

recordings

The Reprise—Warner Brothers label should be congratulated simply because it is one record-making body that is not afraid to experiment. Experimentation has resulted in two excellent albums by Van Dyke Parks and Randy Newman.

SONG CYCLE by VAN DYKE PARKS is quite interesting, but still in its experimental stages. While impossible to decipher any meaning from the album, the general sound is enchanting, including practically every rhythmic and harmonic variation imaginable. "Vine Street", a selection written and arranged by Randy Newman, and "By the People" are unbelievable in both their technique and imagination, the latter featuring an "authentic folk choir", to quote the record cover, while the former suggests passages from Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. The album's only instrumental, "Donovan's Colors" (written by Donovan Leitch) demonstrates Van Dyke Parks' ability to expand a simple theme.

The RANDY NEWMAN album has to be the most underrated album in record-making history. Employing a seventy piece orchestra, Newman creates arrangements which are technically as good as others, only much more imaginative. His sometimes intricate orchestration serves to emphasize the meaning of the lyrics rather than obscure them.

The most fascinating aspect of Newman's songs is their realism. For example, "Love Story" is a beautiful comment on the meaninglessness of life; the words are supplemented with meaningless orchestral "gimmicks" such as the ludicrous inclusion of castanets, which are so out of context that the perceptive listener can get the feeling of the futility which Newman portrays, only he is able to laugh at it. In "Davy the Fat Boy", however, the humorous orchestration serves as a contrast to the theme of man's inhumanity to man, emphasizing the actual real-life, day-to-day tragedy.

Musically, his songs are nothing less than works of genius. His harmonies flow smoothly and every innovation has a musical as well as a lyrical purpose to it.

—Larry Saidman

Words wanted

Leona Gom, editor of Inside magazine, has discovered the campus has a lot of poets but few writers of prose. If you have a short story, a fable,

or an exciting NEW prose form, bring it up to her office (room 282b, SUB). It's about time somebody made Leona happy.

Moliere at Studio Theatre: But Father, I'd rather do it myself

The tastes and demands of a modern audience have changed considerably from those of the 17th century French court, and to take a play by Moliere, in translation, and be able to work it into a performance that is as appealing today as it was to Moliere's audience is a difficult task indeed. The U of A Drama Dept.—Studio Theatre—deserves a lasting applause for they have done just this with *The Miser*.

Praise must be first given to Director John Terfloth. He did an admirable job of overcoming the difficulties involved in making translated Moliere palatable. Action and speech were pushed to a galloping pace. All the characters were slightly distorted, though never past the limits of believability. The role of audience as actor was utilized to the full. The *Miser* was certainly the tightest, most unified production I have seen at Studio Theatre.

Tuesday night was studded with outstanding individual performances, the best of which without doubt, was Jeremy Dix-Hart. His acting of Cleante deserves only superlatives. He carried himself as the perfect fop consistently and magnificently. Dix-Hart was one of the two members of the cast who were able to handle and control their ends of the accelerated dialogue.

I went to the play with deep reservations about Walter Kaasa's ability. He butchered the role of Volpone last Spring. However, in *The Miser*, even he was outstanding. At times he tended to ham needlessly out of character. He fumbled over words occasionally. Nothing quite as serious as I had expected. I think I would have liked to have seen him present Harpagon a little less amicable and a little more miserly.

Pieterella Versloot was her usual magnificent self. Not only that, she acted her part well as Elise. Nancy Beatty's role of Frosine was likewise well acted. These two are fascinating to watch when not directly involved in the action on stage. Both have mastered the slight and subtle gesture. Nancy Beatty is especially good with her hands.

Alexander Diakin (La Fleche) and Jay Smith (Master Jacques) are also to be applauded for their acting. Diakin perhaps was a little too bouncy.

Elmer Hohol (Valere), Catherine Jackson (Marianne) and Richard Sutherland (Anselme) each did an

adequate job but weren't as impressive as the others. Hohol did handle his speech well, though at a slower pace than the others. There was simply no bad acting in the production.

Costuming was varied. While some were accurate reproductions of the time and place, others, under no stretch of the imagination, could be related to 17th century France. On one hand were the costumes of Cleante, Anselme, and Master Jacques, all very convincing; on the other hand was the costume of Marianne, complete with bonnet, looking like she had stepped out of late Victorian England. A very major fault in the costuming was evident in the case of Frosine. Harpagon spends a great deal of his time

oogling over Miss Beatty's bosom. I think it would have been a nice gesture if Miss Beatty's costume could have been altered somewhat to show that there was indeed something that Kaasa was gaping at. They proved it could be done elsewhere.

The set by Gwen Keatley served a purpose, I suppose (I'm not sure what.) It would have been nice if it had resembled the interior of an abode or a courtyard of some sorts. As a matter of fact, it would have been nice if it had resembled anything.

Nonetheless, Studio Theatre's production of *The Miser* was lively success thanks to very good acting under very good direction. My condolences to those who missed it.

—Philip Hinman



Walter Kaasa as Moliere's Miser

—Photo by Peter Emery

STUDENT EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION

Week of October 28, 1968

H. G. Acres and Company	— October 28, 29
Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company	— October 28, 29
Shell Canada Limited	— October 28, 29, 30, 31
Public Service Commission	— October 28, 29, 30, 31 & November 1
Alberta Oil & Gas Conservation Board	— October 30, 31
Marathon Oil Company	— November 1

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