

# The arts



Photos by Andrew Yeung

## A Canadian success story

The Royal Winnipeg Ballet Company began as a dance club in 1939. In 1949 Socialite Lady Tupper, enthusiastic and inveterate dabbler in the Winnipeg arts, urged the club - which had just returned from a disastrous tour of eastern Canada - to turn professional. It did.

Two years later, Princess Elizabeth came to town and Lady Tupper pulled strings to get the Winnipeg Ballet a command performance for the royal visitor.

Two years after that, in 1953, Lady Tupper urged the board to apply to Elizabeth, now Queen of England, for permission to call the company the Royal Winnipeg Ballet. The Queen agreed. It was the first royal charter she had granted, and made the Winnipeg company the first "royal" company in the British Commonwealth.

Through its thirty-five year history the company has survived fire, apathy, isolation, competition and near bankruptcy. Today the Royal Winnipeg Ballet has an at-home subscription audience of 9,000 - higher than that of every other company on this continent except the New York City Ballet, and on a proportionate subscriber-to-population basis, the highest in North America. The company performs in its home town four times a season, six performances at a time, with a further six free open-air performances in a city park every summer.

The rest of its forty-five week year is taken up with rehearsals, preparation... and touring. This spring, for instance, the company undertook a 46-performance, thirty-three city tour of Canada and the U.S. that had it hopping backward and forward across the border no less than eight times.

But the Royal Winnipeg Ballet is celebrated today not only in Winnipeg, not only in Canada, but across the globe. It has been acclaimed in 374 cities in twenty-three countries on four continents - making it

Manitoba's most important export after wheat. It has played almost 250 cities in the U.S. alone - ranging alphabetically from Aberdeen, S.D., to Wichita Falls, Tex. The demand for the company's services is such that this season general manager Jim Cameron was actually turning down bookings to give the dancers a chance to snatch some holiday time.

The reasons for the com-

## This music a deviation from the norm

Today there are a lot of popular forms of music, all gaining a large following - Jazz, blue grass, country, rock, and gospel. Yes, even gospel. Gospel music is attracting people as never before, and this form of music is probably best epitomized by the singing of the Imperials and the Couriers. This was once again made evident in their concert Friday night at the Jubilee Auditorium, before a near-sellout crowd.

The Couriers opened the concert, singing for the first hour. The Couriers' style of music can best be described as "traditional" gospel, with prominent vocals complemented by a varying background. At times their vocals may have even been too overpowering, detracting from one of the better gospel concerts in recent memory. They showed great versatility by performing with backgrounds varying from piano to the London Symphonia to no accompaniment whatsoever. The highlight of their performance was "The Statue of Liberty", written by Neil Enloe of the Couriers, which has recently climbed into the top ten songs in the U.S. This song has finally given them the recognition which they so rightly deserve after 20 years of singing.

The Imperials, singing the second half of the program, represent the more contemporary approach to gospel music, with a more prominent

pany's successes so far beyond the Canadian border in the past decade have to do in great part with the company's unique awareness of its limitations and its potential, its canny exploitation of the things it is best at, its continuing contemporaneity, and its compelling vitality.

Its style - no superstars, a compact company, a bold, accent-on-the-contemporary repertoire - is already becoming

a copied pattern.

The Royal Winnipeg Ballet will be in Edmonton November 17, 18, 19 at the Jubilee Auditorium 8:30 p.m. Tickets are available at SU Box Office and Bay Outlets for \$3.50 - \$7.50 a seat. (Discount rates for students and senior citizens).

If past experience is any indication, Edmontonians will have three very pleasant evenings of dance.



Photo by Gerhard Hiob

The Imperials: top of the line contemporary gospel music.

background, in this case an electric piano-organ, bass and lead guitar, drums, and trumpet. The Imperials, all four of whom are accomplished soloists in their own right, show a blend which is really unequalled by any other group. Their ability has not only been recognized by those appreciating gospel music, who have repeatedly voted them as the top gospel group in America, but also by such noted personalities as Elvis Presley and Jimmie Dean, who utilized them as a background group in personal appearances and records.

The Imperials have a style of music which is appealing to everyone, young and old. Rock enthusiasts would enjoy a song like "No Shortage", written by

Gary Paxton, former songwriter for the Beach Boys. Those appreciating a soft, relaxing melody would enjoy songs like "Give Them All to Jesus".

Both groups, the Imperials and the Couriers, are there not merely to entertain but to share themselves and their message with the audience.

The usual carefree style of the Imperials was somewhat hampered due to the absence of Joe Moscheo, who showed an ability to establish rapport with the audience as well as arranging the music and playing piano-organ. Both groups, however, were well received by an enthusiastic audience whose only complaint was that the concert was too short.

Wally Wesner  
Paul Batke



## Gino Vanelli - a powerful person

Beyond the power, there was presence. Tuesday evening Gino Vanelli captured the crowd at SUB Theatre as much with his personality as with his now-patented musical style.

Vanelli's Jaggerish on-stage movements were not simply an exhibitionist ploy. With them he conducted the band, emphasizing the lilting cadence of his music; which incidently, is well represented by his three hits "People Gotta Move," "Powerful People," and "Love Me Now."

The distinct patterns, if not your cup of tea, do become repetitive. But the audience responded with two standing ovations to indicate their approval. With the audience "in his pocket" Vanelli refrained from condescension, speaking of his background and inspirations in a refreshingly candid tone. He gave several well deserved credits to his band, which included his brother Joe on keyboards.

Special guest Patricia Dahlquist ("Keep Our Love Alive") did an opening set composed chiefly of disco-type tunes which, though well executed, fell on largely unappreciative ears. The crowd wanted Vanelli, got him, and in Dahlquist's words, it was a magnificent show.

by Loreen Lennon

## Asimov again

Buy *Jupiter and Other Stories*, by Isaac Asimov, 206 pages. Doubleday and Company Inc, 1975, \$6.95.

Doubleday editor Larry Ashmead claims that no Asimov story can be really bad and, after reading this collection of two dozen science fiction stories previously unseen in an anthology (unless you attended the Boskone XI convention), I must concur.

Every selection appeals to the reader's imagination in some way, and it would be difficult to discard one of these stories half-read without a great deal of mental anguish. Every story deals out some kind of surprise card, often the joker. For Asimov enjoys his jokes.

The title of the book itself is left unaffected by his sense of humor and one story, *Shah Guido G*, is an exercise in punmanship.

The stories are enhanced by the biographical commentary that runs through the book. Each story is introduced by entertaining dialogue that gives background for the story's creation.

Asimov shows his wide range of interests and abilities in stories that vary in idea and attitudes to a surprising extent. His characters are realistic in such vivid settings as a run-down bar or a big city ball park. Rather than the unreal adventures of starship captains we are shown the reactions of common people in unusual situations.

The themes are somewhat unique to science fiction. What happens to the last zoo on earth when there are no more animals? How will earth cope with visitors from another galaxy who need advertising space and want to purchase a rather unique billboard? Asimov explores the possible future of some seemingly normal situations and astounds the reader with his results.

*Buy Jupiter* is something no lover of fanciful tales should miss. Asimov is a masterful storyteller and these stories are masterful examples of what science fiction can be.

Zina Avian