

## Theatre 3 refreshing but fishy

In an age when Canadian Theatre continues to be dominated by American and British plays, it is refreshing to see a production which is both set in Canada and is about Canadians. *The Head, Guts, and Sound Bone Dance* takes place in an isolated Newfoundland outpost, where people have a style of life and genre of personality probably unknown anywhere else on earth. Theatre Three has achieved a high level of authenticity in their portrayal of this locale and the characters found there, but the production labours under the double burden of faulty scripting and incohesive directing.

Both acts take place in a ramshackle fishermen's shanty where two old men waste their time reliving 'the good old days, when fish was thousands.' The village idiot Absalom is the only one left who will share in their pretensions and vain hope of better times. Act One is spent in anticipation of Absaloms' return from a fishing trip. At one point a village lad tries to make the two men save a boy who is drowning nearby. They are oblivious to his pleas, being too engrossed in the past to take part in the present.

This is the well-used theme which the entire play is devoted to developing, and even then it is a poor attempt at best for the actors are forced to make up for a ludicrous plot and erratic plot structure.

One of the basic problems with the plot is that the action builds slowly and never seems to reach a climax. The high point of the play could be when the village boy is drowning, it could be Absaloms return, or it could be the discovery of the body. Then again it could be when the men clean and gut Absaloms' fish on stage.

As a result of a poorly arranged plot, the play did not flow smoothly nor did it work as a unit. This can also be partly attributed to Richard Roberts' directing, which failed to create

harmonious timing. Scene did not melt into scene because pacing was sloppy, choppy, and indecisive.

The actors made a valiant effort to compensate for shortcomings in the script. Characterization was well-rounded and imaginative; accents and speech patterns were priceless. Alex Moir and Skipper Pete seemed born to the part, right down to the stiff joints, rolling gait, and raspy voice of a crusty old sea-dog. His mistake was that he only responded to the other characters by scowling and uttering breathy wheezes sounding like what you might expect from a beached walrus.

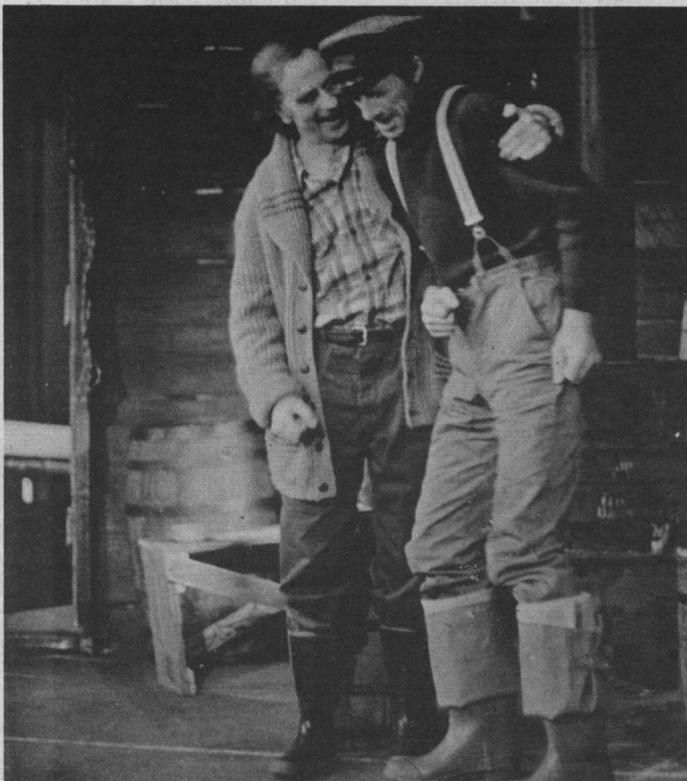
Des Smiley (Uncle John) adopted a realistic and convincing approach to his role, as did Jennifer Riach, who played his

wife. The finest acting was undoubtedly that of Richard Sutherland, who portrayed the half-wit, Absalom. He gave a touching interpretation of his role, with depth-of-character which made for a delightful performance.

The set contributed a great deal to the authenticity of the play. The bare wooden walls and working oil-barrel stove were so realistic the stage nearly reeked of salt air. It certainly reeked of fish after Absaloms' catch was cleaned.

*The Head, Guts, and Sound Bone Dance* is interesting but it is undeniably the product of a fledgling Canadian playwright. If you intend on seeing it be prepared for a poorly designed plot, but expect a very realistic set, interesting characters, and great characterization.

