

The old youth rebellion routine (again)

D.O.A.
Princess Theatre
Dec. 3-5

review by Jens Andersen

Q: So how did *D.O.A.* strike you?

A: I felt sort of nostalgic watching it.

Q: You mean punk is old hat - ancient history - like the Beatles?

A: Not at all. Punk music seems to have a lot of mileage left yet. And the film's performances, mostly from the Sex Pistol's 1978 American Tour, certainly don't sound dated.

The nostalgia comes from the "youth rebellion" attitude of the punks. The attitude is as old as the hills. It is older than Jack Kerouac and the "beats" of the fifties; older than the Greenwich Village bohemians of the 1920's.

In fact, watching the film's "interview" with the stoned and catatonic Sid Vicious I had a *deja vu* flash to James Wechsler's book, *Confessions of an Angry Middle-Aged Editor* (I think that is the title) where Wechsler is "debating" a drunk and catatonic Jack Kerouac. Some things never change. To paraphrase Jesus: "The glorious burn-outs you have with you always."

And the punker's hostile, anti-social songs are consciously or unconsciously, almost a carbon copy of songs like those the early *Rolling Stones* sang: "Brought Up All Wrong," "Stupid Girl," "Play With Fire," etc. (and for my money, the Stone's "Get off My Cloud" is a better screw-the-world song than the Sex Pistol's "Anarchy in the USA").



Sex Pistols on tour: revolutionaries or traditionalists?

Q: That sounds like a put-down.

A: Not really. I have a certain appetite for atavistic music and outrageous theatricality, and if punkers want to cater to it by acting like damn fools (this is a high privilege of youth, you know) then more power to them.

Q: What about the social issues behind punk?

A: I don't think the punkers will accomplish anything in particular other than providing a momentary cheap thrill to a lot

of people (yes, I am all for cheap thrills: I can't afford any other kind). Their only other accomplishment is to provide heaps of ammunition for the new reactionaries. There must be at least a million mothers now who lecture their children about the evils of rock and roll by dragging up as Exhibit A and B the corpses of Nancy Spungen and Sid Vicious.

In the coming years I suspect you will also see many punkers doing moral flip-flops a la Dylan and Little Richard:

renouncing their sinful rock and roll past. And most of the rest will become more conservative after they get vomited on a few times.

The irony, of course, is that when they lecture their kids in turn, the kids will hoot with laughter and dive head-first into their own brand of nihilism.

Q: Do you think *D.O.A.* is a good film?

A: An excellent film. I heartily recommend it to everyone. I particularly like the sequences of the people in the audience: the Christians who claim the whole movement is the work of the devil, the pseudo-intellectual with his pseudo-revelation that "punk is a thermometer of our condition," and the rapturous (and probably stoned) woman who rolls and writhes out of her parked car, massaging and stroking herself deliriously - for what reason is not exactly clear.

The only thing in the film that is rather laughable is its faint note of hero-worship. After all, any average Joe can agonize semi-lyrically about the botched world situation, rip his mind on drugs, and spill coffee and orange juice all over his girlfriend.

The real heroes of the world are those who persevere; who attack society's sickness more shrewdly and strategically, or contribute something to the world besides yet another round of violent despair.

Oh yeah, it's a damn shame that the teenagers who deserve to see this film more than anyone, will probably be barred because of age.

EOA stages impressive opera buffa

Don Pasquale
Edmonton Opera Association
Nov. 26

review by Peter West

The Edmonton Opera Association's latest production, *Don Pasquale*, makes an interesting contrast with their October production, *Turandot*. *Turandot* has large stagings, impressive arias and some memorable tunes; *Don Pasquale* is in another style altogether. It is an opera buffa in the manner of *The Barber of Seville*, a light and frothy affair about an aging roue who has decided at last to take the plunge and marry a woman who has taken his fancy, though the spirited young woman

