

Entertainment

Editor: Agnes Kruchio

Director of Night No One Yelled

Duffy urges reform, compassion for inmates

Peter Duffy is one young Canadian director who is not an idealist. He doesn't believe in the power of the individual to make large changes. He doesn't believe that theatre can make much social impact.

Yet Peter Duffy, 29, is here from Montreal to direct a play about the

conditions people have to submit to in prisons.

The play, currently at the Tarragon Theatre and called *The Night No One Yelled*, has opened to favourable reviews from all the major Toronto papers, and brings home to many theatre-goers the psy-

chological realities of prison. While Duffy professes not to believe in the individual's power vis-a-vis society, he also becomes remarkably fired up when the topic of prisons is broached.

"You can't take people who are emotionally and sensorially deprived, throw them out on the street and expect them to cope," he said in a recent interview. "They simply freak out."

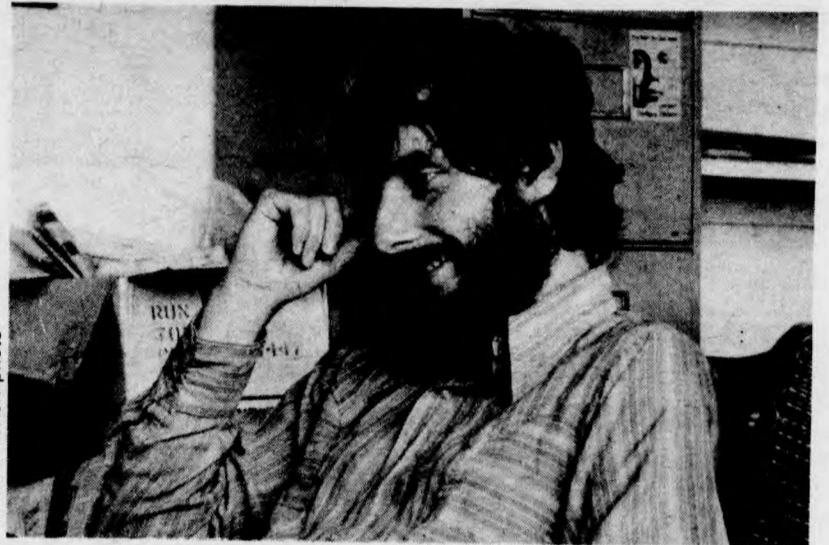
This, he believes, is the major reason for Canada's recidivism (repeated offences by criminals) rate of 80 per cent, which is the highest in the world.

"I do not idealize Sweden," he said, "but they have managed to work out a system there that is slightly more humane, and which certainly results in a lower recidivism rate than Canada's".

In Sweden, prisoners have visiting privileges on weekends with their wives and families.

"There must be action taken on the part of judges, politicians, doctors and mental health professionals in general, and an evaluation of the whole system must be made. Practical alternatives must be looked at."

"We hope that this play will affect people in some way. What we present here is prison on the level of



Peter Duffy, director of *The Night No One Yelled*

Thomas McKerr photo

people and the kind of choices they have to make."

Peter Madden, the playwright, has spent from 18 to 20 years in prisons. Duffy met him in Collin's Bay Penitentiary, where he was conducting a drama workshop for inmates.

Madden had entered the Dominion Drama Festival with a 1970 play *Criminal Record*, which was produced entirely by the inmates at Collins Bay, and another of his works, *Cell 16*, has been turned into a film by the National Film Board. He worked on

the present play for three months with Duffy's Montreal company, *The Beggar's Workshop*.

"What we are trying to do in this play, and also in the *Beggar's Workshop*," said Duffy, "is to develop characters more than would be possible in a regular theatre. A character must be really understood emotionally and must become part of the actor to be authentic. We're trying to rip down falseness, the kind of theatricality that dominates other companies."

"While technique is very important, it is only a tool for us to present the kind of 'up-frontness' that makes a play psychologically precise."

"Some of the performers that appear in this production, such as Michael Fernandes, who plays Ralph, are not even professional actors. Having had some of the experiences we are dealing with in this play, however, they have a sincerity that professional actors would have a hard time duplicating."

This is not Duffy's first exposure to the topic of prisons. He has worked with *Challenge for Change*, a programme under the auspices of the NFB that aimed at bringing prisoners and guards closer together with the aid of videotape. Duffy was fired when the guards themselves began to reveal some of the problems, and the whole project was becoming too controversial.

"That brought the whole point home very clearly: there is sickness in the institutions and the whole system is sick. As long as you have one group of men locking up another group you will have riots and beatings and brutality."

"People must realize that band-aid solutions won't work, and that we must have a total changeover to have any improvements at all."

Jazzing it up at Burton; Braxton plays free music

By IAN BALFOUR

The term "jazz" encompasses a wide range of musical styles. Its meaning expands as quickly as modern music develops, and anything from a simple rag-time tune to a complex atonal composition can fall into that category.

On October 7 at Burton Auditorium, Anthony Braxton and friends presented a programme of works embracing two very different styles of jazz.

The first segment of the concert consisted of two 1974 compositions whose titles are cryptic sets of letters, numbers and symbols, apparently representing the musical patterns on which the works are structured. Having no traditional rhythm or beat, the pieces placed special demands on listeners more accustomed to the appreciation of long-established musical styles. Both works consisted of prescribed and improvisational parts which relied heavily on structure for their meaning, a dangerous approach since structure is perhaps the most difficult aspect of music to grasp in a single hearing at a live concert.

Fortunately, the Braxton compositions were much more than mere exercises in structure; the exploration of tonal and temporal relationships were integral parts of the pieces. For the most part, the musical dialogue between Braxton and the other musicians was interesting, particularly in the second composition, a duet performed by

Braxton and bass saxophonist Roscoe Mitchell.

