

ENTERTAINMENT

The Fantasticks is . . .

Vanier has its best show yet

J. BRETT ABBEY

Last week, under the direction of Fred Thury, Vanier College Productions presented *The Fantasticks* in the over-crowded Vanier College Dining Hall. Written by Harvey Schmidt and Tom Jones, *The Fantasticks* was first performed in 1960 in New York City. Presently, the show is still enjoying its record-breaking off-Broadway success.

While the show seems to be a simple 'boy meets girl' musical romance, *The Fantasticks* is deceptive, insofar as it contains significant underlying messages. Vanier College's production seems to have found both the direction and the method to find and deliver these messages to an enthusiastic audience.

Basically, *The Fantasticks* deals

with people who yearn for an ideal, like having a wish come true, then find that the ideal isn't all that it's supposed to be. When the girl wishes to see the world and all its heroes, she is disappointed to find that her hero has deserted her and she won't get her wishes. Similarly, the boy sets out to find a world of riches and fun, only to find sorrow and hunger. In the end, the boy and the girl find that all they ever needed was right before them in each other.

It is Thury who appropriately directs the narrator, played by Albert Schultz, to come across as a fairy godfather. He ultimately hurts the couple to teach them that "we all must die a little before we grow a bit." A lesson we all could use, he says. Schultz's combined musical and acting talents provided a

continued source of strength in this two-hour production.

The real impact of the show, however, was created by York's own Della Powell. Playing the part of a girl who lives in story books and fairy tales, Powell's dynamic performance never let up. Filling every lifeless moment on stage with small gestures and subtle flowing movements, she kept the audience spellbound.

Powell's harmonious singing further enhanced the production--she has close to a three-octave range and while she sang for most of the show, her voice never faltered.

However, the concentration and consistency in the performance of the deaf-mute played by Duncan Ollernshaw was the focal point in this tightly-knit production. Only a first year student, Ollernshaw will be a talent to watch.

On another level, the character of the boy's father, played by John Gazey, deserves considerable attention. His vivid portrayal, in speech and in song, effectively brought the printed word to life with details as small as the glance of an eye.

Thus ended a production that director Thury should be proud of. After all, many Vanier College shows have bordered on the mediocre, but *The Fantasticks* should strip away any negative opinions people may have gathered. There is talent north of Bloor St.



The Fantasticks at Vanier featuring Della Powell

...ENTS...

Musician's daughter stands alone

STEVEN HACKER

Children of famous artists attempting to forge their own identity seldom have it easy. Frequently they are measured against their parents' achievements. Pianist Katharina Wolpe, who gives a free solo concert tonight in Curtis 'F' (8 p.m.) is the daughter of famous new music composer Stefan Wolpe but she is establishing the reputation as a gifted pianist in her own right.

The late Stefan Wolpe, who died in 1972, was one of the leading modern composers of the New York scene, along with Aaron Copeland, John Cage, and Milton Babbitt. He was also an important teacher whose students included noted jazz composers, George Russell and John Carisi, who wanted to learn to compose in extended forms. York Music Professor Austin Clarkson has referred to the elder Wolpe as "a radical populist and a radical individualist who created an original, inclusive, and unfailingly imaginative response to the quest for coherence and communication in post-tonal music."

Born in Vienna, daughter Katharina has been playing professionally for some 20 years and studied extensively in Europe. She was also Pianist in Residence for two years at the University of Toronto.

On the programme for tonight's concert are works by Brahms, Schubert, and two challenging compositions by her father: Form (1959), and Form IV: Broken Sequences (1969).

This Saturday at the U of T Edward Johnson Building, the New Music Concert Series pays tribute to Stefan Wolpe, and Katharina Wolpe will be among the soloists in a programme of seven Wolpe originals. For tickets and information on this concert, call 593-0436.

Oh, to get physical with her

"She's not just a pretty Australian girls that sings, she's what I want for Christmas." Olivia Newton John may be too big to be that ideal stocking stuffer but that hasn't dulled the fantasies of millions of adorers. In *This Far Away From O.N.J.*, York theatre graduate Ric Sarabia plays Sam Boulevard, a roadie hopelessly devoted to Olivia Newton John. The play was written by Mike Blouin, a fourth year film student and also stars Karen Ballard as a high school groupie.

Admission is free. Thursday-Saturday, 8 p.m. at the Samuel Beckett Theatre in Stong College. There will be an additional show on Friday night at 10 p.m.

The second-run and repertory cinemas in Toronto are not the only discount film spots in town. Carlton Ciniplex, at Carlton and Yonge streets in downtown Toronto, shows films that never appear at the regular run houses--small budget American, cinema gems and foreign films, particularly.

With a student ID, you can avoid the five dollar admission charge. The student discount card, available from the Carlton cashier, is good any day of the week, for any showing. Also, the Eaton Cineplex has resumed its policy of reduced admission for weekday matinees, but does not have a student discount programme.

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Videodrome: the winning answers are

MARSHALL GOLDEN

First, the answers to last week's freebie film quiz:

- 1) Poltergeist
- 2) Heather O'Rourke
- 3) Tobe Hooper
- 4) First Choice - Rich Little followed by the Who concert
SuperChannel - Star Wars
C Channel - Did not come on the air until 8:30 when it broadcast
Swan Lake
- 5) The Dead Zone
- 6) Martin Sheen, Christopher Walker, etc.
- 7) Stephen King - Carrie; The Shining
- 8) The Silence Upstairs; Participation House; Loose Ends . . . etc.
- 9) Cutting It; The Best Kept Secret; Streetcar
- 10) Dave Homer

More free film tickets

Now, this week's freebie giveaway: *The Lords of Discipline* is Paramount Picture's latest release and is scheduled to open on February 18. It is a film which examines the power structures of military academies and the conflicts which can arise when these hierarchies clash. To qualify for this week's giveaway, list, in 25 words or less, as many similarities or differences as possible between the films *Lords of Discipline* and *An Officer and a Gentleman*.

Please enclose your answers in a sealed envelope with your name and phone number and slip them under the door of the Editors' office at Excalibur, 111 Central Square. The first 30 answers received will win passes to the film's premiere.

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