

Mixed media evening

a success

By TONY BERGMANN-PORTER

UNBers seem, for the most part, to treat the arts in a manner reminiscent of Mark Twain's aphorism about the weather — everybody talks about it, but no one ever does anything. A refreshing exception took place at the Playhouse on February 27, when the UNB Dance Theatre presented a well conceived and professionally executed program of contemporary dance and poetry.

Playing to what appeared to be a near-capacity audience, the company presented eight dance selections interspersed with readings of poems by Bill Bauer, Alden Nowlan and others. The accompanying avant-garde jazz ranged from two pieces by Zappamonte Edgar Varese, to Toronto's own Syrinx.

The poetry proved both appropriate and well-received. Readers Simon Leigh and Ilkay Silk seemed more comfortable and less forced as the evening progressed, and their subject matter was obviously placed in the program with great care. Bill Bauer's crusty old New Englander, Everett Coobler, delighted all, and the large number of children in the audience thrilled to the exploits of Mark Butler's Masked Avenger.

The "Games" trilogy, a colourful series of frantic, pointless, structured movements, presumably a comment on modern society, opened the evening, and

was an unqualified success. "Images", a conceptually sound attempt at incorporating Eastern dance motifs into the program, fared less well, possibly as a result of some problem on the dancers' part in synchronizing their movements. For this reviewer, the piece de resistance of the evening came early. "The Collectors", a trippy descent into an atavistic maelstrom, featured three male dancers roaming the stage at will, ensnaring seemingly helpless females. The mystico-religious atmosphere culminated in the last girl being carried off in a bizarre, crucifix-like manner, to the throb of Herbie Hancock's "Rain Dance". "Locale I", complete with Pieta parody, attempted to resurrect this theme in the second act, but lacked "The Collectors" subtlety and tension. Likewise, the "Three Faces" segment didn't quite score, but the failure lay with the audience, who were not adequate to the demands of the piece. ELP's "Hoedown" concluded the evening on a lighter note, and left the crowd applauding enthusiastically.

While the entire cast and crew were inspired, special praise belongs to Tim Williamson's lights, and of course to Ms. Nenagh Leigh, the producer-director-choreographer. Hopefully, we shall see many more such productions long before weather control becomes commonplace.



Drama group to perform

The Gordon Players, the student drama group from Gordon College will present two one-act plays "The House By The Stable" and "Grab and Grace" as part of their annual Spring Tour itinerary at 7:00 o'clock on Tuesday, March 19th at the First Nashwaaksis United Baptist Church in Fredericton. Under the direction of Dr. G. Lloyd Carr, Assistant Professor of Biblical and Theological Studies, the Players are in their 18th season of bringing Christian religious drama to the Christian community.

Although religious themes are their speciality, their yearly

theatrical productions span a spectrum of contemporary and ancient dramatic styles. Recent presentations have ranged from the comedies of Archibald MacLeish's Pulitzer Prize play "J.B." and Cole Porter's "Kiss Me, Kate" to the satires of Moliere's "Tartuffe" and Aristophane's "The Frogs".

Charles Williams, who was a close friend of C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkein, wrote these religious dramas in the form of the medieval morality plays, with most of the characters portrayed as personifications of virtues or

vices. Hell and Pride are attempting to win Man's soul (the "jewel"). But aided by Gabriel, man offers the jewel to Mary's Son, and Hell and Pride are banished. In "Grab and Grace," the conflict is renewed by Hell and Pride (now renamed "Self-Respect") but again Gabriel, this time assisted by Faith and Grace bring man through.

Gordon College is a four year Christian liberal arts college in Wenham, Mass. Its president, Dr. Harold J. Ockenga, is former pastor of Boston's historical Part Street Church.

