

# THE CHOPPING BLOCK



## Where am I?

Most readers probably have no idea of the blizzard of press releases and publicity stuff that inundates the Arts desk. Where do these hordes of poets, painters, filmmakers, writers, musicians and what-nots come from? And all of them bellowing at the top of their lungs for attention.

Naturally, one of my first requisitions was a shovel to deal with the sifting, wafting drifts of paper. How the previous editors managed without one, I don't know.

A few things do get lost with the shovel method. For instance, in some strata accessible only to archeologists lies some information about the musical treats put on at the Power Plant (by Fine

Arts students if I remember rightly). An employee of the campus resort phoned the info to me, making menacing noises about *Gateway's* lack of coverage all year.

For now, though, all I can say is - check out the posters or go there and get surprised. It can't be any worse than RATT.

## Canadian aesthetics (an autopsy)

Spring; and the veil of snow vanishes, revealing the ugly face of Edmonton. The filth and trash that litters the street alone turns the stomach, not to mention the grey-box buildings, pink flamingoes and dreary unrelieved expanses of barren lawn.

I can't recall anyone really complaining about this hideousness. Any Canadian that is.

A gentleman from Europe, however, came over a few years ago with a vision of 'Canada the unspoilt wilderness' dancing in his head. Not an artist, but a farmer, theoretically insensitive to the niceties of beauty. He left Canada shaken and appalled. How could people *stand* to live in such a pigsty? Who could tolerate it?

To the average Canadian, though, beer bottles, candy wrappers, cigarette butts, tinfoil, cardboard boxes, pop cans and straws in the gutter are as lovely as the neat tree-lined boulevards of Versailles, and of course gutters are the handiest receptacles for detritus, no?

And to the Edmontonian the tangled spaghetti tree in the City Hall fountain is as pleasing as a nude Venus pouring water from a pitcher (How Cec. Purves would blanch at the mere suggestion of such a thing!)

Such a deep-rooted lust for the ugly probably explains the feebleness of the higher arts in Canada - our meagre literature, our virtually non-existent

musical heritage, our non-descript painters, our lackluster theatre - I mean in the *creative* end, not just the artistic hewing of wood and drawing of water.

How can great art be produced by a people who have not even mastered the lowly art of disposing of garbage?

This being an editorial I suppose I should offer some sort of solution, but I confess I can't think of one, unless it is reinstating the death penalty for litterbugs. But my bleeding-heart friends would probably call that extreme.

## FILMS

*The Best of the 1980 Cannes Festival Commercials*; March 17, 7:30 p.m.; National Film Theatre (Zeidler Hall, Citadel Theatre); \$3.50 non-members, \$2.50 members. The promo sez: "... just remember that Da Vinci was a commercial artist, working only if commissioned."

*The Silence*; March 25; 7:30 p.m.; SUB Theatre; Tickets: HUB, SUB Chaplains Office; \$3.00, \$2.00 students. A taste for Bergman films is like a taste for Kierkegaard - acquired. Not everyone relishes the agonizing of gloomy Nord. However, in the humble opinion of the Editor everyone should see one at least once. They are certainly better than standard Hollywood pap, and *The Silence* will probably be your last chance to see one for a while.

*Sir! Sir!; Waiting for Fidel*; March 24; 12:30 - 2 p.m.; AV L-3 Humanities Centre; Free. Part 1 in a series of films by Michael Rubbo for the National Film Board. The first film concerns a classroom in Toronto where two young boys teach a class of teachers. In the second Rubbo and former Newfie Premier Smallwood go to Cuba to meet Castro. Hmmm.

Persistent and Finagling; Tigers and Teddy Bears; March 26; 12:30 - 2 p.m.; AV L-3; Part 2 of above. The first is a study of a citizen's group fighting pollution. The second is about four candidates in the 1976 Quebec election fighting for the Westmount riding. Hmmm hmmm.

## GALLERIES

A growing collection: The Department of Zoology; March 26 - April 16; Ring House Gallery; Weekdays 11-4 p.m., Thursdays 11-9 p.m., Sundays 2-5 p.m. An exhibition of natural history specimens from the U of A zoology department research collection.

