

# Entertainment

## Lucien 2: Gloriously (Politically) Incorrect

By Lilith

I don't think that I would have fully appreciated Marshall Button's performance and writing of *Lucien 2: Lucien's Labour Lost*, when I first arrived in New Brunswick four years ago. While I come from a thoroughly Maritime background, when I landed here from Halifax, I had only passed through New Brunswick en route to points American and Upper Canadian. Now that I have gone to school here for four years, worked here for two summers and as my family puts it, "defected to the province next door," Button's work has effectively highlighted the spirit and character of a province that is quite distinct from even its close neighbors. There was no aspect of New Brunswick's profile that was safe from Button's wry commentary.

While Button is technically delivering a two hour-ish monologue, as the Miramichi mill-worker and ingenue entrepreneur, he has a convincingly sustained interaction with an invisible "young fella" who drops into visit. His mimed contact and conversation with the sole visitor to his spectacularly unsuccessful tavern, "The Wooden Squirrel," is more effective without a superfluous actor on stage. Although my companion had predicted otherwise, Button's performance was compelling and successfully carried the material.

The set designed by Pat Flood was verifiable Maritime bar grunge at its best, including notes of authenticity: toilet paper as props, Grateful Dead poster and business cards on the bulletin board and an effectively utilized video gambling machine (mysteriously possessed by the spirits of Frank McKenna and Brunsie Jethelo E. Cabilete, among others).

In the past few days I've heard considerable criticism of this play as "politically incorrect," but it was its incorrectness that endeared it to me. While much of the play was "over the top," Button's dialect, the political commentary, the sexual jokes and the inside jokes that only a long-time intimate of the region would get. One of the sections that has most frequently come up in discussions of the piece is the sequence in which Lucien expresses outrage at the goings on of politicians and decides to call up "Skin Campbell" to give her a piece of his mind on topics ranging from the "repression" to the "Charlottetown Constipated Accord." While I've heard objections to the whorehouse metaphor employed in this section, is there anyone out there that can honestly say that it's not an apt comparison? I've heard a report from a woman who attended the show on opening night that a provincial party leader and a cabinet minister sitting in her section were among the heartiest ap-

plauders and loudest laughers.

At any rate, the tone of Button's approach was quite obviously affectionate jesting, rather than malicious parodying. I would hope that native New Brunswickers would respond to Lucien in the tradition of the Newfie, and be able to laugh at themselves. As for the political correctness crowd, my biggest problem with their objections to material like this is that this piece, in its "incorrectness," reflects the realities of life here. The laughs that it elicits are not always comfortable, and far from idealizes the area. Let's face it, this region has problems and Button successfully exposes them, through Lucien's uncertainty about his personal future. This is balanced by the fact that Lucien also celebrates his home.

One woman I heard describing the play hated everything about it. Offended by everything. It was sexist. It was racist. It was this...it was that...I almost couldn't believe that she'd seen the same play. The explanation came when we asked her if she was from New Brunswick. She was almost as offended by that question as she had been by Lucien 2: "Me? Oh God no...I'm not from here!" Ah...my townie friends and I smiled knowingly at each other...she'll learn.

Theatre New Brunswick's *Lucien 2: Lucien's Labour Lost* continues until October 16.

## GENREKIDE

MICHAEL EDWARDS

Vinyl is not dead. I don't care what you may have read elsewhere or that you can't seem to find it anywhere in town, it is not dead. And I hope that it never does die because it has always been my favourite format for music; I never have really liked CDs even though I have learned to put up with them because it is all you can find over on this side of the Atlantic but they don't excite the way that taking a brand new album out of its crisp new sleeve does. For one thing, CDs just look as impressive with their horrid plastic boxes which shatter when you drop them and their equally horrid little booklets with artwork so small that you can't make out any details not to mention lyrics so small you need a microscope to read them. And what about the CDs themselves; rather tiny unimpressive looking things that look like they shouldn't hold more than an hour of music. They do shine in a rather pleasing way though - just the thing for dazzling any passing cats but is that a good enough reason to switch over to a new format? And as for cassettes - don't get me started. Nope, give me nice big impressive record sleeves and a big slab of vinyl any day.