At times, the musicians seemed to succumb to one of the dangers of improvisational music, in that the music verged on arbitrariness and any sense of dialogue was lost. But the many moments of Braxton's brilliance more than compensated for the tedious ones.

Braxton is a very competent saxophonist, always in complete command of his instrument. His saxophone is a vehicle for a very wide range of tones and textures; his woodwind work was never repetitive, but always refreshingly unpredictable and innovative.

The second half of the programme was more traditional, though equally fresh and original.

For the three compositions featured after the intermission, the quartet worked within a framework of classical jazz idioms. This time Braxton's saxophone work was ably supported, particularly by bassist Dave Holland and drummer Jerome Cooper, who were each given ample room to display their talents.

Though some people were disenchanted with the first part of the programme and slipped discreetly out of the auditorium, Braxton was met by more than polite applause, and the second half was very well received indeed.

It would be a credit to the music series if upcoming concerts were to equal the standard set by the Braxton performance.



Murray Leadbeater, with one of his summer artists.

Leadbeater's kids on show

By DICK BAGSHOT

On Monday, October 7, the Winters College Art gallery opened its 1974-75 season with a show of children's art and photographs of the artists by Murray Leadbeater, entitled *Summer Art*.

The paintings and drawings in the show were done by six-to-12-year olds from Uxbridge, Ontario who attended a summer fine arts school in Uxbridge called *Creative Energy for Children*. The school was staffed by Mary Jo Wiley, Chris Belfontaine, Debbie Hall and Murray Leadbeater of York University, and Linda Rankin of Centennial College, under an Opportunities for Youth grant.

Much of the freedom and spontaneity of the school atmosphere is captured in the works of these children; they project a certain integrity that only children's art can have.

Leadbeater didn't manage to save all the best of the summer's works, and they are unlikely to make an indelible mark on Canada's art history, but it is certainly worth the trip to Winters to see these efforts.

Like the paintings and drawings, Leadbeater's photographs are candid and have a distinct "snapshot" flavor to them; but they are sensitive and capture, at least in part, some of the essence of children and their art.

The show is in room 123, Winters College, weekdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., until tomorrow.

Prison play involving

By AGNES KRUCHIO

In *The Night No One Yelled*, ex-convict Peter Madden's play at the Tarragon Theatre, the audience is thrust into the prison milieu by a clever design (by Valerie Tozzo) which mingles clumps of seats with prison cells, so that we cannot escape the sensation of being locked in.

The nine actors, each on the bottom of his three-walled cell-cocoon, in which he can hear his neighbour but cannot see him, all represent different backgrounds, different headspaces, different idiosyncracies.

The characters in the play, though physically so closely thrown together that they lack even enough privacy to use their individual toilets without the world looking on, all are solitary men, forsaken by their families, by their friends and the world they have left behind; occasionally they manage to rub against each other in this inhuman vacuum, which has been declared their punishment by society.

Little happens in the play that would make it a traditional dramatic composition, aside from an attempted escape by two young convicts. For the most part, the action consists of a conflict between Harry the intellectual and hardened repeater Rocky.

A background to their encounter is Ralph's musing about his future. About to be paroled, he broods about the possibilities and the lack of same for an ex-con.

Having burned all his bridges, he faces the possibility of being thrust into a world where he knows no one, for which he is not prepared, and which has left him behind many years ago. That possibility scares him, as it would scare any of his fellow travellers who dared to delve into the matter deeply enough; and even Harry's egg-head comments cannot allay that fear.

The play rises smoothly to the climax of the conflict between Harry, whom everyone treats as an omniscient neighbour to God, and Rocky, who while apparently a cynic, has retained a remnant of human dignity.

The play, however, neither fully

resolves nor sufficiently treats this conflict. After Harry doubly betrays his fellow prisoners by pressing on them the 'rational' belief that there is no escape (which there isn't) and by subverting their hope, the prisoners' reaction is one of capitulation. After an inexplicably short shouting spell at Harry, they curl up to go to sleep.

While there is a crack in Harry's defence, the tension created by his betrayal is not sufficiently resolved and we are left somewhat emotionally hanging, even as Rocky assures Harry that "everything is going to be all right."

Mina Erian Mina as Rocky, while a dominant actor, wins out in the end not through domination but through sheer humanity, and Michael Fernandes' portrayal of frightened Ralph has a piercing tone of reality.

The play runs through to October 27, at 30 Bridgman Avenue, Tuesday through Sunday at 8:30 p.m. Student tickets are \$2.50 weekdays, \$4. weekends. Sunday pay-what-you-can matinee at 2:30 p.m.

Sight and Sound

Pinter picked for York Cabaret

Don't miss the York Cabaret tonight and tomorrow night, October 17 and 18 in the Open End Coffee Show in Vanier College at 9:30 and 10:30 p.m. This week's show includes Rick Wolfe, Cathy Henderson, transvestites and some good old Harold Pinter. Free. Licensed. Information obtainable at 667-3970 or 661-4973.

Pony prances in Bethune pub

Bethune's Tap 'n' Keg pub presents *Under the Sign of Prancing Pony* (we don't make up the names, we just report them) next Wednesday and Thursday evenings (October 23 and 24) in the Bethune dining hall. Admission is 50 cents, unless you're from Bethune. York ID must be shown, and the show lasts from 8:30 p.m. to 1 a.m.

Japanese pomegranate in Curtis

Prize-winning Japanese films are shown by the humanities department every three weeks. Next week's feature is *Pomegranate Time*, to be shown on Tuesday, October 22, in Curtis LH-L, from 2 to 4 p.m. Admission is free.