

Russian know-how

by Mark Simkins

Victor Yampolsky and the Atlantic Symphony Orchestra made a valiant effort to bring the sounds of Russia to Halifax last Monday. However, the problem with the ASO is its size. The orchestra is too small for a talent like Yampolsky's and too small for the great volumes needed for Russian themes.

I predict that Victor Yampolsky will be with the Atlantic Symphony for a year at most. He will find the ASO ultimately suffocating to his talent. In the meantime, one should attend at least one concert to see a conductor get the most out of a small orchestra. The ASO should learn a great deal from him and so should Haligonians, as Yampolsky proved last Monday.

In his opening concert, Yampolsky lead the orchestra and audience through an educational lesson in Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky's roots and influence in Russian music. Beginning with the short overture to the opera **Ruslan And Ludmilla** by Mikhail Glinka, a

precursor of Tchaikovsky, he brought us into the modern world with Igor Feodorovich Stravinsky's **Apollon Musagete**. The Stravinsky work displayed the influence of Tchaikovsky's manic moods in its dissonance, which Yampolsky skillfully brought about to an abrupt climax. He then culminated the concert with Tchaikovsky's magnificent hymn to Mother Russia, his **Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 64**.

The last two pieces provided an opportunity to display the talents of at least two of the symphony's soloists. The Norwegian first-violinist, Jan Bobak, played solo in **Apollon Musagete** and Kirk Laughton had a chance to shine with the famous french horn passage from **Tchaikovsky's 5th symphony**. Both players were in obvious physical contrast to their short, black be-curl'd conductor, with their tall, lanky, blondness to his compact, dark, energetic frame.

The music was well done but I missed the volume of a large symphony orchestra. I suppose I'm spoiled since my first experience of symphony sound was in the Berlin concert hall with the Berlin Philharmonic (unfortunately without Herbert Von Karajan). The sound as the strings drew the first music from their instruments was incredibly electrifying and I missed that with the smaller orchestra.

Yampolsky's astounding energy almost lifted his feet off the podium, making his baton a white blur most of the time, pulling as much sound as possible out of the orchestra and at times almost matching the grandeur of the compositions. For my taste there wasn't enough volume to express the sweeping power of the Russian land.

Yampolsky and the ASO received standing ovations in almost every town on their tour. The evening in Halifax was no exception — the audience was on its feet after the first round of applause. The tour will be completed after a performance on the 6th in Baddeck.

For those interested, there will be a gala fund-raising gambling casino at the Hotel Nova Scotian on Friday, the 18th of November. At \$75 per couple, it is a bit steep, but apparently it raises about \$3000 to \$4000. Perhaps the orchestra should rather be trying to broaden its appeal by giving Saturday and Sunday matinee performances at popular prices for those who can't afford the \$14-plus for tickets.



Of blondes and barnacles

by Andrew Gillis

The Crusaders / Free As The Wind / ABC Blue Thumb 9307-6029
Free As The Wind; I Felt The Love; The Way We Was; Nite Crawler; Feel It; Sweet 'n' Sour; River Rat; It Happens Everyday.

Across the table was a very nice-looking girl with really long blond hair which she obviously had not been thinking about for years and which was now splendid and about eight different summer colours. Dutifully, we sipped drinks; carefully we spoke of impersonal topics; gradually I was sure everyone in the Barnacle who had come to sit outdoors and sip drinks was drinking up this girl and would fidget jealously if she left with me or anyone else when things closed.

When I went home (to listen to records by myself), there was what was known as "incinerator" dope around, and I had some; and then there was a comforting Crusader's album, called "Free As The Wind," on hand. I listened to that many, many times. All I did — it was easy — was sit there and think about looking at that girl in the Barnacle, outdoors, on the fifteenth of July. But the Crusaders are unreal anyway.

The Crusaders are unreal because

they have been together for more than 20 years. They brought funk to jazz, popular black to legitimate black, in the late sixties. The jazz-rock fusion began with the Crusaders; and ten years later they are the best at it. They are not themselves the leading solo players in jazz, but as a 20-year-old band they are smooth. This album is as unreal as you would expect such mature, tasteful funk to be. You do not have to be thinking about splendid blonde girls in the Barnacle.

