

'Hester Street' almost a dead end

The Film Society presents "Hester Street", March 26-27, at Head Hall; Saturday at 8:00 p.m., Sunday 6:30 and 9:00 p.m.

U.S.A. - 1974 b/w Director: Joan Micklin Silver, Screenplay: Joan Micklin Silver, with Steve Keats, Carol Kane, Mel Howard.

In 1974, when "Hester Street" was conceived by Joan Micklin Silver, only Elaine May was recognized as a woman director of any stature in the United States. Financing the project was nearly impossible, and it was saved only by Ms. Silver's husband who undertook to raise the capital.

From such difficult beginnings has come a film of exceptional loveliness. Its immigrant theme explores the struggles and transformation of the Jews who settled the lower East Side of New York City and tried to reconcile the

ordered values they brought with the unmarked opportunities they found. Ms. Silver uses anecdotes, incongruities, a mixture of comedy and pathos to tell the story.

Writer-director Silver handles the anecdote form very well; she has an instinct for how long a scene should run, and though she filters folk tale material through current attitudes too pointedly, the scenes are undramatized in a likeable way. The narrative's simplicity is extremely appealing.

Carol Kane as Gittel is extraordinary. Her quiet, waiflike portrayal gives the film an unusually quiet centre. Big eyed, scared and inaudible at first, a sparkle of allure pops out here, a spark of anger there, until by the end of the film she is a triumphant bonfire. Miss Kane manages the high acting feat of seeming to

change size physically, expanding and shrinking as she is happy or miserable.

After "Hester Street" was finished, distribution became a problem. Because Ms. Silver was virtually unknown no major

distributor would handle the film. It was only by accident that a selector of films from the Dallas Film Festival happened to see it. It was shown at Southern Methodist University to cheers and applause, reviewed in the "Dallas Morning

News" with raves, entered in Critic's Week at Cannes, and then taken on by Midwest Films. One wonders how many other films of quality lie in cans because they have been made outside the system.

Starcastle shows potential

By SIOBHAN MURRAY

Starcastle? Not necessarily great stuff, but great potential. This is definitely a record that doesn't grab you as being worth all the money it costs the first time you listen to it, but I must admit after listening to it about a dozen times it began to sound worthy of that money.

Starcastle seems to have their music directed at the commercial market, hoping to hit the ears of "teenie boppers" making their transition from Donnie Osmond to the Stones.

Their music makes extensive use of a synthesizer, which if used by a person with the capacity for handling the flexibility of that instrument, can be adapted to produce any sound. The problem with the music produced by this group is in the beginning it is

euphonious and consistent but after a few songs the consistency becomes too much; in fact, it becomes repetitious.

The mellow harmonizing quality of the vocals is slightly reminiscent of Yes. In fact I find that Starcastle lacks originality; they seem to have adapted the qualities of such groups as Pink Floyd, Genesis and predominantly Yes, that would seem to give them some leeway on the market.

Some of their lyrics provide refreshing images, but they too sour with their parrot quality, hence monotonous music. But not to discredit all their lyrics, in Solar Winds the images of the sky are handled with an unquestionable expertise, even though the freshness of these images are exhausted by the completion of the song.

The arrangement of their music definitely lacks any sense of unity.

The musical aspect of the songs tend to go on continuously with the element of synthesizer with a spattering of drums here and there. The only exception to that rule on this album is Portraits which is introduced on a relaxing base with a nice combination of percussion and guitars and carries through fairly smoothly.

Starcastle have the potential to provide their audience with new and innovative music of a marketable quality, and perhaps it'll be realized with a little maturing on their part. If they overcome their apparent infatuation with the synthesizer and the habits of echoing of their lyrics and music (not only from song to song, but also within the individual piece) and of drowning out their vocals with their music, then perhaps they will find comfort in the reflection of the successes of their predecessors.

Hugh Hood here

Distinguished Canadian writer Hugh Hood will give a public reading Monday, March 28, in Fredericton.

The author of six novels, four collections of short stories, a collection of essays and a book about Jean Beliveau will read at 8 p.m. in Memorial Hall of UNB.

His reading will include published and unpublished selections from the first three novels in his proposed 12-volume series entitled The New Age. The first novel, The Swing in the Garden, was published by Oberon in 1975. The second, A New Athens, will be published next September and the third, Reservoir Ravine, is scheduled for publication in 1979.

Mr. Hood will also speak at an open session graduate course on major Canadian novelists at 1:30 p.m. Monday in Tilley Hall, Room 28.

Hugh Hood's work has appeared in more than 50 anthologies in England, France, Germany, Swit-

zerland, and Sweden as well as Canada and the U.S. Four of his stories have been adapted for films or television.

Twice named senior arts fellow by the Canada Council's awards programs, Mr. Hood holds a PhD from the University of Toronto. He taught from 1955 until 1961 at Saint Joseph College, West Hartford, Connecticut and since then has been on the faculty at the University of Montreal.

