

Canton Acrobats balancing wonders

By VICKI FORESTER

Pigs have wings and people can fly; or so the Acrobats of Canton would have us believe. Substitute the word 'dragons' for 'pigs' and the entire statement is indeed true if eyes can be any judge of such things.

A burst of color against a solid background marked the opening number. Small individually unimpressive tricks were performed in a collective unity with a swift precision that served as an introduction to a well-paced and perfectly timed programme. The full and vibrant stage was satisfying for even the most wandering eyes. Oohs and aahs were to be the standard utterings for the evening. Each act seemed to demand an even more appreciative response.

Transitions as new sets were erected, were playful and suitably distracting. Bordered on a vaudevillian interpretation of the British pantomime, wagging heads and little scenes demonstrated talents in juggling, dish-spinning, and one-person wrestling.

The succeeding acts were all

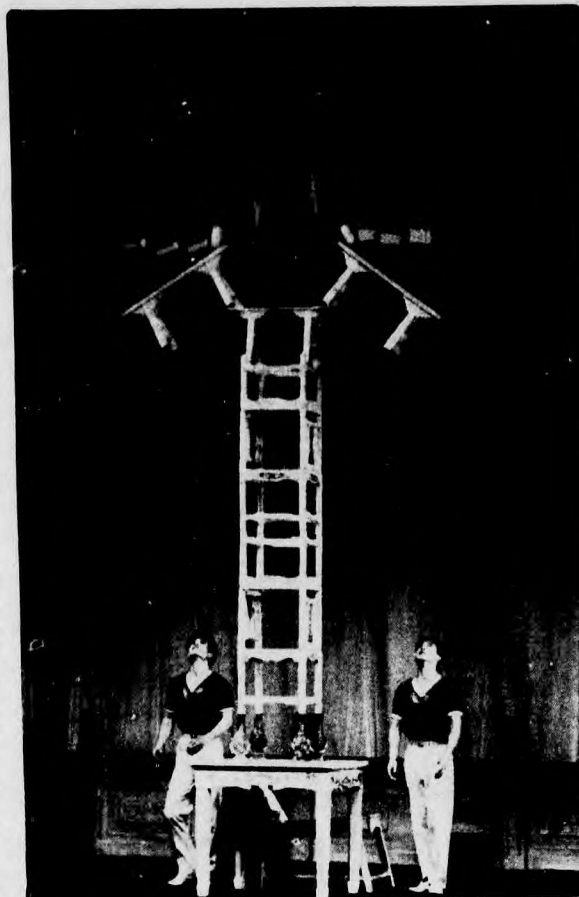
technically awing - from the plummeting of small bodies earth-

ward, to the tumbling and twisting of males through stacked hoops. For people who have trouble convincing umbrellas to open the feats (or feets) of the young lady who "danced" on umbrellas (while on her back) were quite amazing.

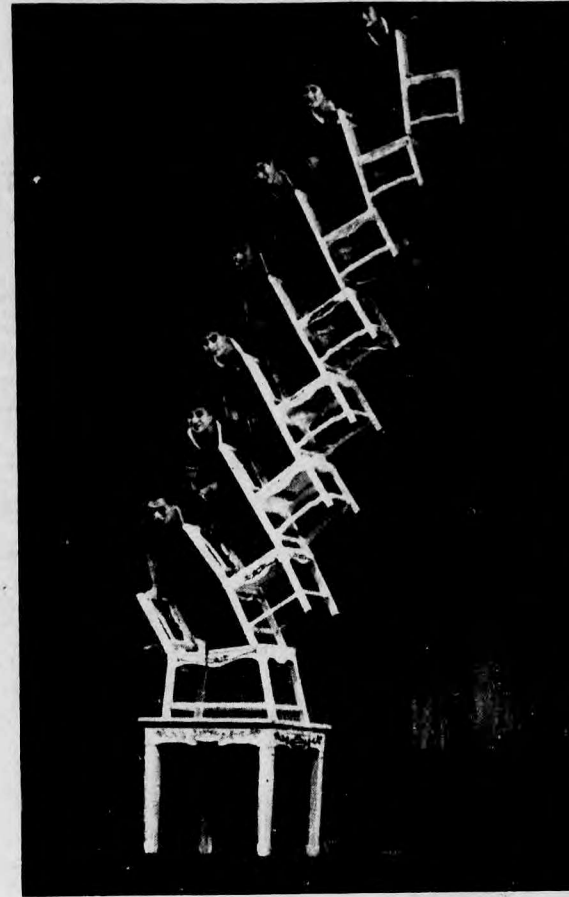
No hero treatments in this show - top performers and literally supporting actors alike took quick bows and moved aside for the next number. The orchestral accompaniment assisted in maintaining the pace and accentuating major accomplishments. Cleanly coordinated, it was obvious that there was no room for ad lib in this show. The attention to detail and the willingness to reveal the mechanics of illusions made the acts seem yet more remarkable.

Larger than life was the dragon duet, as two majestic reptiles cavorted in the darkness. Larger than life too, was the twelve-year-old contortionist who always mangled, in spite of the audience's confusion to remember where she left her limbs.

In spite of the vaguely distracting extraneous noises offered by



the inner workings of the Aitken Centre it was an evening of rare enjoyment. Good technique and



the polished showmanship of the Acrobats of Canton were the order of the evening, even if those

balancing wonders never quite seemed to be totally attached to some earthly object!