April Wine / Live At The El Mocambo / Aquarius AQR 515 / Teenage Love; Tonight Is A Wonderful Time; Juvenile Delinquent, Don't Push Me Around; Oowatanie; Drop Your Guns; Slow Poke; She's No Angel; You Could Have Been A Lady.

A new April Wine album should normally make the serious record -freak clutch dramatically for an old Steely Dan album, perhaps just a Steely Dan album cover. April Wine records cannot be taken seriously if compared to mainstream creative hard rock like the Rolling Stones' or Aerosmith's, or the more gentle Steely Dan's. All except for one April Wine record.

The record is "Live At The El Mocambo," a single disc on the band's grateful Aquarius label. The punch of top-40 hard stuff, unanticipated by a four-inch car radio speaker, is by itself impressive in this record. A Toronto resident who drinks in the Deadwood told me yesterday April Wine's punch was enough to slide bar glasses and untwist pretzels in the T.O. lounge where he saw them this year. Punch is something a band as boppish as the Wine needs; especially when you think of their very-bop David Cassidy and Eric Carmen vocal stylings by Myles Goodwin.

There is little reverberation on this record. This gives you an April Wine sound in your living room, rather than the usual production effect of making the recorded material seem remote. This sound is very clubby, only betrayed by a (suspiciously) reverberant crowd cheer at the end of each cut. The material is good top-40 dancing tunes (which unbelievably had their lyrics displayed on the foldout liner). The production, by Eddie Kramer, makes the record good for high-sound-pressure listening at Howe Hall parties where Geils is shunned.

The monstrous, mad, diabolic Moreau

by Gregory Larsen

Here is a real winner folks! **The Island of Dr. Moreau** (American International Pictures) is one of those horror shows that will be appearing on television in about six months or so. The thing is that this flick will not be shown during prime time on Sunday evening. Instead it will appear as one of those late, late, Thursday night horror movies that no one in his or her right mind would stay up for.

Disappointingly, Burt Lancaster and Michael York have squandered their talent in this film. It is not that these two give poor performances but that the parts are shallow and limited, leaving the actors with no room for dramatic depth. In addition to this I am quite sure that H.G. Wells would not be at all pleased to see how his literary work has been so inadequately portrayed by cin-

ema.

What more can be said? This is a second rate horror / monster film that strikes me as being pathetically weak. And what's worse is that it's not even scary.

In actual fact the beginning of the film does keep the viewer a little on edge with the occasional "shock treatment" type score. The problem is that, unwisely, the frightening subjects of the film are revealed to the audience much too early and after this point all effective suspense is exhausted. These frightening subjects turn out to be very plastic-appearing semi-humans which look as though they belong at a fancy dress party instead of playing monsters in a serious horror film.

Lancaster plays mad Dr. Moreau in this flick. The doctor has

discovered an organic solution that is capable of turning animals into men and hypothetically men into animals. He has changed many animals into semi-humans, but only with limited success. These transformed beasts seem to reach an apex of human likeness but after a short while regress to uncontrollable monsters. These creatures are released to the woods and may be recaptured by the doctor for his



continuing experiments.

Michael York appears as Andrew Braddock, a young shipwrecked sailor who has been adrift in a life boat for seventeen days. The boat comes ashore on Moreau's Island and Braddock is chosen to be the doctor's first human guinea pig. He is injected with the changing serum and starts to show preliminary signs of some animal characteristics. Fortunately for young Braddock and beautiful Maria (the enchanting girl he has fallen in love with) the semi-humans rebel against, and kill, Moreau. This gives the couple a chance to slip away on a prepared boat and escape this island of self destruction. Shortly after, they are spotted by an ocean liner and presumably they live happily ever after in England.

The moral of this story is: do not waste three twenty-five on this one. But, if you are still interested, keep your eyes on the T.V. Guide and you will be able to see it soon on that late Thursday night T.V. show.