

Hair comes to York

Communal Theatre

Heather Whyte

The fervent search for some sense of identity can be felt in every area of social life. In the music world (perhaps the best example) it exists as an increasing interest in the Beatles, Jim Morrison and the Doors. And although this sense of 'emptiness' is slowly beginning to dominate society, few individuals have chosen to do anything to alleviate it.

The York Independent Theatre Production, Inc. has broken out of this apathetic state by putting together a production of the rock musical, *Hair*. The individuals responsible for the creation of the Y.I.T.P. and the musical are York students Barbara Huget, Douglas Ross and Clyde Rasmussen, and they've created a community theatre company designed to offer an opportunity in commercial theatre not presently offered through York's Fine Arts Department. As the Directors of the Board, they hope that *Hair* will be a unifying experience, as it is open to all students with an interest in the theatre.

Barbara Huget chose to do a production of *Hair* because it is a communal effort with no starring roles. Huget said "I want to experience the peaceful revelations of the era that I missed because now everything seems so superficial." Similarly, Douglas Ross related the intrinsic appeal that a production of *Hair* will have for its audiences. "I want it to be enjoyed by people, but it will have special significance for those who were there in the sixties, as well as for those who wanted to be there." Apparently, the main objective of *Hair* is to revive the communal feeling prevalent in the sixties and extend it into the eighties. Barbara Huget hopes that "people will be pulled out of their seats and become directly involved." This involvement during the presentation of the musical will be the essential element of the play's success.

Y.I.T.P. is unique, not only because it's independent from York University, but in the way it's been established. The Company has received moral and financial support from all the York colleges, and from many individuals of separate faculties as well. Additionally, Ian Macdonald is very enthusiastic over the concept of *Hair*. President Macdonald has stated, "the idea of a production that would bring a unified spirit to the university and would involve all colleges and faculties would, I feel, be a great asset to York University. As of October 7 (between this type of support and private fund raising), the Y.I.T.P. had raised \$2800 towards their production costs. Doug Ross, who previously operated his own production company, has been responsible for all legal matters in the creation of the company as a non-profit corporation—an independent entity within the York environment.

The essential element of organization within the Y.I.T.P. company is being put to the test, as the efforts of the Board of Directors are becoming more concrete. The Board is experiencing some expected complications with *Equity* (The Canadian actors' guild), as well as with obtaining the necessary skilled help which is needed. However, these problems are being overcome and the support and enthusiasm for *Hair* is rising.



Barbara Huget and Doug Ross of Y.I.T.P.

Greg Peterson, the professional director of *Hair*, is confident the production will succeed. He feels the Y.I.T.P. is "very organized and reliable," and he's pleased with the professional attitudes and direction of the company. "I expect the best," says Peterson. "However, human frailty is essential, so the production won't be problem-free."

Greg Peterson hails from Montreal, where he and a partner created *The Phoenix Theatre*. Peterson has completed two seasons at Stratford and has assisted Peter Moss, who is now at Toronto's *Young People's Theatre*. Peterson is currently directing Jacques Brel's *Alive and Well and Living in Paris*, at the *Toronto Truck Theatre*. He has directed everything from *Arthur* to Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, and is looking forward to *Hair*. Doug Ross realized the need for a fully accredited director when they chose Peterson. "It is important to have someone with the necessary guidance we need to provide the professionalism we want to attain, when working with people of limited experience," states Ross.

Peterson is the type of director who will provide proper guidance during the production of *Hair*. He capitalized his philosophy in a quote from *Evita*: "Get them while they are young, *Evita*, get them while they are young." Peterson believes there will

DISCIPLINE PROBLEMS

be discipline problems with this production, but he will manage to overcome them. Peterson wants young people to get involved with theatre, for, as he states, "There is little good theatre around, so if young people who are interested are exposed to some quality material, they will maintain interest and create a less-subsidized and, therefore, more commercial theatre industry."

Peterson's enthusiastic belief in the Y.I.T.P.'s production of *Hair* is based on a perception of an open-minded Canadian theatre audience, one which is ready for *Hair*. He wants to revitalize the 'shock value' of the original script but leaves one major question unanswered: Will he recreate the nude scene as it was performed in the original Broadway version? The Board of Directors of Y.I.T.P. are leaving this decision up to Peterson and his cast. Doug Ross, in reference to an attitude of non-resistance from the York College Masters, believes that "York is a liberal arts university which has not considered censorship of this production." Peterson, who refuses to give a definite answer, did relate that whatever he does with *Hair*, it will be controversial. "And artist expresses self, that is, a communal self, which should be acceptable to all."

