

Wishing for summer, dreaming of winter

The Odeon 2 is currently playing a film so fine and worthy of serious attention that you'll have to hurry if you want to catch it. *Summer Wishes, Winter Dreams* is certainly one of the most serious films to play Edmonton in some time. It makes very few of the usual concessions to the demands of the almighty box office czars and relies heavily on the drawing power of its star Joanne Woodward. In this particular case that isn't such a bad bet. Her list of impressive performances has made me a confirmed Woodward fan. Her performance in *Summer Wishes, Winter Dreams* reaffirms that she is an actress of unusual talent.

This film is concerned with a wife and her husband who are in the tentative process of trying to plug their lives into some kind of alignment with their existence. When the pieces don't fit into a nice, neat pattern that is no easy feat. Both have been living on fragile memories of days of innocence and hope originally incubated in the summers of their lives when all the world was young. Both Woodward and Martin Balsam have a difficult time of it, trying to piece their lives together and trying to piece their lives together together.

Woodward is simply superb as a woman possessed by the neurosis of mid-life. She is an iceberg who can only thaw out or crack into crystal fragments. Trapped in a marriage one would normally consider materially comfortable, she finds there is no easy escape from her ophthalmologist husband, bad dreams, a homosexual son and an ever-increasing inundation of shattering confrontations with unpleasant truths. Woodward claws her way through visions pleasantly filtered through an imperfect memory bank, quite incapable of reconciling them with reality. She is very much in the process of drumming up the courage to live with herself in the present and the prospect is destroying her. She is not a dismal failure but rather, a mundane one.

It is in the presentation of this facet of her character that Woodward reigns supreme. Indecision, uncertainty, wistfulness, that desperate search for evidence of a pleasant reality; this is Woodward's special turf, she makes it a country her own, and brings it to fruition with awesome precision. She excels in the tiny moments, weaving them into a net with which she captures

unnerving, individual truths.

Martin Balsam is no slouch either. As Woodward's husband he once again shows signs of talent that have long been hidden in a series of forgettable films. Balsam pins his character down by exposing his sense of patience and long suffering grace. The expertise that goes into his performance sneaks up on you until it holds you in its grasp.

Summer Wishes, Winter Dreams has some truly fine scenes in it and some of them one will remember for a long time. In some there is an eloquent touch of the macabre. In one brilliant scene director Gilbert Cates pays homage to Bergman, whose influence permeates the entire movie by having Woodward jerked awake from a nightmare to find her mother dying beside her in the theatre while images from *Wild Strawberries* fills the screen. At the funeral the diminutive entourage arrives at a lonely country graveyard to find the grave only half-dug. The family commences to debate the real estate value of the inheritance that has been left to them, threatening to disassemble and sever Woodward's connection with a gentler but unattractive and addictive past.

Cates direction is poignant and relentless, if somewhat mannered. The work presented is evidence of the influence Bergman has on today's film-makers. Cates deals with vulnerability and the struggle to put some grace and delight into the lives devoid of heroes but are everywhere filled with situations that smack of visitations reminiscent of Promethean nemesis. Trying to put these together and make sense of them can drive one quite mad. Cates does his best work with his actors and actresses. If he had let them carry all of the load he might have come out with something even more moving and slightly less contrived.

The script is slow moving and packed with detail, some of it reverberating between the lines with disturbing force. Stewart Sterns script does not come to the point of the affair, it is the point. This gives the film a slightly tedious and almost languid quality which is at times slightly irritating, but forgivable in its totality. The experience is an illuminating one if one gives it the attention that it deserves.

Hirschfelds photography is patently contrived and seldom comes into sharp focus. It is seldom possible to see the things

with the clarity that one craves when dealing with the intangible as in dreams or visions. On these grounds Hirschfelds work seems overly self-conscious and calls a little too much attention to itself. He might do well to pay a little more attention to Nykvist, Bergman's photographer if he intends to emulate the pattern again. It's not that the camera work or the editing were poor, they are in fact delivered with remarkable precision and deliberation, it's just that they seem a bit too calculating and call attention to themselves.

