

Arts

a view from nosebleed country:

The play is not particularly well-written, everything moves too quickly, leaving little time to build suspense or to attach meaning to what is happening. The music, the backbone of the piece, was often difficult to follow and hear; and there was little sense of the musical numbers building or connecting with each other. (TW)

How does such a show gain this sort of following? Perhaps only by flash and dazzle. It certainly isn't the inane lyrics and story structure of which even able actors and singers are not capable of saving. The draw must be the technology and stagecraft which somehow surpass both play and actor. (KT)

The only other aspect of the production which could even compare to the spectacular set and costume designs is the music. Colm Wilkinson as the phantom not only is able to lull Christine (played by Rebecca Caine) into a trance-like state with his soothing voice in "The Music of the Night" but also does the same to the audience. (BP)

So why do the 'opera' arias sound to me like songs from an album conceivably entitled *Classic Moments in Love* from K-Tel? Why does Colm Wilkinson have a voice that sounds like it should be flogging its own record collection and toll-free number during the late, late show? Why do none of the chorus members ever get to sing solo except for Donna Rubin, who was obviously chosen for her dancing ability? (SF)

Everyone has heard about Phantom of the Opera, the international mega-hit now on view at the refurbished Pantages Theatre downtown. But with ticket prices ranging from \$40 to \$75, not everyone is sure it's worth it. In the following, four York theatre students — Sandra Ferguson, Barbara Poole, Kirk Thomson and Tanya Walsh — assess the experience from the heights of Pantages (also known as the \$40 seats).

After witnessing this show's 12-month marketing blitz, my expectations were high. Unfortunately, *Phantom* is only spectacular as an event. The first show to be produced in the newly restored Pantages Theatre, "glitz" and "glitter" probably best describe the theatre's entrance with its lights, limousines and doormen. The experience of being drawn in to the centre of the building through a hallway of mirrors, past the liqueurs and souvenirs, and over a grand staircase, is enchanting.

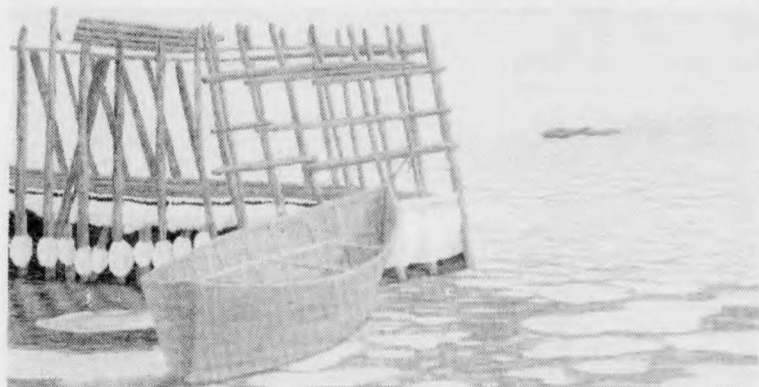
Once through the sea of silk and satin patrons, it's possible to enjoy the intricate decoration of the house. The spell is broken, however, once in the auditorium. The seats are severely under-raked, and from the rear of the theatre, this is a serious problem. (TW)

As I reach my chair and gratefully kick off my shoes (never mind the foot odour; after all, these are only the plebian \$40 seats), I realize that I am in major nosebleed country. Also, from the perspective of the stage, I feel about six inches shorter than the person in front of me. I solve this problem by balling up my coat and sitting on it, while leaning so far forward that my back never once gets to touch the velvety yumminess of the seat. Gee, I'm sure achieving that look of casual elegance that I was striving for. (SF)

I sat stunned. Stunned by their performance, by the music and by the lavish set and costume designs. All that I can say is WOW. (BP)

The idea of recreating Gaston Leroux's 1911 novel in musical form is intriguing. Lloyd-Webber, however, all but destroys the intrigue within the first five minutes. It does not open on a captivating note. Rather, it meanders through an auction and an opera dress rehearsal almost purposely keeping the phantom from being introduced to the audience. If this were the book, I would leave it on a dust shelf. (KT)

centre committed to breaking stereotypes



An example of Lindsay Collins' work.

Due to a mixup with files in last week's edition, an unedited version of the article "gallery enables artist" was mistakenly printed. We apologize for any misunderstanding and offer a reprinted, edited version of Tania Hewett's article.

The road for an artist is difficult and, up until now, even more difficult for the artist with disabilities. But the opportunities previously denied to artists with disabilities are now provided with the help of The Able Disabled Creative Arts Centre which opened its doors in May 1988.

The gallery, a project of the centre, was founded by director Bruno Kuemin who suffered a

stroke 13 years ago. His dream to provide a forum for the work of artists with disabilities took four years to accomplish.

The centre is a bridge between the art community and artists with disabilities. It provides services beyond gallery space for artists' work. The centre also provides unique and vital services which involve education and peer support, as well as personal outreach as a way to bring other artists to the centre.

In addition to a director, the centre also has administrator Judy Boswell, who graduated from York with a fine arts degree. Boswell believes her study at York, particularly in an art administration course, adequately prepared her for the job because, "It helped give me a good understanding of how to run a non-profit organization. The course also helped me deal with the problems that cropped up more

effectively."

Unfortunately, there are many problems these artists face. According to Boswell, one problem is that, "The work of the artist with disabilities is not taken seriously, it is seen as a craft. The toughest thing to fight is the perception that the work of artists with disabilities is not of the same calibre as so-called 'normal artists.'"

There are 16 artists associated with the centre. This organization is non-profit taking only a 20 per cent donation from the sale of the artist's work.

Currently, the artist that is featured is a paraplegic from Newfoundland named Lindsay Collins. The focus of his work is the beauty of the East coast, specifically places he saw as a child growing up in Newfoundland. Collins wanted to give people a sense of what life is like in Newfoundland, and the hidden beauty of the

Maritime region. Collins is a talented artist, but without the centre he would not have had the chance to get his work displayed. Boswell points out, "These artists don't have the networking or connections that other artists have."

Boswell sees the gallery as a springboard, and hopes that one day there will no longer be a need for the centre because that would mean the artists are accepted in the art world and have easy public access to their work. The centre is committed to breaking the stereotypical perception of artists with disabilities by showing how capable they are. The work being done at the centre is not only important to the art community but to society as well.

The Able Disabled Creative Art Centre is located at 49 McCaul Street, Village By the Grange. The hours are Tuesday to Friday 11-4 p.m. and Saturday 1-4 p.m.