Shari Saunders gives strong performance

Shari Saunders gave her first solo recital in Fredericton Tuesday night to a large audience at Memorial Hall. Miss Saunders, a soprano is well known to Fredericton audiences, having begun her vocal studies here with Gloria Richard. The concert Tuesday showed that studies at l'Universite de Montreal and various performances in Canada and France have greatly expanded her repertoire and increased her sense of stage presence.

The first group of Italian songs and Schubert art songs established the great range and power of Ms. Saunders' voice. Some of the sweetness of tone was lost in the high passages of *Per la gloria, d'adorarm* by Bononcini. The emotional change from the sorrow of a maiden left alone and in tears of *Nas Verlassene Magdlein* by Wolf to the sauciness of *Elfenlied* also by Wolf was well handled. Ms. Saunders seemed to relax and enjoy the playful mood of *Elfenlied* the story of an elf who peeks at a wedding party, ending with a teasing "Cuckoo" refrain.

Following were selections from Brahms *Wie Melodien Zieht es mir*, a short piece of soaring melody, was beautifully sung, as if Ms. Saunders felt the lyrics; "Melodies softly fill my senses" *Immer leiser wird mein Schlummer*, in a more better mood was well sung, although marred by unevenness in the lower register and strain in the high register.

The soloist's talent at charac-

terization was again shown in *Hat gesagt, bleibt nicht dabei* by Strauss, a folk tale about a spirited young woman.

After the intermission a group of French love songs by Faure and Dupau were presented, sung with naturalness and emotional understanding. Spanish songs by de Falla provided a contrast.

One of the strongest selections in the programme was *Monica's Waltz and Aria* from Menotti's *The Medium*. Ms. Saunders performed the leading role in *The Medium* this summer in Victoria. The varying moods and the subtleness of the waltz rhythm were well controlled by the soloist.

Ending the programme was the dramatic *Wi naht mir der Schlummer* by Weber, from *Der Freischutz*.

Ms. Saunders was singing to an audience of friends and well-wishers, who responded enthusiastically. As an encore she sang an Acadian song written by the former piano teacher, Claudette Melanson.

Catherine Courvoisier, a professor of piano at l'Universite de Montreal, provided sympathetic accompaniment throughout the evening.

A reception followed in the Gallery of the Art Centre. The concert was sponsored by the Creative Arts Committee. The committee was particularly pleased to support a Fredericton native whose career is just beginning and who shows such great promise.

Springsteen is back

By J.F. BUTLAND

With his first four albums Bruce Springsteen has guaranteed himself a niche in any credible rock history. His work from now on will determine the size of that niche. *The River* will enlarge it substantially.

Of the twenty songs on this two-album set, only three are over five minutes. On his second album there were only two (of seven) under five minutes (four were over seven minutes). This doesn't mean Bruce has less to say. It means he is saying it better.

Six songs have shown up in various incarnations before this album. *The Ties That Bind*, *Sherry Darling*, *Independence Day* and

Point Blank were all regular or semi-regular songs in the incredible 1978 tour. *The River* was debuted at the MUSE concerts in late '79. (It's also included in the MUSE *No Nukes* movie but not on the record. These songs are all more or less in the same form as they appeared in the concert. (Which means nothing when it comes to the versions on the '80 tour).

The Ties That Bind and *Sherry Darling* are two great rock songs the latter being frat-rock in the tradition of *Louie, Louie*.

Independence Day and *Point Blank* are two haunting ballads about the realities of life. *Point Blank* frankly is terrifying. It poses a beautiful melody against a story

of failure in much the same way as the Doors *The End*. The music makes the lyrics more terrifying, but instead of Jim Morrison's retelling of the myth of Oedipus, Springsteen's tale is much more close to home.

Drive All Night was incorporated as an extended break in the middle of the line version of *Backstreet* where it centered on a love affair (as it does on the album). It was more effective there, where the solo piano and impassioned vocal built to a crescendo only to have the musical theme of *Backstreets* take control again. It was guaranteed to leave you emotionally wasted.

The River also shows a return of Bruce's humour that was missing on the *Darkness* album. Songs such as *Out in the Street*, *Crush on You* and *You Can Look [But you'd better not touch]* have Bruce and the E. Street Band rocking out and having a good time. Once again Springsteen realizes that "it ain't no sin to be glad you're alive." These songs are full of the joy and braggadocia that made *Rosalita and Saint In The City* so great.

The other songs on the album are of familiar themes if you're acquainted with Springsteen's other works. *The River* is the story of a teenage marriage and the hardships involved. The E Street Band shines (as they always do) and Bruce delivers one of his best vocals ever. And that's saying quite a lot. It also contains one of

Red n' Black videos in Blue Lounge

Red n' Black opening night is only four days away and it looks promising for an evening of excellent entertainment. If you still aren't sure of what *Red n' Black* is videos of past shows will be shown in the blue lounge of the SUB all day today so come on up and take a look.

In case you haven't already done so, you can buy your tickets at the SUB info booth, at the Playhouse box office, and in front of the bank today and Monday. Tickets will

also be on sale at the football game and from numerous *Red n' Blackers* around campus. Tickets are going fast so don't delay - only \$3.50 will buy you an evening of fun and laughter. Hurry - Nov 4th, 5th, and 6th are coming fast and you don't want to miss out on one of UNB's most cherished traditions!!

Red n' Black Revue, Nov. 4, 5, and 6th at the Playhouse - Don't miss it!!

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