

# Flaunt & Folly: big talent, small turnout

BY BEN MACLEAN

Organizers of *Flaunt & Folly*, Dalhousie University's new weekly variety performance, say the show must go on, despite frustratingly small audiences.

Held each Thursday afternoon at one o'clock in the Student Union Building's (SUB) Green Room Pit, *Flaunt & Folly* gives everyone from talents to tap dancers the chance to strut their stuff.

Organized over the summer, the program is the brainchild of Aubrey Fricker, a theatre student at Dalhousie who stage manages the show, and Bridgette McCaig, Dalhousie Student Union vice-president executive.

"We want to give people a place to express themselves," says McCaig, who hopes that *Flaunt & Folly* will fill an entertainment void that she says exists on campus.

Now in its fourth week, it seems *Flaunt & Folly* has a void of its own to fill: its audience. On average, only a dozen people find their way to each free presentation. A record crowd of thirty showed up during Orientation Week's bookstore blitz.

McCaig invites people to come by the Green Room and see what

they have been missing.

"It's very laid back," she stresses. Informal, energetic fun is clearly the name of the game at *Flaunt & Folly*. At last Thursday's show which was held in the SUB's amphitheatre, Fricker fittingly summed up the event as "raw performance."

For the first half-hour, the Dalhousie Percussion Ensemble made people's feet and fingers move to the beat of world rhythms. Passers-by turned their heads to see the music department students jam on congo drums, timbales, and many other instruments.

"We're just having fun," the group said.

Next up were Bobbi Savoy, emcee André Davey, and Fricker, who got people laughing with a scene from the British comedy *Fawlty Towers*.

Other performers included Cameron, an electric guitarist who introduced himself by simply saying, "I'm just gonna play a song that I wrote."

Despite rain, a crowd of about ten remained at the end of the show. Some people applauded then left, others stayed around to finish their lunch or chat with friends.

Even if numbers are low, this is just the atmosphere that Aubrey Fricker wants for the event: he does not want *Flaunt & Folly* to become "institutional." In his words, "You bring your coffee and you sit down."

Being on stage is equally relaxed.

"There are no rules," says Fricker. When it comes to talent, "You can be as good or as bad as you like...If you feel you can face an audience, go for it."

In scouting for performers, Fricker and McCaig hope to find more dancers and instrumentalists.

"Music raises the energy," says

Fricker.

No matter what kind of artist takes stage, the audience's response has been quite positive. On a comments form passed out at each week's show, people have generally said that they like the performance, the location, and the overall concept.

"It's great that it's during the day when you're trying to kill time," added one spectator.

Several audience members have also requested a return performance by the Dalhousie Improv Society, which was one of *Flaunt & Folly*'s first ever guests. Fricker hopes the artistic departments at Dalhousie

will take advantage of this unique program to showcase their works-in-progress.

As for the lack of audience presence, McCaig believes she may have an explanation. Since the Union Market cafeteria has been refurbished, she feels students may be taking their lunch there instead of to the Green Room.

"Drop in and see one little act," she recommends.

If more people get involved, Fricker suggests that "the [performance] standards are likely to rise."

McCaig agrees. She says that people will get from *Flaunt & Folly* "as much as [they] want to give to it."

## Get aware: AIDS Walk '97

BY KAREN DOWNY

AIDS is not the sensational story that it once was. It no longer headlines every news broadcast. It isn't found on the cover of every newspaper or publication that we might pick up, and as a result perhaps we don't think about it as often as we should.

"Everyone thinks that it won't happen to them," stated one Dalhousie student.

When asked if he, himself, practiced safe sex he replied, "Sometimes".

It is estimated that 54,000 Canadians are presently infected with the HIV virus. Approximately 3-5,000 are Nova Scotians. It is predicted that another 5,000 Canadians will be infected in the next year, and that half of those infected will be under the age of 23.

These are startling figures. In an age when deadly diseases such as AIDS are unnecessarily claiming lives, an alarming number of young people are not presented with the information that they need. Even more startling are others who choose to ignore all the information that is available.

'Picking up downtown' is still a common occurrence with the students often too drunk to care if condoms are being used.