Summer Wishes, Winter Dreams is a serious film and that's the audience that it deserves. It is not entertainment of the light-hearted variety. It is an uncompromising work that deserves an attentive and interested audience. Still Woodward's and Balsam's performances alone would make the film worth seeing. Hurry, it's not likely to survive long at the Odeon. It's too good to last.

Walter Plinge

Poetry

Western Canadian Poetry Tour: 1974, is the brainchild of Brian Dale of the Edmonton Public Library, and Douglas Barbour and Stephen Scobie, poets, co-chairmen of the league of Canadian poets, and members of the English Department at U. of A. It is co-sponsored by the Canada Council, which has done so much to promote poetry in the last few years in Canada.

After deciding to have the readings here, Mr. Dale sounded out libraries in Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Regina, and Calgary, all of which were enthusiastic, as well as the art gallery in Moose Jaw. So the seven poets will read in all six centres during the week they are on tour. The tours begin in Winnipeg on a Monday and finish in Edmonton on Friday evening.

In order and with the dates of their readings in Edmonton, the poets are:

January 25, Gary Geddes
February 8, Gail Fox.
February 22, Dale Zieroth.
March 8, Susan Musgrave.
March 22, David McFadden.
April 5, Robert Hogg.
April 19, Frank Davey.

The readings will be held at 7:30 in the evening, at the Central Library.

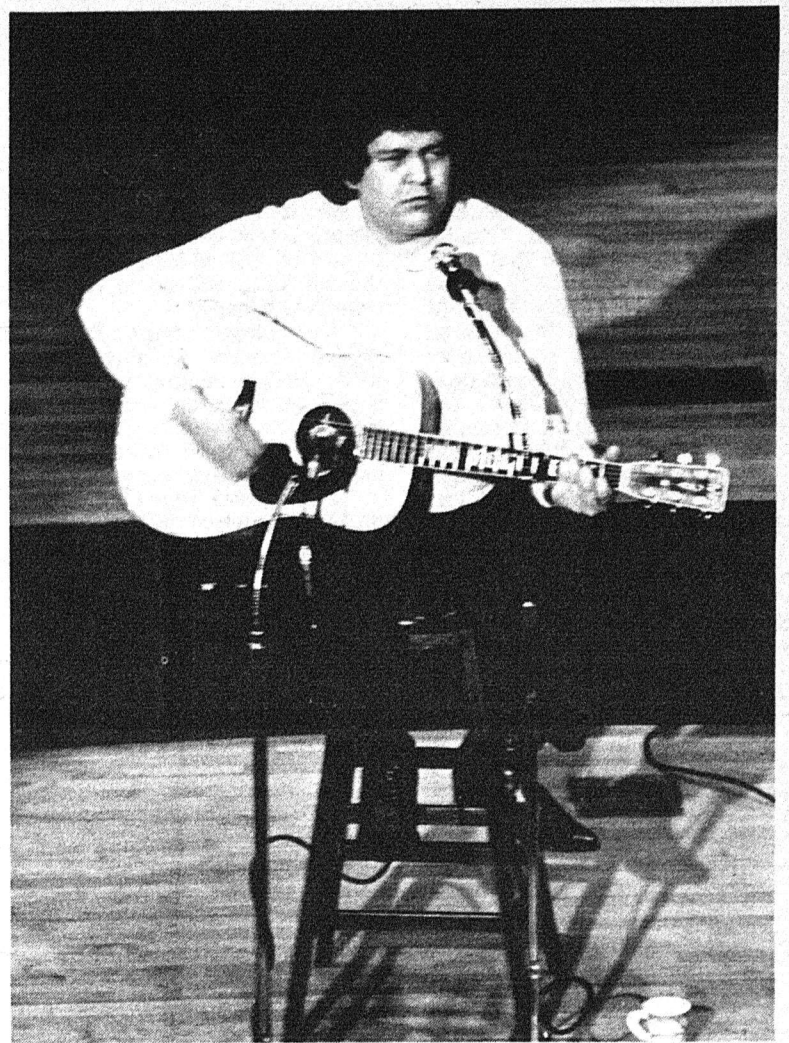


photo by Doug Moore

Shanon Two Feathers a possible replacement for Lightfoot.



theatre lives

Child's Play by Robert Marasco and directed by Richard Ouzounian. Opens at the Citadel January 5 and runs to February 2, 1974. This production stars John Neville and Vernon Chapman. There will be a student preview January 4 with a question period following the performance. Tickets for this evening performance are \$1.50 for students.

