

A wedding in Halifax

By STEPHEN SHAY

"I've been approached on a lot of important feminist issues over the years and the question that often gets out to me is — 'what about bumming smokes?' — an important feminist issue. I say 'Go ahead. Men all too often have the higher paying jobs. they always got a pack of smokes on them.' Of course this only goes for Newfoundland where smokes are \$2.80. In Nova Scotia, buy your own. What are you, cheap."

—Cathy Jones, *Guidelines for the Eighties for Women*

Cathy Jones wants to take you on an adventure. And adventures are always fun, right?

The "adventure", *A Wedding in Texas*, is the latest offering from the irreverent Newfoundland-based comedy troupe, Codco. Codco thrilled audiences across Canada, the United States, and England during the late '70s with productions like *Laugh Your Guts Out with Total Strangers*. Although billed as a one woman show, Jones is quick to point out

the *Wedding* had a lot of people helping out behind the scenes — what's a wedding without a groom, a priest, a few alter boys and relatives, anyway?

The show, which "hits home so many times you think it lives there," is a lively mix of characters: Burford "Love" Murphy, the sleazy corner boy in a double breasted suit who forces cheap sexual confidences on his audience; Vave Gladney, hostess of a TV talk show called *Fudgeos and Feminism*, who offers free medical advice — "Don't try to pick up men; they're too heavy and you might put your back out"; and Drusia Ice Cream Morningstar Farm River, who reads surreal poetry to her boy friend, Free Hugs.

And that's only the half of it. After meeting Jones' interesting and charming friends, the audience is ready (almost) for the real (almost) "adventure".

Jones, or rather, "LindyAnna Jones", leaves her outpost home to bump across America in her little car, with you in the back

seat, for the wedding of a lesbian friend in Texas.

But this is no tedious road trip. Jones uses "every effect I can get my hands on" to make certain her passengers won't pass out in the back while she befriends stray dogs on the side of the road, talks to her mother and muses about sexual politics.

Codco bills *Wedding* as a "slicker, done up for Mainland version" of the show that "thrilled" lots of Newfoundlanders in St. John's last year, and went on to the Quinzaine Internationale Festival du Theatre in Quebec City to earn the honour of being "the best piece of English theatre" there.

"It's the Codco tradition to laugh at ourselves," says Jones. "This show comes from everything — relationships, the people around me."

Wedding in Texas runs tonight, Friday and Saturday at the Sir James Dunn Theatre. Showtime is 8 pm. Don't miss it. How else can you get to Texas and back for \$10? Don't forget to pee before you get into the car . . . ya hear?



Yuks for liberals

by HEATHER HUESTON

This is one comedian/songwriter who doesn't do the usual club and cabaret circuit.

"I don't smoke, so I can't take the clubs," says Nancy White, resident lampooner at CBC's Sunday Morning. "And I'm not a 'good-time' singer, I don't have the right temperament."

White has recently been performing as the comic draw in Pops concerts given by always-audience-hungry Canadian orchestras. Does this mean White's temperament is suited to the dressed-up setting (and better money) of the Pops route? "For one thing there aren't enough bands to make a living that way," laughs White. Though she feels it's a challenge for a "novelty singer" to perform with classical musicians, she doesn't plan to give up radio or theatre. "The feedback (at a Pops concert) is different, people don't laugh out loud as much."

People may have an image of White, the "acid-tongued satirist," as a political radical, but her approach to singing with Symphony Nova Scotia (SNS) at the Cohn last week was a practical one. The audience expects sheer entertainment and the music White selects isn't heavy-political or the songs she brought back from her visit to Nicaragua. Unlike singer Bruce Cockburn's tunes, White's tunes depend on the milieu of the audience (last time she was in Halifax, White sang at an Oxfam benefit for El Salvador). As for Bruce, "he's not

known for doing yuks, but I'm billed as a comedian."

In concert, White, along with vocalist Betty Belmore and pianist Erin Davis, outclassed anything the Symphony could offer. The arrangements of White's songs illustrated the moods beautifully and made up for the SNS' programme of medleys and syrupy light music. White's topics ranged from why Newfies are so highly-sexed ("it's that extra half-hour, my dear") to Yuppies, to that Canadian standby, Ottawa politics and Mulroney ("three parts charm to seven parts smarm"). Her voice is stronger than is sounds on radio and her between-song patter rambled in an almost giddy way through talking about her new baby, doctors and clumsy Canadians. Not quite the "voice of liberal guilt," as she was introduced, but witty and funny. Two numbers that stood out were a 50s piece that had the whole orchestra wearing shades and playing as one big Doo-Wop, and a rollicking gospel-style "Freedom Train to Texas" for the fed-up Ontario doctors.

When I asked about the chance of a social commentator becoming successful and verging into Yuppie-ness, White said she's as successful as she's going to get. "I'd be embarrassed to own an ostentatious car, but I am a bourgeois person. I own a house, I have a kid, I wear mascara. I'm not as trendy as some people. There's no danger."



Nancy White's lite satire and symphony's lite music were slurped up by Cohn audiences last week. No, she didn't bring the banjo.