

# Prosperous tourists flash cash

By DAVID BURGESS



ALEX NEUMANN

**OUT TO SEE THE WORLD:** York grad DJanet Sears in Mixed Company's *Tourist & Refugees*, now playing at Harbourfront's Studio Theatre.

Mixed Company's presentation of a new version of *Tourists and Refugees*, a collective creation originally devised by Joseph Chaikin & the Winter Project (at Harbourfront's Studio Theatre until Oct. 4) is a provocative look at the imperialism of tourism and its negative image: the phenomenon of displaced people.

Through short vignettes laced with powerful, non-literal imagery, the company, under the direction of co-founder Steven Bush, confronts the audience with the contrast between glib first-world tourists and dispossessed refugees. While the tourists are out to "see the world," the refugees seek only to survive.

Allen Booth and Juan Opitz have infused the piece with highly evocative music. Performing on instruments ranging from simple drums and whistles to state-of-the-art synthesizers, they provide important aural environments which comple-

ment the visual/textual aspects of the play.

For the most part, the cast is up to the considerable challenges placed before them. This piece is difficult to even call a play, as it almost completely eschews narrative; it contains minimal text, much of which consists of direct questions to the audience such as, "Do you remember the last time you tasted pineapples?" Actors are called upon to evoke characters, which quickly disappear, and are replaced by other characters, other styles, and other gestural vocabularies.

Among the most pleasing performances are those given by Monique Mojica (of Trickster's Cabaret, and the title role in Passe Muraille's *Jessica*), and York graduate DJanet Sears, who is especially good as the tourguide with the bizarre questions about the pineapple fields, and as a West Indian woman who makes a pilgrimage to Buckingham Palace.

Sears said that the Grotowski/Pe-

ter Brook-style work she did at York with Professor Michelle George helped to prepare her for this show. She also spoke of the necessity of fleshing out the longer-lasting characters with much of the method background that actors normally use for more naturalistic plays.

The least successful effort in *Tourists and Refugees* was the work of Another Mixed Company co-founder, Simon Malbogot. This is strange since the text provides his tour agent character with many of the funniest and most accessible lines. He seems to have based his performance on an imitation of the TV work of Harvey ("Will you look at that full figure") Aikens. Yet Malbogot hasn't quite embraced the type, timing or fearlessness needed to reach the Aikens' requisite size.

Particularly for those who have not tasted much outside the traditional, "fourth-wall," realistic theatre, *Tourists and Refugees* contains much that is recommendable.

# Copa showcases talent

By LISA WARNER

Featuring 28 local bands, the Copa held its second annual college and university entertainment showcase September 29 and 30.

The shows gave organizers of student functions an opportunity to see 14 bands each night and gauge audience reaction at the same time.

Evan Adelman, the organizer of the event, stressed that the function's aim was not competitive but rather an opportunity to showcase local talent to buyers and the general public. Admission was free to anyone possessing student identification.

The show Monday night began just before seven o'clock. The small crowd seemed to be mainly made up of the various bands and their ent-

ourages, plus 168 buyers representing their colleges and universities. The relatively small size of the crowd can be credited to the torrential thunderstorm which swept over Toronto that evening and although the crowd was wet their spirits were high.

Monday's entertainment line-up included relatively well-known acts such as Johnie Lovesin and Tall New Buildings, as well as up-and-coming groups such as Buoy Up, Vis A Vis, Room of Fools and Secret Lives. The music from the 14 bands varied from the rockabilly sounds of The Jack DeKeyzer Band to the heavy rock of Trés Hombres, with the pop-funk group Phase IV balancing the extremes.

Secret Lives, the most publicized

band of the evening, was one of the first bands to get people dancing to their faithful covers of New Order and The Cult, while Tall New Buildings created the most energy both on the stage and among the audience. As is the case with most bands who are starting out, there were many cover versions, but with the exception of Trés Hombres' ZZ Top numbers and Secret Lives' covers, they were not well-received by the crowd.

The well-organized show featured each band playing for approximately 20 minutes with the stage being set up for the following band within five minutes. Next year the Copa again hopes to provide this unique podium for bands to display their talent and audiences to enjoy.

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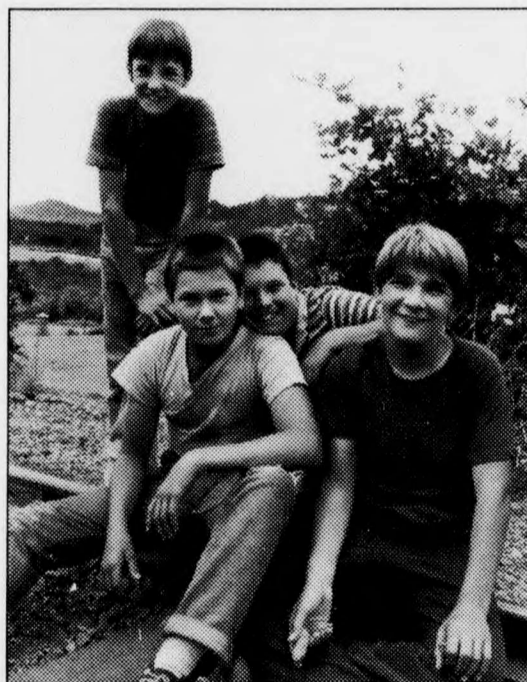
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