

Dancing in the critic's jaws

Record review by Bob Fedun

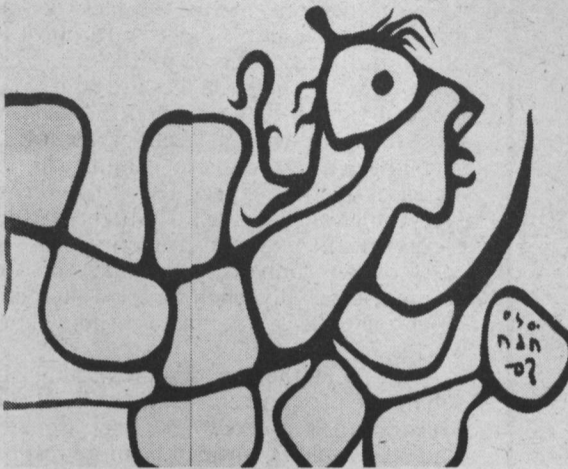
Bruce Cockburn's tenth album is characterized by a return to simpler arrangements than those making up his 1978 LP *Further Adventures of . . .*. The embellishments of electronic gadgetry are fortunately absent on *Dancing in the Dragon's Jaw*.

On seven of the eight songs the back-up crew of Pat Godfrey, Bob Disalle and Bob Boucher serve as a canvas for Cockburn's brush. Godfrey's keyboard and marimba work remain impeccable. Boucher is always reliable, and his bass and DiSalle's percussion serve as bookends, holding the album together.

Cockburn's music continues to be a blend of intricate folk guitar and straight jazz. One negative note is sounded in some of the bridges between choruses on one or two songs — especially noticeable on "After The Rain". Although adequate within the context of the piece, these runs sound like throw-away collections of notes, composed in five minutes. Here is

where the artist has betrayed himself; for Cockburn shows his talent on other compositions, the most outstanding of which is "Badlands Flashback". This piece contains a delicate interplay of piano and guitar which requires several listenings before all the textures can be perceived.

dancing in the dragon's jaws bruce cockburn



Another song which is musically superior is "Northern Lights". Here Bruce employs his familiar alternating bass pattern which is accented neatly by the extra "punch" of Boucher's bass. Although the familiarity of Cockburn's style has brought on accusations of his works sounding too much alike — when they sound this good — who cares? "Wondering Where The Lions Are" is a good example of how easily accessible his music can be, without sacrificing originality. On "Lions", the percussion of Ben Bow (of the Ishan Band) rates nothing short of inspired.

Cockburn's long-time associate, Eugene Martynec, deserves a complement for a masterful job of production. Ever since *Salt, Sun and Time* (1974), Cockburn's guitar has been too-often hidden behind bodhrans and phase-shifters, a fault not repeated here.

Lyricaly, Cockburn expresses his two faces. As always, Cockburn paints pictures rather than tells stories. Some of the straight-forward lyrics illustrate his ability to turn a phrase into a nearly visible image. On the other hand, he also delves into more abstract descriptions, as in "After The Rain":

*Engine throb street cruise light bullet car flash
hollow beauty night gleam oily river tension glass*

Songs written in this style will never stand the test of time. Like the cover of the album (by Norval Morrisseau 1979), phrases like this are designed to set a mood here and now. They succeed in documenting a period in the artist's life — and when viewed as such they can never be seen as pretentious.

One song which was performed on Cockburn's last tour, "Joyous Son", is absent from this collection. This is perhaps a deliberate attempt at toning down the religious messages in his latest releases, although they are very definitely present. This is part of the reason why my personal favorite has to be "No Footprints", a song with a near pop sound to it, but fortunately too long for A.M. play. Like the rest of the album, this song is not destined to be one of Cockburn's classics (such as the *Night Vision* LP). For this reason I would suggest first-time Cockburn purchasers try *Circles In The Stream*, a live double album which contains some of his more extraordinary instrumentals and is also the closest to a greatest hits collection he has ever released.

