

The ecstasy of theatre

Elliott Lefko

"You just can't sit back and say, okay York, feed me. Everyone has their own needs, and involving oneself in the productions going on on campus, or creating one's own ideas, can put one in touch with those needs." So says Shawn Zevit, a second-year theatre student, trying to earn his wings as a legit actor, keeping himself busy acting, writing (he wrote **Where the Lions Sleep**), and participating in workshops. He finds that York gives him the chance to experiment. "I go into a situation ready to take a chance. The worst that can happen is I'll fall on my face. One thing, though, I know that I won't get fired. There will always be a tomorrow.

The theatre department is one of the most viable branches of the York community. In the past year we have seen a variety of shows,

including **The Ecstasy of Rita Joe**, **The Sand**, and **Shakes a Pear Tree**. There have also been smaller productions put forth by individual students. The Department is in the process of gearing up to enable students to express their ideas and take the initiative to reach the community.

Because York has a fine film program, students of theatre are encouraged to mix and exchange ideas with their cinematic neighbours. "Film students are like us," maintains Sam Beckett, a 3rd-year theatre major. "They are also experimenting. They want to establish themselves. We're both students."

In the theatre department there is a call board, constantly filled with different notices. There is also one in the film department.

The audiences at York are for the most part receptive to the work of the theatre students.

Sometimes they can be rowdy, but even then it gives the actors a chance to react. "You have to relate," offers Ric Sarabia, another 2nd-year man. "If you can't change, you're forgetting the audience."

Does the York Theatre program prepare you to meet the big, bad world? Shawn Zevit admits he doesn't know. "I'm getting things out of the department. But I don't know what yet. The possibilities are there. You have to go out and try something."

Beginning tonight, the theatre department is presenting a New Play Festival. On the boards will be a variety of projects featuring the best work of the students and staff. Tonight: **Bayette**, 7 pm; **Traces**, 9 pm; Fri.: **Suicide in B flat**, 7 pm, **Bayete**, 9 pm; Sat.: **Traces**, 7 pm, **Shakes a Pear Tree**, 8:30 pm; Sun.: **Shakes**, 2 pm, **Smirks**, 3:30 pm, **Suicide**, 4:30 pm; Wed., (Apr. 2): **Where the Lions sleep**, 7 pm, **Shortages**, 8:30 pm; Thursday (Apr. 3): **Emily Carr**, 7 pm, **Sex and Death**, 8:30 pm. The festival moves to the Factory Theatre Lab, 207 Adelaide St. E., on April 10, 11 and 12. Break a leg. Be Wilde. Whew!



Sophelia, one of Haverland's sprightly characters

Tracing the song

Karen X. Tully

Traces of wit. **Traces** of talent. **Traces** of excellence. **Traces**. A one-woman show performed by Kelita Haverland last Thursday and Friday nights happily lived up to what was one of the most outrageous displays of advance publicity since the Genie Awards. For the past few weeks, it has been virtually impossible to walk ten paces without stumbling upon yet another poster announcing the performance. These efforts to inform the public, by Richard Strutridge, were not in vain. To those who managed to ignore the posters I offer only my condolences. You missed a good show.

Written and directed by Haverland, **Traces** presented the audience with a cast of characters vastly different at times and closely linked at others, which she managed to slip in and out of with apparent ease. Within seconds Cecil Ferguson, the kid on the block who is just a little bit "different", transformed to Miss Dixie Lee, The Singing Queen, who later became Dorine of the

NBA (No Boys Allowed) club. Haverland's sense of characterization was dazzling. Her manner of speech, her facial expressions, the smallest gesture were always convincing in the truest sense.

Accompaniment on the piano by Dianne Sokoluk was well executed. As instrumentation for Haverland's singing and background music during the monologues, it added depth and intensified the mood, much like the pianists of the silent film era.

Haverland opened the show with an original song, "Let Me Be Me" (with no reference to the Clairol commercial), and closed with her theme song, "Traces", a touching melody of reminiscence. The low points occurred as Haverland presented the audience with herself, while the high points were to be found in the midst of her well-disciplined yet seemingly-casual comedic style. Although **Traces** may have been Kelita Haverland's final performance at York, this is not the end. This is just the beginning.

Bryon Johnson

Bryon Johnson



Haverland, on piano, and piano player Dianne Sokoluk

Sing out

The York University Choir is pleased to present a guest appearance by The Harpur Chorale at the Scott Religious Centre on Friday March 28 at 8:00 p.m. The Harpur Chorale is based at the State University of New York in Ginghamton. Trained as an a cappella concert choir boasting 28 voices the Chorale has made numerous cross North America concert tours as well as a 1977 tour of much of Europe. This is an exciting choral group which should not be missed!

