

Food shortage in Soup Song

Musical steps lightly through cannibal future

By DANIEL MOSES

The Open Circle Theatre is now playing excellently in *A Soup Song*, a musical.

Inspired by John Gay's *The Beggars' Opera*, and based on the ever greater possibility of worldwide food shortages, the story occurs in the not-too-distant future.

The government, in an attempt to combat rising mortality rates and lowering food supplies, legalizes and promotes cannibalism.

Rest farms spring up for fattening human clients as supply to the major grocery chains. To live well for a while, one has to accept the prospect of ending on a rich man's plate.

In this future, "It's business as usual" and human beings are corporeal commodities. "That's the system, there's nothing else," unless you like rat soup.

The play concerns the attempt of a ruthless, ambitious young man to avoid becoming someone's supper. This he does by fraternizing with the females of the men who control the farm and the butcher plant. So love comes into the story, as well as hunger, cruelty and other double crossings. There is even a happy ending of sorts, though only the strong survive.

Through song and music, these ideas, so long the province of pessimistic science fiction, here yield well rounded characterizations,

lively, and well-timed staging, and an evening both enjoyable and thought provoking.

The action occurs on the wooden skeleton of a many-tiered stage, reminiscent of a compact Stratfordian set-up. The character movement from scene to scene, the attention's movement from character to character during songs, and the efficient story movement of the play, are all aided by this stage, and contribute to a compelling dramatic event.

The music and lyrics are economically written and listenable. The tunes are almost haunting. The dialogue incorporates both wit and truth.

The actors are all more than adequate in their roles. The clarity of their characterizations is greatly complemented by their singing voices. One notes especially Sylvia Tuckey as Lucy, Leah Petersen as Jenny, and Clive Endersby as Filch.

The only regrettable thing about the entire production is that the second half ran at too mad a clip, and ended too soon.

But, thanks to director Whelan, this one is well worth the money — \$2.50 per student Tuesday through Sunday, 50 cents more on the weekends.

The Open Circle Theatre is presently performing at 106 Trinity St. (Enoch Turner School House) nightly at 8:30 p.m.



Hungry humans in this *Soup Song* are Leah Petersen, Leslie Olsen, Sylvia Tuckey, Maida Rogerson, and Candee O'Connor.

Sampson realizes viol's potential

By ROBIN BECKWITH

At the Town Hall at the St. Lawrence Centre last Thursday and Friday, the audience had the rare

and delightful experience of listening to the serious and lively sounds of music written before and by J.S. Bach.

vibrating as the modern strings; intimate in that its sound draws one to it, increasing the ears' sensitivity by demanding close attention.

On Friday evening, Kenneth Cooper, tall and long-haired, slightly hunched over the harpsichord, produced excerpts from the celebrated *Water Music* of Handel as an introduction to the evening.

To all ears and eyes it was immediately evident that Cooper is a master of his instrument, and that he totally enjoyed giving us the music he held within him. He drew the enjoyment not only from within himself, but from within the music.

The rarely-heard viol was used, in solo, continuo and consort capacity, in each of the succeeding pieces. This instrument resembles, in its largest size, a cello, and a viola in its smallest size, with three gradations of size and range in between.

It is held within the inner part of the knees, without the support of a peg. Unlike modern orchestral string instruments, it has frets. The tone is clear and stark, not as richly

The woman responsible for providing the impetus for the reappearance of the viol is Peggy Sampson. York is fortunate to have such a talented, sensitive musician on its faculty, one who is enthusiastically devoted not only to her instrument, but also to her students. She appeared as soloist in two pieces, one by William Young, the other by F. Benda.

In the Young piece we heard the blending of two solo bass viols, over harpsichord accompaniment, each merging with and emerging from the other, until it became difficult to distinguish one's sound from the other's.

In the Benda piece, Peggy Sampson vividly proved that the viol has great potential as a profoundly expressive instrument. Because there are six strings on a viol, she had to move the upper part of her body much more than one would on a four-stringed instrument, in order to bring expressive tones from the instrument.

ACTING SINGERS

Pieces by Purcell, Monteverdi and Telemann required the use of voices as well as viol and harpsichord. The singers, especially in the Purcell songs, acted as well; if anyone believes that the music of the 1600s holds little humour within its formality, these songs certainly proved otherwise.

The last piece on the programme by J.S. Bach, combined flute solo with harpsichord. Hearing the sonata in its entirety, and meeting at the end the tumbling allegro, which sounds as da Vinci's studies of waterfalls look, one feels that more happens in the playing and listening experience of the sonata than often happens on the programme. As It Happens, for which the allegro movement is a theme.

