



Left to right: James Hurdle as the English Lieutenant Mannon, and Rowland Davies as Captain Gross.

"Colour the Flesh"

Play a quiet success

by Sharon Dunn and Dale Parayeski
 Neptune Theatre's presentation of "Color the Flesh the Color of Dust" is pleasingly depressing. This paradox is allowable in that a definite sense of melancholy was obviously a goal of its playwright, Michael Cook. He has placed on the stage the human misery of St. John's, Newfoundland,

during one of its cruellest periods; the spring and fall of 1762. At that time the town was captured by the French and then retaken by the English. The sadness comes in that the change of flags means no change for the mob in its streets. The men still go out to sea, the women still sell themselves to the soldiers of the garrison for enough money to keep alive, and the merchants still turn unjust profits. The peoples' souls were equally crushed under the weight of either crown.

petuated in that the Irish woman he leaves behind is pregnant with his child.

Because there is something to be experienced by seeing all of this, the presentation is curiously entertaining. It was not without flaws, however. Diane D'Aquila's rather coarse and badly-timed portrayal of the English lieutenant's woman was one; another was the poorly handled lighting which marred an otherwise commendable set. These mistakes, while not covered completely, were at least partially masked by the performances of Eric House as the impecunious merchant, and that of Ian Deakin as his clerk. The latter, whose part could have been easily ruined by a lack of genuineness, was particularly believable.

The initial English defeat seems of real consequence only to an English lieutenant as played by James Hurdle. Even then it was only his pride which was damaged. He eventually regains that honour when killed during the recapture of the town. The misery is only per-

Neptune has opened its season with a quiet success.

Black 'Journey' commendable

by Stephen R. Mills
 The small audience who attended "Journey Into Blackness" November 19 in the Rebecca Cohn auditorium were treated to a fine performance by a fine company but, as far as understanding "blackness", were still in the dark when they left.

"Journey Into Blackness" features Voices Inc. from New York who, in song and dramatic sketches, chronicle the history of the black man from African tribal days, through slavery and emancipation, to modern times and the split between the militant black revolutionary and the peace-loving black conservative.

The songs — tribal chants, gospel, and blues — were all beautifully performed. They crystallize and radiate the emotions involved in black history — joy, sorrow, fear, melancholy, pride, and defiance. The performers also managed to capture the humour of deadly serious situations without overdoing it.

The too-few dramatic sketches were also excellent and personalized the presentation to the point where empathy as well as sympathy was possible. This was particularly true in the first half (Africa to emancipation). The second half of the journey was much weaker.

The empathetic atmosphere existed but the players did not make use of it. An overly long satirical sketch on the church was almost embarrassing. The final confrontation between the black left and right was disappointing in that all that emerged was a soapy liberalism and the eternal cry for freedom. The cry was interspersed with "right ons" and clenched fists but the genuine solidarity evident in the company found nothing to back it in their performance.

Voices Inc. and "Journey Into Blackness" would be that much more impressive and forceful if the company "got their shit together" off stage and let the audience — black and white — know it on stage.

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 Christmas
 and
 Happy
 New
 Year**

**(see you
 in January)**

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