

Good time mime meets audience approval

O.J. Anderson, the One and Only "Good Time Mime"
Provincial Museum Theatre
Saturday, March 3, 8:00 PM

review by Gunnar Blodgett

O.J. Anderson is not a "pure mime". Nor does he want to be. Delighting a small but enthusiastic crowd of fans last Saturday, the veteran performer proved true to his billing, "the good time mime."

Anderson escapes from the asceticism of "pure mime" in his creative and energetic use of props and his own pleasant voice. He doesn't stress technique, "as long as the people can understand," he is happy. His routines, from "Apple" to "Mime 101" and "Reception", bear out Anderson's desire to reach his audience.

"Mime," says Anderson, "is a 50-50 deal... the audience has to do half the work. They have to laugh and join in on the sound effects. It's fun to be able to laugh at yourself." It is this audience-performer bond that Anderson exploits, going beyond his extensive training to create an atmosphere of fantasy. He adds, reflectively, "when you're doing *Swan Lake*, you know... there's got to be something there besides technique."

Envision a blank stage. An oddly dressed young man comes out with his back to the audience and works his way along the rear curtain, apparently painting it. After some contorted efforts to reach a high place on the wall, his eye catches the right side of the audience and gazes at us in slow disbelief.

Then he starts counting us off. Someone walks in late, and the man impatiently looks at an imaginary watch and taps his foot to the appreciative applause of the audience. The mime gives a quirky half-smile and returns to his task.

Finally, he stops, turns toward the wings and nodding, rubs his fingers together to indicate "lotsa cash here, yup". Thus ends the introductory routine of an evening of mime those who saw will not soon forget.

Anderson has an incredibly expressive body. His face and hands speak volumes

with each gesture, and his back alone pantomimes the greatest tragedies of life. A thrust of the chest or extension of the hands seems to create a universe of material which is as real to the audience as their seats. Yet Anderson's effort to involve the audience in his worlds goes beyond this.

In "Cowboy Jim Bob" O.J. turns the audience into his sound effects, inciting groups to the production of various hoots and hisses as required by his story. Unexpectedly for him, the sound effects flow over into his next skit, "Pay Toilet."

In "Moon Stools" the involvement is

Feminist theatre group performs Saturday

Hecate's Players:
Feminist Theatre in Edmonton

By Amanda Le Rougetel

It happened one night: a couple of friends, a few bottles of wine, some talk about how Edmonton's feminist community really needed something new and creative to liven it up a bit and voila!...Hecate's Players was born.

Hecate's Players is a recently formed feminist theatre group.

A "theatrical" format for a number of reasons: there is so much information already in existence - good and useful information - that simply doesn't get out to the vast majority of people because few have the time to read volumes and volumes of stats, reports and briefs.

A lot of women have done a lot of writing - diaries, novels, short stories, essays - over the last century or so. Sadly, these writings are all too often unknown and left unread because they do not represent what the mainstream of society considers to be worthwhile or legitimate reading.

Hecate's Players takes this written information from its original form and translates it into a new format: Taking stats and facts and combining them with poetry and women's own stories told in their own words.

Another important feature of the "theatrical" format opposed to that of lecturing is that the relationship between

the performer(s) and the audience is vastly different. A lecturer tends to be regarded as an expert by her audience thus establishing a relationship of inequality between performer and audience. Actors, on the other hand, assume characters and "play at being someone else" so that difference between expert and neophyte is diminished. A lot of the responsibility for interpretation and comprehension is placed in the audience's lap thereby increasing their active participation in the learning process.

Hecate's Players consists of a core-group of 5 women who share equally the responsibility of researching, writing, acting and the artistic and technical directing

Moore" has died, O.J. is standing by her husband singing "he fell down by her side... he fell down by her side"; while stage-struck hubby continues to stand six feet away from her. Finally, O.J. turns and kicks hubby, singing "he fell down by her side (move it dummy, lie down!)" Far from looking stupid, he makes the whole scene look absolutely hilarious in its sad tragic poignance.

Anderson may be back during the summer in the Edmonton Folk Music Festival.

of the group's productions.

There are two scripts in the repertoire: the first, *A Creation in Process: Organizing Towards a New Reality*, is a collection of women's writings dealing with women's lives, hopes and dreams; the second is called *Taking Back Our Own...Issues Facing Alberta Women Past and Present* and is more documentary in style. It focuses on Alberta women and covers a number of topics from poverty to pensions, pornography to battered women.

Hecate's Players will perform in the Women's Fair celebrating International Women's Day on Saturday afternoon, March 10th at the Centennial Library Theatre downtown.

Literary Supplement

Deadline for submissions:

March 16, 1984




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C.I.A.U.
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MANITOBA BISON
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
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