

entertainment

Richard Myers' cinematic dreams



By Michael Korican

Richard Myers, independent filmmaker, honoured York's Film Department last week with the Canadian premiere of his latest film, *Floor Show*. Myers, who has won a gold Hugo at the 1974 Chicago Film Festival for experimental film, appeared somewhat guarded about his newest creation, barely four weeks old, which is scheduled for a screening at the Chicago festival later this month.

Part fiction and part autobiography, *Floor Show* utilizes a mythical fantasy structure totally foreign to Hollywood's commercial formula and destroys time into the instant. Believing myths and dreams are a method of relating to reality, Myers explained *Floor Show* contains a lot of ideas based on "delicious" dreams. "It's about so many things: filmmaking, dreams..." The very loose plot of

the film concerns the failure of a film director to capture art with a sparkle movie camera. Themes of Vietnam airlifts, flying, Hollywood, film classics, fish and automobiles also appear.

The black and white photography possesses beautiful texture and tone, not very surprising since Myers teaches cinematography at Kent State University in Ohio. The repeated image of the zebra effect of light shining through a vertical venetian blind displays some of this mastery. *Floor Show* also incorporates some video footage which contrasts starkly with the crisp film.

Though Myers handles sound very well, he uses subtitles throughout to augment the narrative line. They reinforce the idea of film as text but annoy when experimenting with extremely short durations.

He also "quotes" from numerous film classics, one of his themes.

These clips are well-integrated and certainly advance his ideas.

In a question period led by Ken Dancyger following the screening, Myers fielded queries from the audience. Responding to the cutbacks situation, he stated that the Kent administration virtually ignores their film programme. "They don't really know what's going on — we kind of like it that way."

Asked why he makes films, Myers concluded, "There's a kind of ego thing" behind every process of art and that "you want to share the experience of the film.... I can't think of anything that excites me more than movies." The resounding applause that accompanied his departure for the Ontario College of Art seemed to embarrass him more than slightly.

Bryon Johnson



Richard Myers illustrating a point.

Film & video series

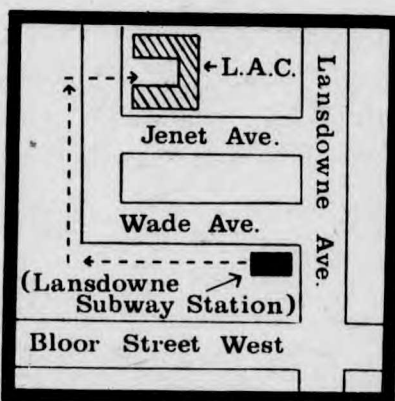
Throughout the month of November, the Lansdowne Artists Collective will host a series of film and videotape screenings. The series will showcase young Toronto experimental filmmakers and videographers who would otherwise not have the opportunity to display their work in public.

The Lansdowne Artists Collective, occupying Calumet College's former downtown studio, is a group of painters, sculptors, musicians, filmmakers, videographers and writers who share common studio space in the L.A.C. building. About half their members are York Fine Arts students or graduates.

The series begins tonight with the films and videoworks of Harvey Chao, a York graduate student in Visual Arts. The program starts at 8 p.m., with the proceeds from the \$1 admission

going to support the participants.

The L.A.C. is located north of Bloor at the Lansdowne subway station. Two nights of the series will feature experimental, and dramatic and personal uses of film. An open screening will occur on November 23, to which all films (16mm and Super-8) and videoworks are invited.



By Colin Smith

Immediately the stage props give the game away.

As one sits down in front of Cafe Soho's cabaret performance of Dick Dale's *The Indictment*, one knows that absurdity is about to be launched lapward.

There is a living room: a black vinyl couch, end table, TV and stereo. It's contained in a boxing ring, replete with stools in the corners and bell. The play is not set up in acts, but laid out in ten rounds.

For a play of the domestic drama breed, this seems like a sharply ironic setting. Unfortunately, it doesn't really work. *The Indictment* is a ragtag quilt of ten dialogues that, while providing some rich moments along the way, still sums up as a highly uneven experiment.

