

Entertainment

Caribbean Night '94" Spirit without Spirits



by Al S. Tare

With the absence of alcohol at this year's Caribbean Night I was not sure what to expect. Would the crowd even appear? After all, the event occurred on a Saturday night and most students would prefer to consume rather than teetotal on the weekends. And being used to stumbling around in a rum induced stupor for most of these shows, would I enjoy the sober experience? However, while I wished on more than one occasion that I had a beer, it was out of thirst rather than out of a need for alcoholic increase to the entertainment value.

Multiculturalism was the theme of this year's Caribbean Night. The guest speaker, Prof. Dexter Noel, explained in his address that the culture of the Caribbean is derived from the descendants of the native Amerindians, descendants of African slaves, the Chinese, East In-

dian, Irish and German people who arrived as indentured laborers, and English, Spanish, Dutch and Portuguese who came as colonizers. This multicultural flavor was reflected in the makeup of the night's performers who hail from many different cultural backgrounds.

The acts of a show such as this are confusing for any reviewer to judge as they are amateur by design and that changes the criteria which a reviewer must base his/her observations. The performers are not members of a professional troupe but rather they are the people of a culture sharing aspects of that culture with us. Therefore, what criteria do we base our observations on?

Perhaps the only criteria of use are 1. Did the show go smoothly? 2. Was the audience suitably entertained?

Cable 10 was present to record

the night's proceedings, provided technical support and coverage on video monitors to those areas of the cafeteria with not such a wonderful view of the stage. Due to the near capacity crowd, this was a much needed bonus. However, wireless microphones presented problems in that they were WAY TOO LOUD FOR COMFORT and it seemed to be beyond the technical support to figure out which one was on the stage at any given time. The use of the monitors is a great idea but perhaps for next year it would be a good plan to place more speakers around the room with the volume turned lower as by the end of the evening I had developed a headache of monumental proportions.

With the microphone cacophony and a slight breakdown in communications over keeping utensils and cups for desert and refills, being the only exceptions the night progressed with a smooth precision which was commendable. The fluidity of the show was not negatively affected by the technical problems with the exception of Mark Ireland's recitation. Mr. Ireland's thunder was stolen when the microphones were confused resulting in the one on stage not being turned on and when the problem was rectified the volume was turned to painful levels. The hilarity of the situation was neither lost on the crowd nor on Mr. Ireland who continued unflappable by the experience.

The surprise of the show was that members of the Latin American community joined in this year's Caribbean Night. The Salvadoran duo (two FHS students) performing "Margarita" were a great addition to the show. This community (the Latin Americans not FHS students) has been growing in Fredericton over the last few years and an abundance of Latin American talent is emerging onto the local scene. These complimented the high caliber of acts which are part of every years show. The Caribbean community has long been involved in raising the consciousness here in Fredericton and Caribbean Night continues to be a show which pulls together the community and shows us that after all "All-A-We-A-One".

Face Values: continuing to be "Discontinuous"...

by Carla Lam

An evening of monologues on Friday night—what a RUSH! Okay, just a little sarcastically. I went to see "Face Values"—the last Stage Left / Theatre UNB production of the season — and the second part in their "Discontinuous" series. What I didn't realize was that it would be a rush — a rush of emotions; a rush of seeming spontaneity — so natural and so personal. I couldn't believe the possible transformations nine actors/ac-

had literal and figurative merit. From the intense and abstract "My First Child," written and performed by Mike Fralic to "Jesus Bites Man" — written by Allanna F. Bondar, performed by Lance Ceaser and Greg Doran, Stage Left commented on everything from abortion to religion.

"Face Values" was soft on the outside, hard on the inside — criticizing societal values sometimes hyperbolically, as in "The Fund-raiser" — and sometimes more quietly, but always effectively. The artists manipulated the language as they did the atmosphere — to the highest efficiency; the best exam-

ple is in Steve Mac Isaac's cynically hilarious "Nothing is Easy." "Face Values" was a celebration of creativity. It was almost therapeutic; a mutual spiritual purging to listen to these people recite their thoughts, views & dreams with brutally abstracted honesty and purity. I absorbed Face Values like indulging in the forbidden intimacy of the reading of another's diary. This was pure emotion — unrestricted, unconstructed, untouched — that's what I loved about it accompanying and complementing the monologues, "much music" was provided by guitarist Kurt Bowes whose original tunes with somber lyrics enhanced the mood. Sometimes you don't have to say it all to say everything. Stage Left have proved to be masters of this art.

Emotions can often be read from a person's "body language"—his or her posture, bearing and gestures. Facial expression is particularly important in this regard. The face contains a large number of separate muscles that can contract in a wide variety of different patterns to produce the smile of joy, the wide eyes of fear, the sneer of disgust, and so forth.

Stage Left covered in-depth issues with incredible grace, simplicity and humor. The scripts were fresh, uncensored and in four of the seven pieces, written and performed by the same artist. While some of the material was so seemingly overt in presentation and meaning all the work

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St. Pat's Day Jimmy Flynn Drinking Song Fest Runs Dry

by Nathan Weinman

Hey, By! It was St. Patty's night and little maritime humour courtesy of Jimmy Flynn sounded like a good way to spend the evening. Obviously everyone else on campus felt the same way. The turnout was tremendous. This was extremely surprising because the event was put on by our famous Student Union. Even the CP's didn't expect the massive turnout and were scurrying around setting up extra tables in all corners of the ballroom.

It is not just merely by chance that the lineup descended three flights of stairs however. Jimmy Flynn is extremely popular. Did you know this man had five tapes and CD's? Neither did I.

What was really amazing was the

amount of crowd participation that this man receives. UNB crowds, or lack of crowds, at certain events don't exactly have an astounding history in this area. Pay no notice to that old precedent with Jimmy however, if he had led a line to the Princess Margaret and jumped we would have been right behind him. People love him! After all what's not to love. Here's a guy who makes a living playing guitar, telling crude jokes and drinking beer. We pay \$8000 a year to come to university and do exactly that and nobody seems to be paying five bucks to come see us, right?

The show involved two hour and a half long segments of Irish drinking music (which everybody - and I mean

everybody - sang along to) intermingled with down home stories and one liners. In the Irish tradition a wee few beverages were consumed. In fact the bar ran dry by the first intermission. This slight set back didn't really prove to be too much of a hindrance and the second half of the show continued with the same crowd involvement as the first. It is my suspicion that a few people may have consumed a few beverages before coming to the show as there were several people very fond of dancing on tables and the like.

As for the actual content of the show itself I must admit I was impressed. The guitar playing and singing won't win any grammys but that is where the charm

lies. Flynn is just another guy like us with a mediocre voice. In other words we aren't intimidated to sing along. Likewise the humour didn't involve many hidden subtleties but the crowd thought it was the funniest stuff they ever heard I tell ye. As I said before it is this roughness that provides the attraction and the Maritime connection was never stronger.

The only problem I had with the performance was the racist humour which occasionally marred the monologue. The show wouldn't have been hurt in the least if this crap had been left out. I especially question Flynn's motive behind performing these jokes, especially in the academic community. One which

is supposedly a tolerant community. What really shocked me was the audiences reaction to this humour. I did not hear one heckler or even anyone objecting to this. The general response was positive. This is not what I have come to expect here at UNB and was quite disappointing if not frightening. I realize I am off topic here but I have to put in my little plug for the betterment of humanity.

Now that I have depressed you or angered you, if you are a die-hard Jimmy Flynn groupie, let me say that I was still very impressed by the performance. St. Patrick's night was the perfect occasion for this performance. With just a small change in the comedy this could become a legendary annual event.