

ENTERTAINMENT

Good Grease!

STEPHANIE GROSS

The rock 'n roll comedy *Grease* opened last Tuesday with a high energy, extremely musical performance. It is the second hit show presented by the two-year-old York Independent Theatre Productions.

The nostalgic 50's play captured the hell-raising, good times attitude of the rowdy teenage days with Greaser hair-dos, black leather jackets, the "Jitter Bug" and a powerful cast which gave an excellent performance.

The split-level stage allowed for an interesting, varied focus and as well, smooth, fast scene changes. The lighting was very effective, intensifying moods with the use of strobos and stage colour that surrounded the entrances. The band played old rock 'n roll, providing ongoing entertainment during scene changes, and throughout the entire performance.

The dances and gestures of the characters were humorous and well employed, most noticeable in the

performances of Kevin Alary (Danny Zuko) and Frenchy, played by Hilary Taylor. The choreography was impressive and kept the audience clapping and bopping in their seats. An especially notable number was "Beauty School Dropout" sung by Jeff Miller as "Teen Angel". This song had the largest chance of being a flop but the special effects and Miller's humorous gestures made this a memorable moment in the play. Another song which deserves special mention is Kevin Alary's "Alone at the Drive-In-Movie" which proved his tremendous vocal talent.

Grease provides quality entertainment and it is only the singing that could use a little polishing.

The rowdy and energetic performance captivated the audience.

Grease runs until March 12. Tickets are \$4 for York students and \$5 otherwise. They are on sale in Central Square, near the Bookstore.

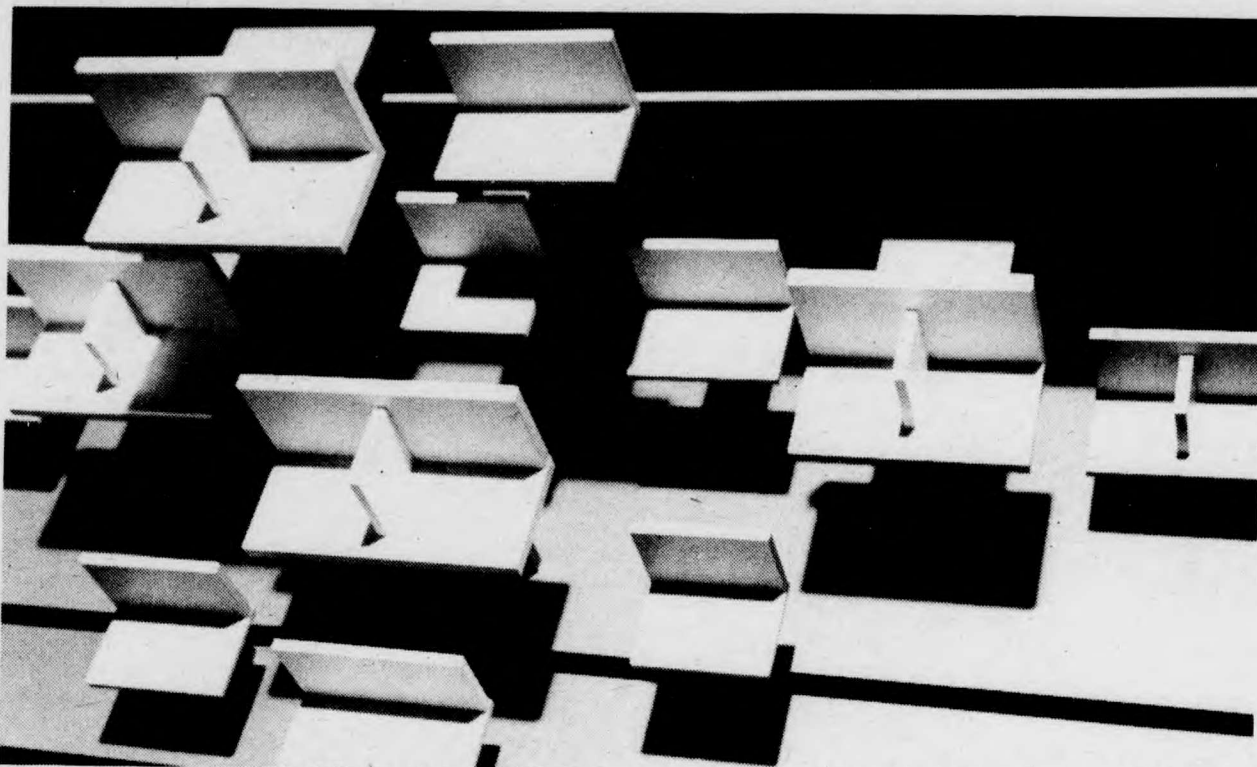


Photo: Mario Scattoloni

One of Eli Bornstein's 35 structured reliefs now on display at the recently expanded AGYU.

Structuralism at AGYU explores form, colour, light relationships

IAN BAILEY

Thirty-five structured reliefs by Eli Bornstein, now on display in the York Art Gallery, represent an obscure art form called structuralism. Their quiet, cryptic artistry is a counterpoint to the difficulties of obtaining the exhibition.

"I had hoped, years ago, to acquire an exhibition," says curator Michael Greenwood, "but it would have required the co-operation of several galleries." The exhibition is presented now only as a result of the decision by the Mendel Art Gallery of Saskatoon to assemble a circulating show.

