

# TNB's tonic for the soul

by Nicola Benjamin  
Brunswickan Entertainment

The two "man" play *The Gin Game* is currently running at Fredericton's Playhouse until Saturday, January 27th. The curtain rises on Weller Martin (played by David Hughes), a gentleman in his senior years sitting at a card table playing solitaire. The setting is the porch of a large old house which serves as a senior citizen's home. Fonsia Dorsey (played by Joan Gregson) enters weeping, seeking the solitude of the porch, thinking no one is out there. The two strike up a conversation, and to get her mind off her troubles, Weller suggests a friendly game of gin. Both have sought refuge on the porch because it is visitors day at the home, and neither has any visitors. This is their first meeting, as she is a relatively new arrival. Initially they become friends, bonded by the loneliness they both feel. But soon the very characteristics of their respective personalities which has led them to their current state of loneliness, begins to come between them. Mind you, the downfall of their friendship is helped along considerably by an uncanny winning streak Fonsia is "blessed" with as a beginner to the game of gin (a game in which Weller considers himself to be an expert).

The play is a bitter sweet tale of two lonely souls who try to reach out to one another, but whose human flaws fail them once again. Many funny moments come out of their



David Hughes and Joan Gregson enjoy a game of cards

reflections on life, yet ultimately it is a sad story, serving to remind us that growing old is never easy, especially for those who must do it alone. One's past can be a haunting thing when it hasn't gone as you intended.

*The Gin Game* serves as Joan Gregson's debut with Theatre New Brunswick. She is a familiar face to me, as I've been fortunate enough to see her grace the stage at Neptune Theatre in Halifax on more than one occasion. Her performance is a solid one as usual. It is my first time to see David Hughes, although he has walked the boards for Theatre New Brunswick several times before, most recently in the Christmas production of *A Gift to Last*. He was, however, every bit as impressive as Ms.

Gregson. There were the occasional line slips on both parts, but certainly not enough to detract from the show in any way. Early on some of the movements seemed more stiff and calculated than natural, but this improved as the play went on.

The set was designed by a local Frederictonian, Patrick Clark, and credit must go to him and the set builders for a job well done. Especially impressive, though, was a thunderstorm that rumbled and rolled around the theatre, complete with lightening flashes in the distance. In short, I thought *The Gin Game* was a show worth seeing, but if you need a Hollywoodesque happy ending, you'll be sadly disappointed...for the realities of life invariably kick in.

# New shows at Arts Centre

by Jethelo E. Cabilete  
Brunswickan Entertainment

Humanity's time on Earth has been marked throughout our lives, from conception, birth growth and death. Whether it is through metaphysical means (such as religion), physical means (the creation of an artifact), humanocentric (a family, relations) or abstract (memory of deeds accomplished) the result is a reflection of a deep-seated human need. This issue is presented in Brigitte Roy's exhibition entitled, *Le Désir des Traces*, an exploration, in the artist's own words, of "Le désir profond de laisser sa trace, de prolonger sa mémoire à travers la vie des autres et de transformer la nature par l'activé humaine." (The deep desire to leave one's mark, to prolong one's memory across the lives of others and to transform nature through human activity.)

The selected pieces in the East Gallery of the UNB Art Centre, are abstract creations of the artist's expression of the human passage of time, memory, trace and desire. The evocative titles speak for themselves, and provide clarification of the acrylic collages. Within the paintings, one can

observe depictions of Ms. Roy's examination of human existence. Flows of dark colour interwoven with lighter abstract objects give rise to notion that the human existence is flexible, an articulation of the nebulous qualities of time and memory.

The consignment of a variety of materials embedded in the pieces can be perceived as expressions of the art (e.g. *Cycle salin, Le temps d'ouvrir les yeux*). Others call forth the theme of memory within the context of a location (e.g. *Lieu souterrain, L'espace d'un lieu*) or an occasion (e.g. *Cérémonie pour deux, Clair-obscur pour une amie*). The legacy that Ms. Roy calls forth from the viewer, is that of change and of the transitional quality of life. It is a physical discourse on the topic passage as it pertains to our desire for traces of human existence.