Don't play with TNT, play with me

Elliott Lefko

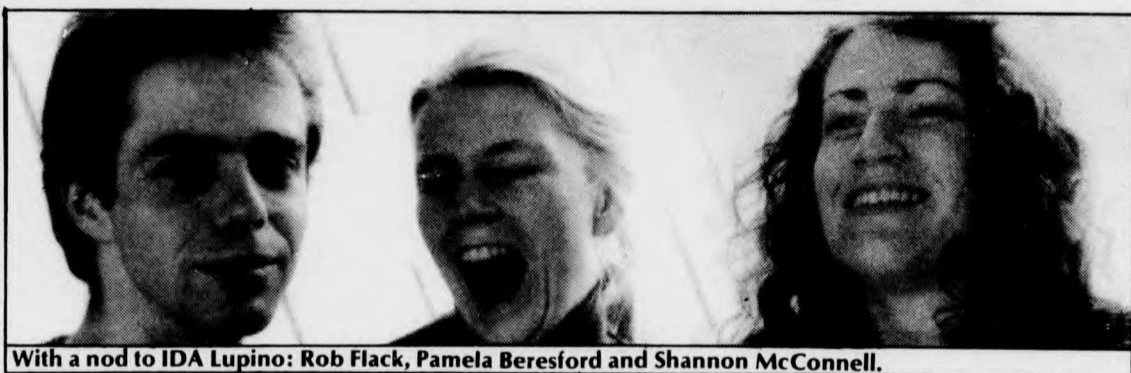
I'm putting the aerial up, so I can go out on the air.

Last week a howling wind was ripping up Toronto, knocking over anything that wasn't tied down. At Yonge and Bloor the traffic lights snapped like dead branches and were cast into oblivion. The poor cops had to stand there, directing traffic, their boots weighted to keep them out of the path of the oncoming autos. Meanwhile back at York, in the modest IDA gallery, a triad of 4th year visual arts students were sparking their own electrical storm.



The show began on Monday and ran until Friday. The participants included Rob Flack, Pamela Beresford and Shannon McConnell. For the three it was the last time they would 'go out on the air' to the York community. For at least one, however, it was a wasted effort.

"If I had to do it again, I wouldn't," says a wide-eyed Flack. "I've exhibited downtown, with others, at the Music Gallery and YUFAM, to good response. But here I haven't got any constructive feedback. This place seems to be artistically isolated."



With a nod to IDA Lupino: Rob Flack, Pamela Beresford and Shannon McConnell.

Pam Beresford, a pretty, blonde-haired, 22 year old, agreed: "I'm glad I'm leaving York. When I began I felt a tremendous collective energy here, but it seems to have dissipated. Last year we presented a show, at YUFAM, entitled "I met John Cage", and afterwards it sparked a new interest in experimental directions. However by evidence of the recent **Diverse Perspectives** (an experimental exhibit) there's more ambition in that direction, but the majority of the people in visual arts seem to be deadlocked.

The three individuals booked the gallery space last year. They began planning soon afterwards. "We wanted to make people work," offered the soft-spoken McConnell. "We wanted our ideas to reach out."

The performance was overwhelming in nature. Audiences

entered the gallery to a myriad of exhibits, closely connected by an overriding theme. Flack explains: "There are different ways of living. You can make moves positively. Or you can live a complacent existence. Our exhibit was a step-by-step manual on how to make the decision. The meaning of some of the art is literal. We tried to create a balance, demonstrating the tension."

Flack, a talented artist with a background in drawing, crafted a careful series of semaphore signal diagrams to demonstrate his ideas.

He continued his theme with a set of imaginative, symbolic, photographs that traced the combating forces of creativity, going on in the mind of a particular person. The dramatic photos, combined with some abstract captions, colourfully threw us back into the past and

interpreted the outside influences making up the total being.

Beresford and McConnell demonstrated in 4 separate performances a wide expanse of creativity and imagination. For the record the 4 were entitled: A IS FOR ART, B IS FOR EARMUFF; THE GEO TAPE; YOU'RE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN A TEA PARTY; AND THE PAISLEY GIRLS PRESENT; I ALWAYS WANTED TO BE A _____ NOT _____

Beginning in the back of the gallery they threw a variety of word images on the wall, while Beresford peeled bananas and played with a cat's cradle. They continued, playfully, with a time-trip into the past with the Paisley girls. While eating atop a human table, a man galloped across the floor, a hobby-horse between his legs, sprinkling us with the words to a song called 'Row, row, your boat.'

The next part of the show featured George, the talking budgie. As Miss Beresford delivered a lecture on Budgerigars, interrupted by a nagging voice of authority, George did his thing on video.

The show finished on a lush, and dreamlike note. "You're all invited to a tea party," announced our host (Alice?). She invited three participants from the audience to join the table for tea and reading. While a slowed tape of a music box threw the notes of "Send In The Clowns", the participants created a hazy mood, highways for the audience to drift back into their own pasts.

Although Flack expressed his concern at the lack of imagination of the York community, participation was actually encouraging. Tuesday's opening was attended by a large crowd of close to a hundred. At each daily show there were at least 15-20 people. A book left at the gallery door was filled with feedback of all kind. More than one person left the gallery on a high note after the shows.

The performances demonstrated a genuine fire on the part of at least 3 York students. When they entered York 4 years ago, each were babes constipated with ideas. Last week they showed they had indeed found a medium to express themselves. A for Art.