

3 1-Act Plays reviewed

By JOHN DEMPSEY

How can a curious topic like a man at his own funeral produce a bad play? It can't, and it didn't. "Balcony Scene", the first of three one-act plays performed each night at 8 p.m. from Wednesday, November 21 to Saturday, November 24, was well-produced and well-performed by members of the UNB Drama Society. Although the characterizations were real and worthy of real consideration, some of the portrayals (or perhaps it was the portrayed) tended to become, for the occasional instant, beyond belief. Then again, as the play itself illustrated, people are really sometimes unbelievable and, as it turned out, one person's pettiness is often another's whole life, or death. The fact that the man can no longer communicate with the

living is sad, but the deeper sorrow comes with the distinct impression that he could never really communicate with them, even as one of them.

Following this sojourn into sobriety, the audience was levelled with the heights of levity — "Still Alarm", very short, very alarming. The bellboy, played by John Timmins and the firemen, Patrick Clark and Norman Merry, were particularly comic and, although you may have expected it so soon after a funeral, the laughter was not in the least guarded.

Next came the peanuts (unless you saw the plays on Saturday, in which case you were left to your own devices), just one of the several novelties which made the melodrama (those ordinarily tedious and embarrassingly comic sob stories) an escape from the

extremes of the first two productions into what was ultimately a very middle-of-the-road combination of the two. Villians are villians and virgins are virgins; there's not much else to be said for a melodrama. However, the machine was an informative distraction and a welcome innovation. Of "7,000,000 stories in the naked city", we were hit with this one (and defended ourselves with planets), but you needn't wonder what the other 6,999,999 were like: I have a terrible suspicion they were all the same (with names changed, of course, to protect the innocent). "He Ain't Done Right by Nell" was indisputably melodramatic, and the audience put on a great performance (for peanuts!) for this one. After all, UNB Drama Society, imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.



man of la Mancha

By DANIELLE THIBEAULT

Thank God the musical isn't dead. If Diana Ross can act, Peter O'Toole can surely sing. Make no mistake about it, this movie is a MASTERPIECE. It's the kind of movie that will make you want to stand up and cheer.

Peter O'Toole portrays a poet, actor and writer of plays about to appear before the Inquisition on the subject of his writings, which are thought to be offensive to the Church and a mockery of the Christian teachings. During his brief stay in the 'Common Room', he is forced to justify his role in society or forfeit his writing book and his basket of props. As his defense, he offers the character of Don Quixote of La Mancha, an aged, fragile nobleman with a quest 'to follow a DREAM'.

With such emotions does Peter O'Toole's Don Quixote come alive for his cell mates and the audience, that it becomes hard to disassociate the poet from his legendary 'knight'. O'Toole portrays both characters with a contagious determination to justify himself and a profound respect of dreamers and strong conviction in the beliefs of the idealists.

O'Toole's fragile but determined Quixote rides merrily toward his confrontation with the Enchanter, along with Sancho, his humourous side-kick, so wittily portrayed by James Coco. Quixote's fantasy world is as real to the audience as it is to him. Through Peter O'Toole's performance, he comes across as determined but never fanatic, amusing but never ridiculous, very much in love with Dulcinea but never insane. The old man has a DREAM and he sees through the eyes of a dreamer but he is not the demented, love-struck child that needs to be protected so that he does not squander the fortune his heirs covet so possessively.

One can almost see the inn as a castle, the kind-hearted innkeeper and his wife as the Lord and Lady of that same castle, and the rowdy customers as a group of knights in between battles. It's a bit harder to picture the daytime kitchen-maid-nighttime-whore as a virgin damsel worthy of the greatest honours but to remember that Quixote sees beyond the cold airs and rough language and deep into the soul of the dejected and disillusioned woman to understand how such a person can react to the

reverence she is subject to on behalf of the old man.

Sophia Loren, well typecast in the role of Dulcinea, moves around with style and determination in her character, providing a good target for Quixote's romantic ideals. But it takes O'Toole's leading, powerfully magical Quixote and Coco's humourous, go-between Sancho to substantiate the plot to the point of enjoyable entertainment it attained.