## MUSIC

Ensemble Music for Wind instruments; March 25, 8 p.m. Convocation Hall; Free. Baroque brass music, Mozart's Piano Quintet, Strauss' Serenade for Winds, Schuller's Symphony for Brass and Percussion.

Johnny Griffin; March 24-28; 9 p.m.; The Palms Cafe; EJS members \$6.00 (\$7.00 Fri. - Sat.) others \$7.00 (\$8.00 Fri. - Sat.) At the door only.

BIM; March 26; 8:30 p.m.; Provincial Museum Theatre; Tickets: Mike's, HUB, West Den; \$7.00, \$6.00 advance.

## READINGS

Dr. Emil Braun, Kevin Lewis; March 26; 12:30 - 1:30; SUB Art Gallery; Free. Poetry by local talents.

# On the platter

review by Wes Oginski

Roger Whittaker  
*Roger Whittaker With Love*  
(TMT 3778)

Roger Whittaker does indeed present his album *With Love*. It combines pop, ballad, and middle of the road. For those who enjoy CHQT all day, *Roger Whittaker With Love* is a treat, and it will entertain many others too.

Whittaker is involved with writing or composing (or both), the songs on the album. *I am But a Small Voice* ('Ako Y Munting Ting') is the essence of the album. This song is the winner of a U.C. competition for *The Year of the Handicapped Child*, written by Odina E. Batnag, a Jamaican girl, and the music is by Whittaker. It has an innocence that glows and communicates straight from the heart.

*Love Will*, and *Tall Dark Stranger* are typical Whittaker style, delivered with the same finesse his earlier songs contain. They both are toe-tapping fun.

A must-mention is the ballad *Newport Belle*. Whittaker produces a song that stands well with other recent ballads like Kenny Roger's *The Gambler*.

Doc Holliday  
*Doc Holliday*  
(SP-4847)

*Doc Holliday* starts out like a band in a local tavern, loud and not very enticing. Luckily I listened to the flip-side.

This is the band's first album, and a few problems are to be expected. *Ain't No Fool* is one of the songs that comes off as loud and disorganized. Sometimes it is difficult to distinguish between the blaring instrumentals and the screaming lead singer, Bruce Brookshire.

*Magic Midnight* makes this a premature judgement of Doc Holliday. This song is a much more relaxed rendition that carries the tone of caring.

By the time the album reaches the flip-side, *Doc Holliday* seems to be following a thematic outline of an entertainer's life on the road.

*The Way You Do* is a fast song and expresses the excitement on the road.

This song is followed immediately by one with an opposite tone. *Somebody Help Me* expresses the pain.

A band that comes off like Doc Holliday in a debut album has a lot going for it. They do have their rough spots, but given a few more years, they could become major performers.

Dutch Mason Blues Band  
*Mister Blue/ Did You Mess Your Mind*  
(Attic LAT 1093)

I never listened much to blues music before, but Dutch Mason Blues Band could start a new trend in my repertoire. The two songs on this 45 are a good introduction for the novice.

*Mister Blue* defines the field. It has a light lilting quality. The song hypnotizes in its movement and beat, that just spells out blues (that is to me the layman).

The other song, *Did You Mess Your Mind*, continues the trend and has the same lilting quality. It does not come on as strong as *Mister Blue*, but is still of interest.

