

SPOTLIGHT

THE FLIES

A POST MORTEM COMMENT

by W. J. Schyrer

"The Flies" showing this month at the Central Library Theatre is a reworking by Jean-Paul Sartre of the Greek play "Orestes In Argos".

This, Sartre's first attempt at writing a play, concerns the return of Orestes to his native city where he finds his father's murderers ruling as despots and their guilt transferred to their subjects. Orestes conspires with his sister Electra to regain their throne and thus absolve the town's people of their transferred guilt complexes. The plot is complicated by the presence of Zeus who is determined to thwart their intentions.

As presented by the Upstairs Theatre Foundation, "The Flies" was visually a success, but artistically a near failure.

One got the impression that the director, Adam Ludwig, had not fully reasoned and planned his presentation of the play. The acting was uneven, unbalanced, at times incoherent. For example, in the second act only one of the two main climaxes was reached. Zeus, played by Tony Miller. Although his voice and carriage were good his failure to remember his lines destroyed any emotion or rapport with the play which the audience might

have felt. Since Zeus was one of the central figures in the second act he brought the whole act down with him.

John Innes (York University - Vanier I) as Orestes vainly tried to hold up the crumbling ruins of the second act. This reviewer was pleased to see John's development from Act I to Act II. Despite his jerky movements he approached brilliance in the final scene of the second act. His delivery was excellent, his voice strong and confident.

As the third central figure in the play, Electra, Mavis Hayman caters to the partially deaf portion of the audience. Her lines were delivered in an ear-piercing shriek characteristic of a neurotic rather than the abused 15 year old she supposedly portrays.

"The Flies", though enjoyable, could have been improved if the direction had decided what he wanted out of the play. Zeus appeared as a kindly "grandfather", Orestes as a defiant child. This is not the right portrayal of the play as members of the audience who are not familiar with the play may not gather Sartre's purpose in writing it. If a director cannot get this across, what is the use of producing the play.

MAGIC HAPPENS IN "HEY RUBE"

by Anne Dublin

Streams of calliope music pervade the air outside the basement of Toronto Workshop Productions at 47 Fraser Avenue. And inside we are thrown into the world of "Hey Rubel", of the circus that never closes, but where "the whole thing is dying".

Director, George Luscombe, has taken Jack Winter's play, and has created from it an overwhelming experience in "total theatre". The audience becomes involved in the play--before it begins, a clown ushers us to our seats; we are both the audience who have come to see a play and the audience who, munching popcorn, applauds the routines of the performers. And in the end, when trouble hits in full force, we are the mob, the rubes, the trouble from the outside, against whom the performers yell "hey Rubel!" to protect themselves.

The action never loses its intensity or meaning. Every moment is filled to the utmost. At one time the performers are smiling and chanting, "Hurry, Hurry, Hurry"; at another, they are arguing backstage. The shift between these two scenes for the audience is jolting, but is necessary for our understanding of the tension between outward appearances and inward reality.

The powerful impact of this play is largely due to the actors. They work together in a closely-knit, cohesive, group, but still maintain their identity and individuality. In a company of such high calibre, it is difficult to single out individual actors, but outstanding in their performances were Geoffrey Read (Charlie) and Frances Walsh (Josie). Charlie is the clown who laughs outside but cries inside, a tragi-comic character who, underneath the mask of make-up, is truly human. Josie is deserted, lonely, lost; she is a clown, a juggler, a tightrope walker, but does not know what she really is.

Milo Ringham (Dora), David Clement (Moss), and Terry Noble (the evil, sinister element who attempts to destroy the circus), are also worthy of mention for excellent interpretations of their roles.

John Faulkner's technical effects enhance the idea of "total theatre". In the juggling scene, for example, we are given a surrealistic, nightmarish effect--a Roaring Twenties movie gone berserk. In the scene of Charlie's rejection, we feel that time has stopped, that actions are not actions, that movements are not real. These effects are not done for their own sake, but are in complete sympathy with the action of the play.

If you can tear yourself away from essays and tests for a few hours, go see "Hey Rubel!", playing Friday, Saturday, and Sunday nights. Prepare yourself for an unusual, intense experience in theatre.

Freud

on Horseback

Pardners, it's Freud on horseback down at the Imperial and other establishments playing "The Professionals". It has wit, plenty of dead guys, and Claudia Cardinale taking off her clothes. It's a loud and enjoyable western with Burt Lancaster and Lee Marvin stealing the show as two chaps hired to re-claim the wife of a rich rancher who was kidnapped by a Mexican bandit (The wife not the rancher. I mean the bandit has some taste.). You can't have an ordinary cowboy epic these days, so underlying motivations have been sprinkled about to carry us away from the days of Gene Autrey. Actually, one look at C.C.'s did the trick.

A good Hollywood movie is a welcome relief from today's "in" type flicks (you know, Morgan, Le Bonheur, Mary Poppins). I don't know when I saw my last Hollywood film, but it had a masked man and an Indian in it and everybody got shot. This one is quite different. The villain gets the girl and Burt Lancaster, well, he gets Lee Marvin and you should see the number of Mexicans killed. I don't know how they ever won their revolution. Maybe they received federal aid. At any rate, the whole thing is a kick in the abdomen and Lee Marvin wears a funny hat. Woody Strode plays a Negro (that's wonderful since he's a Negro) and Robert Ryan plays Robert Ryan and Claudia Cardinale takes off her clothes and I think I'm regressing.

IT'S HAPPENING

SATURDAY DECEMBER 10

GLENDON COLLEGE DANCE. Dance to "The Last Words", West Dining Hall, Glendon College, 9:00 p.m. Casual Dress. Admission \$1.25.

SUNDAY DECEMBER 11

JAZZ AT YORK, Archie Shepp Quartet, West Dining Hall, Glendon Campus, 8:00 p.m. Tickets: \$3.00 - YORK STUDENTS \$2.50 from Sam the Record Man or from Glendon Student Council Office 487-6137.

The Orpheus Trio, Collages of poetry, prose, music and song. 8:30 p.m. Burton Auditorium.

York Campus. Tickets at door: \$3.00, faculty and staff \$2.00, STUDENTS \$1.50. Further Information 635-2370.

MONDAY DECEMBER 12

CHRISTMAS CONCERT by York Choir and Band. Founders Dining Hall, York Campus at 8:00 p.m. Included is carol singing for the audience.

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 14

CHRISTMAS CONCERT (same as Monday December 12) Glendon Campus.

FRIDAY DECEMBER 16

SEMI - FORMAL, York Campus.



ARE YOU
GOING TO THE SEMI?

Featuring the Band of
Ellis McKlintock

Friday, Dec. 16th

Founders' College Dining Hall.