The draw-bridge lowers and Don Quixote and his "mystical, magical, merry charade" fade from the screen and the faces of the poet's cell mates, one realizes that the dreamer in everyone's soul has taken a breath of fresh air and is very much alive. As the poet and his aide walk up the plank to face the charges that brought him in contact with the crowd down below the spell-bound audience can almost believe that: "The world will be better for this, that one man, scorned and covered with scars, still strove, with his last ounce of courage, to reach the unreachable star."

Pleasant Dreams!



BILL OF FARE:

FAYERWEATHER FISH CAKES

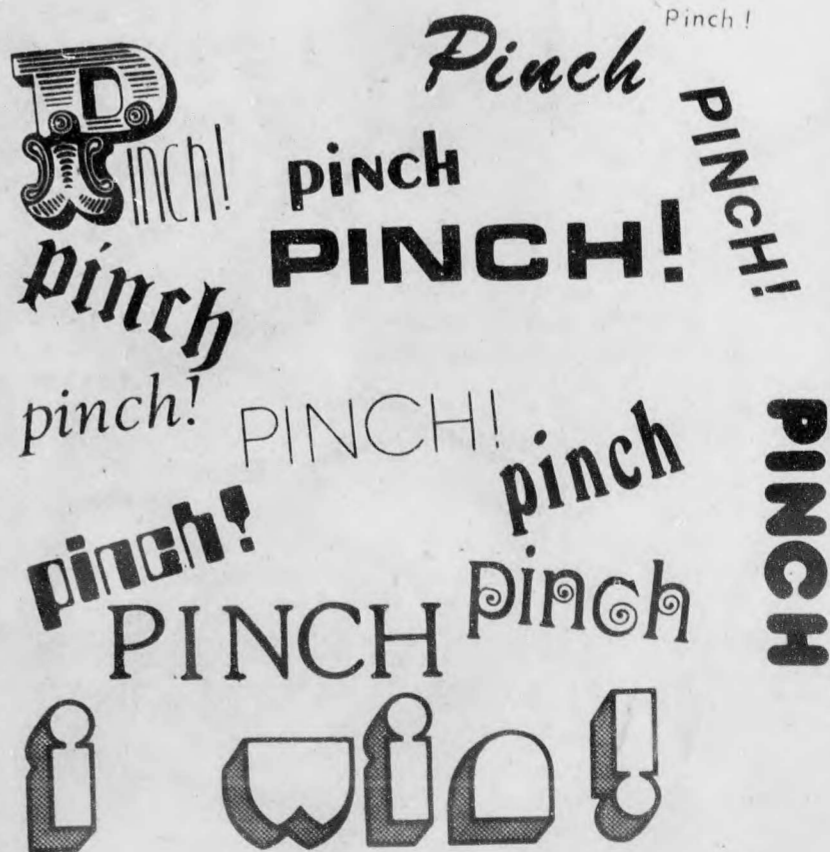
- 1 LB. SALT CODFISH
- 4 - 5 MED. SIZE POTATOES (RAW)
- 1/4 TSP. PEPPER
- 1 EGG
- 1 CUP SHORTENING
- 1/2 TSP. PARSLEY FLAKES

PREPARATION

SOAK CODFISH OVERNITE, DRAIN, ADD PEELED POTATOES SLICED ABOUT 1/2 INCH THICK. COVER WITH COLD WATER AND BOIL TOGETHER UNTIL POTATOES ARE DONE. (ABOUT 15 MIN.) DRAIN THOROUGHLY IN COLANDER AND RETURN TO SAUCEPAN. MASH FISH AND POTATOES TOGETHER ADDING WHOLE EGG, PEPPER AND PARSLEY. BEAT WITH FORK. USING A TBSP. SCOOP UP MIXTURE AND SHAPE WITH FORK. SLIDE ONTO PLATTER. PLACE IN COOL SPOT UNTIL READY TO FRY. POUR APPROXIMATELY 1/2 INCH HOT MELTED SHORTENING IN SKILLET COOK UNTIL CRUSTY GOLD ON EACH SIDE.

SERVE WITH STEWED TOMATOES (SIDE DISH) AND FAVORITE GREEN VEGETABLE.

BY A. M. KORNER JR.



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