

# For those long, long nights love beats the computer

An unusually attractive book called *Love Where the Nights are Long* has been gathering dust in too many bookstores for too long a time.

The book is an anthology of Canadian love poems, selected by Irving Layton. It is a remarkable book - not in the poetry itself, for only a few of the 78

poems approach remarkability - but in its intention, and more particularly, in its six-page introduction.

According to the blurb on the back jacket, the respectable firm of McClelland and Stewart decided to find out if "Canadians really care about love". Layton ignored that question in his in-

roduction and instead discussed, vehemently if not always eloquently, "What Canadians Don't Know About Love". We don't know very much, it seems.

But from that dismal and dubious point Layton goes on to explain why "Canadian poets have written some of the best love poetry in the world". McLuhan would not agree with one reason - that "we are a backward folk" and have not yet learned that love is dead. A nicer reason is that "the dehumanizing forces are not so irresistibly powerful here". Whatever the reason, says Layton, "our poets have been able to write of love as the grandest of human experiences and to turn to the everlasting pole of male and female for that intensification of life that alone can make the long, winter nights endurable".

If we had to rely on much of the poetry in the book to make winter endurable we might as well lie down and freeze to death right now. "Twillit gardens", "fair perished summers by the sea", and "impalpable knees" don't generate much warmth.

But if Leonard Cohen's poems seem more vital than those of Bliss Carman, perhaps it is the years speaking - perhaps *Love Where the Nights are Long* is an historical as well as poetical document.

The layout of the book is very CBC despite itself. Harold Town illustrates it with obscure drawings that were most likely forerunners of his phallic Founders flag. But Town does add one thing to the book - his portrait on the back cover is more erotic than his drawings and 50 per cent of the poems put together. Which, I must admit, says more about Town than about *Love Where the Nights are Long*.

The nights are getting longer and colder here. Forget about Cupid Computer - get a copy of *Love Where the Nights are Long*.

by Linda Bohnen

## Leftovers

by Bill Novak

For the next two months, the *Riverboat* will be repeating some of last year's more popular acts. Penny Lang will be appearing there from the 24th to the 29th of this month. The *Riverboat* is, of course, open nightly except Mondays... Peter Paul and Mary are in town Sunday and Monday night... Joan Baez has been arrested in an anti-war demonstration in California. Demonstrations protesting the American aggressions are taking place all over the world this week, and this includes *Queens Park* on Saturday... The York University Folk and Blues Club is out of the planning stages and has already started; we could use your support... Ted Cole is giving a concert of tropical songs tonight at *Burton Auditorium*... I was a little disappointed at the CBC television production of "The Rock Scene" last Monday night. Despite an abundance of talent, the producers were completely unable to put together a cohesive and professional production. The *Jefferson Airplane* had enough spirit to save the show from being a total failure... Eric Anderson, who is much more exciting than one would have guessed from "The Rock Scene" should be in town around Christmas time... The Atkinson Bookstore is now selling folk records, but the selection is small and the prices are big... If you like to sing, the York University Choir (a first-rate group) could always use new members, especially tenors and basses (men, in other words)...

*MacBird* by Barbara Garson  
Penguin Books  
Paperback 95c

## MACBIRD...

### A tar and feather job

by Frank Liebeck

*MacBird* is gross and pretentious. You see, Barbara Garson was in one of her clever moods and saw the possibilities of using Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and putting it into a modern setting, by letting *MacBird* and *Lady MacBird* plot against the President, whose name by the way is John, and have him assassinated in Dallas.

The President has two brothers. Surprised? Not only that, but their names are Robert and Teddy. Of course you know who she's talking about. Think a little harder. It'll come to you.

The original concept is uniquely fascinating, but once you've started reading her things, it wears thin, for Barbara Garson's talents as a playwright are meagre and vague to the point of invisibility.

Once *MacBird* is in office, he becomes a fire breathing diabolical, bent on destroying all who defy him. He bombs Viet Land and perpetrates other flagitious crimes. Notice the subtlety in using Viet Land. That's pretty hot stuff. It's the sort of thing our campus peaceniks would eat

up at a moment's notice.

The author employs the rhyming couplets at every opportunity.

"Taylor's tongue and Goldberg's slime,  
MacNamara's bloody crime.  
Sizzling skin of-napalmed child,  
Roasted eyeballs sweet and mild."

