

ARTS

A different kind of youth rebellion

Taps
Capital Square

review by Peter West

So! The Edmonton *Sun* has attacked *Gateway's* arts reviews as illogical, badly written and vindictive. I would have been much more disturbed if the *Sun* had said our reviews were perceptive and intelligent. Are there any journalists in town whose opinions are worth bothering with, except those of Bill Thorsell and Katherine Dedyne?

And so to the film *Taps*, which I saw last week. Some years ago Lindsay Anderson made a film called *If* about an elite boys school in England which was taken over by a small group of radicals; as the film ended Malcolm McDowell set fire to a chapel full of dignitaries, bombed an archbishop and engaged in machine-gun fire with the military.

Taps takes a similar theme and examines it in an American context - a military school. The school, threatened with closure, is taken over by the boy cadets. So far, so good, but the story becomes somewhat implausible when the boys commandeer the school, hand out grenades and defy the state governor, the state police and what looks like half the U.S. Army. After a time, too, the story seems to bog down, so that the film sags in



The revolutionary leaders in full dress regalia

the middle. Fortunately, it has a snappy end.

The cadet commander, played by Timothy Hutton, makes an interesting

study in power. The revolt in some ways presents a typical study in revolutionary personalities: there was an aging general, for example, (soundly, but stolidly, played

by George C. Scott) who gives the boys an ideology; like many revolutionaries the boys say they are just trying to *preserve* things the way they were. While the cadet commander launches the revolution, some of his subordinates wish to accelerate things, some to slow them down. Towards the end there is the usual shift of power to the left, represented by a tight, elite group of boys in red berets; meanwhile the cadet commander has joined the leader of the cavalry cadets in arguing that the revolt should end. It is the interplay among personalities and ideas here that makes the film an overall success.

Most of the film's problems are caused by bad direction. Much of it was slack and self-indulgent: whole scenes were unnecessary and some of the dialogue was tedious, particularly the conversation (about honor, virtue, purity and the American way) between the boys and the general early in the film. As in *Lord of the Flies I* was held by the tensions and arguments among the boys, who were acted extremely well; the adults in the film seemed redundant to the drama instead of heightening it.

No masterpiece, this, but good fun if you can maintain the necessary suspension of disbelief.

A Magic Combination

Bergman and Mozart

The Magic Flute
Tonight 6:45 P.M. (Tuesday, Jan. 26)
Princess Theatre

review by Geoffrey Jackson

Every Boxing Day for the past four or five years The Plaza film theatre in Calgary has shown Bergman's *The Magic Flute*. The last two years I have been in that sizeable audience that comes to see it. On both of these occasions I found the film a charming and magical entertainment.

The Magic Flute could be simply described as a faithful motion picture version of Mozart's famous opera. The only problem with that description is that it conjures up instant visions of fat buxom ladies trilling high-pitched German. Please refrain from such a conclusion for *The Magic Flute* is not some Wagnerian piece of bombast. Rather it is a funny, light hearted, and beautifully melodic film. In short, something that would appeal to anyone with any taste for musical theatre at all.

The story is a basic fairy tale in which a handsome prince rescues a beautiful princess. The prince, Tamino, has a humble sidekick named Papagano, who is one of the most famous and loved comic heroes in opera. He gets to sing some of the most entertaining songs, such as the wonderfully silly "Pa-pa-pa".

The Princess, Pamina, has a mother who is the villain of the story. This woman, the Queen of the Night, is having a tooth and nails fight with the wise old king, Sarasto. She is played by a terrific

coloratura and she gets to snap off some crackling arias.

The wise king, Sarasto, is a lion of a man, possessing a glorious deep bass voice. You feel safe and warm just listening to him sing.

Bergman's treatment of this fairy tale material is light and full of wonder. Wisely he refrained from any attempt at realism. Instead he takes us onto the stage for a real performance in a beautiful European opera house. The action takes place on a stage, replete with canvas scenery and curtain calls. We even see the singers backstage, drinking coffee and playing chess. This could have destroyed the story's credibility but when these singers step onto the boards the magic of the theatre is recaptured. You are so entranced by the music and the story that you believe in what you see.