Have You Any Dirty Washing Mother Dear? written by Clive Exton and directed by Warren Graves. Next at Walderdale Playhouse, Nightly at 8:30, January 15 thru 26 inclusive. Tickets at the Bay Box Office or phone 424-0121 for reservations. Do it now or you'll be out of luck.

10 Women, 2 Men, and a Moose with Mia Anderson. One night only. January 25 at the Jubilee, 8:30 p.m. Tickets \$2.50, \$3.50 and \$4.00 available at the Bay. Canadian talent at the fore and at its very best.

L'Effet des Rayons Gamma sur les Vieux-Garçons by Paul Zindel, translated and adapted by Michel Tremblay. Directed by Jean-Marcel Ducaume at Theatre Francais d'Edmonton, 8406-91 rue. Feb. 1, 2, 3, and 8, 9, 10th. Students \$1.25. Tickets at the door or phone the box office at 467-3626. En francais.

dance

The Royal Winnipeg Ballet Company will be at the Jubilee January 31, February 1 and 2 with their production of the NUTCRACKER. Student Prices are in the \$3.00 to \$5.50 range. A classic more talked about than performed. This is your chance to get caught up and find out what all the talk is about.

poetry

Gary Geddes, 7:30 at the Central Library, January 25.

Robert Burns Birthday celebration at the Citadel. January 25 at 12:15 noon. Admission is only a dollar. See article this edition for more information.

easy on the ears

The University of Alberta String Quartet will be at SUB, 12:00 noon on January 25 with Schubert, D Minor.

the eyes have it

Latitude 53 gallery is running a show of the works of Pat Martin-Bates, Janine Jakobow and Fred Owen until January 31. 10048-101A Avenue.

Opera on campus

The world premiere of *Sganarelle*, a comic opera by Violet Archer of the department of music at the University of Alberta, will be one of two one-act operas to be performed on campus early in February.

Sganarelle, the first opera by the internationally-renowned Miss Archer, and *Orfeo ed Euridice*, the classical opera of Christoph Willibald Gluck, will be performed by senior students of the voice opera division of the department of music.

There will be two performances: Tuesday, February 5 and Wednesday, February 6. They will be held in Convocation Hall, beginning at 8 p.m. each evening.

The two operas provide examples of widely contrasting operatic styles.

The Gluck opera, first performed in Vienna in 1762, is representative of the oldest existing style of opera. It takes as its theme the ancient Greek tale of Orpheus' search for his dead wife.

The Archer opera, while taking its theme of love and jealousy from Moliere's play of the same name, is opera in its most modern form.

Miss Archer was first recognized as a composer while a student at McGill University in the 1940's. There she received numerous scholarships which enabled her, after completing her Bachelor of Arts in Music, to take up post graduate studies at Yale University. Studying there under Paul Hindemith, she received her master's degree in 1950.

By then, the list of her compositions was already long: she had completed some eight scores for orchestra, ten chamber works, a dozen piano and organ compositions and a score of incidental music. Now, twenty years later, this list has more than doubled.

She has received commissions from a wide range of sources and has been honored with numerous awards.

The two operas are being

performed as part of an opera training program carried on by the voice opera division of the department of music. The program, begun four years ago, is designed to give senior voice students the opportunity of learning more about opera through a combined program of study and performance. While the students have given a number of informal performances, this will be only their second major production.

The operas will be directed and conducted by Professor Alfred Strombergs of the department of music. Stage direction is by Roland Holt Wilson, also with the department of music. Music will be provided for both operas by the St. Cecilia Orchestra of the university.

Tickets, \$1.00 for students, \$2.50 for all others, are available in advance from the department of music general office, Fine Arts Building, room 3-82 or at the door.