

"Twelfth" success again

by Marion Frazer

On Saturday afternoon, the Dal Theatre Department ably demonstrated the lasting appeal of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*. All age groups were present, including small children. For some, it was a first experience of the play; for others, it was the happy renewal of

an old acquaintance.

Twelfth Night is a tale of a revel, of a world divorced from reality, in which may exist plausible improbabilities. Here may a woman masquerade as a man, and in that guise, accidentally win another woman's love; or a sober citizen convince himself that he may rise in the world by donning yellow stockings. There befall mishaps and all kinds of misapprehensions before the twists of circumstance are unwound in time.

Much of the charm of *Twelfth Night* depends on the quality of the acting. It is a compliment to the Dal Theatre Department that the small children in the audience seemed to follow the intricacies of the plot, indicating by appropriate laughter and comments that they knew what was going on. As a team, the actors performed well.

The believability of individual performances, however, varied. Two outstanding characterizations are attributable to Sandy Bagwell (the countess Olivia) and Wendy Magahay as Viola. Ms. Bagwell was a poised and gracious Olivia. Her confident manner was enhanced by a warm, low speaking voice which carried with no sign of strain. Viola's role was skillfully performed by Ms. Magahay, despite the problem of convincingly representing a girl dressed as a boy. She maintained a gentle air, occasionally spiked with sauciness. Her



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sweet, clear soprano was an attractive addition to the occasional song.

The part of Orsino (the Duke of Illyria with whom Viola was in love) was not quite so well taken up by David Skinner. His gestures were often over-enthusiastic, and his expression, though confident, sometimes lacked conviction.

Comic roles were generally well achieved. Jon MacKenzie, as Olivia's riotous uncle, Sir Toby Belch; with Stuart Dunsworth as his dull-witted but wealthy companion, Sir Andrew Aguechuck and Charles Gosling as the churlish Fabian kept the audience in delighted laughter. Malvolio, Olivia's snobbish steward, played by Gerard Morrison, came in for his share of appropriate dislike. Morrison successfully portrayed a suitable scapegoat.

Lindsay Empringham's interpretation of the part of Maria, Olivia's maid, is open to argument. Maria is generally portrayed as a lively and wanton, but not hypocritical. Ms. Empringham's was somewhat prudish and malicious, rather than mischievous.

The character of Feste, the "wise fool" is genuinely vital to *Twelfth Night*. He flits through the play, appearing in the various centres of action, an objective participant who interprets the other characters to each other, to themselves and to the audience. Jim Moreira, as Feste, suggested the theoretically appropriate characterization of a continually watchful, "sad clown". On stage, he was sometimes guilty of too little animation. Like his voice, his acting, though often more than adequate, was sometimes a little flat.

Matt Helppi, who played Sebastian (Viola's twin brother) could have learned something from the fine balance maintained by his stage twin, Wendy Magahay. The Dunn Theatre possesses excellent acoustic properties; Helppi kept his voice at a level which would have carried well in a football stadium. His gestures, too, were a trifle overdone. It was unnecessary to reinforce the sexual and character differences between himself and Viola. One was visually obvious; the other, his speeches conveyed.

Sebastian's friend, the sea captain Antonio, was well-presented by Barry Eldridge. At one point, Antonio becomes a dupe of fortune, mistaking Viola for Sebastian. His bewildered outrage was particularly convincing in Eldridge's hands.

A well-trained group of actors supported those already mentioned. They were: Art Fisher as Viola's sea captain friend; Eric Miller and Sandy Crockett as Valentine and Curio, two of the Duke's gentlemen; Mary Ellen Watt and Linda Rosborough, Olivia's two serving ladies; John Dodge and Ron Hicks as two officers; Ray Doucette as a priest and James Rogers as a servant to Sir Andrew Aguechuck.

Congratulations should be extended to the Designer, Robert Doyle, and to the wardrobe, make-up and stage crews. Their efforts combined to produce a pleasing aesthetic effect.

Twelfth Night was a success again. Thanks to Director Gordon Gorday and to all the actors and crew for a really enjoyable production.

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Greece-black years

by Dimitri Koutsoliakos

On Tuesday night, November 2, the Dalhousie N.D.P. Association presented the film, "GREECE, THE SEVEN BLACK YEARS: Life in Greece under the dictatorship from 1967-1974". The film attempted to describe what life was like for ordinary people in Greece during the seven years that the military regime was in power. This was done primarily through interviews with people from different classes.

One problem with this film was that the sample of the people interviewed was not representative. There was an absence of interviews with civil servants, industrial workers, politicians, those in control of the production of the private sector and the "intellectual elite", i.e. scientists, artists, journalists and authors.

There were no interviews with

people who had spent even one day in the concentration camps that the regime had established for its political opponents. There were also no interviews with supporters of the regime. Interviews such as this would have been useful in order to identify the ideology and the way of thinking of the people who believed in the necessity of maintaining the dictatorship.

Apart from these imperfections, the film did present the way that the majority of the people in Greece faced and opposed the political situation during the "seven black years". Also the film did give some insights into the methods that the regime used in order to maintain its existence.

The audience was made aware of the economic, social and political consequences of the dictatorship for

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