

Arts & Entertainment

Ferry plays in *Burn This*

interview by Mark Primmer

"At one point I had just had it with the (expletive)s of the business... I was starting to lose my passion for the theatre," explains David Ferry, star of the Citadel Theatre's latest production, *Burn This*.

Ferry says that he was very cynical two years ago, but that his cynicism has died down, if not away. At a downtown cafe, amidst the clatter of dishes and the chatter of waitresses, an enthusiastic David Ferry spoke of the play, his role, and the acting business.

"*Burn This* is about passion... it's a love story, a love story set in a very specific social milieu — that of 1980's Manhattan — the age of anti-personal relationships — the age of caution and of conservatism. It's a wonderful play about the struggle between security and passion, and it's beautifully written."

Ferry says that he's a big believer in the writer. "I think (the actor's) job is to find out what the writer is saying and then to tell the story. That is what it's all about — telling stories. It's the world according to Northrop Frye."

"... find out what the writer is saying and... tell the story."

Of Lanford Wilson, the play's writer, Ferry says, "This writer is, I think, one of two or three best American dramatists alive. His technique is extraordinary... I've worked with him in New York. He is so careful in the way he writes. He's thought about everything he says, and the structure of the play is so flawless. What his technique does is that he allows the characters he's writing to be so lifelike, even though it's poetic realism, not gritty naturalism."

In *Burn This*, actress Colleen Winton takes on the role of Anna, a 30 year old dancer caught between the passion offered by Pale (played by Ferry), and the security offered by Burton (played by Larry Yachimec). Jeff Haslam takes on the role of Larry, a gay advertising art director.

Describing his character, Ferry says,

Bush exhibition at EAG shows natural frames

Jack Bush
In Edmonton Collections
Edmonton Art Gallery
September 17 — November 13, 1988

by Alexandra Parr

The work of Canadian painter Jack Bush (1909 - 1977) is instantly recognizable with its intense, vibrant colors and abstract forms. They combine to create a style of modern art which is currently in high demand: indeed, every painting at this show was collected from homes and private galleries in Edmonton. Not since Matisse has a painter used such simplicity with such success.

Children and those who don't like modern art are quick to scorn this basic style — eg. "Even I could do that — it's so easy!". Perhaps, but emulating Bush is not as easy as it looks; trying not to "look like Bush" when using high-key color became a problem for his disciples. Bush developed trademarks which kept his work original, however. The exhibition shows several examples of his "natural frame" created by not painting to the edge of the canvas —

"He's an absolute non-bullshitter who calls everything as he sees it. He's completely honest... and he's graphic!"

Ferry is not new to the Citadel. He played the role of John Merrick in *The Elephant Man*, and has starred in other Citadel plays including *The Trials of Oscar Wilde*, *A Sleep of Prisoners*, *Cause Celebre*, and *A Life*.

Ferry's work in television is extensive. Those students who were watching television when they should have been preparing for their Chem final may have seen him on the CTV show *Night Heat*, where he has made three or four guest appearances.

Listing those people who have influenced him, Ferry names people like Neil Munroe, R.H. Thompson, Gordon Pinsent, Paul Newman, and Tom Berenger. Ferry says that he goes to a lot of plays, and a lot of films.

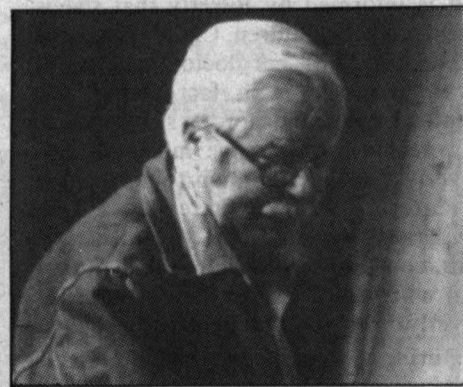
"The reality is that Canada is getting more and more competitive"

Ferry received his formal training from the National Theatre School of Canada. He attended the school three years, of which Ferry says, "I worked my ass off." Since graduating from the school in 1972, he admits that there have been a couple of occasions that he's had to sling beer or drive hack, but he has usually been quite fortunate. "I've got a 16 year old daughter, a marriage, a house, and a mortgage... I work at it," he says.

Assuming the tone of a lecturing professor, Ferry states that acting is a business. "The reality is that Canada is getting more and more competitive, more big league, and you have to constantly keep at people to make them aware of what you're doing. You have to phone... and write... and audition... and put tapes together and hustle!"

