

Entertainment

Harbourfront performance

Emotions and arguments clutter York play

By ARA ROSE PARKER

As a directorial assignment, two York students took their one-act plays down to Harbourfront last Thursday and Friday evenings.

The programme commenced with a rendition of Ingmar Bergman's "The Woodpainting", directed by Howard Rypp. This one-act play was created as an

exercise for actors, and later Bergman used its premise for his film "The Seventh Seal". The drama is a series of portrait images, a study into a mural of plague stricken victims. The figures in the woodpainting step out one by one to act out their feelings of Death.

One was aware that the material was beyond the experience of the cast. Credibility was difficult to

achieve, and as a result the play took on moments of a farcical nature.

The production was saved however, by one or two performances, and by technical details. The witch played by Jane Enkin was particularly effective. Lighting successfully enhanced the tragic mood of the piece, and the original music composed by Doi MacMillan and the York Music Cooperative was appropriate and exciting. Despite some very good direction "The Woodpainting" barely evolved beyond the stage of being an exercise.

The second one-act play, Harold Pinter's "Silence", directed by Double Greenberg, provides interesting material for a philosophical discussion. One either likes Pinter or not, but no matter how good the production, this play on tedium is a torture to sit through.

There were no flaws in the realisation of the material, all techniques of production worked harmoniously, allowing for the audience to zero in on the actor's speeches. A world was successfully created in which the actors and audience were one. All three performances, by David Bentley, Elspeth Strang and Pekka Haninen, were strong and suggested



Bryon Johnson photo

'Tis the season to be jolly, etcetera, etcetera. One of the nicer touches is this store window (Simpson's) at Yonge and Queen.

The Bee Gees came, saw, and conquered

By EVAN LEIBOVITCH

It's not often that a band of the Bee Gee's popularity and range comes to town. The group has defied almost all predictions, and presently appeals to two audiences — those that grew up when the group was riding high on the top 40 charts with their slow, folksy tunes; and the present gang of kids who love them for the new style of music that's characteristic of the Bee Gee's last two albums. Both groups were totally pleased by the end of Monday night's concert at Maple Leaf Gardens.

Before the Bee Gees took to the stage, the audience was to have been "warmed up" by some band from New York whose name was incomprehensible over the sound system, and rather unlistenable once they started playing. The material was so bland, the only real applause they got was when they announced their last number.

Then the roadies got to work setting up the headliners' gear. They took about 20 minutes, and by the time they left the stage, the crowd was growing very restless. Even the opening band couldn't cool down this mob.

As some silhouettes mounted the stage in the darkness, some of the crowd shone flashlights and flicked their Bics as the roar grew louder. The roar developed into a wild cheer as the lights came on to their first song, "I've Gotta Get A Message to You".

The group consisted of two guitarists, two keyboardists, the Boneroos (a six piece horn section), a percussionist, and of course vocalists Maurice, Robin, and Barry. As well, Barry played guitar, and Maurice played bass. While not singing, Robin strutted around the stage doing a dance that might have been called the spastic chicken.

They started out with their slower songs, such as "Massachusetts", "I Started a Joke", and others, with an unfamiliar addition of brass and synthesizer strings. Maurice, not singing all the time, amused the crowd with gestures he made on stage.

The fever of the audience rose with the tempo of the music. During one piece, Barry created a duel between the two sides of the Gardens by approaching one side,

hearing the screams, and then going over to the other side and "challenging" it to do better.

By the time the group ended its set with "Jive Talkin'", the folks in the floor seats were standing up, and didn't sit down for the rest of the show.

The Bee Gees literally had them dancing in the aisles, or grinning at their seats. Only a polished group of professionals like this could take an audience cooled down by a mediocre opener, and work them up into the happy bunch of thousands that left the Gardens.

McLaughlin Hall hosts student run fantasy

By JAMES BRENNAN

Last Friday saw the final performance at York of the fourth year theatre students' production of Salad Days. The production now goes on a tour of high schools.

Salad Days is a very English, and

somewhat crazy musical about Tim and Jane, two young university graduates who for a week look after Mini, a piano which makes all who listen to it dance. In the process of evading capture by Tim's uncle, the Minister of Pleasure and Pastime,

they lose Mini, only to find her again with the help of the flying saucer of Uncle Zed, a different uncle incidently.

The trenchancy and energy of the performances, highlighted by Tim (Stewart Arnott) and Jane (Dianne Hawkins), gave the production an extraordinarily bright and appealing character. On the whole, the singing, under the direction of John Oxley (who worked with Slade during the 1960's) was excellent, particularly in "Find Yourself Something do Do", a song involving rapid exchanges between Tim's father (David Nairn), mother (Jana Cervinka) and Aunt Prue (Silvana Jasaitis), not to mention the victim Tim.

Likewise the choreography, directed by Jill Courtney, was

spirited and lively and one can only admire Tim and Jane for their stamina.

Act II opened in the Cleopatra night club with manageress Maggie Butterfield seductively singing the audience wild, followed by Gayle Kerbel, perfectly cast as Asphyxia, the wild-eyed night club singer. Finally, Chrys Bentley, the pianist, played superbly with great sensitivity throughout the performance.

According to John Oxley, Friday was the production's best night because there was a more sophisticated audience. Evidently, previous performances had played to almost all student audiences which failed to pick up on many of the jokes and were unprepared to become involved themselves.



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