

...and once again the Red n Black Revue Review

or, the Phone Lady Returns...

By Beverly R. White

I was sitting in my lonely log cabin on the fourteenth floor of Mountie headquarters when suddenly, the editor walked in and handed me a ticket. "Phone Lady!" he said, making certain that the collar of his trench coat was turned up high and the brim of his fedora was covering his eyes. "Here's your assignment..."

The Red and Black Revue. I flashed back to last year and to how horrible the show had been, the ensuing controversies, the accusations, the space.... God! What was I getting myself into, volunteering to review it again? Did I really want to risk a fate worse than death... easily offended performers and volatile choreographers?

I needn't have worried. It seems that, this year, those behind the Red and Black cared a little more about what they were putting on stage. The show may not have been the ideal variety production, but it was definitely a serious step up from last year's travesty, Simon and Garfunkel aside.

The musical acts this year were reasonably good, relying on the guitar. One Stefanie Stefan, for example, performed a two-song set of acoustic numbers that proved rife with emotion. (Her decision to sing the second song, a freeform expression of an abused child's emotions and needs, with little Jocelyne Tranquilla was spot-on.) Also in the vein of acoustic guitar, Mark and Devon Chandra (Chandra Squared, they call themselves) covered well both a Skydivers song and the inevitable Simon and Garfunkel selection (well rendered technically, although the selection itself proved to be the weakness rather than the performance). Meldrum and Hughes also tossed in two songs of their own, the best selection being a cover of the infamous Barenaked Ladies song "If I Had \$1000000." The weakness in the abundance of acousticism, sadly, was Sarah Haley's well-intentioned but stylistically incongruous pair of folk numbers. (Ms. Haley has a lovely voice, and the songs themselves were lovely as well, but the two should not be intertwined. Were her voice huskier, or the songs written for a soprano warble and trill, she might have been better off.) The name of her accompanying guitarist eludes me, but his instrumental contribution was impressive (although his voice proved to be an impediment).

Other forms of music pervaded the stage, of course. Geoff Cook (Marius!) was permitted two numbers, both standards. (His "Piano Man" trio with Chandra Squared was a highlight, although his voice is a tad too well trained for such an informal affair). The Out Crowd, a standard-style semi-hairspray pseudo-alternative rock band, should indeed have been ousted — they were far too mundane. The Engineers' Jugband made their unwelcome return — unwelcome, at least, to those with enough sensibility to be offended by their infantile, ludicrous, self-deprecating, universally humiliating, drunken, senseless, off-key, bigoted, homophobic, obscene, and reckless shredding of the reputations of themselves, their trade, their faculty, their alma mater, and their fellow performers. The instrumentation was brilliant, however — this reviewer does appreciate the skillful playing of a banjo. (The superfluous addition of two female persons was not only unnecessary but defamatory to the gender!!)

The comedic side of the show was generally weak — while last year it was the show's strength, this year it was the show's weakness. The lackluster, unoriginal skits about such mundane topics as dating and Superman's retirement, did not prove tremendously funny. The jab at the six o'clock news was halfhearted and unfunny (particular offense was taken by this Star Trek fan over their misrepresentation as to what kind of things occur at conventions — William Shatner, self-centred as he is, does NOT go running up on stage to attack Patrick Stewart!). The only exception to this was Mark Chandra's (him again?) hilarious stand-up routine about imitation crab and McDonald's (a repolished version of the routine he performed at FHS's show last year — funnier this time than the last, but this humble writer would like to see new material from him). And then there were the emcees...

Ah, the emcees. Both engineers, both adamant to prove that Engineering is the finest faculty and that Engineers are the highlight of the Earth and without Engineers, the world would be devastated. Both proving it in exactly the wrong way — long talks about pickup lines, snide commentary of how each gender looks in their uniforms, onstage bunji-jumping, and so on and so forth. They were a weak point and may have been better off ignoring the concept of

faculty altogether. (But at least they were better than last year's batch...)

And the dancing. The opening number ("Move This") was well choreographed, although the asynchronous execution thereof left a little to be desired. Just Us, certainly one of the finest acts in the show, was this humble writer's personal favorite; their finely choreographed, yet still spontaneous, onstage recreations of Madonna's more successful single releases shone as a brilliant jewel betwixt lackluster emcee performances. The C.O.H. Dance Posse (WHICH I SAID I **LIKED** LAST YEAR!!) were also exceptional, bet-



ter than last year; they were well in synch and well-executed, but slightly mechanical and lacking in variety — the same moves seemed to show up over and over.

Oy. I didn't want to talk about this... the Kickline. The World's Smallest Co-Ed Kickline, the joke of last year's Bruns spoof issue, is now a horrid reality. The UNB Swim Team pixie-footed their way around the stage attempting to look like the dream of any Luke Perry and Jason Priestly buffs, while an inordinately small number of females swung their calves around the stage. It may seem odd for me to say this, seeing as how the kickline is a UNB tradition, but perhaps this is a tradition best ignored next year. The kickline is not only a depressing look at how much we value shapely bodies over true artistic expression, but a tawdry and tasteless (not to mention *boring*) item that has become an anticlimax rather than a spectacular finale.

And before anyone that I didn't like blows their stack at me again, let me say this: This is my opinion. I am expressing it. Your opinions are just as valid. If you do not like this review, that is your right. But please don't write any hastily scribbled, furious notes telling me to try it myself or that I should be easier on you because you are university students. I don't pretend to be any better at performance than anyone involved in the show. I only write what I feel in my heart to be true in my experience. And my age has nothing to do with it.