It's supposed to sound like Shakespeare you know. And it comes from Berkeley too. That place far, far away by the ocean where they smoke the LSD and get mentioned in *Time* magazine.

*MacBird* is hardly comparable to something like Miller's "The Crucible". Maybe it's not supposed to be. We have here a bitter parody and this is perhaps the most important aspect of the play. It has achieved wide fame, and this is something the real *MacBird* should note. On the back cover LBJ is quoted as saying on World Theatre Day, March 27, 1966, "To the artists of the stage, who give us all mankind in all its disguises and so give us ourselves as we truly are, I pay tribute..."

## Fat Daddy raps with Fothergill on the Orient Express

by Michael Hirsh

Presenting Bob Fothergill, an English professor at Atkinson, coordinator of this Summer's Cinethon, director of the Canadian Filmmaker's Distribution Centre, presently at work on his second film "Solipse" starring David Beard, a York University student.

### FAT DADDY

Bob, as a professor of English you typify a very large modern trend for artists to be simultaneously artists and members of the academic community. Have any problems in methodology arisen because of this simultaneity of roles?

BOB This will all have to be re-edited or something because it will sound phony but many years ago when I was not much older than some of you are now, I was taught by a man named Leavis, of dubious fame, and it's said of nearly all his pupils that they are totally inhibited as creators of anything because he implanted such strict and almost repressive critical standards that anybody who comes out of his hands is unable to produce anything himself. Something I feel conscious of in making this film is that it isn't as good as I know it should be.

I get the feeling about a lot of the American Underground that they're inhibited by absolutely no critical standard at all. Whereas if you happen to be professionally engaged in putting down other people's works of art, then when you're amateur-

ishly engaged in making a work of art you feel a big sort of conflict.

FAT DADDY What criteria do you employ in judging movies?

BOB I like films which I couldn't have made myself. I like Burton Rubenstein's film "The Hyacinth Child's Bedtime Story" because I would never have thought of making it. His imagination is completely different from mine and therefore better.

I like films which are deliberate accomplishments, or look like deliberate accomplishment. Some of the things made in the West Coast like "Plastic Haircut", "Hot Leatherette", and "Uptight Los Angeles is Burning...Shit" looks like raggedy things made without any originality or much invention, or any sophistication of technique.

FAT DADDY Could you describe the development of the film you're now making?

BOB Very early on it was a play about this guy who was constantly having visions of how every little thing he does is being done at the same instant by hundreds of thousands of other people around the world. So that his little gestures and his little actions and

his emotions are being annihilated because so many other people are doing them...

It is a fact that in universities right across North America at 11:00 on Tuesday morning probably half a million people are hearing English lectures. Probably a hundred thousand of them are hearing a lecture on the same thing, and you get the feeling that they might as well be the same lecture. If the lecturer begins to feel that, and comes in at five minutes past eleven on Tuesday morning and thinks that two thousand other people are getting paid his salary and living with his kind of wife, wearing his kind of wool tie, and doing his kind of thing saying the same stuff about Wordsworth at that instant, then he begins to feel completely stupid and trivial. Moreover there is the distinct possibility this is happening.

FAT DADDY What difficulties are generally encountered in making short films?

BOB The difficulty of making any movie, apart from talent is money. Because unless you own your own equipment you have to go out and rent it, and you have to buy footage, and nobody ever owns a processing company so it has to be processed. You've got to get a camera which has

fairly sophisticated devices on it. I was compelled this summer to rent for a kind of middling fee a camera from McMaster University which already has a student film-making organization. No university group will ever get to making movies unless it owns some equipment or has access to it.

FAT DADDY Could you describe the phenomenal growth of the Canadian Film-makers Distribution Centre?

BOB It's growing enormously. We put out a little five page catalogue in May with six films in it. We put one out last month with 55 films in it. The increase is accounted for by the fact that we have several semi-commercial films made by semi-professional film-makers like Richard Ballantine. We have five of his "Mr. Pearson", "The Most" and things. We have several by Julius Kohanyi. It's also accounted for by the fact that we're now exchanging prints with the United States Co-ops. We even have one Australian film called "Rita and Dundee" which has naked ladies running up and down stairs, which is quite entertaining.

The Cinethon in June was at least a kind of symbolic event in that it marked a moment when one could see what had happened.