell. He uses this little talent to throw the nicely ordered adult society around him into a satisfying state of confusion. Why couldn't we find such an effective means of protest in the sixties?

Although he is able to maintain his sense of humor through a rather gruesome period of history, Grass is not all fun and games. Oskar's poor mother Agnes suffers from an excess of insight, in the form of a horse's head. While walking along a beach Oskar, his two fathers and his mother come upon a man fishing for eels. He is using a severed horse's head for both bait and trap. When he begins to draw the live eels from the very dead head Agnes loses her will to live, along with her breakfast. Dead things feeding live things who become dead things is just too much (or perhaps not enough) for her.

When Germany goes to war with Poland, Oskar winds up with fathers on either side of the fence. Jan Bronski works at the Polish post office and when this Slavic bastion is attacked by the German forces Oskar leads him into the holocaust in search of a replacement for the precious drum. Bronski is captured and executed and in true Freudian style Oskar feels responsible for his father's death.

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Later when the Russians occupy Danzig Oskar inadvertently murders his other father. He hands Matzerath his Nazi party pin and Matzerath tries to swallow it in a panic. He is shot by a young Russian while in the act of choking on his symbol of affiliation.

At the burial of his second father Oskar loses his ability to scream and begins to grow. You may attribute this sudden change in direction to the end of the war, the death of Alfred Matzerath, or a blow in the head that Oskar receives from Kurt, who is either his son or his brother. Oskar's first love, Maria, marries Matzerath and the child is therefore of questionable and almost incestuous origins.

As you can see, Grass doesn't make things easy for the would be interpreter. In *The Tin Drum*, as in modern life, it is almost impossible to attribute anything to simple causes. Oskar has moments of macrocosmic vision in which the whole of reality is spread out before him in its confusing splendor. Perhaps that is the "real" reason that he ends up in an insane asylum. Who can say for sure?

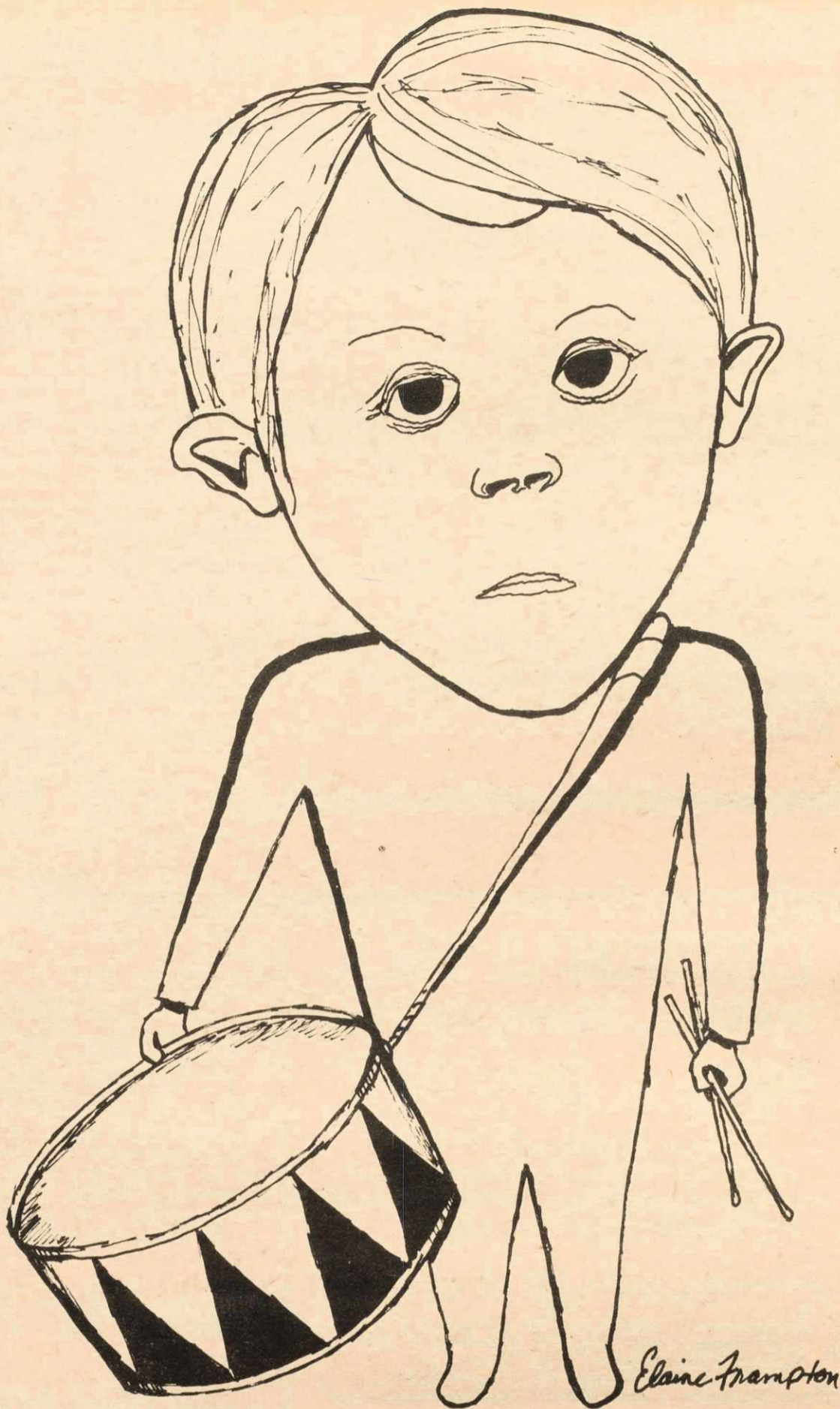
Well on the more technical side of things might I say that the Penguin translation is excellent. The only thing that I missed was the delightful dialect spoken by some of the characters. In English this is indicated by a few double negatives and inappropriate contractions.

