

Barbarian vs Bunny Bloodbath

by T.H. Smith

The nineteenth annual Media Bowl was played this weekend, on Saturday and again on Sunday. Despite a cunning ruse by the Bunnies to trick us into forfeiting by conveniently rescheduling the game to Sunday, the Brunswickan Barbarians triumphed over the pathetic CHSR 'Bunnies of Death' by the absolutely incredible score of 108-21.

This victory is made all the more sweet when you consider that we poor Barbarians were outnumbered by roughly 14 to 4, and that those Barbarians that were there were more than a little hung-over. The Bunnies of Breath, having no social lives, were all totally sober and awake, having probably stayed home the night before to watch Star Trek.

The Brunswickan Barbarians showed up ready to play, while the Bunnies of Death showed up in Rabbit make-up and with a Nerf football (seriously, folks!). While the Bunnies

warmed up for half an hour, the Barbarians, being real men, simply walked onto the field and kicked bunny butt.

The incredibly inept quarterback of the Bunnies had trouble finding an open man to throw to, even though there were at most four people covering twelve or more Bunny receivers (why so many? As everyone knows bunnies multiply rapidly- there seemed to be more after each huddle).

Early on in the game, the Barbarians came up with an unstoppable strategy: "Pick any two men. Now, cover both of them!" At half time, the Bunnies were nevertheless winning 21-0, mainly due to the difficulties involved in throwing a Nerf football into 20 km/h headwinds and triple coverage. When you have a 10 man advantage, you've got to ask yourself: What's up, Doc? Why can't 14 bunnies score more than three touchdowns in one hour against four hung-over Barbarians? It would get worse for the long-eared rodents of mortality.



Errol "Babyface" Williams runs in yet another Barbarian touchdown

After halftime, a rejuvenated Barbarian side, bolstered by the arrival of our star running back, went out onto the field ready to really do some damage. We quickly racked up 108 unanswered points by using an unstoppable running game. While the Funnies of Death put up a futile struggle at first, they kicked the bucket

after the sixth unanswered touchdown.

It was then that they decided to get nasty, transforming themselves from cute (if talentless) Bunnies into vicious Killer Rabbits. One especially vicious rodent was responsible for a brief hospital visit by two Barbarians, one for a broken collarbone, the other for a cut

over his left eye. Despite this nastiness, the Bunnies went hopping away in shame, having been totally obliterated by the unstoppable brutality of the Brunswickan Barbarians.

Final score: vastly outnumbered and hung-over Barbarians 108, Bunnies of Death 21

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throughout his journey. On the most part, these specific characters are women with whom he has a complexity of relationships. The tensions of the love triangles that are inevitable in such a scenario make for sensual and passionate dance movements among the dancers. Montanaro's choreography takes the concept of trust among artists and uses it as a choreographing device. The dancers repeatedly fall back into chairs, arms, bodies etc. that are placed there by the other dancers. The acrobatics utilized in this free mode of choreography rely on this kind of trust dynamic. The result is a slick and clever series of seeming accidents of movement which highlight the wonderful ensemble spirit apparent in the company. The choreography also makes use of the precision of body percussion. The dancers clap and stamp their feet in complex syncopations that counterpoint the pre-recorded sound track used for the show.

Rhythmically, the piece is a

challenge for the performers. The music track is often fairly explicit in its funk and jazz orientation so that it rarely wants for a beat. However, Montanaro chooses to work with the off-beat. His dancers move in a slow flat footed and earthy fashion that conjures up images of the dream. Their expressions are often characterized by a peculiar reverie as if they are participating in a wonderful act of hypnotism. Rarely does the piece explode into passion and action. Even in the powerful war scene, the movements, though fast, are still restrained and the sudden explosions of movement are often broken by a return to the dazed dreaminess of the protagonist. The effect is compelling.

The set is simple and yet effective. Icons: a park bench and a winter stripped tree; a red rose; an orange rubber ball; a view-finder; a story book; a red arm-chair; and a hat; become clues for the audience as it tries to discover the world that is engulfing the protagonist. The

symbols are echoed and re-echoed throughout the piece and are cleverly choreographed into the fabric of the dance. In what can only be described as a perfect example of the scope of multi-media performance, a waterfall is created through the use of projections of film/video images; the use of a sound track that conveys the deafening sound of falls; and the use of a huge sheet of cloth, painted in greys and blues which is flapped by two dancers creating the effect of a bubbling river at the foot of the falls. The impact of the scene is stunning.

The Montanaro Dance troupe is

a skilled unit of seven dancers and a long list of creative technicians. The piece they performed is highly lyrical and romantic, though somewhat simplistic and cliché in its treatment of the themes love and war. According to the programme notes the show that we saw on Wednesday night represented a version of the original. This version was created especially for more "conventional theatres." This may perhaps explain the occasional over explicit use of fairly banal verse to explain things. However, these were not allowed to tarnish the quality of the piece. The sheer skill of the

dancers; their capacity to maintain the restraint of slow controlled movement throughout the piece; and their ability to execute a multiplicity of dance styles including slapstick (the shoe dance), popular funk/jazz (the blindman sequence), the lyrical pastoral (the female dancer in the park); the romantic love duet (the many duets in the piece) and ritualistic dances of male bonding (the duet of the two men), is remarkable. The UNB/STU Creative arts Committee should be commended for bringing to us such a dynamic and challenging troupe.

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