

arts

"Once a man like the sea I raged, once a woman like the earth I gave..."

McIntyre's show becomes an intense study

Theater review by Beno John

Last week the U of A was treated to a fine production in the U of A Drama Department's Thrust Theatre. JoAnn McIntyre's *Brush-Off* is a well-conceived and masterfully acted piece. Written and acted by JoAnn McIntyre, the play takes a lean, fresh approach with a theme that has already become cliché and even hackneyed.

Brush-Off is a short play which involves a pick-up from a fashionable Montreal disco and the ensuing chain of events. We are taken into the nether world of a (supposedly) sexually permissive society which liberates the individual for one night, last stand sexual encounters. But this world of frank, almost self-conscious sexual politicking is a kind of limbo for individuals who wish to extend the relationship out of the transitory, one night sexual encounter; a motif sensationalized by movies like *Looking for Mr Goodbar* or plays like *Sexual Behaviour in Chicago* or *The Last of the Red Hot Lovers*.

What is singularly different about *Brush-Off* is that the male and the female parts are both played by the same actress, a rather demanding, if not daring approach. McIntyre's male role is played with an understanding that is disarming. Instead of the two-dimensional stereotyped treatment that one has come to expect of a play about sexual awareness, we are given a rendition of a role which is a fully human one that we can actually sympathize with. We are given a keen insight into the character and motivation of a young, masculine, Corvette-driving, upstart, entrepreneur.

McIntyre achieves this by her attention to small details; the jockish, locker room bawdiness coupled with the male, squash court, big business competitiveness is done so well that anyone can recognize her character as someone he knows in real life.

But McIntyre never parodies or satirizes this role, a temptation that is difficult to resist given this character's aggressive and competitive nature, at least externally. Instead, McIntyre chooses to poke gentle fun at this character's naivety of human relationships. He, as so many who are products of the glitter and glamour which Madison Ave. packages wholesale as a lifestyle, can't recognize something good and healthy even when he is told, "call me again, I like you." There is no place for sincerity in the well ordered, packaged, underworld of the disco.

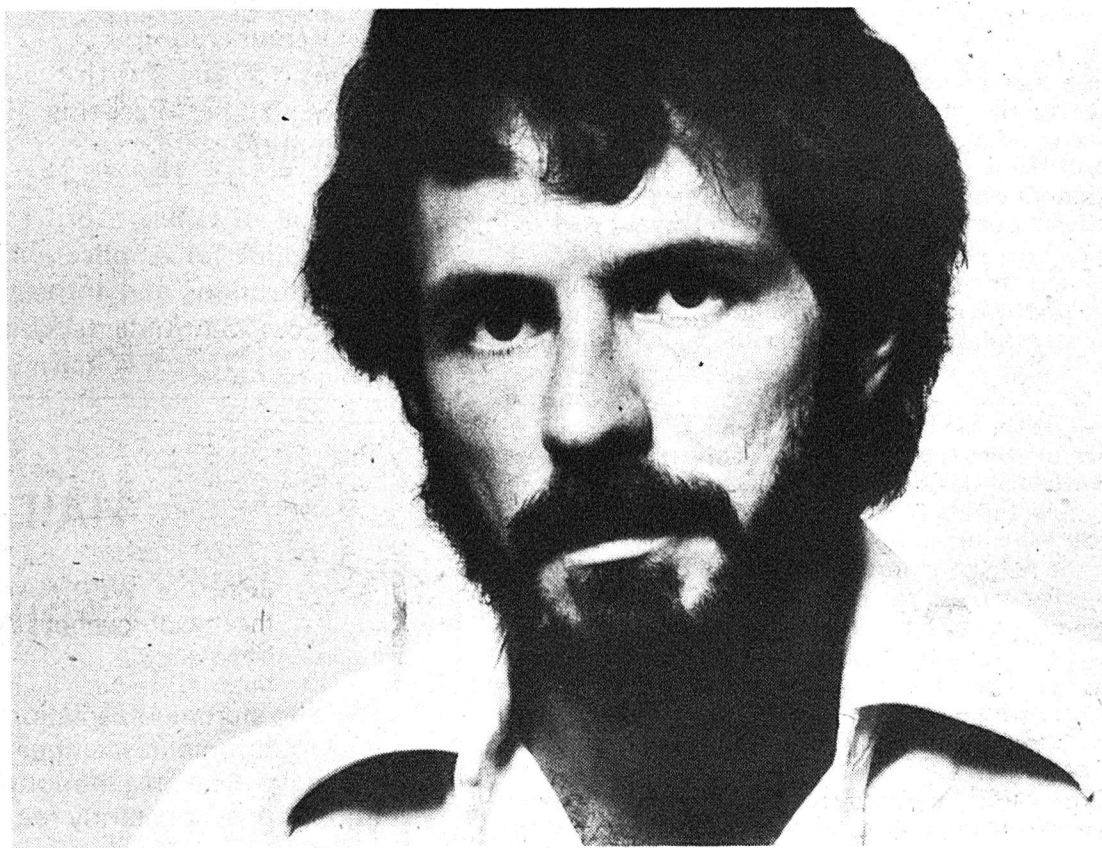
About halfway into the play, McIntyre flip flops into the female counterpart of this sexual game. The transition, though immediate, is smooth and natural. Surprisingly her version of the evening in the disco and her place does not differ greatly from what McIntyre, the man, has already related. It is simply the female version and naturally, McIntyre plays this role with a little more depth and understanding.