The opera is performed by a charming Swedish company, singing in German. Everything is subtitled in English so that even the greenest opera novice can follow the plot. (Not to mention the dirty jokes.) For once this is an opera with first-rate acting. The cinematography is fine, as you would expect with Bergman at the helm. Indeed everything in this film comes together with polish and perfection.

So you could do a great deal worse than to spend this evening with Bergman and Mozart. *The Magic Flute* is an unique opportunity to travel to the elegance of the old world and to be entertained by beautiful music and a magical tale.



Expressions Hallelujah Chorus from the piece "Black Is" (April 1980)

African culture on campus

by Cameron McCarthy

Since the arrival of blacks in Western Canada, there have been numerous cultural groups formed to provide a common meeting place within the black community to bring together its scattered members.

These groups provided means through which blacks could express their culture, arts, music, history, pride, expectations, aspirations and hopes.

Owing to certain unavoidable problems many of these groups died out. Presently there exists a new black group in Edmonton connected with the University: "Expressions Black Cultural Theatre". As one may guess from the name, it is a theatre

group. Its goals are numerous, but the basic aim is to provide Edmonton audiences with different forms of Black Theatre: theatre written by blacks, about blacks and the problems they face, the lives they live, their loves and their fears.

Although Expressions is a black-based group dedicated to performing black pieces of art, they are very much open to anyone who wishes to join.

Expressions has been in existence since Sept. 1979. In April 1980 they presented their first theatrical performance, a collage of different black works - dances, poetry readings, etc. The production was well attended and encouraged members of the group to continue and to start a new project.

In April 1982 Expressions will be presenting their second theatrical endeavour, a West Indian play by Derek Walcott.

Expressions is a non-profit organization registered with Alberta Corporate and Consumer Affairs and depends on members of the community for support in raising funds.

Thus the members of Expressions would like to extend an invitation to all to attend the upcoming art show and lecture given by Dr. Nitecki entitled "From the Pyramids to Picasso". The lecture covers 7,000 years of African art forms. The lecture will take place at the Newman Center at St. Josephs College Thursday Jan. 28 at 7:30 p.m. Admission is \$2.00.

In addition to the lecture there will be a presentation of excerpts from the Expression's upcoming musical-theatrical production of *Ti, Jean and His Brothers*.

Up and Coming

MUSIC

Don Freed; Centennial Library Theatre; Fri. Jan. 29; 8:30 p.m.; Tickets \$5.00 adults, \$4.00 students and seniors, available at Woodwards.

There is lots of praise for Don Freed on the poster announcing this concert, including plugs by the *Edmonton Sun*, the *Edmonton Journal*, the *Calgary Herald*, the *Vancouver Free Press*, and (ahem) the *Gateway*. Well, why not? He is pretty good, after all. If you don't believe us, check him out yourself.



J.V. Cunningham Don Freed

The Marriage of Figaro; Convocation Hall, Fri, Sat, Jan. 29 and 30; 8:00 p.m. Tickets \$5.00 adults, \$3.00 students and seniors, available at Mike's, Woodwards, HUB and Fine Arts 3-82.

The Mozart work is presented by the University Music Department.

FOR ARTISTES ONLY

First Annual Bucky Beaver Amateur Film Festival; Londonderry Mall; March 22-27;

open to artists working in the Super 8, 16mm, and 1/4 inch videotape format; categories: animation, short story and documentary; prizes given in age categories - 10 years and under, 11-14 years, 15-18 years, and over 18 years old. Deadline for submissions is March 17. Interested applicants should call organizer Doug Smitheman at 1 (403) 475-9266 for further details.

READINGS AND SPEAKERS

J.V. Cunningham; Wed. Jan. 27; 4:00 p.m.; Humanities Centre L-3; lecture entitled "God's Child, Manipulator, Hear Me! Sappho and the religious experience."

Thurs. Jan. 28; 12:30 p.m.; Humanities Centre L-3; poetry reading.

Dr. Hoffpauir of the University English Department says that Cunningham is one of the most important poets to visit the campus this year.