Malaysia

Cultural Night 1992

BY NATASHA RODRIGUES

THE MALAYSIAN STUDENTS' SOCIETY TREATED THE FREDERICTON COMMUNITY TO A NIGHT OF EXOTIC CUISINE, MUSIC, FASHION AND CULTURE AT THE MALAYSIA CULTURAL NIGHT 1992.

THE EVENTS OF THE EVENING ILLUSTRATED THE RICHNESS AND DIVERSITY OF MALAYSIA'S

ETHNIC

MAKEUP.

A VERY

TASTY AND

SPICY

DINNER

WAS FIRST

SERVED TO

THE

GUESTS,

DOING

JUSTICE

TO TRUE

MALAYSIAN

CUISINE.

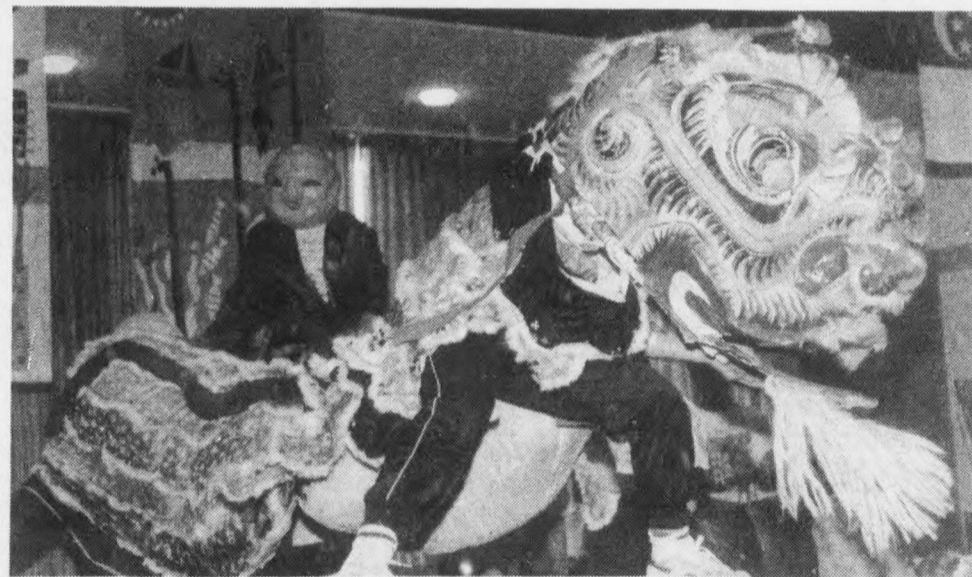
AFTER

DINNER,

THE

GUESTS

WERE GREETED BY A MALAY WELCOME DANCE WHICH IS PERFORMED USUALLY AT MALAY WEDDINGS. THE DANCE BEGAN SLOWLY AND GRACEFULLY, DISPLAYING THE ART AND SKILL OF MALAY DANCING. WHEN THE MUSIC QUICKENED, THE DANCE BECAME TRULY INTRIGUING AND DE-



LIGHTFUL. THE CHINESE ETHNIC GROUP WAS REPRESENTED BY THE NEW BRUNSWICK FREDERICTON CHINESE COMMUNITY. FOUR YOUNG MAIDENS PERFORMED A

TRADITIONAL DANCE WHICH ORIGINATED DURING THE HAN ERA IN CHINA. THE LION DANCE WAS ALSO PERFORMED TO CHASE AWAY THE EVIL SPIRITS. THE SKILLS AND STRENGTH OF THE LION DANCERS WERE APPARENT WHEN THEY WERE CHALLENGED TO OBTAIN THE ANG POW (A RED PACKET CONTAINING MONEY). THE CROWD HELD THEIR BREATH AS THE LION DANCE TROUPE PERFORMED THIS INCREDIBLE FEAT.

MS. HANSAGUPTA REPRESENTED THE INDIAN COMMUNITY IN A SONG AND DANCE PERFORMANCE. THE AUDIENCE SAT SPELLBOUND BY THE INTRICATE AND SENSUAL DANCE AS WELL AS THE EXQUISITE COSTUME WHICH MS. GUPTA WORE.

THE AUDIENCE WAS ALSO TREATED TO A MEDLEY OF TRADITIONAL FOLK SONGS AND LOVE SONGS PERFORMED BY THE STUDENTS. MR. INDRUS, A MALAYSIAN OFFICIAL FROM THE MALAYSIAN TOURIST PROMOTION BOARD WAS ALSO PRESENT TO GIVE AN INFORMATIONAL AND HUMOROUS PRESENTATION ON THE WONDERS OF MALAYSIA.

LASTLY, A FASHION SHOW WAS PERFORMED DISPLAYING CHINESE, INDIAN, MALAY AND BATAK FASHIONS RANGING FROM TRADITIONAL TO MODERN COSTUMES. THE COSTUMES WORN WERE RICH IN COLOUR, TEXTURE AND PRESENTATION. THE ACCOMPANYING TRADITIONAL MUSIC ALSO BEFITTED THE OCCASION.

THE SUCCESS OF MALAYSIA CULTURAL NIGHT '92 WAS A CLEAR REFLECTION OF ALL THE HARD WORK AND EFFORT OF ALL THE STUDENTS INVOLVED AND THEIR OBVIOUS PRIDE AND ENTHUSIASM IN SHARING MALAYSIAN CULTURE WITH THE PEOPLE OF FREDERICTON. THE MALAYSIA CULTURAL NIGHT WAS WITHOUT A DOUBT AN ENORMOUS SUCCESS!