The fight against AIDS is not limited to such things as practicing safe sex or eliminating IV drug use. It isn't only about finding a cure or walking in the AIDS walk. It requires a conscious effort everyday.

Our struggle with this disease forces us to face issues such as homosexuality, religion, prostitution, and homelessness.

The AIDS Coalition of Nova Scotia is actively involved in promoting AIDS awareness in the province. President Wilson Hodder said that many Nova Scotians are not aware of AIDS issues.

"I know situations with young gay men, 12,13,14, who when they told their parents they were gay were kicked out of their home. This also applies to young girls who are pregnant or in some other situation that the parents cannot deal with. These young individuals then very often migrate to the large urban centres be it Halifax, Montreal, or Toronto. Very often they don't have the coping skills they need to deal with life. Very often they end up on the street. Very often they engage in prostitution or engage in more unsafe activity and find themselves HIV positive," said Hodder.

Awareness surrounding these social factors is the biggest challenge and since the average age of infection is decreasing, it is

important to get the younger generation involved. However, it can be difficult to reach those that may need it the most.

"In our society it is extremely, if not impossible in some situations, to talk realistically and intelligently about sexuality in schools. What we need to do is go in there when they are 12, 13, 14, to talk about sexual activity and to talk about it in a positive light...Some schools are more intelligent and enlightened than others, but there are still some religiously dominated school boards and schools which would prefer to see kids and young people infected rather than provide them with the information to prevent themselves from getting infected.

"Simply saying no does not work. It has not worked with respect to drugs and it has not worked with respect to sexual activity. We had one high school where we were told that we could not talk about AIDS, we couldn't talk about condom use, we couldn't talk about masturbation, and yet in that school in the first half of the year there were 13 teen pregnancies. They could not talk about planned pregnancy or birth control in the school because the old cliché was that if you talk about it then everyone will want to do it. That is a rather naive attitude because by not talking about it what these people are actively doing is encouraging unsafe activity, lethal infections and the death of young

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## Strong Voice

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and setting the agendas for Senate meetings.

Since its inception, students have never had representation on this committee. This was quickly rectified when the Senate voted unanimously to allow the addition of one seat to the Senate Steering Committee to be filled by either the DSU president or the vice-president academic/external (Kevin Lacey).

"It is important that finally students will have a full say concerning the academic policies at this University. It is a big step forward for student representation," said Adams.

"Such an oversight as the omission of student representation on the president review committee will not reoccur now that we have representation on the Senate Steering Committee. I am really excited about this."

### EXPERIENCE JAPAN !

#### THE JAPAN EXCHANGE AND TEACHING (JET) PROGRAMME

The Government of Japan offers Canadians an opportunity to participate in a youth, cultural exchange programme as assistant English teachers, beginning in August 1998. The Consulate General of Japan at Montreal will hold the following information sessions :

**Date : Wednesday, October 1, 1997.**

**Time : Place :**

**AM Session : 10:00-12:00 Room 307  
Student Union Bldg.  
Dalhousie University**

**PM Session : 14:00-16:00 Room MM 208A  
McNally Bldg.  
St-Mary's University**

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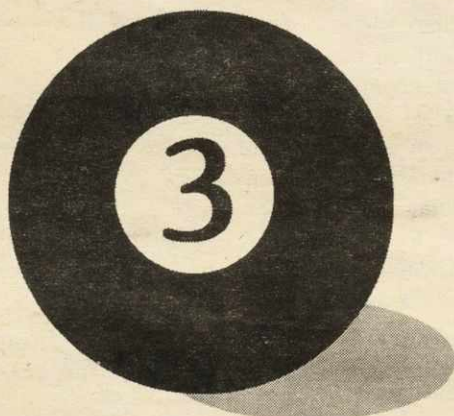
**Application forms can also be obtained at :**

Consulate General of Japan, c/o JET Desk  
600 de la Gauchetière West, Suite 2120  
Montréal, Québec H3B 4L8  
Tel : (514)-866-3429

**Application deadline : Nov. 14th 1997 (postmarked)**

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