

RAMBO IN FREDERICTON

(IT SAYS HERE)

MEATMEISTER RICH RENAUD SLAPS HIS PEEPERS ON MEGA LAUGH-FEST

The Second City National Touring Company entertained to a sold out house of 700 at the Playhouse, Tuesday night as part of TNB's Interact Series. The troupe of six managed to keep the crowd laughing, through three forty-five minute acts, with their unique blend of planned skits and improvisation.

For a troupe which was completing a tour through Eastern Canada, they appeared very fresh with the skits. These skits ranged from a spoof of James Bond avoiding the Club Z clerks on a ski hill (in typical Bond fashion), to a song based on Michael Wilson's 9% sales tax called: "I want your tax" sung to the tune of George Michael's "I want your sex". For the most part these skits were quick and clever; however, two of them dragged a little too long despite their somewhat humorous content.

Only once in the first two acts did they attempt any improv. This was done rather well, as it involved the usage of the French language and an eggbeater. I was told by one of the performers that

all that was planned for this scene was: a family, a common household object and lots of bad French (which came naturally). This seemed to go over big with the largely student crowd.

The last act was dedicated to improv. In improv the performers have no planned dialogue, they just take suggestions from the audience on certain topics and go from there. In this they rely solely on their natural wit as comedians. This is where the true strength of Second City comes from and despite the fact that the Fredericton crowd gave them plenty of suggestions that were local in nature, the troupe managed to make fun of Beaver Foods, Fredericton and Newfoundland alter boys.

The areas that they asked for suggestions in were: pet peeves, dangerous places, things that happen at a wedding and current events. After a fifteen minute break, they came back with some really good improv, that gave us Rambo in Fredericton and a drunken uncle in a newlyweds honeymoon suite. Other popular improv acts were the freeze game

and the name game which got the audience really going. It is unfortunate that they decided to close with improv songs, as these seemed a little monotonous.

The National Touring Co. is composed this year of three veterans: Moira Dunphy, Terry Hart, Garry Campbell and three newcomers: David Healey, Sarah Levy and Jenny Parsons. The music director is George Kauntz and the Stage Manager is Peter Sherk. When asked if they felt any pressure from the Second City name, they said no and that people soon learn that they are not SCTV. They are currently on their way to a tour of Ontario after a busy tour of the east. They say that Fredericton was the highlight of this tour, as the audience is wonderful, friendly and appreciative, which is evident in the standing ovation that they received.

(The writer wishes to thank Miro Wiesner for his help with this article) R.R.

HARD DAY'S NIGHT

Dwight Macdonald referred to it as a "success d'estime" causing somebody to run over his head later that afternoon for being such a pretentious knob-end. It is nevertheless a fab documentary on the rise to God-like status by a group of four ordinary working class louts from Liverpool. It's on tonight and tomorrow at YOUR university.

This weekend the UNB Film Society presents the first (and best) Beatles' movie, *A Hard Day's Night* (1964). The film, which cheerfully charts the activities of the Beatles prior to a concert appearance, is much more than a simple piece of hype. Directed by Richard Lester (who learned a number of tricks from the French new wave cinema), written by Alun Owen (who gave the film much of its wit and charm), and photographed by Gilbert Taylor (who deserved an Oscar), the movie stands out as the best pop-culture film of the decade. The camera, like the Beatles themselves runs, zooms, and swoops--rarely has any film so successfully established an irresistible aura of giddy and exuberant cheerfulness.

When a *Hard Day's Night* first appeared on movie screens in 1964, virtually every film critic was caught off guard. Everyone had been expecting an exploitation film--a marketing device for Beatles wigs, boots, lunch boxes, playing cards, records, etc.--and even the toughest of critics were surprised to find "a movie that works on every level for every kind of audience." In *The Village Voice* review (Aug. 1964), Andrew Sarris admits, "So help me, I resisted the Beatles as long as I could," but concedes that *A Hard Day's Night* won him over: "The fact remains that *A Hard Day's Night* has turned out to be the *Citizen Kane* of jukebox musicals, the brilliant crystallization of such diverse cultural particles as the pop music, rock 'n' roll, 'cinema verite,' the 'nouvelle vague,' free cinema, the affectedly hand-held camera, frenzied cutting, the cult of the sexless subadolescent, the semidocumentary and studied spontaneity." Much the same verdict was handed down in Dwight MacDonald's review for *Esquire*: "*A Hard Day's Night* is something that has become extremely rare since Chaplin and Griffith: a movie that is both a popular success--it grossed almost \$6,000,000 in its first six weeks over here--and a 'success d'estime' with the critics."

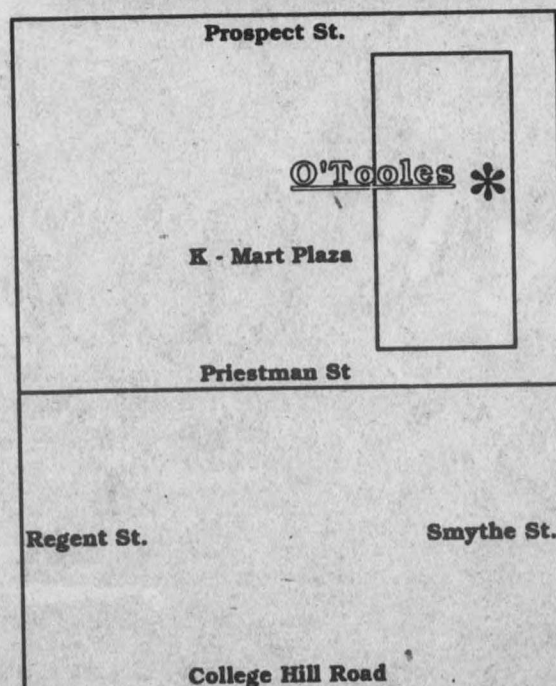
A Hard Day's Night is, then, not only a film for fans of the fab four. The director, Richard Lester, has accomplished the remarkable feat of bringing the 1960's new wave cinematography of Godard's *Breathless* (next week's film) together with the foremost pop phenomena of his day; the combination can be described as nothing less than exhilarating. Come early: leave enthralled. Friday and Saturday, 8:00 pm. Admission: Members- \$300, Non-members-\$4.00.

Peter Friesen

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