However Peterson decides to express the communal message of the sixties in *Hair*, the creation of the play itself will hopefully accomplish its anticipated goal of communal interaction. Through the efforts of the company's three entrepreneurs, many individuals will have the chance to experience a collective sense of being which seems to have been lost since the sixties. Continued support from York students for the Y.I.T.P. company, will symbolize the existence of a communal entity at York.

York Independent Theatre Productions will remain intact as long as there are York students willing to donate their time and effort toward keeping it functional. For the moment, the Y.I.T.P. company and their production of *Hair* exist as a means of unifying all York students, from all departments, in a single creative effort. The auditions, which are being held October 28, 29 and 30th, are open to all interested students. The Y.I.T.P. invites everyone to sign up for the auditions at 205 Burton and become involved.

Hair will run from January 26th to the 30th, in Burton Auditorium. Ticket prices are \$4.00 regular and \$3.00 with a student discount. Additional information on ticket sales will be available prior to opening night.



Greg Peterson, *Hair*'s dedicated young director

A Reminder...

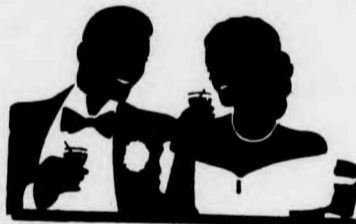
Just a reminder to all you hosers out there about our first annual Bob and Doug essay writing contest, "What Canada means to Me", okay? Like, it's gotta be about 1000 words long and, like it's gotta be about Canada—written in the Bob and Doug style, okay? Right, so send in those entries, 'cause we got prizes for the winners. For more info, check out the October 22 issue of *Excalibur* and get writing! P.S. Take off, eh? (pause) Hosers...



Bob and Doug want you!

P.S.S. Like, the deadline is November 19th, and like we've already got some entries, so you better move, right? okay? (pause) Pass me a cold one, will yah?

CHOWDOWN: Fantastic Falafel



E.P. Curean M*A*S*H's Corporal Klinger would love *Aida's Falafel and Shish-Kabob Cafe* at 597 Yonge Street. Television's draggy Lebanese could gorge himself on one of his ancestral homeland's mainstays — falafel.

This long, narrow corridor of a cafe (just north of Wellesley Street) serves some of the most nourishing, reasonably priced food a student can find downtown.

The main ingredient in *falafel* is chick peas, an excellent source of protein. Once ground, the chick peas are cut into silver-dollar-sized fritters and deep fried in vegetable oil. A handful of these fritters are then stuffed into a circular envelope of pita bread and garnished with tomatoes, onions, parsley and covered with a spicy tahini sauce. The finished product is excellent, and the whole thing has a spicy meat taste — but don't be fooled, the entire concoction is vegetarian.

For the carnivorous, *Aida's* offers *Kabob* and *Shish-Kabob*. The \$1.90 *Shish-Kabob* consists of seasoned, skewer-broiled beef stuffed in pita and topped with vegetables and tahini sauce. The equally priced *Kabob* is a mixture of minced beef, onions, parsley, spices, vegetables and tahini sauce all held together in a pocket of pita. A variation of this *Kabob* is the *Kabob Meat Loaf* at \$2.10. The same ingredients used in the *Kabob* are used in the *Meat Loaf*, except that they are spread on pita and toasted.

Two desserts are available for just under a dollar each. *Buttered Baklava*, stuffed with walnuts and cinnamon and sweetened with syrup is 95¢. *Mammoul* (wheatlets and flour dough filled with walnuts and cinnamon) is 70¢.

"Soft drinks can be bought."

Other items on *Aida's* menu, including a Lebanese salad, cost mostly under a couple of dollars, except of *Labneh* (a cheese yogurt), which costs a rather pricey \$2.75.

Aida's is not licensed, but soft drinks can be bought for 50¢ and Lebanese coffee also costs 50¢.

This family-run cafe has just completed five years of offering good food, self-service and casual business hours to students and other thrifty souls. *Aida's* is open from Monday to Saturday from 11 a.m. until "about 8:30 p.m. or 9 o'clock."

AGYU Art Gallery of York University

SLOWLY I
TURNED...

BRIAN CONDRON

A suite of 35 photographic images on the theme of Niagara Falls

Oct. 26 - Nov. 13, 1981

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