His novels include White Figure, White Ground (1964), The Camera Always Lies (1967), A Game of Touch (1970) and You Can't Get There From Here (1972).

His two works of non-fiction are Strength Down Centre: The Jean Beliveau Story (1970) and the highly praised collection of essays The Governors Bridge is Closed (1973).

The literary reading is sponsored by the UNB faculty of arts and the Canada Council.

'Patience' virtuous

By ROSEMARIE HOPPS

Gilbert and Sullivan Society's presentation of the comic opera "Patience", a spoof directed primarily at Oscar Wilde, was great. The singing was uniformly good and the pace, except for parts of act two, was consistent.

Director Jo-Anne Claus did a good job of blocking, sometimes handling upwards of 30 people on the stage.

Although "Patience" may have been poking fun at the unimaginative military man, as well as the freshly aesthetic, the spoof appeared lost on the audience who were delighted at the stalwart soldiers resplendent in scarlet and gold.

Elizabeth Williams as Patience was well received, as were Kevin Patterson and Peter MacRae as Reginald Bunthorne and Archibald Grosvenor respectively.

Kevin was marvellous as Bunthorne, and almost, though not quite, managed to steal the show.

Constance Atherton as "Lady Jane" was another favourite, especially when she sang "Sad Is That Woman's Lot" and when she and Bunthorne sang "So Go To Him And Say To Him."

There were many great scenes in "Patience". Every aspect of the play was well presented, including music, lighting, scenery and costumes. This was a great second effort by the Gilbert and Sullivan Society and I look forward to their next offering.

Trio receives double encore

By SARAH INGERSOLL

The lights went down, the audience quieted, three men walked silently out to the front of the stage, guitars in hand and the evening began.

Approximately 200 people sat back, relaxed and let Marty Reno, Noel Harrison and Gene MacLellan take over and entertain them for the first show of the evening. These three artists appeared for the first time together at the Playhouse Sunday night for two shows, to a very responsive audience.

The first to perform individually was Marty Reno, singing many inspirational folk songs, including "High on Morning Sunshine" and "There Am I." He made it clear to the people that his religion was a very important part of his life (and maybe even tended to come on a bit strong) but with a pleasant singing voice and excellent guitar-picking, he showed us that he, indeed, had an abundance of talent. One thing that cannot be denied about Reno, is that he thoroughly enjoys himself while performing.

Next to solo was the multi-talented Noel Harrison. He was a sheer delight to the audience treating us to a number of humorous songs of his own including "Hurrah for the Middleton Fire Brigade". With the accompaniment of an acoustic lead guitarist, a electric bass player and a pianist, Harrison had no problem building a feeling of camaraderie between himself and the audience.

Harrison also talked about the transition he made in his life five years ago, moving from the glitter of Tinseltown to his present home in the Annapolis Valley in Nova Scotia. A tune that he wrote entitled "Autobiography" elaborated on this transition from "toking" and "drinking" to life on a farm, working it and raising his family. It was plain to see that Harrison could have gone on for the entire evening and the audience would not have minded a bit. However, he eventually turned the microphone over the Gene MacLellan, only after the three of them sang John Denver's "Country Roads".

MacLellan, with the accompaniment of Marty Reno on acoustic lead guitar, began his act with two of his biggest hits, "The Call" and "Biding My Time" much to the delight of everyone. It was at this point that an unexpected accompanist made his way onto the stage, attempting to display his musical ability on the mouth organ. However, the microphone was not operating and was soon escorted from the theatre by Walter Learning. MacLellan later asked for him to return to the stage but the fellow had since vanished. MacLellan's beautiful and effortless singing style, along with a certain charm that puts a person at ease, enchanted the audience and left them wishing that he would continue for hours. MacLellan has established himself in the music industry, having written numerous songs which have been recorded by various artists. Of these, probably his

most famous is "Snowbird" recorded by Anne Murray. He has a shy and unpretentious manner which tends to place his audience under an almost magical spell, as he demonstrates his gift of musical virtuosity.

Once again, joined by Harrison and Reno, MacLellan performed another of his hits "Put your hand in the hand", which was the closing number of the evening.

However, the audience had no intention of letting them leave it at that, and called them back for an encore. Led by Harrison, the crowd joined in singing "Will the circle be unbroken" and "down by the riverside". Called back for a second encore, they rendered their version of "Amazing Grace". At this point time had expired, to the disappointment of everyone, and all three artists received a much-deserved ovation.

Any people wishing to send in poetry to be published in the literary section of the Yearbook must have them in by April 18, 1977. They may be dropped off either in the Yearbook office Rm. 31 SUB or in the Yearbook mailbox in the SRC office Rm. 126 SUB addressed c/o Judy Bunting.

The final deadline for ordering a yearbook is April 27, 1977. If ordered after this date, we cannot guarantee that you will receive a copy of the 1977 book.