The problems almost balance the assets. Dale's play provides as much pedestrian exposition as

illumination, and the unsuccessfully anticlimactic ending hurts. Dale himself, playing Ring Announcer, Pimp and Trainer, comes across rather badly in all three roles. So does Alan Dean, who is unable to raise two of his three characters above common stereotypes.

The feminine quarter is much better. Toward the middle the play takes on real vitality (rounds five through nine). Jacqueline Pert and Marie Stillin do some fine work, and Dale's writing is considerably more evocative.

But then (on the same bill) we have *Tillie's Punctured Romance*, an absurdist monologue by Charlie Ledds, performed as a one-man show by Simon Malbogot. A lacerating reworking of the tale of Noah's

Ark, the play is brilliantly crafted, scathingly funny, and manages to turn all religious thought on its ear in 65 minutes.

As rendered by Malbogot, the play is dynamically perfect. With no more than a few props the man succeeds in turning out three fully realized roles — God, heretically portrayed as a boozie junkie subject to inane whims of creation; Noah, a beleaguered hedonist trying desperately to succeed at a mission he doesn't know the purpose of; and Charlie, the befuddled bystander.

The play has not a false line in it, and Malbogot's tri-role rendition of it puts him in the Al Pacino school of high-powered performance. It is a superb rendering of a serious play, and is recommended to those desiring the off-beat and intellectually stimulating.

Agamemnon: unimaginative

By Mark Monfette

On Tuesday of next week (November 7) a group of former York theatre students will be dragging their rather lifeless production of Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* into the Burton Auditorium.

The production was on display for several weekends in October at The Dream Factory, the intimate, warm and ingeniously designed little theatre on Queen St. E. But ingenuity, it seems, is a limited resource: it certainly isn't wasted on the play.

The culprit here is clearly the director, Richard Rose. He has

taken a complex, suspenseful and powerful play and made it quite dull. And he has a good cast to work with. The actors ranged from the competent (Patricia Nember and Jayne Ransberry) to the exceptionally talented (such as the gifted Philip Adams).

What Rose and the production lack is imagination. The chorus stands in a row, rarely breaking formation, chanting their lines and hitting their staffs on the floor when emphasis is desired. *Agamemnon* (Pekka Hanninen) and Aegisthus (Lawrence Laffan) expound on morality, death, adultery and the ravages of war,

not with passion, but with stately reserve.

Monotonous recitation and subdued voices achieve a liturgical effect more welcome in a church than a theatre. Rose seems to rely on the play being aurally rather than visually stimulating, and subsequently fails on both counts.

The appropriately spare set and the multi-functional costumes have been designed by R. Bruce Specht. Lighting will be by Dorian Clark.

Tickets are \$3.00 for students, \$4.00 for the general public. For more information call 667-2370.

Jewish book fair

By Elliott Lefko

On Saturday November 4th the YM-YWHA at 4588 Bathurst will play host to the 2nd Annual Jewish Book Fair. Beginning with Rabbi Robert Gordis, author of *Love and Sex*. The festival will run nine days culminating with Arthur Hertzberg proposing "After Camp David peace possible?"

Irving Layton reading from *Love Poems*, Nobel Prize winner Isaac Bashevis Singer, and comic-author of *Metropolitan Life*, Fran Lebowitz, presenting "An evening of Wit and Hilarity," are among guests speaking at the festival.

Added attractions include: "Toronto's most unusual bookstore".... A bookstore with crystal chandeliers and carpeting and filled with thousands of books for sale.... A special area filled with children's books.... Two Sundays of children's programs... A special exhibit of aids for the poorly sighted. (Magnifying aids, for those who have difficulty reading ordinary print and a selection of large print books will be on display.) And finally "Art on Display" featuring the lithographs of Graham Coughtry, illustrator of Irving Layton's latest *Love Poems*.

Tickets are three bucks a night or 6 tickets for \$15. Box office hours are Sun-Thurs - 9:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m. and Fri - 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.