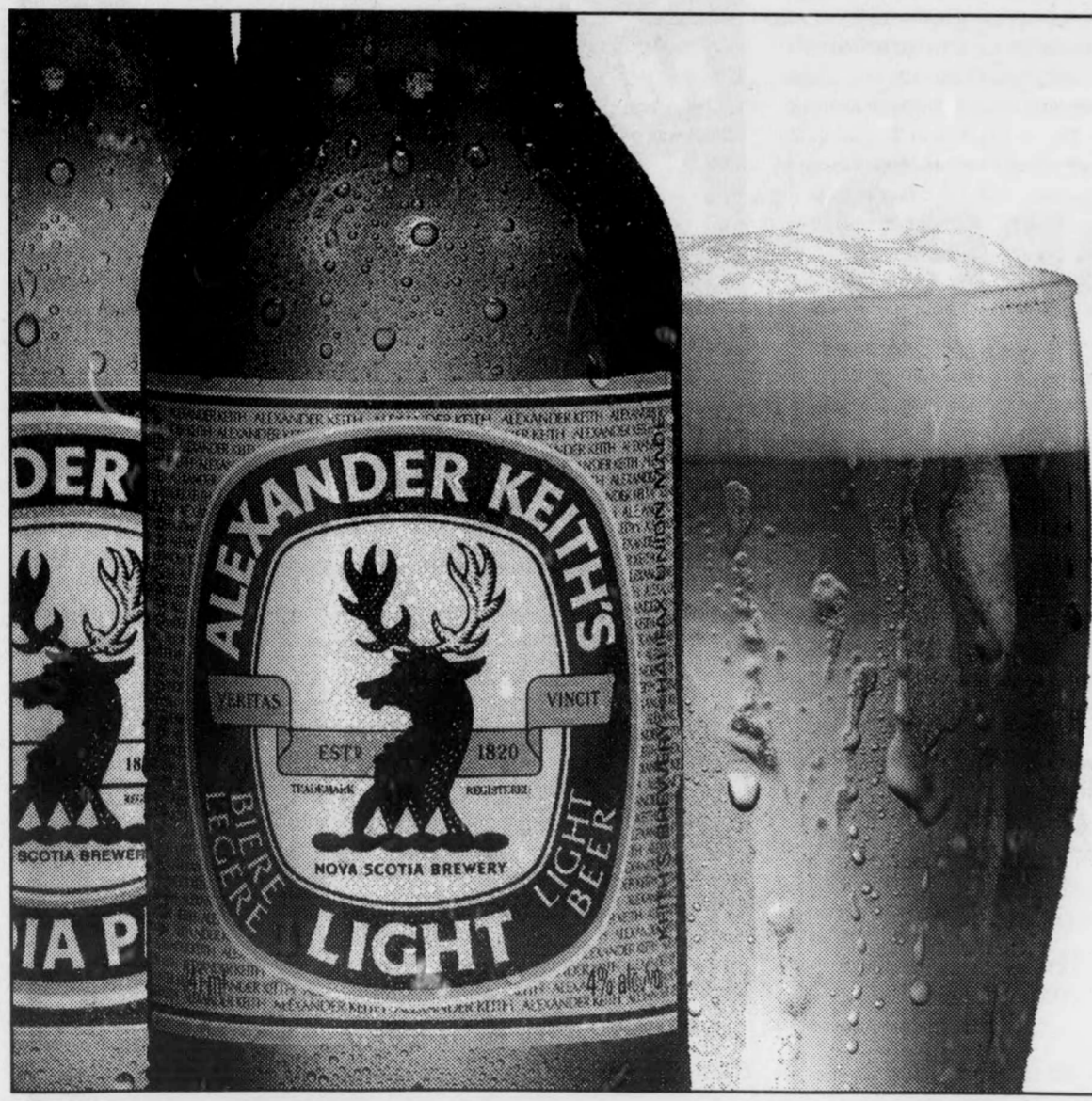
*Le désir des traces* can be seen at the UNB Art Centre in Memorial Hall from January until the first week of February. Also, be on the lookout for *Shadowland* and *Showcase '96* coming up on February 15, 1996. Please remember, applications for UNB and STU student art compositions must be in by February 1, 1996. For more information, contact the UNB Art Centre at 453-4623.



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ME... next that.



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