

ENTERTAINMENT

Faculty displays A Fine Madness

York dancers soar to new heights in concert

J. Brett Abbey

The York Dance Department has had a reputation for bland and lifeless concerts. Many were restrained or bereft of any creativity. Last week, however, the dance students and faculty blew their reputation for tediousness by

producing *A Fine Madness*, a concert that was both refreshing and bizarre.

The show, in Burton, opened with "Sanctus", a series of liturgical dances directed by faculty member Sandra Caverly-Lowery. To a collage of music, the dancers floated and leapt with obvious enjoyment,

despite the strenuous activity of the movement. This sense of ease often marks the distinction between courage and intimidation in a dancer.

Student Danovia Stechishin choreographed "Midsummer's Rite", which explored ritual and its power to control. Circular patterns exemplified this vicious power, but the dancers lacked the energy of Grant Mackay's electronic music. However, Stechishin's choreography was refreshing and evocative.

"Iona", choreographed by teacher David Wood for his repertory class, should have stayed in the classroom. The series of plies and slow steps across the stage was not very interesting. Since nothing happens choreographically, "Iona" is like last year's "Walking To The Opera", also created by Wood.

However, dancer Laima Janusau-

skas was outstanding. Perhaps if she and the other dancers had been given more freedom, "Iona" would have been a delight instead of a disappointment.

Teacher Judy Gregg's work is another example of the new and lively trend in the York Dance Department. Entitled "Train", her piece exploits the characteristics of people bound in an urban environment. Danced by Gregg's repertory class, "Train" blended the diverse personalities and tensions of commuters.

"At Night", by teacher Karen Bowes-Sewell, was as smooth as "Train" was frantic. As a glimpse of love in all its forms, "At Night" created a dream-like state that required the viewer to become a part of the fantasy.

Not to be outdone by faculty choreography, student Chantal

Bourgeois presented the most interesting work in the concert, entitled "5 O'Clock News". Her exciting costumes and bizarre choreography reveal the imagination of a talent who is going places.

The programme ended perfectly with "Party Piece", a collaborative work developed by the advanced composition class under the direction of Anna Blewchamp. After the serious tone of the earlier pieces, "Party Piece" was just what the evening called for. This light-hearted slapstick depicted facets of different people all vying for attention. None of the dancers was more noticeable than the ebullient Helen Cherry.

On the whole, the York Dance Department displayed a new sense of achievement and excellent level of dancing. Hopefully, both students and faculty will continue in this 'fine madness'.



Toronto's Holly Woods

Photo: Barry Carson

Hot bands for hungry crowd

Barry Carson

Connie Pinder, a 29-year-old Calgary housewife and the mother of four, got her "thrill of a lifetime" last Thursday night when she sang on stage with the rock band Toronto. And the show's film crews added excitement to the concert at the Oshawa Civic Auditorium.

Toronto has been on the international music scene for two years and has recorded three very successful hit albums--*Looking for Trouble*, *Head On*, and their most recent, *Get It On Credit*. Toronto is Holly Woods on lead vocals, Brian Allen on lead and rhythm guitars, Sheron Alton on lead and rhythm guitars, Scott Kreyer on keyboards, Gary Lalonde on bass, and Barry Connors on drums. It is not surprise that they are developing a strong following with such hits as "Your Daddy Don't Know", "Break Down the Barri-

cades", "Even the Score", and "Start Telling the Truth".

For the Oshawa show, Toronto opened for B.C. rockers, Chilliwack, the symbol of a hard-working, dedicated Canadian Band. With 15 years experience and ten albums under their belts, Chilliwack has paid its dues. The band has been refined and now has three front men, Ab Bryant on bass, Bill Henderson on lead vocals and Brian MacLeod on guitars. Their latest release, *Opus X*, will be the album which, in terms of international success, makes or breaks Chilliwack. Two singles, "Whatcha Gonna Do" and "My Girl" have already climbed the charts, making *Opus X* one of Chilliwack's most successful albums to date. In this performance, both Chilliwack and Toronto worked up a tight, professional sound that got cheers from the fans.

Professors' poetry for student perusal

Nigel Turner

Last Wednesday, the students of two Stong College writing tutorials were given an opportunity to reverse the tables by commenting on their professors' works. The occasion was Stong's second, 1982, poetry recital held in Sylvester's. Patricia Kenney-Smith read her poems dealing with "identity on several levels" after which Harry Pollock read excerpts from his recently completed manuscript, *After the Funeral*.

Kenney-Smith freelance writer, editor and professor has written on various topics such as the near-drowning of a man to the birth of her first child. Most notable was a series of portraits of a Greek family: the indomitable mother, and the youngest son, bound to the rocky land without a wife to take his mother's place.

Pollock, president of the James Joyce society, actor and teacher, read from his satirical novel, *After the Funeral*. During the ensuing discussion, recital organizer Janet Lewis made a connection between an excerpt about the antics of an Oriental flea circus and the escapades of a young model Gabriel. The author found this unintended parallel hard to deny. Throughout his reading, Pollock's use of sound, words and images displayed the influence of James Joyce.