For those familiar with Bruce Cockburn — this was 1979. *Dragon's Jaw* is no milestone, but it's a step ahead.



The Edmonton Jazz Society is bringing Jimmy and Percy Heath into the Centennial Public Library Theatre this weekend: worth catching.

Rough Cuts

by Diane Young

At one point in my life, I told a lot of people that my major was Astro-Physics. Their jaws would slacken, their eyes go blank; the only replies they could muster were monosyllabic. It was wonderful. Smugly, I would walk away, having successfully averted what used to happen — Before I Got Smart.

You see, I am an English major. As everyone knows, English majors merely read stories and jingles all day long. You know as well as I do that that is a pretty frivolous occupation. Right?

So does our new president.

Actually, the arts faculty — as it most generally is — can be viewed as a kind of museum, stuffed with desiccated exhibits of Byron and Beowulf. As Pheobe Caulfield said, (although in another context) "It doesn't mean anything really." Right?

Wrong. I'm very sorry, but that is wrong, and so is Mr. Horowitz. He has forced my hand; I am going to have to drop the inviolate guise of the Astro-Physicist and, revealed once again as an arts student, defend the value of the humanities. The only chilling thing about this is that the President of the University of Alberta has made it necessary.

So. I will tell you what stories and jingles are all about.

First of all, they are written down. That means that more than one man thought they were important, that two or more men must have agreed to assign particular symbols to certain objects. Obviously then, language can only exist when a group of men agree about specific things. Men who form agreements like this become known as members of a society. Once they agree on the fundamentals that make communication possible, they usually write down their thoughts on how idiotic everyone else's thoughts are.

Now I will stop being so fatuous.

Disagreements between men are always worthy of respect. Even if you are arguing with a complete fool, who says that "One Hundred Bottles of Beer on the Wall" is as important a poetic statement as *King Lear*, you will learn something — either about yourself or about the person you are arguing with. In this case, you could discover that you prefer discussion with people who hold informed intelligence to be of more value than mere opinion. (If you'll think about this, you'll realize I'm not being an insufferable elitist. If you have a broken turntable, you don't take it to the milkman. Well, maybe you do, but only after recognizing that his expertise will probably be more limited than that of an electrician.)

Literature is written because men thought that some things were more important than others. It is the history of centuries of disagreement and retraction and correction and questioning; it is the history of men speaking to other men about what it is to be a man. It is absolutely important.

That's why Mr. Horowitz must be addressed. In his Inaugural Address, he says:

Unless we invest, and invest handsomely, in basic research, we shall not be able to solve the most pressing problems of our time...If we so choose, we can balance the industrial and financial thrust with a similar one in the humanities and the arts—the fields which help to make civil and pleasant and enjoyable what might otherwise be a mundane existence.

In saying "if we choose," Mr. Horowitz is implying that funding for the humanities is not assured, because, as he goes on to explain, they are merely amusing.

The huge point to be made is that a large part of Mr. Horowitz's speech reflects the perceptions of a civil man — one who is informed on the values of civilization's tradition. Why then, is he characterizing that which formed him as being relatively unimportant? Why is he leaving the funding of disciplines that transmit these values open to question?

Thursday Thursday

CINEMA

SUB Theatre

Oct. 18, *Zabriskie Point* by Antonioni.
Oct. 19, *Animal Crackers* starring the Marx Brothers.
Oct. 20 *The Misfits* with Clarke Gable and Marilyn Monroe.
Oct. 22, Marlon Brando and Robert Redford in *The Chase*.
Oct. 24, *Wait Until Dark*.
Oct. 25, *Casablanca* with "you know who".
Admission is \$2.50, \$2 with Student I.D. Shows are at 7 and 9:30 p.m. and tickets are at the HUB Box Office and at the door.

