



# Entertainment

## Orchesis has dances to Byrne

Orchesis dance group  
SUB Theatre  
February 6 and 7

by Dean Bennett

If you're a Talking Heads fan, Orchesis choreographer Lindy Sisson probably has a dance for you. Her dance, "Headset" — featuring popular Heads' classics "Burning Down the House" and "Slippery People" — is only one of twelve dance pieces offered by the on-campus dance group in their performances this Friday and Saturday at SUB Theatre. For Sisson, it was the rhythms in the Talking Heads that attracted her.

"Their rhythms are a little off centre, but the possibilities in dance are unlimited," she said. "It makes me find new movement that I must teach people in the dance; making what I see in my head come alive. Also they (the Heads) have a really interesting sense of humour."

Dancing and the dance scene are nothing new to Sisson. She began her choreography at the age of 14, working with the Peace Players of Peace River in, among other productions, their comedy revue "Sorry 'Bout That."

Since that time her education has included private dance lessons, a year at Grant MacEwan in their dance program, a B.A. in Drama and Dance from the U of A. She has danced for Edmonton companies Synergy and Kompany! and has been involved with Orchesis since 1979, choreographing for the last four years.

Orchesis is a campus club whose membership fluctuates from 40 to about 80 members in any given year. The dancers, who range from absolute beginners to seasoned veterans, rehearse every week during the school year, getting ready for the performance this weekend. Like the dancers, the choreographers also range from raw rookies to vets, something that suits Sisson just fine. "Orchesis is one of the few places where an independent person without a company can still come in and choreograph," she said.

The dances in the Orchesis program vary greatly, but generally fall in the category of modern. This works out fine for Sisson who describes her dances as 'modern jazz.'

"It (modern jazz) is not jazz dancing like 'Solid Gold' or Kompany!, but it's not modern like Brian Webb (dance group). It falls somewhere in the void between them," she



Orchesis dancers spin and soar across the stage.

photo Bruce Gardave

said.

Although dance proves to be a very demanding endeavour (Sisson is taking or teaching classes four times a week, in addition to her daily workouts), it is not a financially rewarding one. While she gets remunerated for teaching Orchesis classes and for the occasional choreography job in a musical, her full time work is Theatre Administrator and Promotions Coordinator for SUB Theatre. "(In dance) you don't quit your day job," she said.

Sisson, though, has had experience in putting a dance group together. In 1984, she and two fellow MacEwan graduates formed

Stageside Turnout. The group later expanded to ten members when they decided to put on a show for the 1985 Fringe, but the best laid plans soon went awry.

"We started out with ten dancers, but ended up with four. Everytime you turned around someone was out with a bad back or was going on holidays. But in the end it was worth it because we all sold out."

Stageside Turnout later became three again, then became one, as Sisson's friends both married and got pregnant.

While Sisson enjoys dancing, she feels choreography is where she wants to be. "I have no desire to go down to Toronto or

Montreal and try out (as a dancer), but I like doing choreography for different kinds of people. Music is my inspiration. It creates images in my mind, then I create dance from that. The music is important to me, the pursuit of inner rhythm melding with the music.

"My goal is to understand rhythm and technique and then teach this to the dancers. This helps the musicality and helps generate a better performance."

If you're looking for Sisson at the Orchesis show however, she won't be on the sidelines; she'll be performing in her dance as well. "Hey," she laughs, "Orchesis is the only chance I get to dance in my own dance."

## Defense of the Realm not worth it

Defense of the Realm  
review by Blair Ratsoy

At one point in the new British thriller *Defense of the Realm*, a character says, in reference to the spy scandal around which the film is centered, "It's like something out of John le Carre." He is wrong: le Carre would never consider using a plot as preposterous and convoluted as the one which fails to propel this film.

The hero of the film is Nick, a smart, experienced reporter for one of London's daily tabloids. Working on an anonymous tip, Nick uncovers, with the help of his trusty photographer sidekick, a sex/politics scandal of the sort which has become almost routine in Britain. This time, however, things are slightly racier because links between the M.P. involved and an East German diplomat are discovered. The M.P. is accused of being a spy and forced to resign and, at this point, Nick goes to work attempting to unravel the increasing complexities which surround the scandal.

It is the absurd nature of these complexi-

ties — which involve, among other things, a murdered teenage car thief, two mysterious bombings, and nuclear warheads — that ultimately makes the film incomprehensible. I was never really sure who was doing or not doing what to whom, and why or why not. So much, in fact, is either muddled or left unexplained that trying to make sense of the plot, rather than merely following and enjoying it, became my prime concern.

It's a shame that more attention was not paid to constructing a plausible script, because much of the direction, and all of the acting, is first-rate.

Although David Drury's direction occasionally strains very hard to create an atmosphere of suspense (as in the wretched overuse of a souped-up score which blatantly blares out at us whenever there is even the slightest hint of danger), many scenes are very effectively staged. Particularly commendable is the nocturnal meeting between the beleaguered M.P. and the older reporter who breaks the news of the scandal to him. Set outside a tube station across from the

Parliament buildings, the scene is scary and rather sad at the same time.

As Nick, Gabriel Byrne convincingly conveys both the enviable energy which drives this reporter and the unenviable hollowness of his life away from the paper. Denholm Elliott, as the decent older reporter, is superb, but he disappears very early on in the film. Greta Scacchi, who plays the M.P.'s secretary, is very good, very beautiful and also, unfortunately, very absent from the screen. In spite of the fact that she is given top billing alongside Byrne, Scacchi appears in just seven brief scenes and speaks in only four of these. Other tiny roles are well sketched-in by a bevy of outstanding character actors.

But because of a script which should be, but is definitely not, "like something out of John le Carre," all this talent is wasted, just as your time will be if you go to see *Defense of the Realm*.

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Today at 5 pm  
in Room 236 SUB  
with Photo Editor  
Ron Checora