Grass collaborated in the filming of the movie which appeared in 1979 in Germany. I saw it then and if the translation is up to the standards of the book, I recommend that you see it while it is still in Halifax. It is a nice change from the standard American grope and gore.

and, as the fisherman has explained, are particularly fat after sea battles, when they have eaten the bodies. Mama is the unwilling accomplice in this cycle of life and death, and herself expires after gorging herself on the food. This symbolism and others are confusing to those who haven't read the book.

Nevertheless, *The Tin Drum* is a major film. Its depiction of bourgeois society in col-

lapse is superb, its techniques faultless. *The Tin Drum* is a sign that Germany, after a generation of anemic cinematic output, is finally coming to grips with its past, in a typically thick-skinned manner. It is at times brutal and shocking, but only because it reflects reality in a way few filmmakers care to, or dare to. And ultimately, it celebrates the endurance of the human spirit in the worst of times.



This week's movies

Thursday, the 27th's movie in the McInnes room is *Last Tango in Paris* with Marlon Brando and Maria Schneider, while the same evening the NFB is screening *Films on Survival*. Also on the 27th, the Alec Guinness Film Festival continues at the Cohn, with *Kind Hearts and Coronets* and *The Lady Killers*. The classic *Bridge on the River Kwai* (for which he received an Oscar) on Saturday completes this series of films of the great British actor who charmed and moved audiences in roles such as Fagin, Feisal, Charles II, Marley's ghost, and Hitler, right down to Ben Kenobi in *Star Wars*. Sunday, the Cohn is showing the 1970 film

Medea, with Maria Callas in the lead of this interpretation of the ancient Greek drama. From the 28th to Dec. 3 Wormwood is showing the film *Meetings with Remarkable Men*, a 1979 film by Peter Brook. It follows the true search of Gurdjieff through the Middle East and Central Asia, until he discovered the elements of a fundamental science that reconciled all the great traditional beliefs of the mystery of human existence. Mon. Dec. 1 at 7:30 p.m. in the MacAloney Room, Prof. Ravi Ravindra will give a lecture on this film.

As of Friday, Paramount 1 will open with *Octagon* and 2 will start *Private Benjamin*.

Scotia Square holds over the brilliant *Stunt Man* featuring Peter O'Toole and Steve Railsback. At Penhorn, 1 keeps Goldie Hawn's smash *Private Benjamin*, 2 takes over the successful *Ordinary People* and 3 has Paul Simon's *One Trick Pony*. The Cove opens with *The Bogey Man*, while Downsview has *Octagon* at 1, *The Elephant Man* (highly recommended) at 2, and *The Mountain Men* (Heston and Keith) at 3. The Hyland has the recommended major film *The Tin Drum*, winner at Cannes and the Academy Awards. The Oxford has *My Brilliant Career*, and Charles Bronson's *Borderline* is at the Casino.