GALLERIES

Student's Union Art Gallery

Oct. 19 - Nov. 1, *Draw*. This is a travelling drawing exhibition organized by the gallery. Five prairie artists are featured: Ihor Dmytruk, Phil Darrah, Don McVeigh, Janis Diner and Robert Achtemichuk. The opening reception is tonight at 8 p.m.

Latitude 53, 10048 - 101 Ave., 423-3126

Oct. 11 - 31, *Erotica*, an exhibition of erotic art of the Prairies.

MUSIC

Centennial Public Library Theatre

Oct 19-20: 8:30 p.m. The Edmonton Jazz Society in co-operation with the Centennial Library Theatre present The Heath Brothers. Jimmy Heath, on sax and flute, has been a prominent member of the Miles Davis and Art Farmer bands. His brother Percy, a bassist, was a founding member of the Modern Jazz Quartet in 1954. Playing with the Heath Brothers are Stanley Cowell on piano and Keith Copeland on drums. Tickets are \$6 for EJS members, \$7 for non-members and are available at Mike's, HUB Box Office and at the door.

Northlands Coliseum

Oct. 23, 8 p.m., The Little River Band. Special guest artist is Jim Messina. Tickets are now on sale at all exhibition outlets.

McDougall Church, 101 St. and MacDonald Drive

Oct. 21, 2 p.m. Kendall Taylor, world renowned pianist, is giving a recital. Tickets are \$7.50 and \$4.50 for students and senior citizens. On the 19, Taylor will give a lecture demonstration on "Piano Literature from Bach to Beethoven." This takes place at the Chateau Lacombe at 3 p.m. On the 20 at 9 a.m., Taylor will demonstrate "The Last Beethoven Sonatas." Tickets are \$10 per session, \$7.50 for students and senior citizens. For more information and for tickets, phone Oliver's Music.

THEATER

Faculty St. Jean, 8406 - 91 St., 469-0829

Oct. 19 - 21, 26 - 28, 8 p.m. *George Dandin* by Moliere is the opening play for Theatre Francais' tenth season. For more information call 486-0829.

Corbett Hall, 112 St. - 89 Ave.

Oct. 18-27, 8 p.m. Mark Medoff's play, *When You Comin' Back Red Ryder?* opens the season for Studio Theatre. The play is set in an all-night diner in a sleepy southwestern town, the time is early Sunday morning. The existing calm at the beginning of the play quickly vanishes, however, as the small diner becomes a pressure cooker for emotional confrontation and terror. This play won two important drama awards for Medoff and is directed by award winning Thomas Peacocke. Performances from Monday to Thursday are free for students and tickets can be picked up at Room 3-146 in the Fine Arts Building. Weekend performances and all performances for non-students are \$2.50. For more information phone 432-2495.

Citadel Theatre, 9828 - 101 A Ave., 425-1820

Oct. 10-28, 8:30 p.m. Herbert Mitgang stars in the Rice Theatre's production of *Mr. Lincoln*.

READINGS

Oct. 18, 12:30 p.m. Scottish poet Liz Lochhead reads her poetry in Humanities Centre, AV-L3. Admission is free.

DANCE

Chateau Lacombe and the Provincial Museum

Oct. 20, 3:30 p.m., Oct., 21, 9:30 a.m. Two workshops at the Chateau Lacombe will be conducted by Renaissance dancers Charles Perrier and Angene Feves. The two have been partners since 1969 and have lectured on 16 century dance and etiquette at many universities as well as performing internationally. The Saturday workshop is entitled "The Well Dressed Courtier and his Fashionable Lady". On Sunday it is "Your Chance to Dance." Tickets are \$10 per session, \$7.50 for students and senior citizens.

Oct. 22, 8:30 p.m. Charles Perrier and Angenes Feves will present a concert at the Provincial Museum. Tickets are \$7.50, \$4.50 for students and senior citizens, and are available at Oliver's Music, 10145 - 103 St.