

Did Zeus know something we don't?

Progress punished, Titan nailed in Burton

By AGNES KRUCHIO

The theatre department's major production of the year turned out to be a beginning without an end, an end without a beginning, and a flux in between which represented the process in Prometheus in Process.

It is very difficult to review a play, or any theatrical event, which is repeatedly called "not a product, but a process". The two-part production did, however, contain elements of both.

Part one, Prometheus Bound, is a Greek classic by Aeschylus, written some 2,500 years ago (enough time for any script to become 'a final product'). The second part, The Fall of Zeus, is a still-evolving creation, brought about by the playwrights in the master's programme in theatre, which attempts to pick up the line of development of the first play, across a gap of untold time.

Prometheus Bound is about the Titan Prometheus, demi-god in Greek mythology, who stole fire from Heaven and gave it to poor and helpless man. For this, Zeus had him nailed to a rock and subjected to endless torment.

One of the most striking things about the production of the play, performed in Burton Auditorium, was its staging, designed by Bill Lord and Tim Sherwood. The active space of the theatre was enlarged considerably; a platform, the Rock, was erected halfway up the

seats of the auditorium, and gigantic balloons, held together by orange valence-bars and intended to represent atoms, were suspended from the ceiling, creating an impression of being inside a gigantic molecule.

The primordial atmosphere was enhanced by the (over) generous use of synthetic fog, a backdrop of plastic curtains painted like clouds, and other-worldly electronic music that brought back all of 2001 and the monolith.

In this conception of the play, Prometheus became something of a human archetype; his role was played by a male (John Innis) and a female (Gina Laight), an interesting experiment which succeeded except for the occasional lines in the text in which Prometheus' bride was referred to.

Since classic lines are not known for their easy delivery, doing a classic becomes a challenge. The message depends heavily on the emotional overtones of the voice and on body movements.

The simple lines given to Io, the tortured girl whom Hera had turned into "the girl with horns", could very easily have degenerated into corny, farcical phrases; but the beautiful delivery of Oksana Kalata made Io probably the most moving and truly pitiable creature in the whole array of supernatural beings.

Prometheus, dressed in nothing more than the chains and ropes in



Steve Thorne as Strength attempts to restrain a gloating Violence while Prometheus is being nailed to the rock in the theatre department's produc-

tion of Aeschylus' classic; Oksana Kalata, right, plays Io, the maiden turned into a beast by Hera's jealousy and Zeus's lust.

which 'they' were delivered to the rock, remained a powerful figure throughout, with Laight's Prometheus taking on an increased amount of fire and brimstone towards the end.

The two bound partners nicely balanced each other, with an animal magnetism essential to the part.

The real jolt in the play came with a new addition to the script, as Prometheus, doomed to be tormented by an eagle that devours his

liver, disappeared. Another deus ex machina device allowed an astronaut to appear onstage on the wings of NASA's metallic Eagle, about to descend to the moon.

The obvious analogy disrupted the mood of the original play and seemed an unnecessary attempt to make a link with the present, as well as with the play which followed.

The Fall of Zeus, written by the playwrights in the theatre department, is still very much in its

beginning stages. The performances themselves were, in fact, "open rehearsals", and not completed exhibitions.

The Fall revolves around a Russian scientist and discoverer (in Russia) of uranium, the new fire. The scientist, who has been locked up in a mental institution, becomes a modern day Prometheus, and his gaoler becomes Zeus.

Many gaps in the script—notably its heavy reliance on the Promethean myth—makes one wonder whether it would be viable apart from Prometheus Bound. Calling anyone other than Stalin by the name of Zeus, moreover, is not a workable exaggeration in the light of Soviet history.

But despite these few flaws, the play is a promising sign of the creative potential of the PEAK (graduate theatre) programme.

Dance workshop shows off talents

Tonight the dance department students have a chance to show off their form in a workshop situation—yes, it's that time of the year again—in studio 111, Fine Arts Centre, Phase II. The 7:30 p.m. show will be free. Bring your friends and your enthusiasm.

Violent Quebec film provokes thought

By MICHELINA TRIGIANI

Jean-Claude Lord's *Bingo*, a 1973 French-Canadian film, opened last week in Toronto to English-speaking audiences.

The film deals with problems of the working class, and with political corruption. Speaking to a York audience who previewed the film, Lord said he wanted to make a movie that would stay in our heads, provoke discussion and make us think.

The story is about François—a Montrealer, student, photographer, lover and son—and his involvement with a strike at the factory where his father works.

As the movie begins, François is romping about Montreal with Genevieve, his girlfriend, laughing and taking pictures.

He becomes involved with a gang of violent, political manipulators. He never questions his motives or theirs, and does not consider the resulting violence.

François is initially attracted to this group because it offers him the opportunity to get physically in-

involved in the battle his father is passively losing as a striker. As the group's photographer (he photographs the Minister of Justice with a prostitute), François is offered a chance to experience suspense, glamour and intrigue. Without stopping to think, François assumes the group's violence will solve the workers' problems.

In *Bingo*, we view the stereotyped blue-collar Quebecois—unsophisticated, brusque, manipulated by big business and relatively "in the dark". Although some of us might enjoy exposure to French-Canadian culture, it is difficult to empathize with certain of the characters and situations presented. Why do the workers react so violently, so emotionally? What possesses François as he joins the gang's activities? What are all those politicians saying? The film is Quebecois and it will be fully appreciated only by a French-Canadian audience.

About the released internationally, the film will present an incomplete picture of Canada abroad. Unless foreigners understand the French-English situation here (and few Canadians do), they may mistake the film as an accurate characterization of the entire country. But so few good English-Canadian films are produced, that recognition of this

French-Canadian venture is worth the risk.

But the film does explore two problems which can be viewed on the national level. The first, and most conspicuous one, is American infiltration. Even with Quebec's strong cultural identity, the American influence is powerful in *Bingo*.

François and Genevieve eat at MacDonald's, scenes of Montreal contain billboards of American advertisements and, naturally, François' father works for an American company.

The second problem surveyed is that of crime and political corruption. For a Canadian film, the frequency and degree of violence in *Bingo* may be shocking. Violence progresses from an accidental killing

during the strike, to the attempted assassination of a politician.

Kidnappings, bombs and a blood bath at a political rally vie with one another for a violent finale.

The politicians in the film leave much to be desired. They are loud, they posture and manipulate voters. Although specific French-Canadian politicians are satirized, their traits are common to all.

Perhaps the best feature of *Bingo* is its photography. For a low-budget movie, the colours and quality are excellent, and render the Canadian scenery beautifully.

Bingo is certainly worth seeing. Not only is the story interesting and thought-provoking and the plot suspenseful, but the movie is Canadian.

Cabaret offers joys of the past

A romp through the movie past is promised by the York Cabaret for tomorrow night, starring such sweethearts (it's Valentine's day, after all) as Rudy Valentino, l'amoureux, Fred and Ginger, and many others. As always, this pleasant interlude can be enjoyed in Vanier's Open End at 9 and 10:30 p.m. The place is both free and licenced.

Eliot's Murder exits muttering in Glendon

Exit Muttering will do so in a last run tonight in Glendon's Pipe Room at 8 p.m. Written by Donald Jack, the play is put on by English 253, for a token fee of 50¢.

The Glendon College Dramatic Arts Programme will present *Murder in the Cathedral*, by T.S. Eliot, directed by Michael Gregory, from February 27 until March 2, nightly at 8:30 p.m. in the Old Dining Hall of Glendon College. Admission \$2.50.

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