

Hello and goodbye

Skilled actors save play

By BOB McBRIDE

Derivative drama can prove unpalatable. Hello and Goodbye, now playing at the Central Library Theatre, combines the confrontation drama of Albee with Pinter's comedy of menace while providing a dash of Beckett's metaphysical despair as spice. This mixture is only partially digestible.

The play, written by Athol Fugard, a South African artist of growing international repute, concerns the return of a prodigal prostitute sister to the family lair. Her brother, who ostensibly tends to their ailing father, is also fighting his own battle with creeping insanity.

The sister, Hester, has returned after a 15-year absence in order to collect a share of her father's compensation money; he had lost a leg in a mining explosion. She is presented instead with a myriad of boxes containing family memorabilia. When she finally storms her father's room, she discovers that her father is no more. The brother meanwhile has completely adopted the role of the deceased parent.

The play contains several memorable dramatic moments. The opening monologue delivered by the brother Johnny, played by James Douglas, is brilliant in both conception and execution. This outpouring of a wandering mind not

only conveys several of the play's thematic pre-occupations, but also sets the rhythmic, almost lyrical, pace for the rest of Johnny's speeches.

Hester, played by Patricia Hamilton, is given fewer opportunities to shine. Many of her speeches are of the near-cliché, pseudo-heavy variety. The interaction between the sister and brother gains strength only during a number of intervals of swift staccato exchange.

Hello and Goodbye deals with such weighty questions as "truth and illusion", time and change, and familial determinism within an over-

ly realistic framework. The play's meanings are made explicit within the dialogue rather than being evoked through stage language, sub-text and gesture. Too often one feels verbally assaulted, therefore almost intellectually insulted.

These textual flaws are by no means completely destructive of the theatrical experience. The actors, members of the Performing Arts Company, are highly skilled performers whose efforts mitigate the play's more cloying aspects.

Hello and Goodbye is playing at the Central Library Theatre. Student tickets are \$3. Call 924-8950 for reservations.

Little light from Lidov

By ROBIN BECKWITH

If you enjoy feeling oppressed and have absolutely no sense of humour, the programme of new music presented last Monday by the York New Music Co-operative would have been the ideal experience for you.

The offering progressed from a piece entitled Heavy Music (for tuba solo) to a piece called Low Music (for three bass guitars), which two titles excellently expressed their content and the musical scope of the evening.

Of the three works by David Lidov, the evening's featured composer, the most expressive of fear and oppression was The Long March, a poem by Mao Tse-Tung.

The poem was written at the end of the Long March of 368 days, during which time Mao and the Red army had travelled "6,000 to 8,000 miles of China's most hostile swamps, deserts and gorges on foot under nearly constant ground and air attack" (from Lidov's notes). The poem is an expression of Mao's conceited pride at having accomplished and survived — though most had died — such an ordeal.

Such material Lidov chooses in which to express himself!

Mao's poem was sung eerily by Rose Bandi to piano and electronic accompaniment. Other works, by J. Hiscott and G. Nachoff, offered us different expressions of gloom and doom.

Shining through the clouds of despair we could see a little light. There were a good handful of talented musicians such as D. Hill (tuba), A. Tumar (bassoon), M. Snook (electronics) and others scattered about the "orchestra" used in one of Lidov's pieces.

Too bad they had to express their talents through such disjointed, depressing music.



Menaka Thakkar, noted exponent of two classical Indian dance styles, will give a performance tomorrow night at 8:00 p.m. in the Stong JCR. Honoured with the title Singar Mani for her mastery, Thakkar has performed widely in India, Canada, and the United States.

Spook's eve

York Cabaret comes down to earth with a special Hallowe'en celebration of Martians, shootouts, and vaudeville. They promise a lot of frightful material, tonight and tomorrow night in Vanier's Open End at 9 and 10:30 p.m.

Prancing Pony

Tonight's Tap and Keg features the dance group Under the Sign of the Prancing Pony. It's really a front for a Hallowe'en dance, and the show gets under way at 8:30 p.m. Admission is 50 cents general, but free with Bethune ID.

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