

# arts

## HOT FLASHES

### MUSIC

Hovel notes: Tues. Feb. 8, jazz with Judy Singh and the John Gray Trio.  
Wed. Feb. 9, Open Stage, Thurs. Feb. 10, membership social with Pontiac, Feb. 11-13 more jazz with P.J. Perry from Vancouver (sax) and featuring Bob Stroupe (trombone, sax, flute). Doors open at 9 p.m.

Feb. 23, 24 - Victor Borge with the E.S.O. Performances at 8:30 p.m. both nights. Tickets at the Symphony Office 11712-87 Ave, Ph. 432-2020.

### CINEMA

National Film Theatre in the Centennial Library Theatre will be showing Tues. Feb. 8 *Igy Jottem, (My Way Home)* (Hungary 1964) English subtitles.  
Friday Feb. 11 *Public Enemy*, (1931). One of the all-time great gangster films. James Cagney, Jean Harlow. Both shows 8 p.m. Tickets \$1.50 and \$2.00

Cinemateque 16, Thurs. Feb. 10, *Beau Geste*, (1939) with Gary Cooper. Show starts at 7:30 p.m. Sun. Feb 13 *Shane*, (1953) with George Stevens. Part of the "Westerns of the 50's" series. Show starts at 2:30 p.m. Tickets \$1.50 and \$2.00.

The Edmonton Public Library will feature *Charlie Chan at Treasure Island* with Sidney Toler and Cesar Romero, Sat Feb. 12 and Sun. Feb. 13 in the theatre. Admission free, at 2 p.m.

### THEATRE

The Studio Theatre will present two one-act plays by Tom Stoppard, *After Magritte* and *The Real Inspector Hound*, from Feb. 10-19 at Corbett Hall. Performances begin at 8:30 p.m. with a 2:30 p.m. matinee on Feb. 12. No performance Sunday Feb. 13.

*Jill* by Lezley Havard, the winner of the third annual Clifford E. Lee Award premieres Monday Feb. 14 at the Citadel's Rice Theatre. Tickets are available at the Citadel Box Office phone 425-1820.

Also at the Citadel — extra performances of *O Coward!* with Brian McKay, John Neville and Diane Stapley will be held Feb. 12 at 2:30 p.m. and Feb. 13 at 7:30 p.m. Tickets at Citadel Box Office.

### DANCE

*The U of A Orchesis Modern Dance Group presents Dance Motif* 77 Feb. 8-10 at SUB Theatre. Admission: Students — \$2.00, adults — \$3, shows start at 8 p.m. Tickets available at the HUB Box Office or at the door.

Tournesol presents *Free Dance Images* Feb. 11-13, at the Espace Tournesol 11845-77 St. The collage of new dances is choreographed by Carole and Ernst Eder. Admission \$2.50, shows start at 8:30 p.m.

### LITERATURE

A public reading by Roy Kiyooka will be held in Humanities AV L-3 on Fri. Feb. 11. Kiyooka, an artist in several media including writing, photography and sculpture, will read from *Transcanadaletters* (Talonbooks 1976), the letter as a poem, the poem as a letter.

### ART

Watercolors by Murray W. MacDonald and photography by Sydney Phillips are showing at the Edmonton Public Art Gallery until Feb. 28.

Two exhibitions: *The Alberta Art Foundation Print Show*, and *Items from the University collections* are showing at the Ringhouse Number One Gallery until Feb. 13.

## Ryga writes fine novel

by Wayne Kondro

*Night Desk*, George Ryga, Talonbooks, 1976, \$2.95 paper.

Without a doubt, this has to be one of the finest books to come off the '76 presses.

Ryga presents Romeo Kuchmir; a fight promoter, speaking in a night-long monologue to a desk clerk in a slummy Edmonton hotel. Kuchmir talks about people he has known and events in his life, mingling these short narrative sequences with a life philosophy encompassing Christianity, Machiavellian technique, behaviorism, Darwinian and countless other theories. Actually, Kuchmir is a workable model of a thinking man as he pieces together different experiences, theories and feelings into a sort of fluctuating 'rules for survival and happiness' philosophy based on reason and morality.