Society as a culture

Let us vulgarize famous men

Paul Pivato

Bad Taste is Terry Fox joking that he doesn't have to change the sock on his artificial leg. *Bad Taste* is also a play by York graduate Robyn Butt that borders on blasphemy.

This satire, at Theatre Pass Muraille until Dec. 5, probes society's obsession with heroes. Harry, the main character, idolizes Terry Fox and follows him on the Marathon of Hope from Newfoundland to Thunder Bay in

limousine. Travelling in the car with Harry are the incestuous twins Cameron and Lynette.

Harry, played by Maurice Godin, is agonizingly schizoid. Writhing on the stage, he displays his anguish to the audience. Harry worships James Dean and Fox because he is, like ourselves, in desperate need of a hero.

The twins, however, are two moths drawn by the glow of publicity surrounding the runner. Watching

Fox hobble along the road, Lynette asks "Have you ever seen anything more moving? When Cameron answers "Moving into the distance", the audience sees how vacuous the twins are.

Like an odd burlesque, the twins lecherously gobble and suck food. When Harry speaks passionately about Fox rubbing his sore stump, Cameron rubs whipping cream on Lynette and then laps it up. Lynette rapes Harry while Cameron gyrates grotesquely to the strains of Beethoven. The ravenous twins are exposed for what they are. In fact, no one is spared in *Bad Taste*.

Even the audience squirms at the play's indignities. There are no sacred cows-only debunked mythologies. James Dean, watching the party from the outside, is relegated to a ditch. Although Terry Fox is publicly raised to the status of a demi-god, he privately asks Harry if people will still love him when he is bald from chemotherapy.

However, Fox is not the satire's target. His adoring public is. When driving by, the twins ask the chauffeur to snap souvenir pictures of them. Obliging, Lynette and Cameron pose with flexed muscles and groping hands. In Toronto, old ladies sip tea waiting for Fox to pass. For autographs, teenagers run after him, not with him. The media hordes have created a "performing monkey" for public pleasure.

The actors maintain the raw tension necessary to satire. Their constant movement relieves the claustrophobia of the single set which is the interior of Harry's limousine.

Unfortunately, *Bad Taste* gets clogged with too many ideas which the author cannot resist packing in. Also, too many allusions presume a prior knowledge of the James Dean mythology.

However, by targeting our obsessions with heroes, the play leaves not only a nasty grin and bitter taste: it also leaves room for thought.

In dealing with Fox, Butt strips the Marathon of Hope of sentimental hypocrisy. What remains is the grim picture of a dying cripple surrounded by vultures. Terry Fox becomes only a circus, intended to arouse and gratify our needs. For the playwright, nothing could be more vulgar.

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'Day in the Death'--intense evening

Nigel Turner

The play *A Day in the Death of Joe Egg* is a serious comedy yet a humorous tragedy.

Addressing the moral and emotional issues of euthanasia, this tough six-character work has been brought to life at the Beckett Theatre.

Written in 1967 by Peter Nichols, *A Day* focuses on school teacher Brian (Timothy Post), his wife Sheila and their daughter, the epileptic, retarded Joe. Brian can no longer handle life with Joe--a "human parsnip" and he advocates euthanasia. However, throughout the play, the actors seemed to be living the drama, not merely acting it.

Performances end December 2nd. Free Admission

Pirates due to land at Stong

W. Hurst

Auditions are now underway for *Pirates of Penzance*, the Gilbert and Sullivan opera which will play York in February. This is the third G & S production to be mounted by Stong College. Director John Huston and Musical Director Leon Tarkis are looking for a Major-General, a pirate maid and other assorted zanies to bring the tale to life.

Unlike the recent Broadway version, the *Stong Pirates* will be more traditional. However, since Gilbert and Sullivan despised pretension, any version of *Pirates* should be fun. If it's good enough for Linda Ronstadt, it should be good enough for York. Auditions continue until Dec. 5. For information, call 667-3061

Would Chaucer approve?

J. Brett Abbey

Geoffrey Chaucer might be both thrilled and appalled to see *Oh Chaucer*, Vanier College's version of *The Canterbury Tales*.

The director of *Oh Chaucer*, Gary Schallenberg, *As You Like It* last year at York University and took that production to Harbourfront. Of this current play Schallenberg said "The tales create an informal evening of story telling based on Chaucer, with breaks for food and drink."

Director Schallenberg notes " *Oh Chaucer* is not pretentious or high art, but a production of rollicking fun that will appeal to everyone."

Best Friends: It takes two

Show *Excalibur* your best friend and we'll show you a good time.

To kick off the holiday season, *Excalibur* is giving away 100 double passes to the December eight screening of *Best Friends*, the new Goldie Hawn-Burt Reynolds film.

Tickets are available as of Dec. 6 between 2 p.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. You and your best friend must appear at the *Excalibur* offices, (room 111, Central Square, Ross Building).