

# Diversions & delights

by donalee moulton

Oscar Wilde is known to us all, if in name only. Most people are familiar with him as a writer, if not familiar with what he has written. Most of us are also acquainted, quite well, with the name of Vincent Price. And as can only be expected when two such familiar names join forces, great things happen.

Vincent Price appeared in metro last evening for the first time; portraying Oscar Wilde in John Gays "Diversions and Delights". As billed, Mr. Price gave a dramatic, professional performance. However, the star of the show was undeniably Oscar Wilde, or at least his reincarnation, brought to us through the script of John Gay.

Mr. Gay says the idea for "Diversions and Delights" came about because he was curious of what would happen "if I took this one great artist, this supreme conversationalist and thrust him upon the stage of a concert hall in Paris to give a lecture in the last year of his life?" And so he did. The result is a script that introduces the audience to Oscar Wilde as a writer, a conversationalist, an intellect and most importantly, a human being.

The opening of the play appears stilted and rehearsed. It is only the second act that clarifies why this is so. For the audience to understand Wilde they must see both the reality and the appearance. The appearance is Act 1, the reality Act 2. It is almost a comedy / tragedy script. It most certainly is a comedy / tragedy biography of Wilde. A known homosexual, Wilde

was imprisoned for two years of hard labor for his sexual

preferences. The devastation of those years is the theme of the second act. The first shows us the man as he could make himself, the actor, the comedienne. We laugh at his conceit in the first act; we applaud it in the second.

Price, as Oscar Wilde, is superb. The script is designed to bring out the greatness of Wilde and in doing so requires the greatness of a dramatist. And Vincent Price is that dramatist.

The most outstanding quality of the show and the foundation of its success, is its professionalism. All the members of the production, from the producer to the set designer, are acclaimed experts in their respective fields. And "Diversions and Delights" is the result—professional and entertaining it is a laudable piece of work.



"I have been asked to give you a list of the 100 greatest books in the English language. Unfortunately I can't do so—I've only written five."

## Cockburn in Cohen

by Alan Adams

At first it was hard to believe that Bruce Cockburn had changed so much. As he walked onto the stage dressed in blue jeans, T-shirt and tweed jacket it seemed quite a departure from his formal dress of years past. But he soon quelled my apprehensions and delivered a very refined, and relaxed, performance to a capacity crowd at the Rebecca Cohn.

An "intimate" performer who in a very short professional career has amassed a cult following, Cockburn sang of love and despair, of Yankee Imperialism and its results, of the Christianity in which he finds personal solitude and of his travels which figure so importantly in his musical compositions.

Cockburn opened the performance with a song he once referred to as his autobiography, "The Blues Got The World By The Balls," in which he sings:

*I've been down to Parliament,  
I've been in school,  
I've been in jail to learn the golden rule  
I've been down to the workhouse, served my time in those hallowed halls  
The only thing I know is the blues got the world by the balls.*

Combining the virtuoso of his guitar playing with the cynicism of his lyrics, Cockburn related experiences that were inspirational in the progression of his music. He talked about Yankee Imperialism, delivering incisive remarks about its works with the crowd favourite "Burn".

*Here it comes the loaded gun,  
Must keep the Commies on the run,  
You'd but or bury everyone,  
For liberty and life and just plain fun.*

*Philippines was yesterday,  
Santiago and Greece today,  
How would they ever make the*

*late news pay,  
If it wasn't for the CIA?*

Cockburn also sang several songs from his new album, "Further Adventures Of", in particular **Bright Sky, Sitting Outside A Broken Payphone With Change In My Hand, and Laughter** (a song for his wife and child).

Cockburn's guitar playing was by far the most entertaining and exciting portion of the entire evening. Tunes like **Foxglove** (from Night Vision) and **Red Ships Take Off In The Distance** (from Further Adventures Of) easily exemplified the highly technical, extremely precise, and complex working of his guitar. With **Water Into Wine** Cockburn showed how an eastern influence has entered into his music.

In the end it was Cockburn's humble personality that overjoyed the crowd and resulted in thunderous applause. Despite two encores, he couldn't render to the call for more. He was just too tired from giving a monumental performance.

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