

# 'Trojan Women' effective

by Judith Pratt

Tuesday afternoon heralded the opening of Noon Hour Theatre as a stage upon which to display the work of theatre students in their own productions. This past Tuesday featured an excerpt from Euripedes' **The Trojan Women**, directed and designed by fourth-year theatre student, Charles Gosling.

The action was economically and effectively centered upon a three-tiered stage, permitting the five actors and actresses to distribute themselves according to prominence and elevation of emotion. Played by Ruth Cormier, Andromache, wife of the dead Prince of Troy, Hector, about to be plucked from her beloved Troy to enter slavery in Greece, largely dominates the upper tier, as she struggles with maternal passion against the inevitability of her young son's execution. The character grew slowly, but the crescendo, a half-scream of despair as she says farewell to her babe, crowns Miss Cormier's performance and, despite Hecuba's burial of the dead boy, the play seems almost anti-climactic after Andromache's departure.

Slightly crazed and indignant, the Chorus painted the scenes of the battle of Troy at the beginning of the production. Too calm, too despondent, the Chorus did not display the lamentation seemingly natural to a group of women whose husbands and sons have all been killed in battle or subsequently executed and who face a future of slave or concubine of the Greek victors. The Chorus, played by

Lynda S. Rosborough, develops sporadically and emerges only as the emotion peaks. Then she hearkens to the carnage around her and opens the wounds of sorrow.

It is Gail Snarby's portrayal of the mother of Troy, Hecuba, wife of the dead king Priam, which captured the audience. Children and husband dead or taken from her, about to witness the death of her only grandson, Miss Snarby contorts and twists her face and body, capturing the spirit of an old woman, surrounded by the ruins of her city and family, and who must now face humiliation of slavery. Indignant and scornful, yet buried in her sorrow, the intricate character of Hecuba rises and falls throughout the performance. She confronts her daughter-in-law Andromache, trying to instill a spirit of life despite the ironic backdrop of death. At Andromache's cries for self-destruction, Hecuba speaks of hope in life, even in a life of bondage to the murderers of a family. Powerful and articulate, Snarby's Hecuba, as she spits what amounts to vulgarities of expression at the Greeks, proves a guiding force to the play.

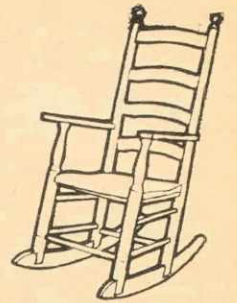
Blighted by inconsistency, the character of Talthybius, the herald of the Greeks, played here by Ray Doucette, rules ineffective one of the most moving scenes in the play. Sardonic and ironical, the herald flaunts the Greek victory to these struggling women and tells them to accept their fate, since it is the Greeks who possess the strength, through their spears. But his

second emergence on stage is as a dutiful but weary bearer of oppressing news. These lines, linked to those of his previous display of verbal heroics, seem to suggest that Euripedes wanted the herald to be consistently sympathetic with the Trojan women. Almost in tears as he departs to throw the baby from the walls of Troy, this is too incompatible with his previous scorn and deters from the effect of the character.

On the whole though, the performance of **The Trojan Women** was well-constructed and effective and allowed the major characters to develop the scope of their actions to a pitch of agony and despair.

The next production of Noon Hour Theatre's will be on Tuesday, November 2, at 12:30 in Studio One of the Arts Centre. Again it is a directorial project by a fourth year student, but the subject matter has jumped from ancient Greece to Canada. Beverly Simon's one-act play **Preparing** will be the groundwork for this experiment.

As a reminder to those unaware of the theatre department's fall projects, **Twelfth Night** will be featured next weekend at the Sir James Dunn Theatre. These performances are free but tickets must be picked up in advance at the Central Box Office. The play runs from October 28 to October 31, with all performances at 8 p.m. There will also be an afternoon performance on Saturday, October 30, at 2 p.m.



EIGHTEEN CHAIRS  
October 23 - November 28, 1976

Chairs of every description will fill the foyer of the Nova Scotia Museum over the next few weeks. Old, new, wooden, plush, some more comfortable than other - all will be displayed from October 23 - November 28.

The "Eighteen Chairs" were bought, used or made in Nova Scotia in the 19th Century.

## Write better

by Royden W.T. Akerley

Louise Young and Dawn Harvey are operating a writing workshop in Room 2301 of the Killiam Library. Louise Young was co-operative in explaining the two parts of the workshop.

