

Cool, professional, comic miming

By JOHN OUGHTON

MacLuhan may not know it, but mime is one of the coolest media around. You and the performer construct and continue to imagine a set in the midst of the graceful silence which characterizes mime. . . and then zap! that reality is finished and a new one starts with the next vignette.

A good mime performance is rare indeed in this age of sensory overload, so you should catch a performance of the Canadian Mime Theatre at the Central Library Theatre before the show ends on December 12. Students only have to pay \$2.00 for the two-hour performance which is a bargain considering what even bad movies cost lately.

The Mime Theatre is a very professional group technically. Light and sound cues are handled as if the performers themselves were pushing the buttons. Strobe lights and sound effects are used sparingly and always for a good reason. One of the highlights of the show is Cocktails for Two, a skit involving roaring 20's music and stunning employment of a black light. A couple of excellent masks are used during The Chair II, an essay on the politics of the living room.

Adrian Pecknold, the Mime Theatre's founder and artistic director, shows taste and restraint in these occasional additions to the basic formula of mime, which is gesture, expression, and imagination. The Theatre consists of four performers: Pecknold, an English Canadian; Margot Lamarre, a French Canadian; Harro Masko, who is of German origin; and George Stanislav, a



Adrian Pecknold of Mime Theatre

naturalized Czech whom you may have seen in the film Closely Watched Trains. The fact that the group just finished a series of performances for Indian and Eskimo audiences in the Northwest Territories indicates their mastery of the international language of mime.

Traditionally, mime is a comic medium. Without dialogue or props, it is difficult for the performer to sustain a serious feeling which is not an easily recognizable and therefore sentimental mood for the audience. The Theatre attempted three pieces of serious nature: Injured Sparrow and Man and Woman fell into sentimentality, but The Rape was more of a success since it showed two possible conclusions to a given situation. Man and Woman overtaxed the mime form in at-

tempting to portray the course of human life in two minutes.

The Theatre's comic pieces, however, are great successes. George Stanislav does some amazing things to Hockey Night in Canada in TV, and anyone who has attended a university lecture or commencement can enjoy the wordless dialectic of the two academics in Discourse at Sunset.

The Canadian Mime Theatre achieves its stated aim of "primarily entertaining." For a charming evening of diversion which is both restful and challenging, go and see the Canadian Mime Theatre at Central Library soon. If you miss the Toronto run, they'll be on Channel 19 December 5, in Ottawa for a two-hour mime play (!) at Christmas, and at Niagara-on-the-Lake from June 15 to August next summer.

Perth Conspiracy grows

By BRIAN PEARL

Doing your own thing with other people around you for good company can be a great show if you are a musician and can arrange it so that you and your friends all can be together onstage. Monday, November 9, the Perth County Conspiracy celebrated the issuing of their first album by renting Massey Hall for an evening and inviting their friends and anyone else who had the price of admission, which was nothing at all.

The mechanics of the event were the musical creations of Cedric Smith and Richard Wheelan, their best friends grooving with them onstage, a well-cued light system, Festival Sound and those fantastic tapestries, quilts actually, that somehow made the stage resemble a folk cathedral. The final element was an enthusiastic audience. We all chanted 'OM' together at the end of the concert in some

organismic, cosmic sensational happening. Massey Hall as mantra temple.

The music of the Conspiracy is securely folkish and decidedly poetic in the literary sense. The tunes are very enchanting and the lyrics deeply imaginative. At Massey Hall, they found it easy to cast a spell and pull the audience into their private trance. Their first album, on Columbia, is called The Perth County Conspiracy Does Not Exist. Transferring their music and experience from the stage onto a disc was a difficult task, and it was only moderately successful on their first try.

There was an obvious attempt on the album to put the message across, continually. But that self-consciousness in the effort made the directing, or programming, of the album seem much too heavy for the delightful whimsy of the Conspiracy's easy trip. They sacrifice some gentleness and

serendipity to state very clearly just what they mean.

But the message of the Conspiracy is:

"Trust in the father.
Trust in your brother.
Trust in yourself.
Trust in each other."

It's a simple idea that needs little reinforcing.

The quality of the sound on the album is extra fine. The string instruments they play so well; guitars, piano and dulcimer emerge with clean edges from the recording, and their delicate interplay in vocals and instrumentals is reproduced finely. Terry Brown at Toronto Sound (wherever that is) did a very good job, indeed.

Perth County is off to a very strong start with this album. Everything depends on how well they can adjust to the transition to recording from their very together live performances. I hope they can do it because we need their easy country trip very badly here in the city.

The Perth County Conspiracy does not exist, yet.



Cedric Smith and Richard Wheelan do not Exist.

Soft Led Zep

By STEVEN DAVEY

Led Zeppelin III, (Atlantic SD7201).

After a year of waiting, Led Zeppelin have felt it time for yet another musical venture in "heavy-dom." But, what's this? It's not loud! There aren't any stereo effects? Have Led Zeppelin gone (shudder) soft?

Not really; but they have let their musicianship reign instead of their usual hit-them-over-the-head-until-they're-unconscious style. Gallows Pole is the highlight of the L.P. It starts as a simple country blues then builds to a soaring climax aflight with sax/violin/guitar solo. Nifty!

Elton John, (UNI 73090).

Mr. John is this season's "Superstar", openly hyped as "Mr. Terrific". However, contrary to the "Gee, Grand Funk are great!" — hype, Elton is pretty good! Take Me To The Pilot and Border Song are exceptional. He has a strong gospel feel, very similar to Leon Russell crossed with Jose Feliciano (right). Elton John's next album will be a monster, if he only drops those violins!

Is This? Jackie Lomax, (Apple ST 3354)

This is surely the most overlooked album of all-time, possibly even more so than all the Buffalo Springfield's combined. It was made over three years ago and was produced by George Harrison. Lomax's back-up group is the elite of pop music. They include: John Bonham, Eric Clapton, George Harrison, Nicky Hopkins, Paul McCartney, Ringo Starr, and Klaus Voorman. In fact, Clapton is at his peak here (this L.P. was made shortly before Cream's demise). If you can find this record, you'll be lucky. It's a classic! Good luck.

(More record reviews)

Singles are a neglected area of rock, often dismissed as garbage. True, you have to sift through the froth ("I Think I Love You"?) but there are a few good singles out.

"Domino" — Van Morrison, (Warner Brothers).

An opening guitar riff, a Motown

sax, and sliding up to the mike is Mr. Marble-Mouth, and it's a hit. This is one of Morrison's more exuberant tunes, and it blares its way out of a transistor perfectly. Who says there's no such thing as Irish soul?

"My Sweet Lord" — George Harrison, (Apple).

George obviously knows what he is doing. The chorus includes George's standard "Hare Krishna" chanting, and will no doubt be a favourite on Vishnu's juke box. An indication of greater things to come.

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