

Drifters first full length LP by True West

By SIOBHAN McRAE

DRIFTERS IS THE FIRST full length album by True West,



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following a single, and E.P. and a compilation package. Not having heard of any of their previous work I had to judge *Drifters* solely on its own merits and found that it was definitely worth a listen.

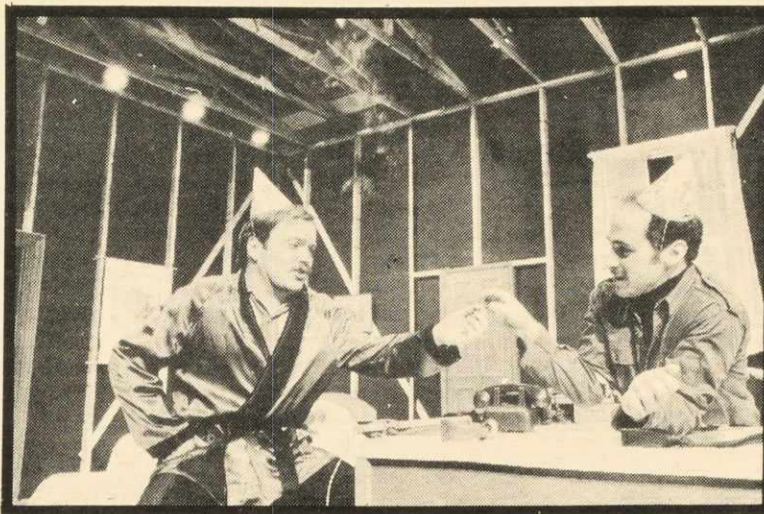
As member Russ Tolman states, "True West is a band that is well aware of its place in the continuum of American music." They, along with such bands as R.E.M. and The Dream Syndicate, fit into the west coast folk-rock sound that had its origins with groups such as The Byrds and Quicksilver Messenger Service.

A more unique aspect of the band is their use of a country blues element, a style best exemplified by the Rolling Stones *Sweet Virginia* from *Exile on Main St.* and by The Faces around the time of their *Long Player* album.

Unfortunately, this aspect of the music only comes out on one cut, *Ain't No Hangman*. True West would be well-advised to develop more in this area if they hope to differentiate themselves from the many other bands of their type.

For the most part, the songs on *Drifters* have a strong, catchy melody line with lots of guitar embellishments. Lyrically, the content of the songs can be guessed at simply from their titles — *Morning Light*, *Look Around*, and *What About You*. There's nothing particularly new here but the music and its presentation is strong enough to carry a listener's interest.

True West are no a band that grabs the attention with flashy production techniques, but rather the understated treatment of their songs improves with each listening.



Jimmy Zoole (Sheldon Davis) and Vito Antonucci (Stephen Tobias) exchange some weed while getting to know each other better in *P.S. Your Cat is Dead*. Jimmy a conservative actor, and Vito a gay burglar are a humorous pair despite their personality differences. The play was directed by Paul D. Smith. Smith is a third year student at Dalhousie. Photo: Micheal Scher, Dal Photo.

cast, the majority of whom had never performed on stage before, and you get a notion of the problems that this group overcame. The performance was excellent. The costumes were beautiful. In spite of a Church stage which made set changes difficult, the show went smoothly. The songs were performed very well, and the play was so well directed that it ran precisely on time. The pacing was so good that one didn't notice the absence of an intermission.

Scrooge was played by Stan Armstrong, a Professor of Religious Studies at St. Mary's University. Armstrong's Scrooge was totally convincing and often hilariously funny. He spent several weeks carrying Scrooge's cane, and living the character in everyday life. This is a drastic measure, but the rewards were immense for his audience.

Mrs. Kristine Driscoll shouldered the task of producing and directing the play, and must receive enormous credit for the highly professional performance. Jayne Driscoll directed the music and choreographed the dance. One especially good dance was a deeply moving dream sequence where Tiny Tim sees himself healed. The Cornerstone Players musical proceeded with a consistency and professionalism which rivalled Neptune's production of *Cabaret*.

There are two lessons to take from Cornerstone Players' production of *The Gospel According to Scrooge*. The first is that an amateur company can do a very professional job. The notion that monetary reward produces artistic quality is as wrong as it sounds. The second lesson that we can learn is that the teaching of religion doesn't have to be heavy-handed and sour.

The Rock Church should be proud of its ability to teach Christianity with a light heart and good sense of humour. The next time you hear that the Cornerstone Players are putting on a play—make a point of seeing it.

Gospel according to Scrooge slick

By MATT WILSON

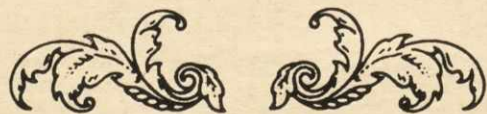
CORNERSTONE PLAYERS, a dramatic group affiliated with the Rock Church of Sackville, presented *The Gospel According to Scrooge*, a musical adaptation of Charles Dickens' *Christmas Carol*, on the 21st through 23rd of December. The production was an expertly produced and directed musical, as spectacular as anything staged in the region this year.

The production follows the story line of *Christmas Carol* very closely, adding many songs, and maintaining a light-hearted tone. The crucial alterations of the play make it a story of a miser who first accepts God, and then catches the Christmas spirit. Instead of being visited by ghosts, Scrooge is visited by angels of the Lord. The converted Scrooge loves mankind because he loves God. The visions given to Scrooge show him how he closed his heart to God's love, and came to depend upon himself and his money for security. Scrooge is made into a witness of God's endless concern for man.

The performance was two hours long. This posed a major challenge for the Cornerstone Players. Add to that the need for extensive costumes, and the large

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