

# Leftovers enough to last the next two months

As the name implies, this column tries to cram in all the bits and pieces that are left over from any issue, and since this is the last issue of the year, we are trying to cram in all the bits and pieces that are left over from all year long. One small bit we would like to comment on, in our dying breath, is the SUB art gallery.

Throughout the year, these pages have offered what we feel to have been consistently constructive criticism of the gallery and the shows they have exhibited. Until last week, we felt that the gallery was steadily improving, but it now appears that we were sadly deluded.

The disillusionment came after an unfortunate incident, which, we admit, could have been avoided. The incident itself is unimportant, but it did serve to uncover some disappointing attitudes of the art committee. We refer to the holier-than-thou, art for art's sake, temple is as temple does, attitude of an art gallery which regards art to be the sacrosanct product of an Artist/Creator/God.

We must apologise to the reading public, whom we have led to believe that galleries are for people, and art is something you relate to. It now seems that to the Students' Union, and in particular, to the art committee, it is another

icon, to be placed on another pedestal.

These pages have been visited frequently by members of Art committee, officially and unofficially asking for publicity, and expressing their desire that the student body come to see their exhibits. We in turn have given them as much space and cooperation as possible. However, if they sincerely wish a larger response from the public, we suggest that they try cooperating with the students, in making the gallery a more enjoyable and accessible place,

Your response, dear hearts, to our article last week on Henry Stelfox's *When the Sawflies Mate in Summer and Other Alberta* was so gratifying that we have decided to give you a second taste of the Soulful Agrarian. Here is one of his more interesting poems, "Lament of the Great White Bull":

Take me not to the home farm,  
Daddy,  
Where little girls can swing on  
my tail and say horrible things  
to me.  
But take be back to the Tay  
ranch, Daddy;  
Where I can lie down in valleys,  
where cool fresh waters flows;  
And rest in the shade of the big  
diamond willows

Where pea-vine and vetch lux-  
uriatly grow.

So that I may range the hills and  
mountains sides in the spring-  
time,  
When nothing worse than moun-  
tain lions and grizzly bears  
bother me.  
Often I dream that I hear a big  
bull elk bugling,  
Then I bugle the challenge of  
the big white bull;  
Only, alas, to wake up and find  
that I have been dreaming,  
And find a little girl named  
Helen giving my tail a big  
pull.

Oh, I'm pining away for the Tay  
ranch, Daddy;  
Those wide open fields, the hills  
and the dells,  
For a sight of the rivers and  
snow-capped mountains,  
Where grass is so sweet, where  
no little girl dwells.  
Just turn me loose, Daddy, from  
your barn in the village,  
I can find my way back to the  
Tay river ranch.

Let me saunter along to my  
friends west of Ricinus,  
I'm longing for a sight of Buck,  
Hattie and Tan.  
I don't want to tell tales of a  
little girl teasing me,  
Though she called me this

morning "a big hunk of  
cheese";  
And sometimes she tells me that  
I'm a homely old lobster,  
And she bet me a dime that I'm  
covered with fleas.

Oh, thank you Daddy,  
Right now I'll be leaving,  
I'll amble along, bugling my  
song:  
I can now paw the ground and  
bugle merrily:  
If you come to the Tay river this  
summer  
Just bring Helen along.

Whatever one may think of the  
depressingly dingy interior of  
SUB, externally it is the most  
impressive building on campus.  
That tall black tower is perfectly  
balanced by the long sweep of the  
white south facade.

Well, someone has screwed it all  
up. Someone has decided that  
SUB is not quite distinctive  
enough, that it cannot be recog-  
nized. Someone has slapped a big  
black label over the main tentry.  
Marilyn, that's not what it's all  
about.

Lassie eats chickens—i.e. we  
have observed from bitter experi-  
ence that there is a crying need  
for natural order in this world. As  
we tumble through metaphysical  
chaos, and a sort of euthanasial  
phenomenalism, there is a con-  
tinuing fight for some sort of ac-  
ceptable support structure in our  
lives (Playtex, Maidenform, etc.),  
which alas is a losing one.

The end of the year is of course  
drawing near, and soon you will  
be without the moral and esthetic  
guidance of those pages. There-

fore, before we leave you, we  
would like to present our public  
with a few humble signposts to  
indicate the direction of the bec-  
koning light.

The following simple questions  
(easy even for Kanklewits) will  
show you, dear hearts and gentle  
readers, if you are eligible to  
register a mark on the great  
existential calendar in the sky.

1. What is your position on  
intercourse? Novelty counts here,  
but honesty counts more.

2. What ever happened to Baby  
Jane? Never mind Baby Jane,  
what about Doc and Snake Eyes?  
If you know, score half the re-  
mittance.

3. Did you vote no for arts rep?  
If you answer yes, score five for  
thought, but subtract ten for being  
screwed up and paradoxical.