But the woman's problem is similar to the man's. She is not quite sure of what she wants and whenever she seems sure of what she wants, she feels guilty desiring it. Throughout the night her mind changes continually. When she is driven home, she wants him to come in an at the same time, not to. "What her body says yes to, her mind says no. After love she asks him to stay but then tells him to leave. The effect of this continual indecision is tremendously funny, she likes the man, yet she doesn't want to sound too forthright or eager. The result is a character who fights to

preserve her humanity in a setting which imposes its own conventions and mores, and which engenders both characters confusion between what is expected and what they both genuinely feel about each other.

McIntyre takes us through the whole spectrum of rationalizations and self-delusion which justify the night stands as simply that; not to be taken seriously pursued. But this is treated gently and with a great deal of humor. We are allowed to see real people in a situation instead of a lobotomized Diane Keaton in *Looking for Mr Goodbar* which paints the singles bars and discos as a dark, gritty world from which there is no escape. McIntyre's characters, as in real life, dispense with externals and realize the solution to their sexual and psychological problems is within themselves.

Except for the somewhat overly sentimental ending, JoAnn McIntyre's *Brush-Off* is a truly meaningful and well executed piece. Here is an actress/writer who will be well worth watching for



On Friday and Saturday evenings, Yardbird Productions presents Jesse Winchester in SUB Theatre. Known on both sides of the border for his captivating folk/rock

stylings, Winchester will perform two shows on Friday, at 7 and 9:45 pm. Saturday's show is sold out.

No Gasoline shortage here

The editors of *Gasoline Rainbow* never wanted to see the U of A literary magazine become a house organ for on-campus creative writing classes.

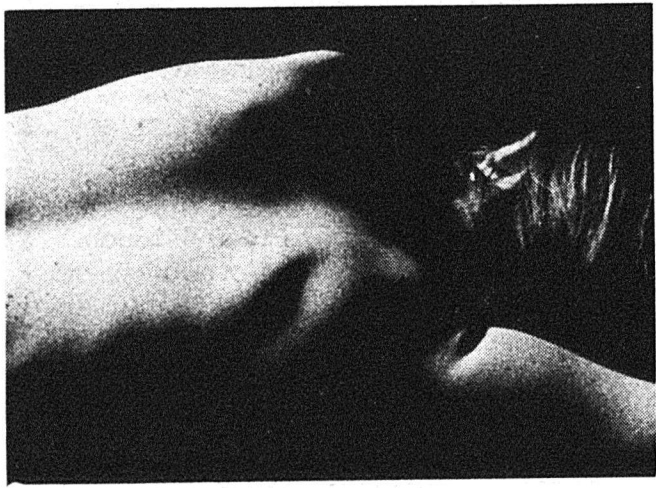
Though many of the authors and poets published in this year's edition are readily recognizable at the U of A, Volume III of the *Rainbow* contains short stories and poems from non-university writers and photographs from off-campus artists.

