

"I want to entertain you"

By Ellen Reynolds

A screen of thick mist rose to reveal an eerie castle setting. Climactic organ music, a dog howling at the moon and a clap of thunder with lightening all set the dramatic scene for—what else but—Dracula!

With that opening I was preparing myself for hard-core horror and though, as it turned out, I wasn't petrified, neither was I disappointed. The intent of the play, whether it was meant to make you quiver with fear or quake with laughter, was somewhat ambiguous. Not that I think the play should have been one or the other but attempting to be both horror & comedy left it sitting on the fence (or castle wall).

In this version, the infamous vampire Count Dracula was terrorizing innocents during the early 30s in England. Most of the plot is revealed at the start. Dr. Steward (Hugh Corston) sent for his specialist friend, Van Helsing (John Innes) in a desperate attempt to cure his seemingly anemic, yet beautiful, daughter, Miss Lucy (Caroline Yeager) with the two mysterious holes in her neck. Although there few surprises, if any in the plot, the play



Photo: C. Georgakakos

was entertaining.

One of the characters who made it so was Renfield (Robin Mossley), one of Dr. Steward's patients who fluctuated between lunacy and lucidity. The poor fool (fashioned after Shakes-

peare's) was dragged from the room several times screaming warnings and pleading to be sent away. Under the mysterious control of the master, Dracula, each time Renfield tried to warn of impending doom the organ

would strike up and a harmless looking rubber bat would flap by the window sending the poor man into a frenzy.

Another amusing character was Butterworth (Paul MacLeod) whose job it was to look after

Renfield. his role was small but he delivered his lines with a strong cockney accent and a sense of humour. Count Dracula seemed to smirk through his performance with a barely perceptible mocking smile. He relished hamming it up, whipping his satin lined cape around like bat wings and was always preceded by a thump on the organ or some thunder and lightening.

The dynamics between the Count and his chosen, Miss Lucy, could have crackled a bit more but I suppose she was feeling peaked from loss of blood.

The first two acts dragged slightly, especially compared to the action in the finale. An innovative scene change in the final act made for a hilarious, stumbling flashlight chase through the aisles.

Sets and costume design by Janice Lindsay and lighting by Peter McKinnon deserve special mention since they really set the scenes (and more).

If you're one of those (like me) who finds humour in melodrama like *Gone With the Wind* and *Casablanca*, you would probably find Neptune's version of *Dracula* real entertainment.

Dracula directed by Richard Ouzounian is playing at Neptune until January.

Forms of Formolo



Photo: Helen Stylianou

By Alexis Pilichos

The-Beast-Under-the-Bed slowly, uncomfortably, unravels itself from its shell, and a lithe figure emerges from the creature. This was the beginning of a long journey into the depths of childhood dreams, of demons, and of mythical beasts for Maria Formolo, well-known modern dancer-choreographer of Western Canada. This dance drama was a

seventy minute journey through birth, growth, pain and finally, rebirth into a spiritual peace. It was a spellbinding performance which combined many forces and elements of nature.

Directed by Brian Deedrick and combining the talents of several choreographers, composers, visual artists, and designers, the performance was made possible by the

co-sponsorship of Dance Nova Scotia, Halifax Dance Association, Nova Dance Theatre, and the Canada Council. The dance drama will be touring nationally and internationally.

Many of Maria's pieces reflected her childhood fears and fantasies. Using the James Thurber stories, she acted out animal-like movements to "The

Indisia Exposure

By CHERYL TIBBETTS

Over 400 people packed the McInnis Room last Saturday to attend the second annual Indisa Night, a celebration of Indian cultural heritage co-ordinated by the Indo-Canadian Association and Indian Student's Association.

The event was five hours of good and refreshing food and entertainment, followed by a dance. It was a definite bargain at the \$8.00 student ticket price.

The evening began with a cultural show featuring traditional Indian dance and music. Rhythmic and dramatic dancers performed in brilliant costumes, and a few talented musicians played their instruments with Tabla (a type of drum) accompaniment. One bold act was the "surprise appearance" of a young man who performed what might appear to Westerners as a graceful and less energetic version of Greek dancing.

Dinner included a delicious

and endless supply of good hot curried dishes served at your table, followed by coffee and fudge-like burfi for dessert.

A fashion show wound up the evening's formal entertainment. It was a well choreographed and at times humorous presentation of Indian dress through the ages. Men, women and children modelled garments in vibrant colours and rich fabrics unmatched by North American fashions. Towards the end of the night the show became upbeat in its display of modern India's day and evening wear.

Student coordinator Banjot Sidhu said "Indian Cultural Night is very important in giving the second generation a chance to gain an understanding of Indian culture and heritage. The event, which was three months in the making, was much appreciated by the audience, one person was so impressed he donated \$500 on the spot to assist in future events.

Unicorn in the Garden" and danced with humour to "The Little Girl and Wolf."

There were echoes of Greece in Maria's fluid and spinning movements, set to Greek music, which reflected a young woman's coming forth in the world. Maria's plunge into pain and the exorcism of evil spirits in an ancient Romanian incantation left people riveted to their seats.

In the last part of her journey, Maria was reborn as one with the forest, her animal and nymph-like movements enhanced by her

gold-winged mask and gold-threaded coat. Maria ascended from the darkness to the light in very fluid, ecstatic movements. Each movement was reflected fully in her cape-like silk costume as it flowed over the whole audience. She ended her journey, at one with the universe, having attained inner peace.

Maria's performance left many enraptured by the primal journey. Hopefully Halifax will continue to sponsor many more talented artists like Maria in the future.