

## Red n' Black: parts greater than whole

By JOE KILFOIL  
Entertainment Editor

In some very important ways, this year's Red and Black, the 37th, was among the finest I've ever seen: Jeff Irwin, was superb; an unannounced standup comedian was by far the highlight of the first act; and there was truly a great variety of music presented.

On the other hand, this year's show was far too long, (four hours) and contained several skits which should have been dropped before the show ever went public.

Irwin, although admittedly a bit nervous on opening night, was the (excuse the cliché) glue which really held the show together. A significant presence in his own right, he has a vast store of characters to draw upon for stories and demonstrated an uncanny knack for accents. Whether telling an elaborate joke, reciting the lyrics to a song as a story, or even just forgetting his lines, Irwin was immediately personable and consistently entertaining.

The first act was a dance number entitled "Work That Body", and starred what were undoubtedly some of the best examples of physical fitness among the female population at UNB. (In fact, I must admit I didn't see the guys behind the screen until the end of the act.) This was one of several dance numbers presented throughout the show.

The next act was singer/guitarist Anna Cain and guitarist/singer Connie Woodside, who performed a pair of original songs. Cain's vocal style is superb, and she possesses an amazing vibrato which she employed effectively throughout her tunes. Her voice at times reminded me of Carol King, just a bit; at other times I could see traces of Joni Mitchell and even Janis Joplin.

The unscheduled appearance of comedian Eric Gigles, was a pleasant surprise. Standup comedy is without a doubt the most difficult form of live entertainment, and Gigles demonstrated a remarkable

amount of professionalism throughout his routine. Although the beginning of his act showed a Steve Martin influence, his own personality took over quickly and the routine--about his experiences as a freshman at UNB--was genuinely funny and very popular with the audience.

The Intercity Connection entertained the audience with their acoustic jazz performance. The trio consisted of Geordie Haley on guitar, Rick Branswell on saxophone and John Frank on vocals and bongos. The Connection performed the standars "There'll Never Be Another You," and a Spyro Gyra instrumental, "The Shaker Song."

The next act in the show was easily the most dispensable of the night. Entitled "The Society for the Preservation of Argumentative Skills (SPAS)", the act was merely a very poor recreation of Monty Python's well-known "Argument" sketch, with a few references to John Bosnitch thrown in indiscriminately.

The next act was a dance number entitled "Manhunt." This was followed by Edward and Walter Considine, who did an old Chad Mitchell Trio song about the problems of being too hip, and were then joined by flautist Chris Cosgrove for a nicely harmonized version of the Simon and Garfunkel classic, "The Sounds of Silence".

A sloppy sketch about Point Lepreau followed, and should have been nuked. Another dance number, this one by members of the UNB business society, as performed to the Stray Cats' "Stray Cat Strut". A totally unnecessary Blues Brothers skit followed.

The last scheduled act was singer/songwriter/guitarist Blair Hebert, who accompanied himself on classical guitar for his first song, a slow ballad. His second piece was a reggae-ish rock and roll song about some of the people he met while attending school in Fredericton. He was supported musically on this tune by drummer Phil Cochrane, guitarist Jamie Legassie, and bassist Dan Flemming.

Although unscheduled, the famous Red and Black jugband made an appearance at the end of the first set. Half-filled beer bottles in hand, the group was expectedly animated and mildly amusing.

Laurie Stacey and Graham Topp opened Act 2. Familiar to Woodshed as well as Red and Black audiences, the pair performed original songs in their predictable but pleasant folk style.

The rock band Iconoclast was, for me, the highlight of the second set. They performed a very bizarre technopop/new wave-ish original as well as a surprisingly good version of Peter Gabriel's "Shock the Monkey," and while I do not personally care for that particular style of music, this group must be commended for shaking up the occasionally rather staid Red

and Black musical scene with something so different; Stuart Kirkley, keyboards; Karl Gans, drums; and Ron Johnson, bass. Clements demonstrated his vocal skill towards the end of the second tune, alternating between a falsetto and natural voice for the closing phrases.

The skit "Psycho Chickens" derived most of its humor from song of the same name; the amusing takeoff of the Talking Heads' "Psycho Killer." The act, unfortunately, was -you guessed it- for the birds.

Backed up by the Constantine Brothers on guitar and banjo and pianist Anne Smith, first-year student Maggie Toner, performed "The Rainbow Connection," the popular song from "The Muppet Movie." Although visibly nervous, Miss Toner sang well and exhibited a class, understated, stage presence.

The Friday at the Social Club' sketch was funny at times, relying more on clichés and old jokes that originality. "Tchaikovsky Meets Schnitzler Von Schnudelheimer," choreographed by the ubiquitous Hutch, again presented the UNB Rugby Club dressed in tutus and doing their own form of ballet.

"Broadway", presented a competent group of both male and female dancers. The grand finale, the 37th Annual Red and Black Kickline, was very good and elicited a good response from the audience.

I have been told that some of the sketches were eliminated from the later shows this week, something which should have been done before opening night. I appreciate the fact that the cast and crew are volunteers, but a well-planned dress rehearsal can eliminate most--admittedly, not all--of the little problems which plagued Monday's show. I don't know the reason opening night

was as disorganized as it was: I have heard rumors from inside the cast as to who is responsible, but since I don't know for sure, I won't comment. I do know this, as a longtime observer of and past participant in Red and Black: it will take an exceptionally responsible and competent director

to return Red and Black to what it was in the good old days--a well-organized, cohesive program, rather than just a loosely con-

nected set of individual performances, regardless of how good these individual efforts may be.

## 20th century work pleased

By SIGNE B. GURHOLT  
Brunswickan Staff

Fredericton audiences are all too rarely given the opportunity to hear works by 20th century composers and it was therefore a double pleasure to hear several in one evening and also to have them performed by a pianist of Louis-Philippe Pelletier's stature. The Montreal Star has called him "a brilliant pianist" while Toronto's Globe & Mail remarked that he is "reminiscent of the young Glenn Gould". Known for his ability to communicate his own intensity to his audience, it was not difficult for those attending his Sunday evening recital at the Centre Communautaire Sainte-Anne to understand how he acquired this reputation. Pelletier stated in any one period of music, and while a listing of his concert repertoire attests to this fact, his particular expertise in the interpretation and performance of 20th century material has been noted again and again.

The entire first half of the recital was devoted to French composers of this period, beginning with a section from Olivier Messiaen's "Vingt Regards

sur l'Enfant Jesus" which was written in Paris during the tumultuous days of the German occupation. The whole keyboard was employed as the work progressed from its quite opening through the vigorous middle section and then back again to calmness. Perhaps the most exciting peice of the entire evening followed - Gilles Tremblay's "Tracantes". Pelletier played with such force and conviction that the unfamiliar techniques and startling sounds which characterize "Tracantes" became an adventure for the audience. As Pelletier explained, the most important notes in this work were the ones just barely heard--they resonated sympathetically with those which were attacked directly. He likened it to the subtle sounds of nature: at first there seems to be complete silence and then gradually, as one concentrates, a whole myriad of sounds begins to filter into one's consciousness.

The first half of the recital was brought to a close with the 6 Etudes from Claude

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