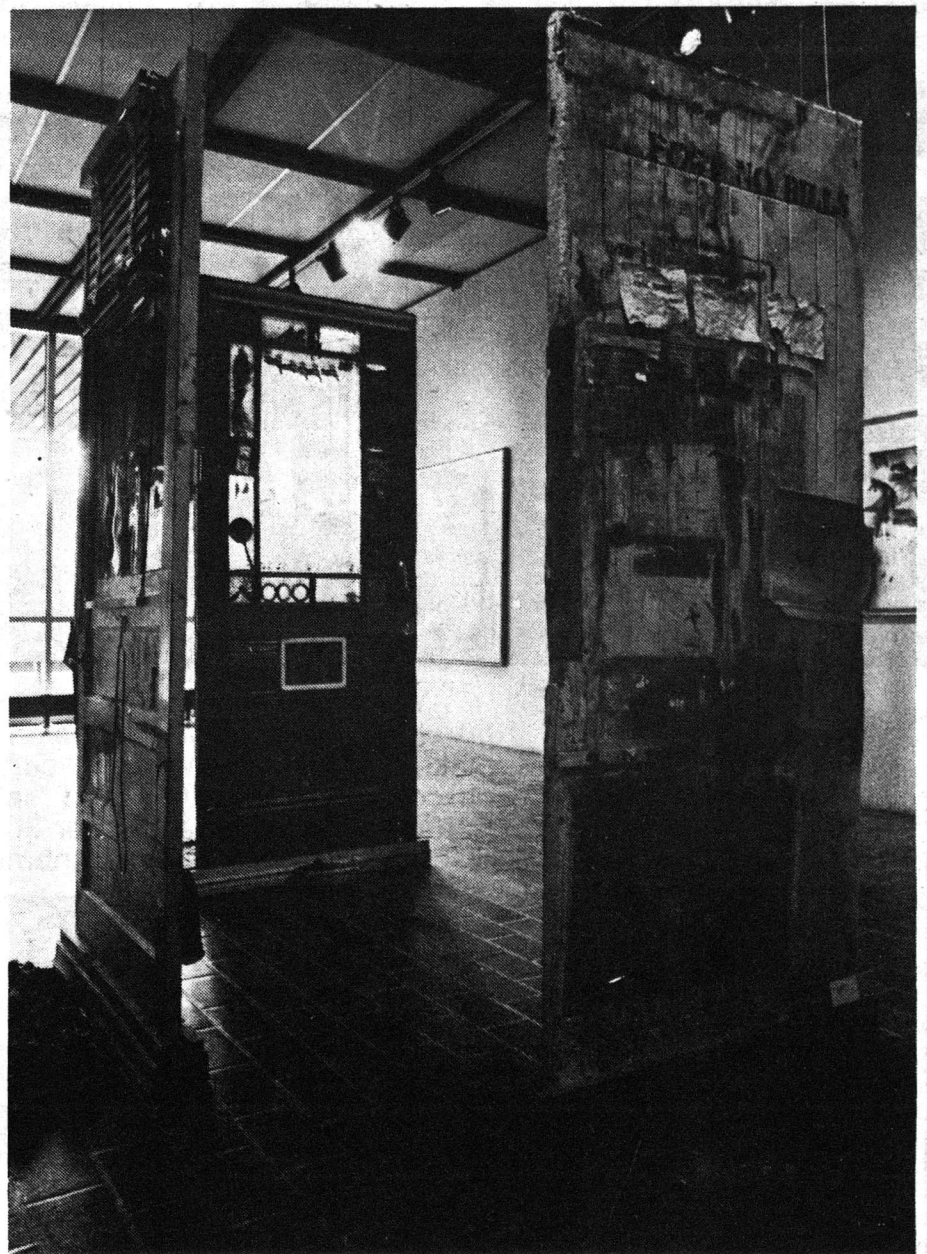
Micheale Jordana  
*Panic/I'll Do What You Want (My Way)*  
(Attic LAT 1101)

I do not pretend to like *new wave* music, and in fact I am guilty of being an avid commercial pop music fan. Thus I can not recommend this 45 at all.

*Panic* is a fast beat tune, unfortunately the lyrics are very contradictory and depressing. This is my major complaint to most new wave music, though there are a few of them I have learned to like.

I could learn to like *I'll Do What You Want (My Way)*. Again the fine strong beat is present, and I could follow the song's meaning since it was without contradictions. The words seem to fit the tune, and the unity is a pleasure.

From only these two songs and a 50-50 split in enjoyment, it is difficult to form an opinion of Micheale Jordan's music. Overall, I would have to go with the experience and not recommend it.



This is "Four Doors" by Laura Vickerson, and the sculpture includes everything from a mousetrap to handbills for the Texas Independence Day Celebration (featuring favorite son Kinky Friedman). It is on display at the SUB Art Gallery along with the work of other B.F.A. graduates. The Arts Editor's Jumping Eyebrow Award goes to Mary Anne William's watercolor "Gifford." Special mention to Shirley Glew for three fine pieces. The paintings, sketches, sculptures and close relations are somewhat abstract for this reviewer's taste (no, Ray, textures are not necessarily art) but some are good, and the design art displays, the highlight of the exhibit, more than make up for the lack. And then there is the postcard of the urinating pig... J.A.

photo Ray Giguere