



Author Margaret Atwood spoke at Grant McEwan last week.

Our Lady Oracle

Within the last ten years Canadians have been increasingly aware of a cloud on the horizon of Canadian literature. That cloud is Margaret Atwood, an individual of staggering accomplishments: a woman with an identity.

Ms. Atwood gave a reading at Grant MacEwan Community College last week before a large and responsive crowd. She was the first of a number of Canadian writers who will appear at the college in the next few months.

Physically Ms. Atwood is a youthful looking woman, with what have often been termed "pre-raphael" features. Soft-spoken and friendly, an aura of interest surrounds her. Ms. Atwood is now in her thirties and has been writing from the age of sixteen. "I started writing because it was more enjoyable than anything else I was doing," she said.

Today she has six books of poetry, two novels, and a book of criticism to her credit. She has achieved recognition not only in Canada, but in Britain and the United States as well. Currently she is writing a new book titled *Lady Oracle*. Reading excerpts from it, Ms. Atwood displayed her wit and talent for precise description, as well as her engaging sense of humor.

Because this, like her other works is written in first person singular, people often tend to confuse her with her central characters. "Maybe it's because I create realistic

setting, ones people can relate to," she states. "I'm less autobiographical than many writers."

Atwood says that writers are shape-changers, they create a personality and then go inside to see what makes it tick. "Alteration of this character is often necessary," she adds, and indeed hers change from one plot advancement to the next.

Upon the completion of a work she usually falls into a state of depression. "When one puts time and effort into something, the outcome is always a little disappointing, one feels something could have been improved," she states.

Criticism is an aspect of writing most poets and novelists don't relish. Ms. Atwood says that when an individual reaches a certain level of fame, personal attack by some critic is inevitable.

Ms. Atwood neither encourages or discourages young Canadian writers. "There are more publishers in Canada now than there were a decade ago, but the level of competition wasn't so high back then either," she says.

Margaret Atwood is a woman who has played an important role in the development of Canadian literature. Her opinions have been formed out of her experiences, experiences other writers have and will encounter in their future endeavors.

Jamie Stanley



photos by Kim St. Clair

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Members of The Thundering Herd playing the sax classic "The Four Brothers."

Woody? Of course he would

It wasn't Glenn Miller or Benny Goodman. It wasn't Duke Ellington or Count Basie either. It was just Woody Herman.

And it was great.

For two shows before near capacity audiences in SUB Theatre last Saturday night, Woody Herman and the Thundering Herd played some of the best damn jazz this town has heard in quite a while. With amazing versatility the Herd performed everything from the hit swing

tunes of yesteryear to the contemporary innovations of today.

The evening began with a snappy rendition of "The Four Brothers", in which Woody put his saxophonists through their paces. Then with Herman watching and guiding like a proud father, the band slipped effortlessly into the slow and mellow Ralph Bunn's tune, "Early Autumn."

It became obvious, however, that something was definitely miss-

continued on next page

inside....

Gallery is an expose of entertainment in Edmonton...Featured in this issue is a collection of previews, reviews, interviews and assorted trivia from the Gateway press rooms.