

Duck 'Zoopa'

Marcia Johnson

After Saturday night's performance of *Alphabet Zoopa*, by York Cabaret, the audience was left with more than program and an ink stain stamp. A menagerie of old vaudevillian slapstick routines and modern risqué comedy all tied together with music. *Alphabet Zoopa* entertained audiences at Stong on Thursday and Friday, and at Vanier on Saturday. The concept was the brainchild of artistic director Valerie Sipos (see *Excal*, Oct. 8, 1981). Her directing and writing talents combined with the indisputable talents of the six cast members, provided an evening of excellent live entertainment.

What made *Alphabet Zoopa* so successful was its informal atmosphere. Cast members, instead of being locked away from sight in dressing rooms, were warming-up and mingling with the crowd before show-time. No one knew what to expect when the spot-lights when on. The saxophonist and pianist began play-

ing while the performers emerged from the depths of the audience and proceeded to transform the bare into an arena of action and entertainment. Each performer enveloped the little space provided and reached out to everyone in the room in his own unique way.

Highlights included Roberta Kerr's performance of "Animal Crackers" in a pinafore and pony tails, Tim Murphy's ventriloquist act with Rufus the lion-faced dog, and Gerry Quigley's singing solo which defied any record for breath-holding. (Not once did he stumble over the tongue-twisting words in "Unrequited Love", even at its fast pace). From Jackie Samuda's "Words of Love", to Mary Lawlis in "No Time at All" and Paul Lawson in "Luv Is", to the musicians, all showed a high degree of professionalism, and should be commended for managing to ignore a drunken boor yelling unsolicited comments of the show's quality.

If you didn't see it, you missed out. But don't fret your little self, for the next Big Cabaret will be unleashed on the York community the first week of November. And if *Alphabet Zoopa* is any indication, it should definitely be worth checking out. □

Penguin Fax

Penguins bear an amusing resemblance to little men in frock coats.



Eat wax now!

CANO beans unMasqued

MASQUE

Camouflage

(A&M)

●●½

Masque is the new name for Sudburian folk-jazz-rockers CANO, minus that band's strongest and womanliest set of vocal pipes, Rachel Paiement. CANO's unique mixture of musical forms and their unpretentiously professional live shows made them a real bright spot on the Canadian scene, prior to their succumbing to record company pressure to record "more commercial" material. By the end, hit-oriented numbers like "Carrie" and "Rendezvous" had taken the band so far from the folksy gentleness of their first albums that audiences became confused. Rechristened Masque and entirely rid of their bilingualism, the band now seems to be heading in the same direction—down the hopeful road to vinyl mega-consumption.

There are definitely some catchy things on *Camouflage*—the CSNY organ on "Run For Your Life", the punchy guitar riff on "Voices", the strong melodies throughout—but they're not enough. The album cries for meatier material, something more

ambitious than verse-chorus-verse-chorus-solo-chorus-fade and the old two-chord progression. The only cut here that approaches the spirit of CANO's best work is "Intuition", a jazzy, piano-based instrumental with some crisp soloing from guitarist David Burt.

On its own terms, *Camouflage* is quite likeable. But in the line of expectations established by CANO, it is a disappointment; it's like asking for a tank of gas and getting a glass of water.

Roman Pawlyszyn

HORACE FAITH

Fly High Anansi

(Rto)

●●●

As music progresses, so must reggae, and Horace Faith's *Fly High Anansi* definitely progresses. The music is vibrant and searching as it wanders through an array of rhythms and instrumentations creating something that is solid and at the same time gentle. "God's Children" is a prime example of this effect, for we can dig its solid beat while at the same time feeling the poignant lament of the guitar and voices. Further along the

album is "All Men Children of God", with its undulating, sensuous rhythms.

Standing out on the flipside is "Looking", with a beat that sets an easy motion, lulling us with the soft purrings of the saxophone.

Footnote: "Anansi is the light within."

Paul Ellington

RATINGS

- Approved by Koalas
- Cool as a cuke
- Mild thrill
- Send in clowns
- Rancid pickle-brine

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