And what will Ferry be hustling when he's finished with *Burn This*? Ferry says that he'll be making some appearances on Peter Gzowski's *Morningside* as part of some work he's doing with the assistance of the Canada Council Exploration Program. "I'll be travelling across Canada, tape recorder in hand, collecting regional dialects. The tape will be used by actors interested in studying dialects."

For those people interested in seeing Ferry perform, *Burn This* opens at the Citadel's Rice Theatre September 29th and runs through until October 23rd.



Jack Bush; exhibition of paintings at EAG

and also, several pieces have "accidental" drips and spots of paint left on intentionally. These give the paintings great character.

The newly-renovated EAG has done a tasteful job with an assortment of Jack Bush's work that might have been overwhelming if not displayed well. The profusion of brilliant color, geometric shapes and somewhat obscure titles ("3 windows" is a painting of four colored blocks — and nothing else) make this show highly recommended for lovers of modern art. Even those who doubt the talent required to paint like this should see it; the Jack Bush collection may change your mind.



Rob Galbraith

David Ferry, veteran of stage and screen, stars in the Citadel production of *Burn This* starting tonight.

Mile Zero finds objects

interview by Christine Boyd

Everyone knows that it all started with an apple. The trouble, the risk, the adventure, the fun: even Adam had to admit that life in the garden was becoming dull. This Friday and Saturday, the apple once again brings excitement and fun in Mile Zero Dance's dance/music collaboration *Found Objects*. According to the group's artistic coordinator Andrea Rabinovitch, the show's main prop is an apple. "In fact," she adds mysteriously, "there are many apples and we do many things with them." Sharing the stage with these apples will be a multitude of other props, not to mention several pipers piping, a couple of dancers dancing, and the odd lord a-leaping. But what else would you expect of a company named "Mile Zero Dance"?

The unusual name was chosen one night when the group's founders, Debra Shantz and Rabinovitch, were watching television. The famous Canadian runner Steve Fonyo was beginning his "Mile Zero Run" and the name immediately struck the partners as not only describing the stage of their company at that time, but having a special and essential quality. In a word, it was hip.

Shantz and Rabinovitch had worked together previously in the Brian Webb dance company. With Mile Zero Dance's incorporation in 1985, they formed the core of a group of fluctuating size. The company gave its first performance in 1986 and has since participated in a number of projects, including Art Works '86, Vertigo Art in 1987, and this year's Fringe.

Mile Zero Dance is currently the company-in-residence at Grant MacEwan College in Edmonton, where it receives free rehearsal and office space in return for any promotion that the college receives through the company's activities. The company must also take on as an apprentice a Grant MacEwan graduate.

This year all three of the company's dancers, though professionals rather than apprentices, have diplomas from the college: Maria Chia and Deborah Stewart-Evans in dance and Tim Bell in theatre arts. As well, both Shantz and Rabinovitch teach dance at the campus, and Rabinovitch also instructs in the theatre arts program. For those who caught *Found*

Objects at the Fringe, this weekend's show should be quite different. "The Fringe show was fraught with disaster," laughs Rabinovitch. "One of the dancers, Debbie hurt her back the week before the show, and we had to redo all the choreography to do the show without her." She adds that the John L. Haar Theatre, where the show will be playing, has a much larger and newer stage than did the Fringe.

This weekend's show will be a combination of live music and dance, with the musicians joining the dancers on stage. The three musicians, David Teha, Michael Sniatenchuk, and Ralph Pretz, collaborated on the creation of the piece, and will supply a hybrid of new age, pop, and African music while the dancers hurl about in a melange of modern dance and modern jazz.

"... there are many apples and we do many things with them."

Rabinovitch stresses that the dance is "definitely not commercial jazz." When asked if the show would compare to any others recently in town, Rabinovitch replied that her group prefers to create shows which have a unifying theme rather than the more traditional repertoire of six or seven unconnected pieces, and mentions Michael MacIntyre and LaLaLa Human Steps as being similar in this respect. However, Rabinovitch is confident that *Found Objects* offers Edmontonians innovative dance, as well as a fun and interesting evening.

After *Found Objects* Shantz and Rabinovitch will continue teaching at Grant MacEwan, and hope to give some lectures in local schools. The group is considering an Alberta tour next spring, and does not rule out more commercial projects such as fashion shows. Rabinovitch mentions a mysterious New Year's project under consideration, but adds no details.

Found Objects will be playing at 8:00 p.m. on Friday, September 30 and Saturday, October 1, at the John L. Haar Theatre, Grant MacEwan College, 10045 - 156 Street. Tickets are \$5.00 for students and seniors (\$8.00 regular) and are available in advance or at the door.