Kuchmir's stories and opinions are told in the manner of a bar-room bullshitter, one story

leads to another. They are packed with violence, poverty, sex, destitute people, often about the wrestling world, told in street language. Perhaps the best way of getting at the book, would be to give you a few quotes of Romeo Kuchmir's:

"I could've got him goin' on a string of French-Canadian jokes if I phrased the next question right, but I didn't because I don't care for them jokes. There's lots of people here in the west who believe them."

"After a match, I get the best booze an' screwin' for myself. The others get beer an' clap. I deserve it, kid — nothin' wrong with that. I'm an enterpriser, a capitalist with forty cents in my pocket. I'm not equal to some oxhead with a thick neck who counts on his fingers! No two men are born equal. They never was an' they never will be."

"What's wrong with us that we can't be grateful for this miracle we call life? That we can still take food away from starvin'

children? An' kill other lives like our own for a piece of extra soil or a political difference of opinion that is of no help at all growing a crop of potatoes or an apple tree!"

The book encompasses an enormous scope. One of the remarkable things about it is the pervading sense of morality within it, reminding one of Solzhenitsyn's works. You don't always agree with what is being said, but the surprising ironies and Ryga's emphatic style make sure you think about it.

The book itself can be enjoyed even by those without an interest in life. If you enjoy racy stories about sex and violence, you'll have a field day. Those who prefer less animated subjects will be surprised by the remarkably inoffensive and humorous way these subjects are taken up and will be pleased with the presence of less temporal topics.

Truly a remarkable book, recommend it highly to those who enjoy reading for pleasure or thought.

## Peg Leg Sam



One of the great blues harmonicists was in Edmonton this weekend performing at the Hovel. Peg Leg Sam comes out of a practically extinct generation of blues artists.

Apparently Sam has been working, playing his harp for varying audiences for over 40 years. His style, reminiscent of that of Sonny Terry, is, to quote Kent Cooper of Blue Labor Records "by no means inferior". And, while reminiscent of Terry's style in that they do the same kinds of things, they put their emphasis in different places.

Peg Leg Sam is more acapella orientated than is Terry. His emphasis on whoops and hollers amazingly enough combined with his playing is the major source of this differentiation. Sam's music relies heavily on improvisation and his playing in that respect resembles as much pianist Champion Jack Dupree as Sonny Terry.

Sam adds spice to his live

performances with various stories, some true and others which are best described as "tall tales". These were likely picked up during his days as a performer with Medicine Shows and on street corners. The latter which must epitomize the kind of crowd-performer intimacy that is so much lacking in these days of mass record sales (at times more keenly orientated to selling vinyl than music) and mass-market hype.

Same currently records for Blue Labor records out of New York. Kent Cooper, the founder of Blue Labour records has done much to rescue many blues performers, who, in the midst of the previously mentioned music business, would be most unlikely to find the means to an outlet for their music. Along with his own album on the label (accompanied by Rufe Johnson), he has done an album with Louisiana Red a name that should be familiar to most Edmonton blues

enthusiasts, and another of Cooper's rediscoveries.

Considering the man's great talent and ability it is incredible that, as few as four years ago he was still playing on street corners for fifty cents a tune. (Perhaps almost as incredible, Rufe Johnson, until coming into the recording opportunity presented by Cooper had never travelled, in his sixty-odd years, more than 25 miles outside of his home town in rural Louisiana).

To quote Cooper once more "As a solo harpist and vocalist, I would rate him neck and neck with Sonny Boy Williamson Number Two." A statement like that, coming from a man responsible for his promotion, cannot be taken at face value. Still though given the originality of his approach to his music and his impeccable control over both his instruments — voice and harp, he is well worth more acclaim, and from a broad audience than he has received.