reviewed: *Who Killed Santa Claus?*

By JOHN LUMSDEN

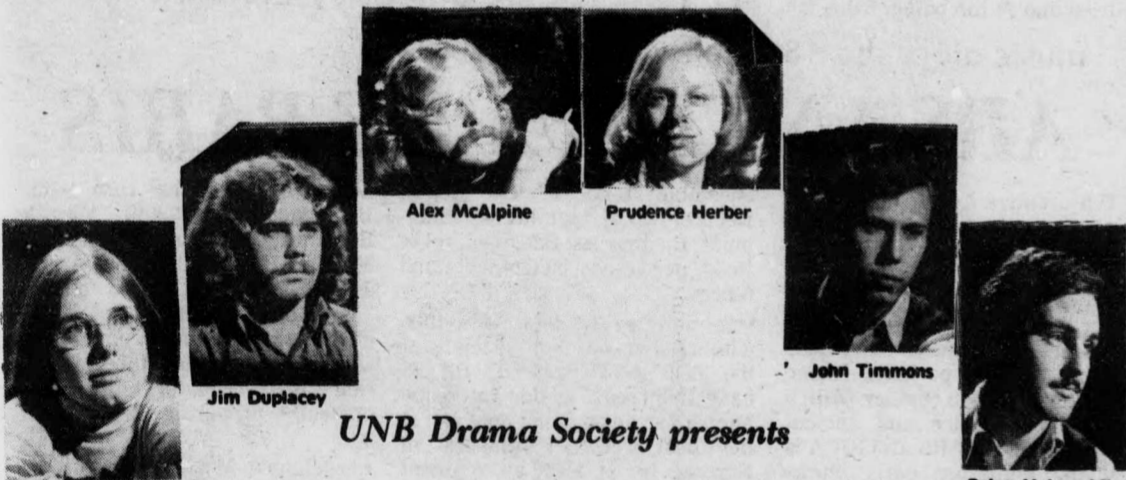
I don't have too much to say about this play that you probably couldn't guess yourselves. It's a who-dunit occurring, yes, on Christmas Eve in the Toronto Townhouse of the lovely Miss Barbara Love. Miss Love had been forewarned that she could expect a slight inconvenience, namely murder, by the usual nefarious means. Besides that, and a too suave inspector, it wouldn't be fair to reveal too much more.

Perhaps I'm naturally prejudiced about this play because it's been "Canadianized". The play was originally set in London, but was slightly rewritten to fit in Toronto, seemingly to appease our beaver mentality. It seems rather pointless, I am from Toronto myself, but I'm sure the name of any upper crust district in London means as much to most other Canadians as Rosedale. But like it or not, the set was complete with a penthouse view of the Royal York Hotel, and T-D Center. Evidently set designers haven't been progressing as fast as Toronto, somebody

should tell them about the Bank of Commerce building and the C. N. Tower. Also, a minor aspect of the play mentions corruption in the CBC. Now any resident of Toronto is used enough to Bill Davis' shenanigans not to be too freaked out about any government larceny, but corruption at the BBC would cause anybody to wonder about the permanence of the universe.

The set was adequate, costumes were non-spectacular, except commendably restrained on the one all-too-sweet gentleman of the cast, who was relied heavily on for comic relief.

The surprise ending was a surprise, while still remaining in the bounds of credibility. I suppose this is all one could expect from a play of this type, except for two hours of solid entertainment, which again this was. Perhaps as my closing note as the drama critic for the Bruns, I may heartily commend the curtain call, definitely one of THE moments of the night. The theatre was about one-third full, and as long as audiences remain like this at TNE, the plays won't be getting any better.



UNB Drama Society presents

Country Wife by Whycherley

By WILLIAM WHYCHERLEY

Perhaps the most difficult task involved in producing a play which is centuries old is to, in a sense, translate the script to make it palatable to a modern audience. This is particularly true of a "Comedy of Manners", in a century where both aristocracy and manners have fallen into disrepute. Lawrence Peters and his cast and crew have succeeded in producing a hilarious comedy that is pleasing to the ear as well as the eye. It is Mr. Peter's first production as a director. He has acted in several UNB productions

including Love Rides the Rails, and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead. Much of his work has been involved with the backstage, set design and lights. Adding his experience and talents to that of Alex McAlpine, the Drama Society has put together the best of its

acting resource people and is about to show you one of the best plays you will see on a university campus. Alex McAlpine has served the Drama Society for three years, he has had something to do with every major production as the group's technical director and as an actor. The set design and

construction, along with the technical arrangements have been managed by him. As Mr. McAlpine has been involved with theatre for several years and has on several occasions worked for TNB, he plans to go to a Theatre School for the next few years. It is a production to be remembered. You shouldn't miss it, particularly since students have free admission. You will be able to pick up your tickets at various places the campus this week.

Don't miss "Country Wife", at Memorial Hall, 8 p.m., Mar. 14, 15, 16, 17.



Whales may not spout money, but ... we like their spirit.

