

Theatre

# The Oldest Profession is dull

**The Oldest Profession**  
Theatre Network  
Run ends March 20

review by Kevin Law

**T**heatre Network, in conjunction with Saskatoon's 25th Street Theatre, are instigating a novel idea by exchanging their finest plays, a sort of revival as it were of old prairie trade ventures that followed a trade route of the 1800's called the Carlton Trail. Unfortunately, the 25th Street Theatre offering being performed at Theatre Network is less than gold.

*The Oldest Profession*, a story about five aged hookers and their profession, is a great premise that falls far short of the mark. A park bench littered with garbage and graffiti is the setting for the five women to gather and talk about their failing fortunes and bodies, and reminisce about the old days of bordellos and cortical clientele. For these licentious ladies the cold changes of modern society is saddening and somewhat bewildering. They long for the days of their youth when their profession held more tradition and was even familial in its function.

Such a play would seem to invite rich thematic exploration, but alas, there is little substance of plot or character to hold one's attention in a drama that should grab the viewer.

The main contribution to the play's shortcoming lies in the script. Playwright Paula Vogel fails to develop the play or the characters to their full potential. There is little insight into Vogel's characters because there is little illumination on their lives past and present.

Vogel's failure to generate interest in the characters' lives is a failure to generate any rising action and resolution; as a result, conflict between the women and their world is aimless and minimal.

The play tends to move laterally because

of the lack of central conflict from which the action can thrust itself, and therefore we get dramatic intensity that is blunt instead of sharp.

It is a shame Vogel's play appears so underdeveloped. A stronger sense of direction could have produced a memorable play full of socially barbed black humour. As it stands, however, the humour is nominal; most jokes inspire only groans, and the profane language remains street-level ordinary and

devoid of satire.

*The Oldest Profession* does possess a cast of seasoned professionals and they struggle valiantly with the directionless nature of the play. Barbara Reese as Ursula, "the whore with the soul of a businesswoman," brings some energy to her approach as a plump and overbearing working girl who pesters the others about their sagging fortunes. Wendy Agnew is good as Lillian, the dignified southern belle whose refined manner of dress contrasts with the garish garb of the other ladies. The chafing scenes between her and Ursula humourously peak when she mocks Ursula with jokes about Ursula's social disease. Similarly, Jane Roth-Casson as Vera has

some good moments, particularly a scene where she informs the others she had a marriage proposal from one of her customers who was then dragged off to a home by his horrified children.

Unfortunately, such good moments go unstained and leave behind few memorable lines. Even critically acclaimed director Tom Bentley-Fisher can do little to motivate the play beyond pacing the scenes with appropriate silence following minor character flaps. The result is a play that drifts about uninspired, conveying little emotion or pathos to the audience. Add to that an overly long length, and *The Oldest Profession* soon becomes simply old.

## Music Trivia Contest

# Grant and Lloyd behind the scenes

by G. Winton and L. Robertson

**E**veryone remembers the stars. They get their names in lights and on the radio. They get the fan mail and the groupies. They get busted in drug raids and paternity suits.

But behind every star there is a supporting cast — the Producers, Managers, Writers and Engineers — who are ignored by the general public. But, fortunately for these forgotten heroes, there are always music trivia buffs around to remember their accomplishments and attempt to give credit where credit is due. But first, last week's answers:

1. Carole Pope's partner was Kevin Staples.
2. K.d. lang believes herself to be the reincarnation of Patsy Cline, hence the band name "The Reclines"
3. Anne Murray was Elvis's all time favourite female singer.
4. Marianne Faithfull went from a convent to become Mick Jagger's live-in (and Keith Richard's live-in, and Brian Jones' live-in, and so on, and so on, etc.).
5. Percy Sledge originally recorded "When a Man Loves a Woman."
6. The "Ikette's" backed up Ike and Tina.
7. Lorraine Segatto and Laurie Conger of the Parachute Club were very close (nudge, nudge, wink, wink, say no more).

8. Sheron Alton and Holly Woods were the two female members of Toronto.

9. Joni Mitchell sometimes mentions Saskatchewan towns in her lyrics. Two examples are Baljennie and Maidstone, but there are others.

10. Two possible answers for this one: 1) Linda McCartney is a dog with wings — a joke, get it? Ha Ha. 2) The title of the Heart Album *Dog and Butterfly* is an even better answer.

**Tie Breaker:**  
11. Luba's last name is Kowalchuk. Her first name means "Love", "Loved One" or something like that. Isn't that lovely?

And who knows about women better than another woman (besides us of course)? That's right! Nobody. To prove it, **Linda Slater** correctly answered every question to become this week's winner. Linda can pick up her prize, a gift certificate from S.U. records at our apartment, say Friday night at about 8:00? We'll supply the bubbly to celebrate our first female winner! But seriously, drop by room 282 S.U.B. anytime and claim your just deserts.

Now this week's questions:  
1. The Beatle's had-Brian Epstein, who was the Rolling Stones' equivalent?

2. Before Paul Samwell-Smith made a name as a producer with Chris DeBurgh's *At the End of a Perfect Day*, he was a member of a very famous band. Name the band.

3. Everyone knows Colonel Tom Parker was Elvis's manager in later years. Whom did he replace at the job?

4. After what two record company executives was A&M records named?

5. Name the notorious manager/producer who created The Sex Pistols and Bow Wow before becoming a performer himself.

6. What famous DJ is credited with coining the term "rock 'n' roll"?


7. What producer has worked on albums with all of the following: Queen, Run Wood, Foreigner, Alice Cooper, The Cars, Journey, and Dusty Springfield?

8. What did Charlie Hodge do for Elvis?


9. Who was behind the writing of the Stones' first hit "I Want to Be Your Man"?

10. After writing all of "Meatloaf's" big hits, this gentleman went on to produce and write for Air Supply, Bonnie Tyler, Barbara Streisand, and Barry Manilow among others. What is his name?


**Tie Breaker:**  
11. Who had a major hit with "Summertime city" in 1975, and followed it up by recording the theme for "The Wombles" T.V. series?



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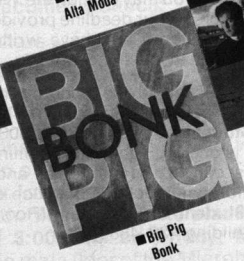
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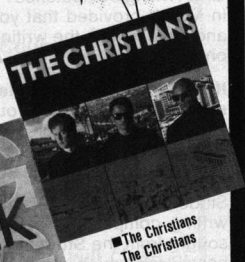
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