Kim St. Clair



Des Smiley (left) and Alex Moir in *The Head, Guts, and Sound Bone Dance*.

## Canadian author reads

Matt Cohen, Canadian author of three novels and a collection of short stories, will give a reading in the Humanities Building on Thursday, March 20 at 12:30 p.m.

Matt says about himself rather matter-of-factly "I'm an indirect person." He always wanted to be a scientist and is rather proud of his theoretical mind. He doesn't talk about himself easily and certainly doesn't volunteer information, but enjoys peering behind words to decipher their exact meaning. Yet, he has a shy, wry humour that finds itself in quick one-liners.

*Books in Canada* says that "In a way he typifies what the young writers of the 1960's may become in this decade. The theoretic and moral lessons of that decade will fade as lives and books become more reflective. Witnesses to the changing nature of relationships, writers will record what is said behind closed doors and in the bedroom." Or as Cohen says, "Most people spend a lot of time in period of stresses... Their lives have to be reassembled."

The reading will occur in the Humanities Theatre from 12:30 - 1:30.

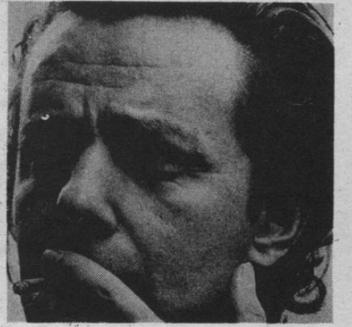
## Kravitz and creator

Mordicai Richler, one of Canada's top novelists, will appear at SUB theatre Friday March 21 at noon. Best known for his *Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz*, Richler is a tough and witty satirist - not just one of Canadian parochialism - of contemporary cultural and moral values in vogue everywhere. He once described the Canada in which he grew up as "a country where there were only isolated voices of civilization, here a poet, there a professor, and, between, thousands of miles of wheat and indifference."

Not exactly the sort of thing to say to endear yourself to your compatriots. But then Richler (much remembered for his description of Canadians as "the English-speaking world's elected squares") is not one to

win friends, but to influence people.

While Richler believes that Canada is no longer as stuffy and parochial as it once was, he



has harshly critical things to say of literary nationalists in a wide-ranging speech that is as much about contemporary social issues as it is about Canada.

## Christ visits

Coinciding well with the Easter season, *The French Theatre of Edmonton* will on March 21 begin presentation of the spiritual-experience play *Between Two Thieves*.

In it, a group of Jewish intellectuals and itinerant actors travel from city to city reconstructing for their audiences the trial of Jesus of Nazareth. Their purpose is to determine if this man's condemnation and death were justifiable according to the Judaic laws of the time. To this end, they resuscitate the main characters and witnesses of the drama that took place 2000 years ago, and scrutinize their statements with today's knowledge and scepticism.

With these Jews, the spectators, regardless of their religious convictions, can question the authenticity of Christ's messianic role, the validity and importance of his miracles, and can attempt to determine for

themselves where lies the truth.

Performances take place at College-St. Jean and will begin at 8:30 p.m.

## On sexuality

In an effort to outline the role for women in today's world, the Library and Women's Place are offering a series of programs on women, issues pertaining to liberation, and their place in society.

In the March 18th program, Ms. Sidney Sharpe, anthropologist, will give a talk on sexuality - what is meant by the terms, how other societies treat men and women, and a brief history of the concept of sexuality.

On March 25th, various women from the Gay Alliance will be available to discuss and answer questions concerning lesbianism and equality.

These sessions will take place at the Central Library throughout March and April at 8:00 P.M. Tuesday evenings.

## CAB SOCIALS

### For 1975-76

APPLICATION FORMS  
Will be Available in  
Room 104 SUB at 5 p.m.  
TOMORROW

All clubs wanting to host a  
CAB Social next term,  
must send at least  
one representative with  
signing authority.

Please be prompt  
as this will be the only time  
applications will be accepted.

Call Tony Melnechuk  
432-4236

for further information.

## ELECTION FORUM



Hear  
**Grant Notley**  
Alberta NDP Leader

speaking on

- Syncrude
- Student Finances
- The Role of the Opposition

Wed., March 19 12:30 - 1:30 pm  
SUB Theatre FREE

Memberships available at the door