

GATEWAY TO THE arts

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CBC Film Violates Pearson's Privacy

The CBC spent \$35,000 filming a day in the life of newly-elected Prime Minister Lester Bowles Pearson, then decided not to show it.

Explanation given at the time was the Richard Ballantyne-directed film was not up to CBC technical standards.

The Progressive Conservatives, freshly ensconced in opposition chairs, raised a furor. They suggested the Liberals were running the CBC.

But Tory demands that Canadians be allowed to judge the film's technical standards for themselves, went unheeded.

Mr. Pearson remained in the canisters until just recently, when Ballantyne and its Toronto producers released it privately.

Campus Liberals, of all people, decided to show the film here Monday night.

Mr. Pearson left me with an uncomfortable feeling, one which makes me wonder whether Ballantyne had any right to film it in the first place.

The CBC was right in saying the film is not up to necessary technical standards. Mr. Pearson (the film, of course) is frequently out of focus, frequently difficult to hear due to portable camera techniques used.

There are dust particles and scratches all over the film. Lighting is so poor in spots that you can't distinguish Prime Minister Pearson from the leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition.

Television viewers would probably go cross-eyed trying to follow the portable camera's jerky movements across their screens.

But most of all, Mr. Pearson is unsuitable because Director Ballantyne took unfair advantage of his subject, and went too far.

We have seen on television for years, hidden, or if you wish, candid camera techniques. Realism is an intended result, but in the case of Mr. Pearson, the result is gentle mockery.

Lester Bowles Pearson is a human being. He has the right to his privacy, the right to fidget or punctuate his speech with *hells* and *damns*.

Somehow, he gave up those rights when he allowed Ballantyne to bring that portable camera into his private office.

Don't get me wrong, Mr. Pearson is a fascinating portrait of the man. The PM's interest in baseball, to the exclusion of a discussion with his labor minister about an impending longshoreman's strike, is magnified by Ballantyne's peering, snooping lens.

His decision making processes also come in for close scrutiny. When the film was made, the Liberal government was embarking on "60 days of decision," to the joy of the Diefenbaker opposition.

Monday night, about 200 spectators were treated to a pencil-tapping and fidgeting display which only they could imitate in privacy.

The Pearson wit is there too. "I hear he's the only emperor left in the world," quoth Pearson to an aide, on the importance of visiting

Ethiopian Emperor, Haile Salassie.

Or, try this one. "Old ladies, watch out," said the PM as his chauffeured car suddenly crossed the part of two elderly females.

Another facet of LBP's personality is displayed in his justifiable concern over what the newspapers are saying about him and his newly-formed minority government. Throughout the film, he comments on newspaper accounts in an attempt, I suppose, to gauge what public opinion will be.

At the end, it is obvious that the PM's time is not his own. His schedule is uncontrollable, ever-changing, ominous and arduous.

He must sacrifice his personal life for his job, right down to allowing a camera to watch the World Series beside him, or to a microphone to listen in on a private telephone conversation with a cabinet colleague.

I appreciate his gesture, but I also wonder whether there are some things which Canadians would prefer to imagine about the personal life of their prime minister.

—D. S.

'Test Tube Mystique' Spoils Spontaneity And Imagination

The argument of science at the university would seem to be experimentation is necessary for the continuance of the discipline.

I do not disagree.

But I feel there is rather a danger when a concept of this sort is taken into the fine arts. Is it necessary in disciplines that require a mastery of craft first for time to be spent in experimentation? Time that would be better spent in the polishing of skills?

Spontaneity and imagination are required in the creative and interpretive arts, yet these are aspects which are not developed by the "test tube mystique." They are the result of long and careful, arduous and diligent work.

No one would hope for a pianist to create a composition spontaneously, until he had mastered his instrument and the difficulties of composition. When there is experience, then can come experimentation.

Studio Theatre is doing valuable work in its experimental work upstairs. Students are having the opportunity to act in legitimate contemporary theatre.

But many of them are deluded into believing they are involved in experimental theatre, while in truth most of them are engaged in quite solid, if slightly dated, theatre techniques.

Why then does the drama division find it necessary to label



BEHOLD THE ETHNICS—Just two short months ago this youthful group of folk songsters joined to form the Ethnics. Dedicated to the "purist" of folk songs, the Den of Iniquity is their hideout (see story below).

The Den Of Iniquity To Feature Folk Singers, Flamenco, Jazz, Blues

By Marion Raycheba

To be really groovy, frequent the Den of Iniquity.

Opening officially tonight, the Den (6519-111 Street) will feature folk singers, flamenco, progressive jazz and a touch of blues.

The Den is sponsored by a local jazz group, the Ethnics, under the leadership of Ron Ingram.

The decor is the standard grubby coffee-house style, according to Ingram. Wine keg tables and

Vaughn Williams, Beethoven, Bach- Enjoyable

By Linda Zwicker

Music by Vaughan Williams, Beethoven and Brahms was presented at the last Edmonton Symphony concert.

It was one of the most enjoyable performances of the season.

The first work was "Variations on a Theme of Thomas Tallis" by English composer, Ralph Vaughan Williams. Scored for strings only, the Symphony handled it with mastery.

Mr. Priestman, very much in control of the group, gave the dynamic variations and tonal control superb quality. The group showed their sensitivity in the work, dedicated to Sir Winston Churchill.

Guest artist Theodore Lettvin (replacing Alexander Brailowsky) played Beethoven's "Third Piano Concerto, Op. 37." Mr. Lettvin handled the concerto well, despite a lack in tonal quality and fuzzy pianissimo passages. The tempos throughout were not always steady or well-correlated between sections.

The highlight of the concert was undoubtedly Brahms' "Third Symphony." One of the most passionate of Brahms' larger works, Mr. Priestman conceived it as a whole and attempted to interpret it as such. Unfortunately, the orchestra was not always with him. The section co-ordination was somehow deficient.

However the calibre of the orchestra is improving with each concert. This one was a great success.

candlelight are special features.

Shows each weekend will run continuously from 7 p.m. Friday through Monday morning. Refreshments from a "don't ask just eat" menu will offer such delectables as sufferin' bastards (main ingredient: 20 scoops of ice cream).

"We want to direct our appeal to the campus," said Ingram. "We want campus customers and performers."

Ingram and associates, all high school students, got their start performing at Club Hawaii. But they formed the Ethnics as a purist folk group just two months ago.

"We're dedicated to ethnic music, no messing around with the commercial stuff."

Ingram plays a 12-string guitar because it is particularly suited to folk music.

"The tone is fuller and the sound funky," he claims.

Ingram defined funky as the close to the earth sound of Negro spirituals and blues jazz.

The Ethnics hope to perform some of their own compositions. Meanwhile, their material will come from Bob Dylan, Woodie Guthrie, Joan Baez, Odetta and Pete Seeger.

"Bob Dylan's our idol," Ingram testified. "He's the greatest of all folk musicians. Everything he writes has a point. Generally, he's very bitter."

Tonight's opening is at 7 p.m. for as many as can attend.

Students Solo At Sunday Concerts

U of A Bachelor of Music student soloists will be featured on Sunday concerts, February 7 and 14.

Accompanied by the Music Division Chamber Orchestra under the leadership of Thomas Ralston will perform in Convocation Hall at 8 p.m. both evenings. Admission will not be charged.