I finally succumbed and bought a CD player at the start of this year and it is nice to be able to listen to a whole album without turning it over, or picking out your favourite songs instantaneously and doing all kinds of bizarre things like playing the album in a random order (a really useful feature...) but there is something lacking. Some companies are reissuing old recordings which are almost impossible to find which makes CDs more attractive - just try finding every Verve recording that Billie Holiday made on vinyl and I guarantee that you will either not have much luck or spend a fortune doing so. Then again you can go and pick up a box set and get it all in one neat package. CDs get bonus points there. But what about their other big plus - sound quality. I really am not convinced there and I have yet to hear a CD that sounds better than a good turntable; the sound quality may be equal but it is not better. And if anyone thinks that it is I will gladly give them a demonstration to show them otherwise. The only way that sound quality enters into it is when you look at how easy it is to damage a record compared to a CD; then you may have a leg to stand on. But for me the pops and crackles that you have on old vinyl is all part of the charm. That way you know if you have an album that has been played a

lot, been with you through the good times, through the bad times and all those other cliches. You get the idea. Old records sound old, and that is it. Even remastered CDs of old recordings have hiss and pops and on CD you just get a better quality hiss and pop. Hmmm. And then there is the idea that the sound from vinyl is much warmer and mixes together the sounds much better than CDs which give a more 'clinical' sound. This is something that is dependant on personal choice as some people seem to like listening to a guitarist playing over there between the chair and the television while the bass player is over there beside the kitchen door, while others prefer a wall of sound enveloping them.

The main reason that vinyl is not dead and never will be is because it is something that is used by many of the smaller bands and record labels as a staple for their releases. A visit to any record store that covers some of the more unusual independent releases will show you a section for seven inch singles for one thing, and these will never turn up on CD. Ever. For one thing, many radio stations will not play cassette material so before CD the only answer was to use vinyl - it is relatively cheap to press up some vinyl so there are many bands out there that still use it. In the weeks to come expect a column on the joys of seven inch singles which are far too numerous to mention here. By staying away from vinyl you are missing out on a whole world of music from today's bands but also from older bands that were not necessarily successful so they are not being reissued on CD. Plus the joy of going second hand record shopping should be experienced by everyone; with CDs you just buy them assuming that the condition is not a problem but with records you had to take into account the condition, try reflecting light off the surface to check for scratches. Pure joy. Especially when you find something you have been looking for for years in mint condition for \$5.

So the next time that you think about ditching your turntable or selling your collection of albums, I beg of you to give them another listen and take in the history that can be found on those slabs of black plastic. Or instead you could just give them to me. (Ed note: recent actions by Sony Music indicate that there is still industry support for vinyl... the new release from Seattle grunge-Stars Pearl Jam was to be released in the U.S. on vinyl on October 12 and on CD and cassette format a week later on October 19...)

## Discontinuous: Can We Talk?

by randall n. haslett

Tonight Theatre UNB's Stage Left Productions is presenting *Discontinuous*, a series of dialogues in mono and stereo by eleven members of Theatre UNB. This is the first offering of the season and it proves to be an entertaining and enlightening evening. During a recent interview with Eric Hill, writer, poet, actor, producer, and spokes person for Stage Left, it was revealed that the original idea for *Discontinuous* came during a house warming party. The members of Stage Left wanted a simple yet dynamic show to open the campus theatre season. As they talked over several ideas, it struck them that dialogue was the answer!! Talk is not only cheap, but is *en vogue* during these elections days as politicians criss-cross the country pontificating their policies. Luckily, you won't get any of that at *Discontinuous*.

What you will get are eight cleverly crafted monologues and one super triologue. The performers are presenting original works that are as diverse as they

are collective. There is no one theme that threads the -logues together. Instead live music will be woven between the pieces. In fact the original music by Jeff Kerr and Mike Mattatol will be featured before the performances and during intermission.

*Discontinuous* kicks off with Michael Brooks who will deliver his story of an *Old Violin*, a tale of a dusty violin on the auctioneer's block. This will be followed quickly by *A Cigarette*, a triologue smoked by Matthew Tierney, Nova Lea Thorne, and Melinda Arseneau. Greg Doran will do his "60's thing" as he reflects on the hippie time in North American culture.

The show is not Stage Left's rebuttal to *Lucien's Labour Lost* so you will be pleasantly surprised by Steve MacIsaac's labour of love. The show features a special presentation by Melinda that I'm sure you won't want to miss. Rounding out the second half of the discourse is Roger Wilkie going to *Extremes*, Jason Meldrum talking about *Bobby*, and Jon Jurmain regales about the *Glory Days* when the war in Nam overshadowed

many events.

Stage Left has three goals the wish to accomplish with *Discontinuous*. Firstly, they want to introduce new students to campus theatre. They also want to raise awareness of and funds for the Frederick Rape Crisis Centre. Lastly, they want to help Dr Kent Thompson establish Cellar Theatre as a viable forum for theatre. Cellar Theatre lives in the basement of Carleton Hall and can usually be found in Room 139.

So what's Eric's prose you are wondering? His piece is *Shoes*. He was reluctant to tell me much about it (he wants you to see it for yourself!!). However, he did disclose that his monologue centres on three pairs of shoes that had a major impact on his life.

So if your shoes are made for walking (a sixties thing!!) get down to the Cellar Theatre tonight for the GRAND OPENING or tomorrow night for the final performance. Help support the Rape Crisis Centre; tickets at the door for \$3.00. Come and learn something about life and practice your listening skills...to be discontinued!!!