

TC playlets laudable event

by Sheelagh Russell

If the efforts presented last Tuesday and Wednesday evenings are any indication, the Creative Writing Class at Teachers College has many members of much promise in writing and not a few in acting. Sure, they're still got a long way to go, but with only a few weeks of preparation, they made a laudable effort.

As was pointed out during the introduction, almost all of the members had little or no training in drama and its presentation. A little more ability on the technical side would have been welcome. That is, lighting and set changes could have been handled with more efficiency and brevity. As it was, the audience found it difficult to distinguish if one play was ending, or just its first scene, and as usual the balancing efforts by the stage crew were greeted with more applause than the actors themselves.

Of the first seven of the nineteen original playlets which this reviewer saw, most looked promising. "Is This Me?" by Cathie Ayer in my opinion was the best of these, with a short pantomime, "Characters" by Joe Kenny a close

second. "Is This Me?" was blessed by good lighting and competent acting, but it is my view that the play could do with less comment by the main character. The audience got the point after the second scene. In a brief comedy sketch, "The Driving Lesson" by Michele McElman, the actors displayed promising comic skill.

The first playlet, "The Comedian" by Bev Gibbons, showed a promising start and some psychological depth, but almost before it had begun it was over, with a surprising, confusing and unprepared for ending. Perhaps it is the fate of the first in a series such as this; once the evening was into full swing, the contributions did not seem to grate so much.

"Listen to Me" by Myrna Ruest was at least understandable, perhaps too predictable. The actors carried their roles competently in a "domestic tragedy" of a husband who hides behind a newspaper and business news while his wife runs off with his more attentive partner.

The fourth playlet, "Both Sides Now" by Kirby Nowlan was interesting. The plot ran

smoothly, the actors were right for their roles, and the ending was prepared for but not predictable. Still, it seemed to lack a certain something, a certain difference to set it off from the others.

"All in a Day" by Jillian Patriquen was an amusing few minutes in the life of a counter girl at a drycleaners. Each customer was an amusing "type", and the two catty women were very well played. However, the ending, in which, I assume, the girl displays a fit of temper, appeared unjustified unless one knew more of her character.

The plays were all relevant, if relevancy is a requirement for good drama, and, for the most part, well written. However, one suggestion. Perhaps, sometime, the class might stage one, perhaps two such playlets, the best, expanded and polished throughout the year as a group effort. (one has the feeling the plays were too short). With the right publicity and a larger audience, the effort should be successful both in terms of audience enjoyment and creative fulfillment.



Photo by Oudamant

gallery exhibits town



Grace Slick by Harold Town (36 x 39)

Grace Slick, Mary Hopkins, Janis Joplin, John Mayall and Johnny Winter are all collected together until the end of November at the Beaverbrook Art Gallery. These and other music celebrities are the subjects of forty drawings by Harold Town on exhibition at the Gallery.

Harold Town, from Toronto, is an internationally acclaimed Canadian artist. Through his association with Painters Eleven, he was one of the first Canadian artists to exhibit an awareness of what was being done on the Contemporary New York Scene in his work. This exhibition titled, "Popsters and Celebrities", shows drawings, mostly black on white, that have been executed in the past three years. The pictures are for sale, varying in price from \$580 to \$1,500.

The exhibition was organized by Robert Percival, Art Curator of the New Brunswick Museum, for circulation on the Atlantic Provinces Art Circuit. Mr. Percival says, "Town draws from his guts and says what he wishes to say, unconcerned with the trivium of improvised gimmickery, shock tactics or any other means employed by those with only mediocre graphic ability.

It is his profound efficiency with the mediums he uses that transport his vision, in mere terms

of line and rhythm to the realms of creative ability beyond the norm. His drawings are never deliberate, in any sense of the word to imply versatility, they are more a spontaneous projection of his own personality imposed upon by the life around him and unsullied by academic dedication."

There are two portraits of Grace Slick, both done in November 1969. The earlier drawing is a cartoon-like face with small black eyes. The other drawing is a very different Gracie with full lips, big eyes set in glasses and a more serious countenance. This face looks at you straight on, and I think it reveals some essential characteristics of her character.

The second portrait of Grace Slick is drawn with a few solid, bold lines and I find his work most interesting when he manages to portray a character with a minimum of lines. B.B. King is scarcely drawn in body, just the outline of his guitar where his body should be; thus the guitar is an integral part of the drawing. The right hand is raised in that familiar King motion, and the hand is somehow perfectly described with only a few blunt strokes. The hands are simply and beautifully expressed in the several drawings of dancers in motion, also.



Bike Freak by Harold Town (36 x 29)

The dancers are hip young people getting into the sound of popular rock bands with contained, cool movements described with a few, light loose lines. The pop figures are all very cool. "Woman Smoking" is kind of a vamp, ornamentally dressed and super-sophisticated with a big brim hat and a cigarette held to her mouth in that familiar meditative pose.

Harold Town is really attracted to floppy brimmed hats. Some of the drawings are almost comical with big hats and big round glasses, perhaps because they slightly resemble (especially No. 38, Yippie)-the Mad Magazine characters in Spy vs. Spy.

Another drawing that has to be mentioned is the long narrow body of John Mayall with his guitar poised and held close to him by those long slim fingers. His head is a wonderful study with his long hair swept around his face and his head arched out for the microphones.

The whole collection is exciting, capturing as it does the movements and expressions of the pop generation. After leaving the Beaverbrook Art Gallery it will continue on the Atlantic Provinces Art Circuit to St. John's, Halifax and Sackville.

Photo by DeFrietas

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