

# The arts

**Brent Titcomb**

## Every move-music

Brent Titcomb's "annual" Edmonton performance last Saturday and Sunday night provided something a little different for his fans; they had him all to themselves.

His nights at the Hovel were his first solo appearances in Edmonton and the performances were sublime, in any sense of the word that you may choose to use.

## Schmid comes through at last minuet

The Hon. Horst A. Schmid, Minister of Culture, advised the Alberta Ballet Company late last week that the provincial Cabinet had agreed to guarantee a \$50,000 bank loan, which would enable the Company to meet its immediate financial commitments. The loan will bridge the period of time required to solicit financial support from the public and private sectors of the community. A major fund-raising campaign will be launched within the next few days to raise the funds needed to sustain the Company and repay the loan.

The Alberta Ballet Company would like publicly to thank Mr. Schmid and the provincial Government for their support and immediate action on behalf of the Company.

His careful combination of polished professionalism, compelling vocals and guitar work, inspired lyrics and an irresistible, magnetic stage personality created a musical meal that left the audience feeling fat and happy.

The man is a walking instrument; during the evening he combined use of his hands, nose, skull, teeth, lips and feet to produce sounds that wholly complimented his unique musical offering. A natural comedian, Titcomb punctuated his songs with relaxed, joking patter, often leading the audience to make hilarious contributions of its own.

Originally from Vancouver, Titcomb is now based in Toronto, but hopes to move to the west coast soon to avoid that "frantic Toronto pace" that westerners often find so wearing. He has performed in Edmonton regularly during the last ten years with Tommy Banks, among others.

"Quintessential folk" was the term used to describe his music on the Hovel print-out; not a very informative phrase. But there is no one comment that could encompass the inspired variety of sound Titcomb offers. His lyrics are composed of sharp, clear images; they are optimistic, mellow and friendly. Onstage, every move, every note and every word is music. Joy is a powerful word lessened by over-use, but it's the only one available to describe the exciting thing that was transmitted between Brent Titcomb and his audiences those two fine nights at the Hovel.

## A Peachy-Caine story



Daniel Dravot (Sean Connery) prepares to wade into battle.

*The Man Who Would Be King* is above all a good, tight story. The film has something for everyone; delving into all the long-time favorites of good entertainment: fortune, intrigue, chance, romance, history and danger.

The movie is based on a Rudyard Kipling story of the same name and Kipling (Christopher Plummer) makes several muted appearances in the film.

In an amusing chance encounter, Kipling meets rogue No. 1, Peachy Carnehan (Michael Caine). With his foot in Kipling's door, Peachy and rogue No. 2, Daniel Dravot (Sean Connery) invade Kipling's life, exciting the author's interest and sympathy with their daring plans for adventure.

Kipling gives them a

dubious blessing and the pair sets off. After an arduous, danger-crammed journey to remote, primitive Kafiristan, the two heroes ingratiate themselves with the "ignorant kaffirs" by offering to annihilate their enemies. The natives are agreeable to the idea. "We're going to teach you how to slaughter your enemies like civilized men!" ex-army sergeant Peachy roars, as he whips the straggling villagers into some semblance of an army. Aided by a few cases of rifles the two con-men brought along, the Kafiristanis promptly wipe out their foes. During one of the not-too-gruesome battle scenes, an arrow lodges in Dravot's leather cartridge belt, which is concealed beneath his uniform. In the heat of the fray, he neglects to remove it. At the sight of the red-coated soldier

charging through the enemy lines with an arrow protruding from his heart, both armies sink to the ground in awe: such an invincible man could only be a god.

As might be expected, the two shrewd soldiers quickly observe the lucrative possibilities in such a situation, and plot to set Dravot up as a benign dictator.

It's a stock situation; with Kipling living as an English colonial in India for most of his life, it is easy to see why he would base his story on the premise that it is the White Man's burden to govern and the native's duty to obey.

But this stock situation is handled extremely well by the author and the film's director, John Huston. All the surprises are well-executed, the finer details are tightly woven and there are absolutely no loose ends left flapping in the breeze.

Our sympathies are claimed alternately by the "poor" natives and by the "poor" roguish soldiers. Our feelings for the natives are simple ones as we watch them being corrupted by the unscrupulous pair. Our feelings for the two "villains" are more complex. The two are an advertisement for free enterprise, as they struggle to set themselves up as lords by exploiting others. But we can also see why they do it; who indeed, in Dravot's words, wants to go back home to England "to open cab doors for belchin' civilians and their blowsy wimmen"? They are exiles, and merely want a small piece of the Indian pie that Britain so generously awarded itself.

Director-actor-writer John Huston, has wanted to film Kipling's classic story for more than twenty years. He labels it "one of the greatest adventure stories ever written." The film is a colorful addition to Huston's long list of film successes: *The Maltese Falcon*, *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre*, *The African Queen*, *Moby Dick*, and more recently *The Kremlin Letter* and *Fat City*, just to mention a few. *The Man Who Would Be King* was filmed on location in Morocco and cost \$8 million to make.

Michael Caine is his usual superb self and Sean Connery is commendable in his portrayal of the rogue-king, as he lives down, film-by-film, his sordid James Bond past.

The film is being shown at the Garneau Theatre, at 6:45 pm and 9 pm nightly.

Lindsay Brown

## It's all a matter of taste buds

Most people think that the only thing that could be duller than a smoker's taste buds is a poetry reading. It's possible, but not when Robert Kroetsch is doing the reading and the writing.

Well-known author Kroetsch entertained and informed an attentive, S.R.O. audience here last Friday noon with a selection of prose and poetry readings.

Mr. Kroetsch, now a "resident alien" at New York State

University, read an excerpt from his most recent novel, *Badlands* (new press) and from his new *The Stone Hammer Poems* (Oolichan Books).

Between selections, Kroetsch spoke about himself and about some of the problems young Canadian writers face.

"These young writers are looking for models, there are some, but not many," he said. Mr. Kroetsch added that Group of Seven artist Tom Thompson and author Frederick Philip Grove were two important "models" for him. He described

the importance and necessity of getting "free from what you've been taught; how to unlearn, so to see things freshly", which brought nods of agreement from the audience.

Mr. Kroetsch's reading was the first in a series of nine planned for the winter term. U of A writer-in-residence Matt Cohen will read on January 30, followed by Bill Bissett, Daphne Marlatt, bp Nichol, Steve McCaffery, Frank Davey, Audrey Thomas and Andy Suknaski in later weeks.

The readings sponsored by the Canada Council and the

Department of English, are given by authors all known for their experimentation with the forms of poetry and prose and are all represented on the course list for English 371 (Experimental Writing in Canada). The readings will all be held on Friday noons in Lecture Room Three of the AV Centre of the Humanities Complex.

## Hosanna held over

Due to the heavy demand for tickets to *Hosanna* by Michel Tremblay, theatre Director John Neville has extended the run of the play for one extra week of six performances to January 31st. *Hosanna* is directed by John Neville and features Patrick Christopher as Hosanna and Jean-Pierre Fournier as Cuirette. Sets are designed by Walter Foster, lighting by Phillip Silver and costumes by Norma Statham.

Mr. Neville considers Michel Tremblay the most outstanding playwright in Canada. *Hosanna*, Tremblay's second work produced at the Citadel, concerns two homosexuals.

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