The serious yet passionate music of Bach was a pleasurable appropriate sound with which to end a valuable and unique musical experience.

Memories hover like huff-puffs in lyrical ode to Fellini's youth

By MICHELINA TRIGIANI

Amarcord, which means "ah, I remember" in an Italian dialect, is a recollection of director Federico Fellini's youth.

A unique and unparalleled biography, it treats its audience with an emotional and cultural nostalgia. The movie contains no plot, and no typical storyline or succession of scenes. Details are scarce, but prove unimportant to the effectiveness of the movie.

The setting is a town in fascist Italy prior to the second World War. Fellini's film is basically a presentation of events in the lives of the townspeople; the action spans one year, and revolves around a youth named Titta.

Fellini concentrates on youth and memory, presenting these intangibles through a series of short, frequently discontinuous and unconnected scenes.

SCATTER-SCENE

This 'scatter-scene' method is characteristic of the entire film, and Fellini uses it to explore different memories within the film. His treatment of school-life involves a series of pranks and classroom scenes. Titta's family is remembered through a variety of scenes, most notably a mad uncle in a tree shouting, "I want a woman," and the typically Italian dinner scene — parents yelling at each other, at their children, and at any object nearby.

Fellini's method of presentation holds our interest and allows us visual excitement and, consequently, emotional experience. What further holds our interest is Fellini's exaggeration and distortion of memories.

All the characters in the film are visually distorted. From Volpina, the mad whore, who pants and crawls around like a dog, to Pinwheel, with

spoke-like teeth, to Titta, who is a normal, clean-cut youth, all Fellini's characters are a physical, visual representation of their personality.

The result is either a grotesque, vulgar representation, or a faultless, immaculate one, but everything is a memory — a distorted, amusing one.

The film contains a number of images representing those beautiful, isolated, special experiences in life. Here Fellini makes full use of film as visual medium. We view a touching hospital scene between father, son and dying mother. During a snowfall, a peacock majestically spreads its wings. A gigantic ocean liner is cheered on in the night, amid blue

water, fog and light.

Fellini's scenes shift from humour to beauty to sorrow to absurdity. The audience is constantly aware of, constantly anticipating and constantly changing emotions.

As the movie begins, the townspeople excitedly trap huff-puffs in their hands and make wishes. The huff-puffs appear suddenly and quickly disappear. They return, though, at the end of the film.

Memories are special, sacred and, they are fleeting. Memories are always present in the recesses of our minds, continuously with us, and oftentimes hard to capture.

Laurence Olivier triumphs as Richard III

By MARTIN FELSKY

Richard III will be showing this Friday and Sunday night at 8:30 p.m. in Curtis LH-I.

The film is a classic, not to be missed by anyone who desires three hours of uncommon pleasure and enjoyment: from every viewpoint, it is a standout.

Sir Laurence Olivier, who produced and directed the movie, stars as the deformed protagonist Richard of Gloucester, who paves the road to the Crown of England in 1483 with almost a dozen royal corpses. In supporting roles are such notable thespians as Claire Bloom and Sirs John Gielgud, Ralph Richardson, and Cedric Hardwicke.

The film is almost 20 years old, and one must make a slight effort to get into the movie's convention; a double distancing is involved. First, one must bridge the language gap to Shakespeare, and then accept Olivier's 1955-style melodramatic interpretation.

But once we get used to things like characters talking to each other in iambic pentameter, or Richard staring directly at the camera and, in confidence, telling the audience how heartless he is, and how he plans to murder so-and-so "on the morrow", the viewer is treated to an extraordinary cinematic experience.

The story itself is not dull historical drama; it is a passionate psychological study of a tormented man obsessed with the quest for power and an illuminating examination of political ambition turned sour by murderous amorality.

"PATHETIC"

There is some justification for calling *Richard III* Shakespeare's "pathetic" villain; somehow, evil as he is, we may be softened by the fact that his hunched disfigurement was not his fault, and that it, above all else, was the root cause of his wickedness.

Whether the viewer sympathizes

with Richard or not, whether one shares his anguish in the famous "My kingdom for a horse!" scene or not, he is involuntarily and irresistibly drawn close to the character by Olivier's intense and dominating portrayal.

The briskly-paced movie provides innumerable moments of genuine humour, as well as many scenes of gripping and highly affecting emotion.

A passing reference cannot do justice to the superb colour and lighting, and exceptional photography of the film. They all contribute to raising the work from a mere presentation of stage drama to a cinematic creation in its own right.

The show is only \$1.50 for York and \$1.25 for Winters students. Well worth the money, even if only to witness first-hand the triple-barreled genius of a youthful Sir Laurence Olivier.