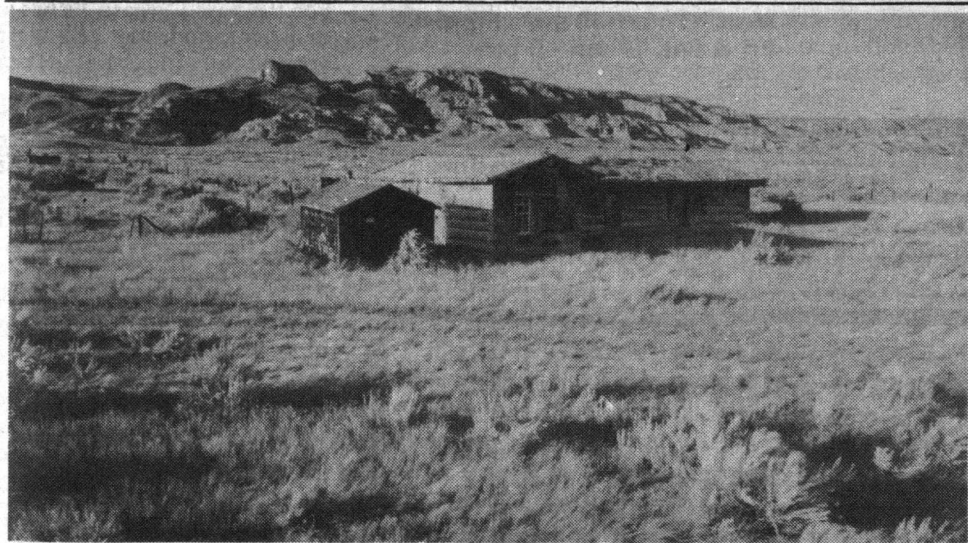
has other ideas. The opera's comedy depends for success on clever characterization, and its music consists largely of recitatives and arias for its principals; the chorus makes only three or four short contributions.

For some reason the E.O.A. decided to present the opera in the original Italian, and a great deal of the comedy was lost to Thursday night's audience, which was unable to comprehend many of the jokes (although my next-door neighbour graciously translated most of them for his wife, *sotto voce*). Joseph McKee's characterization of Don Pasquale, however, surpassed language obstacles and got many a good belly laugh out of the

audience; the young McKee was completely convincing as a middle-aged man.

Brian Schexnayder as Malatesta performed creditably, but the part allows little room for vocal or dramatic expansiveness. John Brecknock (as Ernesto) has a rich and varied voice which was most impressive in the lyrical offstage piece, in which he was ably accompanied by a spirited chorus. But the heroine, played by Ruth Welting, stole the show. The opera came to life when she

appeared for the first time, lying on a sofa reading a racy novel. Her pretended innocence prior to her mock marriage with Pasquale was as entertaining as her post-marital histrionics, and her voice skipped up and down the scale with an alacrity which took my breath away. This young lady has a stage presence and a coloratura which would enhance any opera in the repertoire, and we're certain to be hearing more from her in the next few years.



Mexico ranch in the Badlands.

One for the coffee table

Alberta/The Badlands
by Brian Noble and Glen Rollans
Reidmore Press (McLelland and Stewart)

review by Kent Blinston

Alberta/The Badlands is an unusual book.

Usually when a book attempts to mix photography and writing something is up. Either a photographer is convinced his work means far more than it can possibly say or a writer has just bought a camera.

Brian Noble, photographer and Glen Rollans, writer have instead produced a book where the two are inseparable and complementary. Together they successfully bring their impressions of the badlands to the rest of the country.

The photos and the narrative from a vacation weave together archeology, anthropology, sociology and history. Rollans wastes no words on lengthy imagery and Noble does not have to run

sequences that attempt to show action.

Rollans' text has an introspective feel similar to that in *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*. His reflections on events and scenes go well beyond what is actually seen.

Noble's photographs elicit a wide range of feelings but always those of someone observing from a distance. The badlands, it seems, have a certain quality of remoteness.

The biggest problems with the book are technical. The display of the photographs is unimaginative and white space often stretches into wasted space. And, at least in the review copy, many of the photographs were printed too dark.

But if your local bookstore has a good copy, *Alberta/The Badlands* makes an excellent Christmas gift (I don't know many people who buy \$35 books for themselves). It is several cuts above most coffee table books.

Hi-Fi gets cool reception

Hi-Fi
Dinwoodie Lounge
Saturday November 28

Review by Matt Moralis

Within the last three months Hi-Fi has given two performances in the Edmonton area, yet it still took the audience the entire first set to get used to the band's metallic sound.

Throughout the three sets this sound was almost painful - not that it was too loud, but it rendered the guitars indistinguishable from one another. I think this may have been caused by the fact that three of the four guitars have metal strings.

The drummer, however, is the best I've seen in a long time. Bob Briley's

precision percussion was fast, tight and crisp.

By the second set the audience was drunk enough to dance, but seemed to have lost any inclination to applaud.

The only time the audience applauded Hi-Fi was during the third set, and then it was not an all-out ovation from the sellout crowd of 650 wipeouts. When asked about this, Lead guitarist David Suricamp said, "It seems like the (audience is) asleep."

Unless you like the Heavy-Metal sound of Rock-n-Roll I advise you to keep your distance from Hi-Fi. But if you like good drumming, and good, heavy bass, then go to see Hi-Fi. I felt that the drumming and bass were well worth the five bucks I paid to get in.

GRAD PHOTOS

will be taken at
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on
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February 5, 1982

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