

This isn't God, it's Godard

Salem Alaton

Some local reporter collared James Coburn on his way into the Festival of Festivals' flood-lit opening night gala and asked him if "this is glamorous?" Coburn assured him that it was.

Oddly enough, Friday night's Bloor Cinema screening of *Breathless*, followed by the appearance of Jean-Luc Godard, resembled a glamorous event as well. Fortunately, it wasn't. In a packed auditorium full of lights, cameras, trendy haircuts and elegantly showcased buttocks, a short, balding man who some consider cinema's greatest living artist, spoke of loneliness and the need to communicate. looked shy.

Godard became intimate so quickly as to leave behind all those who had waited prepared with careful, knowingly-toned questions. He fended off the implied significance of his return to film after a decade of involvement with video: "I am not one of those who think t.v. is the enemy of cinema...they are different, yes, but like brother and sister."

Asked if there was a movement he empathized with, he brought up the French Left for whom he had made *Tout Va Bien* in 1972, and that he still felt "with them"; this was prefaced, however, by the somewhat acrid observation that the parties of the Left came together only for someone who had died (as at France's last political slaying) and not for someone still living. When he was asked, "Why do we die?", host Peter Harcourt stepped into

remind the questioner, "This isn't God, it's Godard."

Even the lighting in the theatre conspired (rather ludicrously, in fact) to protect his modesty, leaving Godard in relative darkness with a backlighting on the screen's curtains which reduced him to a silhouette much of the time. And Harcourt, the orchestrator of this Festival's Godard retrospective, was

somewhat out of step when he too quickly glossed over Godard's remark that *Breathless*, his first feature, was the only one that had made money. When Harcourt implied that it was natural that Godard should have no affinity with commercial cinema, the director rebutted, "Yes, but you have to pay the rent."

Elephant man

Robert Fabes

In the past few years, Canada has been fortunate enough to be included in the tour circuit of the more popular Broadway shows. The best of these productions is, without a doubt, *The Elephant Man*. This two-hour drama, now playing at the Royal Alexandra Theatre, is the story of John Merrick, a Victorian man who was afflicted with disfiguring bone and skin diseases. It is hard to imagine that a play can be perfect but to call *The Elephant Man* anything else is an understatement.

The outstanding feature of this play is Bernard Pomerance's writing. He treats Merrick's disease with such sensitivity that the audience, though never forgetting Merrick's grotesqueness, actually feels for him as a human being. Pomerance masterfully captures the essence of what a "freak's" life is.

No matter how well a play is written, the actors interpretation of the material makes or breaks it. In this case the acting serves only to emphasize the brilliance of the writing. The cast knew the material and interpreted it with a

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Demented Yak

Last week's D. Yak was not Peter Brickwood as most assumed, but, in fact, Elliott "Wish I'd never made that Bergman film" Gould, bizarre American actor. Winners Norm Crandles and Allan Zarnet should drop by *Excal* and pick up their tickets to *The Great Santini*, courtesy Famous Players. This week, guess who the fellow in the glasses is. Hint: he's not Roy Orbison. Get your entry for this draw to *Excalibur*, Yak, 111



Central Square and win Krokus' *Metal Rendez-vous*, courtesy Quality Records. The brilliant but baroque staff of *Excalibur* not eligible for this ace draw. Ha! S.R.

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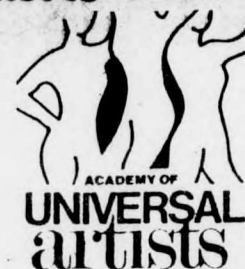
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