To see a structuralist piece is to see a

flat plane decorated by projecting solid geometric, orthogonal elements that allude to natural shapes and forms. The intent is to create an equilibrium of concrete relationships between form, colour and light.

Greenwood describes a structuralist as a builder. "He literally builds forms in space. He constructs geometric elements arranged with one another to create a space-light relationship."

The most obvious example of structuralist art at York can be found in the periodical room of the Scott library. This piece is a massive, imposing, multi-coloured work by

Ziggy Blazeje.

Bornstein's pieces were created between 1957 and 1982. The artist and editor/publisher of the periodical *The Structuralist* works slowly and rarely mounts exhibitions. Bornstein is credited with developing the movement in North America, but without losing sight of its basic principles.

Many of the pieces on display were borrowed from collectors who have purchased them over the years. Each piece had to be shipped in formidable custom-made crates.

The exhibit will close on March 25. The gallery is open Monday to Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.



Photo: Mario Scattoloni

From Death Watch to Joe and Maxi

Documentary voyeurism: Cancer on celluloid

MARSHALL GOLDEN

Have you ever been addicted to any kind of drug? If so, then you understand the medical meaning of the word "tolerance." Tolerance is the body's natural building of immunity. If you take two aspirins every day to relieve a headache you will discover that after a while, two aspirins no longer seem to be doing the trick-you must increase the dosage. You have developed a "tolerance" to aspirin.

Pornography more explicit

Tolerance, however, is not restricted to the medical world. A florist can build a tolerance to the fragrance of flowers just as soldiers develop a tolerance to the visuals of death. It seems though, that in our media-oriented society, we are developing a tolerance to what we consider worth watching. Consequently, pornography must continue to be more and more explicit and film and television must develop newer and more innovative twists if they want to continue to exist in a competitive market. One must ask though, where is the end?

December of 1982 saw the release of *Deathwatch*, a fascinating, yet largely unnoticed film which examined our society a few years in the future. The premise of the film dealt with society's tolerance to sensationalism on television. All of the ideas had been tried and the only

show that drew an audience was one where viewers could actually witness a death, by non-violent means, live on the air. For obvious reasons, critics called *Deathwatch*, "Orwellian."

Last week in the Nat Taylor Cinema, the Jewish Film Festival screened a film entitled *Joe and Maxi* - a film which may make *Deathwatch's* predictions seem a little late. *Joe and Maxi*, a documentary film made in 1978 by New York filmmakers Maxi Cohen and Joel Gold is a great film: it is as artistically made as it is fascinating to watch. But it is that "fascinating" aspect of the film which makes it a disturbing document.

Therapy for the filmmaker

Joe and Maxi is a film from the self-reflexive school of cinema. Self-reflexive or autobiographical filmmakers are those who make films about themselves and usually, their families. These films are most often made as "therapy" for the filmmaker - an attempt to help them understand why they do, or more often, why they don't relate to their families. The filmmakers usually appear in the films and most often it is the presence of the camera which acts as a catalyst to bring out the true conflict.

At the age of 29, Maxi Cohen, a N.Y.U. film graduate decided, in true self-reflexive style, to make a film about her relationship with her



Joe and Maxi - a film by Maxi Cohen and Joel Gold.

father, Joe Cohen. Eight months prior to filming, at the age of 44, Maxi's mother died of cancer and Maxi decided that if she really wanted to get to know her father, now was the time.

Uncomfortable scene

Joe Cohen's relationship with his daughter was minimal. Since she was young, Maxi felt alienated from her father mainly because of the sexual advances he continually made (even in the film there is an uncomfortable scene where Joe corners Maxi and presses his body against hers).

The film begins, innocently enough, with discussions arising from the usual parent-child conflict -

the generation gap. All of this is overshadowed, however, when halfway through the film Joe reveals that he has cancer and does not have long to live. At this moment, the film changes from interesting to compelling. *Joe and Maxi* becomes a document of a man and his family struggling with the reality that he is dying.

Continues to be the joker

Joe's cancer is spreading quickly and there are some uncomfortable scenes where the family feels and compares the size of his tumours, which are every where. Joe never gives up-he continues to go to work and continues to be the joker, always wearing his trademark sunglasses which he continually hides behind,

even at night. Joe dies before the film is over and in a particularly touching scene Maxi, on the night of his funeral, discovers in his room eight, still wrapped, brand new shirts. Joe, who "never buys anything new" was tragically aware that his end was near.

Joe and Maxi is, basically, *Deathwatch* five years before the concept. It is the ultimate invasion of privacy and it is unbelievably fascinating to watch a man actually struggling with his own death. Our discomfort is outweighed only by our voyeurism and curiosity. Near the end, when Joe asks Maxi to turn off the camera, she violates his wish and we are relieved - it is far too interesting to stop.

The existence of *Joe and Maxi* and other related media events is evidence that society's tolerance is rising. Last year the B.B.C. broadcast a similar film about a dying man and thousands of viewers turned in with the same kind of discomfort/voyeurism. Last month P.B.S. broke the ratings with its live broadcast of a heart transplant. Ten years ago these shows would not have been tolerated.

It is worth noting that P.B.S. turned down *Joe and Maxi* for broadcast - at least this year anyway. They said that it was "too personal." Of course it is this 'personalness' that makes the film great. It should be noted, however, that society's tolerance is rising and those of you who want to see *Joe and Maxi* should continue to check your T.V. guides, next year, in 1984.