

Entertainment

A Mardi Gras With Style & Verve



Photo by Mark Robichaud

by Diego Argáez

On Saturday, February 25th, a crowd of about seven hundred people came to the Boyce Farmer's Market for some serious fun at the "Mardi Gras at the Market" concert. I really have to hand it to the Harvest Blues and Jazz Festival people who obviously put in a lot of time and effort to make this event a smashing success, which was sold out by the way. Aside from the great music, one could try one's luck at the various casino games.

There were two bands performing. The opening act was a local blues band, the Michael George Quartet. I was really impressed

with this group. To anyone who missed last Saturday night's event, I definitely recommend you check them out whenever you get a chance. They played some mellow tunes like "Just the two of us" to more jammin' upbeat tunes like "sabotage", and they even did a couple of cover songs, one of these begin Stevie Wonders' "Superstitious". Anyway... on to the main act which was Salsa Picante. Not bad! These guys, and gal, hailing from Halifax really cranked up the heat and set the night into high gear. They played some great songs like "Sopa de pichón", "Elena Elena", "Que sabroso" and "Feeling hot hot hot" that got everybody dancing up

a real storm. Salsa Picante also did some fabulous covers of two of Gloria Estéfán's songs: "El montuno" and "Conga". After the first set, the Twilight Dance Studio People did some dance demonstrations for us. I came to the concert expecting to hear some good Merengue and Salsa a la Cubana and let me tell you, I was not one bit disappointed. So fun was had by all and for those of you who missed out, well, you better get your tickets early next year.

I dedicate this article to my friend Michelle Bricdeau who lent me her pen. Thanks Michelle!

A Captivating Piano Concerto



Stéphane Lemelin

by Hilary A. Stephenson

It's no doubt that pianist, Stéphane Lemelin's recordings have been broadcast worldwide. It was evident from the moment he took the stage at Memorial Hall last Sunday, that he was ready to captivate his

audience through a series of works by Schubert, Debussy, Brahms and Mendelssohn. Mr. Lemelin has been acclaimed for his sensitivity and beauty of playing. A piece may have begun somewhat lugubriously, and he would manage to bring it to various levels and moods before wrapping it all together to come full circle.

Mr. Lemelin began with Schubert's Allegro moderato in F minor, in my opinion the strongest of the four movements. Each piece that he played employed transitions so exquisite, that the listener would be in anticipation as to where it would lead. His precision is but one facet of his success here on his debut Atlantic tour.

Mendelssohn's "serious" Variations in D minor followed, in which a variety of themes were included, ending with a quiet, poetic like ending. Mr. Lemelin has a way

of putting forth several different moods in one movement without ever losing the original concept. At times he appeared to be oblivious to the fact that there were other people in the vicinity, as he was obviously enjoying every minute of it.

Brought to Mem Hall by the Creative Arts Committee, those in attendance were treated to an afternoon of some of the finest classical pieces performed by a top rank young performer. To witness a worldwide known pianist that has performed with the likes of the Montreal Symphony and the Orchestra of Radio-Television Luxembourg was indeed a privilege. If you missed Stéphane Lemelin's performance, be sure to keep an ear open for its appearance on the CBC, as it was recorded in its entirety.

A FIERY

Production by Theatre UNB



J.D. Blackwell (Matthew Collins) preaches to his wayward son, Cale (Matthew MacCallum) Photo by Bill Jackson

by Chad Ball

On February 23 and 24, the South came to Memorial hall, as Theatre UNB and Workshop Productions presented "Fire". Written by Paul Ledoux and David Young, "Fire" is inspired by the turbulent lives of cousins Jerry Lee Lewis and Jimmy Swaggart. Although the names and some of the situations have been changed, the music and attitudes have been lifted directly from the era when Rock was young and times were changing (not as corny as it sounds).

"Fire" is based on the lives of brothers Cale and Herchel Blackwell (Matt MacCullum and Kenny Fitzpatrick), sons of the preacher J.D. Blackwell (Matthew Collins). The first act, set in late fifties Arkansas, focuses on the boys at a critical time in their lives as each is forced to decide what their future holds. Cale (the 'Lewis' figure) finds himself less and less interested in joining his brother at Bible school and more interested in the prospects of a rock and roll career. Matt MacCullum convincingly portrayed Cale through the joys of financial success to the tragedy of alcoholism and domestic violence. While Cale is falling victim to the 'hellfires of Rock 'n' Roll', Herchel follows the ways of his father and becomes an evangelist. However, even at this point, we can see a hint of the 'Jimmy Swaggart' attitude in him.

Although it is difficult to identify a 'best scene' from such a quality performance, the closing scene of the first act left me speechless. It takes place at the pinnacle of the brothers' respective careers. Cale, on one side of the stage is drunk and stoned, proudly proclaiming that his success in music was the work of Sa-

tan. On the other side, Herchel stands on his pulpit, waving his religion at anybody who must listen. Although produce an effect that can only be understood through experience.

The second act is set nineteen years later. Cale's career is plagued with his incessant substance abuse and Herchel has become the stereotypical televangelist (there were times I wished I could turn the channel). This act becomes even more tragic as Cale, after cleaning himself up, tries to return to the brother he had abandoned, only to find that Herchel had adopted the 'unholy' values he had warned Cale about.

As impressive as MacCullum and Fitzpatrick's performances were, the star of the show was Jennifer Brewer who played Molly King. Molly literally set the tone for the first act as a character who was frightened, but intrigued, by a lifestyle outside her church. Obviously suppressed by religion, Molly wants to escape her innocence. With this, the innocence of the play is lost and we feel for Molly. When she argues with a drunken Cale, we feel his slap. And when she returns to Herchel for help, her pain is overwhelming. Although we were following the disintegration of Cale's career and the construction of a televangelist, our hearts were with Molly (she had the worst luck with men).

This performance offered so much more than what can simply be written. From the live music (a definite bonus) to the subtle technical effects that turned an unchanging stage set into a church and a brothel, theatre at UNB is well worth the price of admission. "Fire" was directed by Edward Mullaly and produced by Tanya Atkinson. The stage manager was Katherine Atkinson. The rest of the credits are on the program that you would have got if you went to the show.