

Fairport Convention - "NINE"

How a group that has gone through more personnel changes than a last place football team can remain such steady recording artists is beyond me. Fairport's newest album, "Nine", (obviously their ninth), is a brilliant album, and its not many groups that can boast nine excellent albums.

After ace-guitarist Richard Thompson left Fairport, followed two albums later by Simon Nicol, fine guitarist and last remaining member of the original Fairport lineup, it seemed to me that the group was headed for a dismal downfall. The two guitarists were replaced by Trevor Lucas and Jerry Donahue, both from Fotheringay, and the first album they were on as Fairporters was "Rosie". The album was a pleasant surprise, but not near the standards of excellence set by the previous seven albums. Lucas and Donahue did not appear to fit the Fairport Convention scheme, and the

music and style of the band was severely altered.

But the new album has restored all my faith in Fairport. Allstar musician and long-time member of Fairport, Dave Swarbrick, has himself a great album, having gotten back into a shape highly reminiscent of the "Full House" and "Babbacombe Lee" albums; and first-rate (and under-rated) bassist Dave Pegg is steady as the Rock of Gibraltar, (what else is new?)

Lucas and Donahue are now firmly established as true Fairporters, the former handling (excellently) a large share of the vocals and composing. Lucas also produced the album along with (of course) John "Mildenhall" Wood.

However, the outstanding musician on the album is the drummer, Dave "the drum" Mattacks. Probably the most under-rated drummer in contemporary music, the public rants and raves about Ian Paice and flashers of his type, while

Mattacks goes unnoticed and unappreciated. On "Nine", Mattacks is subtle, tasteful and methodical, but at the same time, his drumming is commanding and complex. Indeed, Mattacks is a fine musician and a pillar holding up the Fairport reputation.

What of the music? The traditional ballad style of the group is largely gone for good, I'm afraid, and has been replaced by a more contemporary country style. Lucas and Donahue brought with them seem strong American influences and these influences are apparent on this album. The songs are good though; a few of them simply brilliant. "Bring 'Em Down", by Trevor Lucas is my favorite song, with good lyrics, perfect and powerful vocals by Lucas, and a superb violin solo by Swarbrick, very similar to the "Dream" sequence on "Babbacombe Lee".

On the whole, this new album is a new Fairport; the

conclusion of the transition started on the "Rosie" album, and I'm surprised that, being a traditionalist and loving the old Fairport, I really think it's great. But, I wonder what Swarbrick thinks about the new image of his old group—does he like it or does he miss Thompson, Nicol, and Sandy Denny?

RECOMMENDED: LINDA RONSTADT - "Don't Cry Now"

MELBA MONTGOMERY

AVOID AT ANY COST: JOBRIATH

The new JAMES GANG album - whatever the title is.

Gordon Turtle



theatre lives

That Championship Season by Oscar nominee Jason Miller. Next at the Citadel. Directed by Tibor Feheregyhazi and featuring Richard Kuss, Douglas Chamberlain, Michael Donaghue, Edward Rudsey and Peter Rogan. Warning: In all fairness, the language used may be objectionable to some.

Interdit Au Public, a French comedy by Jean Marsan will be the next presentation of Le Theatre Francais d'Edmonton. The play will be directed by artistic director France Levasseur-Ouimet. Curtain times are 8:30 p.m. for March 22, 29, and 30; 7:45 on March 23; and 2:30 on March 24 and 31. Tickets may be purchased at the door or by phoning the box office at 467-3626. Prices are adults \$2.00 and students \$1.25. *en francais*

Walterdale Playhouse will be opening Warren Grave's *The Hand That Cradles the Rock* on March 19. Unfortunately all the tickets have already been sold. You have to get in line early for their presentations. The play will be featuring a strong local cast under the direction of John Rivet. Grave's play has already enjoyed considerable success at several centres in Canada. Who says Canadian plays never get produced?

opera

Turandot will be at the Jubilee March 19, 23 and 25. The production to be staged by Irving Guttman and under the baton of Pierre Hetu. Featured artists are Pauline Tinsley, Barnabe Marti, Ruth Huang, and Claude Corbeil. Student tickets are now available at half price at the Opera Box office on the third floor of the Bay.

the eyes have it

Walter Jule is having an exhibit of his recent drawings at Latitude 53 at 10048-101 A Ave. Until March 22.

The Edmonton Art Gallery is featuring an exhibition of recent drawings and paintings by Doug D. Barry until March 26.

easy on the ears

Saturday, March 23 and 24 at 2:30 p.m. the Edmonton Youth Orchestra and the Edmonton Columbian Singers will be presenting concerts with the music of Wagner, Gounod and Pergolesi. John Barnum conducts. Soloists will be Carmen Bourret, Soprano and Shiela Dool, Alto. Concert will be held in Con Hall.

Sunday, March 24 at 8:00 p.m. pianist Edward Lincoln, Associate Professor of Music will present a recital in Con Hall. Admission is free.

Monday, March 25 at 8:00 p.m. Shelly Hamilton, fourth-year Bachelor of Music student will present her senior clarinet recital in Con Hall. There is no charge.

Perth County Conspiracy will be appearing at the Hovel this Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

Sunday, March 24 at 8:00 p.m. The Edmonton Folk Club presents Mike Miller, a country-folk singer and songwriter from Stratford. Concert will be at the Gameau United Church hall, 84th Ave and 112 St. Admission is \$1.25 and 50 cents for members. Membership at door.

miscellany

"The Cultural Arts in Recreation. A forum on the role of the cultural arts in recreation programming will be presented Monday, March 25 at 7:30 p.m. in room 289 of the Central Academic Building. Program includes resource people and informal discussion. Coffee served.