The first part consists of structured classes run twice a week. These classes deal with major problems in writing, approaches or ways of dealing with a topic, or one particular area of writing. Each class deals with one specific area of concern. The second part is the tutorials. This is a chance for a student to discuss his/her problems in respect to the writing of papers. Louise suggested that students bring in some of their works, possibly old papers that have been mutilated by a professor's red pen. Here the tutor will point out the strength and weaknesses. They will be able to break down major problems in English construction, so a student may deal with it her/himself.

The whole programme is supported by Student Services and the student may partake of any or all aspects of the workshop for free. The whole programme is voluntary and the student attends only when or as long as the individual wants.

If personal contact is sought, call 424-3730 and ask for Louise Young or Dawn Harvey. Further information and timetables may be obtained from the main desk of the Special Services Department, Room 2301 of the Killiam Library.

# Tom Jones comic failure

by Donalee Moulton

In 1749, Henry Fielding's **Tom Jones** was published. In 1976, rudiments of that great comedy have been taken and transformed into contemporary vulgarity.

"Tom Jones, or as it is publically billed, "The Bawdy Adventures of Tom Jones", centers around one handsome figure and his escapades. Jones, believed by all to be a bastard, is nonetheless raised by one wealthy Squire Allworthy. This statement of position bars Tom from wedding, in fact openly seeing, the love of his life, Sophia Western. Between struggling to see Sophia and struggling to evade her father, Tom Jones is constantly in flight. And aside from Squire Western, other characters abound who attempt to make life painful for the "young Jones Boy".

The **Bawdy Adventures of Tom Jones** is billed as a restricted comedy. The connotations in the word bawdy help to clarify exactly what type of comedy. Pornography it is not, but neither is it comical.

In literary terms, a comedy is a story with a happy ending; the antithesis of tragedy. **Tom Jones** fits this definition - in the end, all the characters receive their just rewards.

The modern conception of comedy varies somewhat. Comedy is equated with humour, which is measured in terms of the amount of laughter evoked. According to this definition, **Tom Jones** falls short.

There are certain scenes in the play which are humorous; a few characters can be counted on getting the audience to laugh at them. However, these are not the main moments.

The trouble with **Tom Jones** is that it is not funny. Sporadically there appears a comical scene, an untypical personality, and laughter in the audience.

Comedy au contemporanea has been

on the up ever since the enormously funny **Blazing Saddles**. The problem directors and writers of comedy have now is making their films different, making them original enough to be remembered, and this was not done with **Tom Jones**. Instead, reliance is placed upon the typical comic scenes and the stereotyped personalities, both of which are heavily overworked. The result is boredom.

The audience knows what is coming next; there is no expectation of the novel or the surprise. **Tom Jones** follows the tediously repeated lines of film comedy.

The unusual thing about Tom Jones (and supposedly a major comic element in the film) is the way women react to his body. In this respect, Tom Jones affects a whole host of women - women of different sizes, shapes, classes, fame.... Fortunately though, there is a cure. But after the third or fourth time the treatment becomes monotonous and the jokes mundane.


**Tom Jones** fails as a comedy and hence as a film. It is merely a rerun of one liners and situations that were once funny; once funny because they were original and creative. And **Tom Jones** is not.

## Try water polo

Looking for a good way to get in shape? Try Water Polo, one of the most physically demanding sports in existence. You can play water polo simply by joining the Dalhousie Water Polo Club (no experience necessary). The club is for both men and women and it will participate in both men's and women's water polo leagues. Dalhousie has practice time at Centennial Pool on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. which is open to any club member.

Aside from the metro league games the Dalhousie Water Polo Club will have regular pool time for co-ed games among the club members. The club also hopes to host an intercollegiate tournament sometime in the new year, involving Acadia, U.N.B., and Memorial.

Anyone interested in playing should contact Colin Bryson at 477-6081 (evenings) or attend one of the practices.



Rebecca Cohn Auditorium  
Dalhousie Arts Centre  
Tickets & Information:  
424-2298

Coming Attractions...

THE BEST OF THE JEST SOCIETY

Friday & Saturday  
October 22 & 23, 8:30 p.m.

CONCERT OF CANADIAN CONTEMPORARY MUSIC

Tuesday, October 26, 8:30 p.m.

DJOKIC AND STODOLA

Monday, October 25, 8:30 p.m.

THE LONDON SINFONIETTA

Saturday, October 30, 8:30 p.m.