"It even has a short story from a writer in

Calgary," says publisher Allen Young, a jubilant fourth year English student.

The magazine, in its third year of publication, is now on sale at the SUB bookstore, Charing Cross at the HUB Mall, the English Department Office at the HUB, and Aspen Books on Whyte Avenue at 108 Street.

Later this week it will be available at booths in the Humanities Building and on the HUB Mall as well as at downtown bookstores.



One of the many exhibits now on display at the BFA show in the SUB Art Gallery until April 4. A full review and photos will appear in Friday's paper.

Art gallery struts its stuff

By Michaleen Marte

On Friday the Edmonton Art Gallery opened with an amazing display of its own wealth. *Accessions 1979* is a large and extensive exhibition of art pieces that it has acquired within the last year. Purchases in 1978 has brought the Edmonton Art Gallery's total collection to over 800. These include works on paper, photography, paintings and sculpture. The emphasis has been placed on paintings which encompass the last hundred years of Canadian art.

Despite a great amount of government support the gallery has depended on donations from the private sector. The Women's Society has been responsible for providing an increasing amount of funding for acquisitions to the collection. In addition, the gallery has received more private and corporate support than ever before. The director, Terry Fenton, is optimistic for the future of the collection. If such support continues the gallery may soon be able to purchase works by European masters.

In 1978, the gallery purchased 54 new works in three basic areas. These are Canadian contemporary art (including photography), international contem-

porary art and Canadian historical art. This is especially in the works of several painters, sculptors and photographers who help to make Edmonton one of the leading art centres in Canada. These include Painters Alan Reynolds, Douglas Haynes, Terrence Keller and Robert Scott; sculptor Peter Hide and photographer Orest Semchisen.

Purchases by the gallery included a group of 130 photographs of Northwest Coast Canadian Indians taken by Edward Curtis. These were discovered by Douglas Clark in the U.S. and were repatriated to Canada with funds provided by a secretary of State Cultural Property Grant from the Government of Canada. Two Rodin bronzes donated by Westburne International Industries are certain highlights to the collection.

In addition to *Accessions 1979* there are other exhibitions featured. In the long room upstairs there are recent steel sculptures and paintings by Canadian abstractionist Otto Rogers. The most marvellous attraction is the display of photography by Nina Raginsky. It is a large, impressive collection of hand-tinted portraits. These are of the people of the West coast communities of Victoria and Vancouver Island. Raginsky has presented every walk of life, with equal

treatment. We see everyone from W.A.C. Bennett laughing on the steps of parliament, to dancing fishermen, girl guides, waitresses, butchers, bakers and candle-stick makers They are all present and one is a perfect slice of life.

Downstairs is another intrigue. This is an exhibition of an obsolete Library Design Competition for the city of Tehran, Iran. It all began in the mid-seventies when the now-exiled Shah commissioned a plan for the new city centre. In March 1977 international competitions were held, one invited and one closed. The open competition was for the Pahlavi National Library in central Tehran. Three Edmonton architectural teams entered in the competition. The gallery shows the submission and models of two teams from Edmonton: Anthony Eng and B.K. Hou; Eng and Hugh, Richard Fairbank, Keith Numas and C. West. It is ironic to note that at the time that the plans were submitted there was little sign of the social and political unrest that would cause the revolution in Iran, and the shelving of all plans for the Shah.

The current offering by the Edmonton Art Gallery is rich in content, variety of form, and quantity. It is a sure indication that the institution is entering a very prosperous time in its history.