

Bridging the gap

Maple Sugar winds up winner in experiment

By DAVE ROCHE and
AGNES KRUCHIO

Alienation and lack of communication are a serious complaint in the world of the arts as anywhere else, except that here it leads to immediate stagnation, death and decay. Any attempt to stem the tide is well appreciated and Maple Sugar, a new idea for a communications channel, may be just the thing needed to bridge the gap between Downview and the rest of the Toronto artistic community.

Students from the Ontario College of Art and York, who don't very often have the chance to

cooperate, have the opportunity to pool their talents though Maple Sugar. Since its first evening in September, a loyal audience has supported this showcase.

Unlike what their name would suggest, Maple Sugar is anything but sweet and homey. Although the intermedia art cooperative arose out of a summer series of experimentations on a Maple Farm, the only home-made quality of the troupe is that the artists involved produce not slick, commercial products, but experimental performances that tend to be by their very nature rough; what matters more is the idea, and not the

shape.

Says Jackie Humbert, who is a former student of York's Fine Arts department and who organized the original summer programme in her home in Maple that inspired the series: "We're encouraging people to come enjoy these evenings, and witness the collaboration of many differing art forms. And it's really a forum. Anyone who has ideas is invited to submit something."

There are going to be six evening performances at York, and the best of these is going to be shown at A Space to the rest of the Toronto community.

People involved in the programme so far have been faculty members as well as graduate and undergraduate students in music, graphic arts and dance.

Their performances hitherto have included some interesting

materials. Among them were something called a 'live art installation', entitled Net Dresses, set to cocktail piano by Paul Campbell; a mixed media whimsey ("Switch") by Wendy Knox-Lee without any particular focus, a dance performed behind a cheese-cloth scrim set to Eastern per-

cussion designed by Bill Winant, 8 mm films by students at OCA and an electronic concert by David Rosenboom, Richard Teitelbaum and Michael Byron.

The next performance at York is on November 21. For more information call Jackie Humbert at 832-2617.

Slaves and Animaux

By BILL GLADSTONE

The York theatre department gave the York community a sampling of their craft last week with the production of two plays, Slaveship, and Les Animaux, performed in the Atkinson Studio.

Slaveship, based on an outline by LeRoi Jones, is about the tortuous passage to America of a cargo of Africans captured by American entrepreneurs to be sold as slaves. Using no props except four ghastly white masks, the company succeeded in evoking an atmosphere of futility, fear, and horror, and gave the audience a startling view of the terrifying

reality of the slaves' inescapable situation.

Slaveship seems a perfect exercise in rhythm, emotion, and lighting, and the competence of the company in each of these areas is indeed impressive.

Les Animaux explored the concept of a submerged animal nature in man. The cast skillfully juxtaposed various animal characteristics onto a number of familiar dramatic figures. Although the resulting characters seemed contrived at times, they were executed with a professional finesse, for which the theatre people should indeed be applauded.

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