Next at Studio 74

Studio Theatre's final production in the current Stage 74 season at the U of A opens Thursday, March 28th, in the Humanities Centre theatre. *Brecht on Brecht* is a portrait of the German author and playwright, Bertolt Brecht, revealed through the medium of excerpts from his poems, plays, letters, songs, and chance observations. It is a highly unusual theatre piece; not a play at all in the strict sense of the term, but rather a dramatic journey through the many-faceted character of a

near-genius. *Brecht on Brecht* illuminated the richness of his sympathies, the edge in his humour, the acuteness of his mind, his disarming gift for self-deprecation and compassion, and above all, his cool and flaming command of the theatre. In the arrangement and translation by George Tabori, the recent New York production received astonished and glowing tributes from the critics. This will be the Western Canadian premiere.

Bertolt Brecht was born in Augsburg, Germany, in 1898,

and won stature as a poet, playwright, essayist, adapter, and as founder of the Berliner Ensemble, perhaps the finest theatre in the world today. He left Germany when Hitler came to power and became an exile in France, Denmark, Sweden, Finland and the United States before returning to Germany in 1948. Among his catalogue of plays are "The Threepenny Opera", "In the Jungle of Cities", "Mother Courage", "The Caucasian Chalk Circle" and "The Private Life of the Master Race". He died in 1956.

George Tabori, a native of Budapest, lived in Berlin and Dresden until the rise of Nazism drove him to England, and finally to the United States in 1947. Here he met Brecht and worked with him on the play "Life of Galileo". Among Mr. Tabori's other plays are counted "Flight into Egypt", "The Emperor's Colthes", and "Brouhaha".

The news that Gordon Peacock is directing another show at Studio Theatre will be good news to many people associated with theatre in Edmonton. Not that he's really been away. Particularly since vacating the Chairmanship of the Department in 1971 to assume a full teaching load once more, his presence as a director and an instructor has been a very active one.

Gordon Peacock obtained his M.F.A. from Carnegie Mellon, and was directly associated with the formation of Studio Theatre in 1949 under the Head of the Drama Division, Robert Orchard. He became Acting Head of the Division in 1954, formally succeeding Orchard in the following year, and assuming the Chairmanship of the newly-instituted Department of Drama in 1964. He was instrumental in creating the professional training programs in the mid-sixties, the first such programs to be offered by a Canadian university.

He has taught at the National Theatre School and was Chairman of the Theatre Division of the Banff School of Fine Arts from 1958-64. In addition to directing 14 major productions for Studio Theatre, he has for the past several summers directed at the Performing Arts Centre in Santa Maria, California, and has designed sets and costumes for civic theatre, opera and ballet. A consultant on numerous

in "Der Rosenkavalier" and the Countess in "Marriage of Figaro". Following the Glyndebourne Festival she had phenomenal success at the Teatro Colon in Buenos Aires as Liu in "Turandot" opposite Birgit Nilsson.

In December, 1965 Mme. Caballe returned to the scene of her first United States triumph, Carnegie Hall, in the American Opera Society's production of Donizetti's "Roberto Devereux". A week later she made her Metropolitan Opera debut at the old house as Marguerite in Gounod's "Faust". The New York Herald Tribune called her "the Marguerite we have all been waiting for these many years." She was also invited to appear at the old Metropolitan's Closing Gals performance at the end of the 1965-66 season. The 1966-67 season found Mme. Caballe at the new Metropolitan at Lincoln Center as Desdemona in "Othello" and Leonora in "Trovatore". She opened the 1967-68 season there in "Traviata", and Harold Schonberg of the New York Times commented: "She came to the role with a conception, and it was a conception of an intelligent artist...the real beauty of her voice and the authority with which she used it testified to a most unusual singer."

Following these performances in the United States, Mme. Caballe gave a "stupendous" recital at the Salle Pleyel in Paris. The critics raved, as follows: "Acclaimed with a

cont'd pg. 12

cont'd pg. 12

Cabelle

Sills, Stratas, Sutherland, Moffo and now Montserrat Caballe! (Cab-ai-yay)

The Edmonton Opera Association has done it again, (a feat unmatched by any other opera company in Canada) another great prima donna for Edmonton Opera buffs.

Montserrat Caballe will appear "in Concert" for the Association on Friday March 22nd, 1974 at the Jubilee Auditorium. This concert will be "sandwiched" between the associations production of *Turandot* on March 21, 23 and 25th.

Montserrat Caballe, who hails from Barcelona is considered one of the three reigning divas in opera today. She has appeared, without exception in every leading opera house in the world today. The diversity of her repertoire which includes Puccini, Donizetti, Bellini, Verdi, Prokofiev, Hindemith and Stravinsky is exceeded only by the number of roles in her operatic repertoire which amount to more than forty. An exceptionally quick study, she once learned the "Trovatore" Leonore in German in less than a week.

In 1964 she made her North American debut with tremendous success at the opera house in Mexico City in the title role of Massenet's "Manon". Her spectacular U.S. debut is now history, April, 1965 Carnegie Hall, in Donizetti's "Lucrezia Borgia" with the American Opera Society. During the summer of 1965 Mme. Caballe returned to Glyndebourne for performances of the Marschallin