

arts

# Explosion in Halifax theatre

by Emily MacNaughton

The Halifax Theatre Explosion, an independently funded theatre movement, is bringing high hopes to Halifax's young artistic community. Despite the city's high rate of unemployment and the group's shoestring budget, they aspire to beat the odds and prove there is a theatre audience in the Maritimes waiting and willing to pay for good, original work.

**Halifax Theatre Explosion  
Uptown Theatre  
Starting February 18th**

From February 18th to May 20th, the members will be producing, directing and acting a festival of 12 to 14 plays of eclectic and topical material ranging from a comedy about identity crises in border towns to a modern day Passion play where Jesus plays jazz and Mary Magdalene turns

tricks in a hotel scrapyard.

Several of the original plays are written and directed by Dal Theatre students. "Mike (Melski, Executive Director) must have called about 400 people with an open invitation to work," said Associate Director Steven Manuel, "We got input this way. People respect our drive to get their ideas exposure. It's very democratic, broad-minded. The more people, the more ideas."

Seven of the plays are previously produced contemporary works. The remaining five are first-run originals. Highlights from the list of plays include Melski's own "Hello from Sirius", a piece about an adulterous ex-Miss Teen Canada living in an

**"More people, more ideas"**

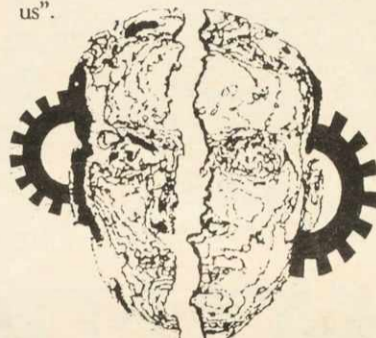
American-Canadian border town, slotted for the first week of March,

and "Nocturne" by Joy Renzi, a play about the personal passions of Percy Bysshe Shelley and George Sand, slotted for the week of April 20th. Christopher Durang's "Baby with the Bathwater", an anti-child-abuse tragic-comedy kicks off the festival on February 18th.

The organizers hope that the success of the festival will enable them to obtain government funding facilitating the development of a full time theatre cooperative in Halifax.

Another main goal of the festival is to give exposure to Halifax's abundance of young talent. "People in theatre tend to think you have to leave home to get anywhere," said Melski. "They set Toronto as the standard of good stage. What they don't see is that what's happening in Halifax is just as good. This is a vital place to be. Hopefully the festival will prove this and stop a bit of the talent drain."

"We're already nervous of the future now," adds Associate Director Steven Manuel, "but our first benefit (Thurs., Jan. 28th at the Double Deuce) showed us that people are getting excited about what we're doing and are willing to stand behind us".



One supporter at last Thursday's benefit said of the Halifax Theatre Explosion, "These guys are so sincere its frightening. They totally believe in what they're doing and they've got the passion to take it all the way."

Others members of the group are tentative but hopeful. "We've had a good beginning, but we still have a lot more work to do," says director Michele Thibeau, "Many things are taking off in Halifax now, with the bands and the Artists' Alliance." The Theatre Explosion will ideally add the potential of the Halifax cultural scene.

Only two of the plays are currently in rehearsal. Those interested in getting involved in the upcoming plays should check the bulletin boards at Café Mokka on Brunswick St, The Coffee Shop on Quinpool Ave. and on the 5th floor of the Rebecca Cohn Auditorium for further information or call Michael at 429-4510, Scott at 422-1981 or Steven at 457-7349. Watch for posters for upcoming benefits.

The Halifax Theatre Explosion starts Thursday, February 18th at the Uptown Theatre, 2158 Gottingen.



**Dalhousie  
University  
Governor's  
Awards**

In 1992, to mark the 125th anniversary of the founding of the Dalhousie Student Union, and to recognize students' contribution to the quality and vitality of the University, the Board of Governors established a set of awards to be known as Governors' Awards.

Up to three awards can be made each year, for exceptional contributions or leadership in the extracurricular realm in such areas as university governance, development of a sense of community on campus, community service, internationalizing the campus, visual or performing art, minority access or athletics. To be eligible, students must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 or equivalent. Otherwise, all students-full or part-time, at any stage in their academic career - may be considered for an award.

Recipients are chosen by a committee consisting of the President, three members of the Board of Governors and the Vice-President of Student Services. Nominations are invited, but the committee may consider other persons as well. Awards, in the form of a plaque, will be presented by the Chair of the Board or designate at the Student Appreciation Night.

Nominations should be submitted to the Office of the Vice-President-Student Services, Room 410, Student Union Building, on or before February 26, 1993. Nominations should include a brief description of the student nominee's contribution to the University and the names of persons from whom further information about this contribution could be obtained.