

Photography in SUB: a sense of silence

I think that the time has come, or is overdue, for someone to give credit to one of the most productive but least recognized committees in the rambling Students' Union. I am referring to the Art committee, who have been coming up with consistently good shows this year.

Those of the general public who visited the gallery during the last week could not help but be impressed by the two top notch exhibits they were featuring. One was a selection of canvases from a show originally put together by the Winnipeg gallery, which included some excellent pieces by Dennis Burton, Ihor Dmytruk, Denis Juneau, and others. This show was notable for its wide range of examples of different modern approaches, which were both representative and exciting. However, if you didn't see the show by the end of last week, you have missed, and more's the pity.

The other show is fortunately still running, and I can recommend it as highly as the Winnipeg showing. This second show is an exhibit of photography by students at NAIT and U of A, and will exhibit until February 10.

The exhibit is significant for two reasons. To begin with, showings of photography are rare. Secondly, I think this show should go a long way towards dispelling the idea that photography is not an art, because it is literal.

In fact, it is quite evident from these works, that a photograph is not literal. The various chemical and technical processes involved in catching light on film and then making the image visible are very flexible, so that a good photographer has as much freedom as any artist with regard to color, shading, texture, form, and line. Another element which is inherent



—Forrest Bard photo

and unique in photography is the photograph's ability to create its own time and space. A good picture, and there are many in the gallery which demonstrate this, should give you a sense of silence. The only really weak part of

the show is the mounting of the pictures. By this I mean both the individual mountings, and the hanging of the show as a whole. Most of the photographers played it safe, with conventional mountings, and I am afraid that their more adventuresome counterparts proved the wisdom of the conservative attitude. The few collages were interesting because they were

unusual in the show, but even they did not fully explore the potentials of mounting and juxtaposition. Evidently sensitivity does not imply a sense of layout.

The show is a textbook in the art of good photography, and for their part in the mounting of it, the Art Committee members deserve commendation.

—Bill Pasnak

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George Gershwin's



Girl Crazy

8:30 pm.
S.U.B. Theatre
Feb. 6, 7, 8, 12, 13, 14, 15

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What's new

Studio Theatre is preparing its third production of the year, a re-vamping of Shakespear's *Twelfth Night*, to be called *What You Will*. One free ticket will be given to students presenting their I.D. card at Corbett Hall, Room 329, from Monday, Feb. 3.

There is only one week left to see the Citadel Theater's exceptional production of Michael Dyne's *The Right Honorable Gentleman*. 8:30 p.m.

The U of A/NAIT Student Photography Show continues in SUB Art Gallery until Feb. 10.

Feb. 9: The Department of Music Chamber Orchestra perform a program of music by Mendelssohn, Beethoven, Haydn and many, many more. 8:30 p.m. in Con Hall.

Feb. 9: SUB Theater Cinema begins its weekly series of experimental films with "The Scene", eight films probing the problems of this generation. Series tickets are \$6, individual admissions are \$1. 7:30 p.m.

Feb. 10: The University Symphony Orchestra presents its first annual Pops Concert, featuring popular music, show tunes and old standards. SUB Theater, 8 p.m.

Feb. 10: Studio Theater begins its run of *What You Will*, an avant garde adaptation of Shakespear's old chestnut, *Twelfth Night*. The production runs until Feb. 16, with special matinee performances the last two days for VGW guests.

Feb. 12: Janos Csaba of Rochester, New York, is guest artist in a viola recital; assisted by Sylvia Hunter on piano. 8:30 p.m. at Con Hall.

leftovers

There have been a number of accusations recently, to the effect that certain members of the arts pages staff are biased, and write slanted reviews. We would like to make an explanation (which should not be construed as an apology) as to just what a reviewer does.

When a critic reviews a book, a play, an art exhibit, or whatever else, he is primarily concerned with its artistic merit. He is audience to something created within the limitations of a specific art form, and he must try to decide objectively if the creation is successful. If it is not, he should be able to say why. Concern with the theme and content beyond the extent to which they affect the esthetics of a production is only secondary.

Let us, for the sake of example, take the case of the New Folk, who played SUB Theater several weeks ago and whose message is love for Christ's sake. Our reviewer felt their performance was lousy. This does not mean that he is anti-Christian or anti-pop music or anti-folk. It does mean that, after viewing their performance, he has become anti-New Folk.

The charge that a reviewer is biased is of course true. It is impossible to escape some form of personal bias, and those who maintain the contrary don't know what we are talking about. Nevertheless, we insist that it is quite possible for a biased—but aware—critic to turn in a very objective, balanced review. The medium may very well be the message, but the message is definitely *not* the medium.

We realize now that it was too much to hope for, but for the briefest moment it actually appeared that, through some miraculous act of divine intervention, the name of our ex-premier had been erased from that marble plaque in the SUB sidewalk. Closer inspection proved that hundreds of feet had merely ground snow into the graven letter. Ah well.