

Baldoon: a true story of historic occult

By ALICE KLEIN

Baldoon, the latest production of the NDWT Co., is a journey to another world. Not some voyage into space or future, but one just as unfamiliar and impenetrable, Baldoon takes us into the world of Ontario in the 1830's.

Weaving together the central elements of church, land and community, playwrights Marty Gervais and James Reaney spin a tale based on actual events that occurred in the Lake St. Clair Region. The story is not the expected fare of staid, traditional, rural life, however. Rather, see lives haunted by spirits and witches, illicit sexual relations and mysterious kin ties. All this is brought home by special effects.

We see the actors bombarded with bullets fired by ethereal marksmen and attacked by strange birds — the kind that can only be killed by silver bullets. Demons rock the cradle, throw valuable dishes around and generally create havoc.

None of these effects are mystifying to the audience. You don't leave the play wondering how they did it. They show you by doing it all in front of you, rather than behind curtains and that makes it more fun.

But fun isn't the main purpose of Baldoon. The plight of John McTavish, forced to turn to Dr. Troyer (the local witch-hunter) to solve the mystery of the spirit's

revenge, is a serious one. And as the chorus informs us at the outset of the play, "What troubles him, troubles us all."

The lyrical quality of the play proves a problem when it detracts from the audience's ability to see the players as more than symbolic people. And here Baldoon is weak. It's all too easy to forget that there was a real John McTavish, who lived and suffered with his dilemma. As usual, however, the NDWT cast was a good one and did their best to struggle with the problem.

For those who need to be convinced that there is more to Ontario than meets the eye, Baldoon — with songs, dance, marionettes

and a fine 'o'er true story" — will prove an enlightening experience. As James Reaney said in an informal talk with the audience af-

ter the play, "That's what it's all about." Baldoon, directed by Keith Turnbull is playing at the Bathurst Street United Church.



Cheap Shots

Here is the promised schedule for Student Project Week, presented by students in the Theatre department:

Tonight at 7:30; So Well I Know My Duty To My Elders — Cornered — Not I.

Friday 2:00; Monologue #3 — Letter Perfect — Ca dit qu'essa a dire — Cornered — Sam Sheppard.

Friday, 7:30; Dylan — the House of Bernarda Alba (dress rehearsal) — Oriental Position 75C

Saturday, 7:30; Rasputin is Dead — Julius Caesar — The Stronger — Sam Sheppard.

Sunday, 7:30; So Well I Know My Duty To My Elders — Monologue #3 — The Blind.

Admission is free to the performances in Atkinson Studio East, and doors open 30 minutes before showtimes.

IN TOWN... at the IDA gallery next week, the works of Stephen Clark and Ted Rettig... John Mills Cockell has composed the music for a new production at the Factory Theatre Lab called The Revolutionary Project, Thursday through Sunday, for the next two weeks only... The Star Smashers of the Galaxy Rangers Laboratory Big Band plays at Sylvester's Tuesday night... Series B of the Toronto Symphony concerts continues Tuesday and Wednesday with works of McMillan, Brahms, Sibelius, and Berg... Monday at 7:30, you can see A Streetcar named Desire in Curtis L for free... Also Monday, at 8:30, A New Music concert at the Ed Johnson Building at U of T, featuring the music of Iannis Xenakis and Denis Smalley... Wednesday marks the last of the Jazzmaster concerts at Seneca's Minkler E.L.

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