4. Have you got a light? Score  
one.

5. Have you got the light? Score  
one hundred and ninety three.

6. Was Yorick a head? For a  
yes, score ten and go to jail.

7. Has it ever occurred to you?

8. Does the crosstown bus run  
all night long? Doodah, doodah.

9. How would you react to:

a. a golden goose  
b. mating sawflies in summer  
c. "What do you think you are—  
the third duke of Bedford?"  
d. none of the above

10. Cross your heart and hope  
to die. Do you? Score ten for  
reality.

11. Are you the African Queen?  
Are you a queen? What a drag.  
Score three.

12. Who said Nevermore? Never  
mind who said nevermore, who  
said never mind? Subtract three  
for perspicacity.

## Films

The Zeffereilli *Romeo and Juliet* (at the Paramount) turns out to be superb. Better than Shakespeare, in fact.

The Shakespearean play, after all, as Bernard Shaw pointed out some time ago, is a hymn to a peculiarly debilitating form of romantic love.

Who can take seriously, or find humanly decent, the world-well-lost-for-love idiocy we must accept here if the play's finale is to work properly? Yet who can hold back from the seductive magic of early Shakespearean language?

Anybody who finds the task of making a Shakespearean film suddenly on his hands, that's who.

The usual problem, in fact, with Shakespearean films is that the visual clashes with the audial; a style, after all, developed to render scenery unnecessary consorts oddly wit the super-scenery the big screen needs to fill it.

What always happens is that the text gets hatcheted; and, since the mature Shakespeare, for all his faults, was more talented than most film-writers, an impoverishment results.

But the peculiar nature of *Romeo and Juliet* is such that the hatchet-job for once lets the play breathe, reveals proportions in the play I can't see emerging from an uncut performance.

Hack out most of the lover's speeches, and you eliminate the romantic-love rot. You are left with the *situation* of the lovers, which is something else again. Juliet's youth suddenly makes dramatic sense, as does Romeo's folly.

The ironies can grow now; the lovers become the young counterparts of those magnificent oldies Antony and Cleopatra. The play becomes the definitive tragedy of immaturity-as-irresponsibility-as-pathos (A & C being maturity-as-irresponsibility-as-splendor).

And something even stranger happens. With the lovers devalued, the "center" of the play gutted, the periphery comes into focus.

Zeffereilli gives us a *Romeo and Juliet* the power of which derives from its vision

of a town on the edge of chaos, of the breakdown of civil order and a consequent casual brutality.

The film is brooded over by the Prince of Verona, whose infinitely sad face restores precarious order twice only to end raised over the dead bodies of the lovers as he cries "We are all punished" to the stunned, repentant town.

The other unexpected emergence is Mercutio's.

Zeffereilli has had the bright idea, appalling on paper, of turning Mercutio into a highly nervous homosexual whose pranks flow forth from dark anxious depths; his Queen Mab speech becomes a writhing mouthing of his sexual horror.

Amazingly enough, the trick works; and the balances within the play are immeasurably enriched by this new component.

Zeffereilli's usual virtues are on display too, of course. The color is scrumptious; the handling of the crowd scenes impeccable.

But the outstanding feature of the film is not, as in his *Taming of the Shrew*, decoration. Rather it is the large-scale structural intelligence the film displays, which leaves one feeling the size of the play to be not all that much less than that of the great middle-period tragedies.

This column will be my last in these parts for some time, so one valedictory thank you may not be amiss.

My greatest debt as critic has been to the Edmonton Film Society, which over the last five years has done an amazing job of providing us with those fine films our shmucky commercial theatres won't go out on a limb for.

Without the Society, becoming cinematically literate in Edmonton would not have been possible. It's as simple as that.

And so, faithful following, dauntless devotees, adieu. Mr. Westgag reigns supreme in lonely eminence again as the pen drops from the exhausted hand of your faithful servant,

John Thompson

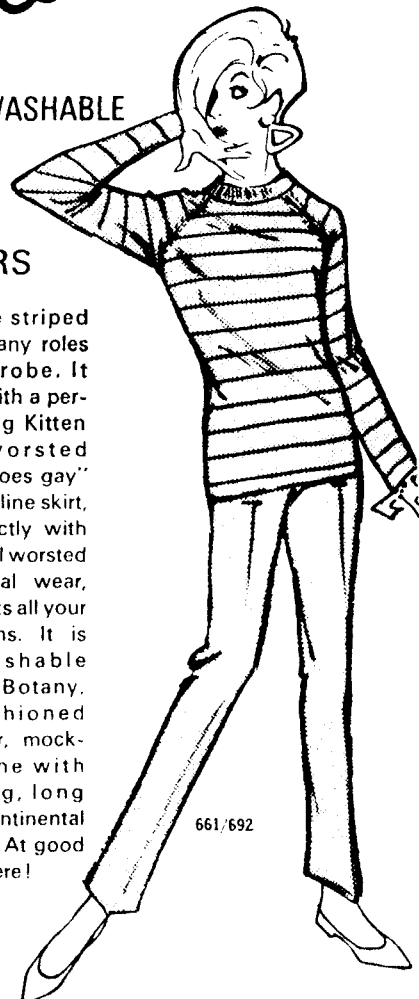
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