

'Back to Beulah'-an acting success

by donalee moulton

Neptune is currently featuring W.O. Mitchell's "Back to Beulah", a play which is, at base, a social comment on reality.

Beulah is a mental institution and a threat which keeps three women living in a half-way house under the arbitrary and well-read thumb of a female psychologist. The force which holds the three women together and simultaneously divides them is Harriet Waverly (Joan Orenstein), the epitome of the Baptist religion there is only damnation or salvation. In weak opposition is the compassion and embryonic rationality of Elizabeth Moffat (Rita Howell). On the other end of the continuum is the search for someone, and ultimately something, which will require love and which will necessitate being needed, a personality represented in the whoring shoplifter Agnes Findlay (Denise Fergusson). Both Agnes and Elizabeth need Harriet Waverly for although she may be societally the "sickest" of the three she is the only one who enables them to believe they are sane. Dr. Anders is the pseudo compassionate figure who is responsible for and in charge of this half-way house experiment.

In a unique twist of events the three women become the doctor while the doctor becomes a mental patient. This twist is the vehicle



whereby Mitchell questions the validity of labelling people "insane", "emotionally disturbed", and "sick". Not only is the dehumanizing effect of the process made blatantly obvious but also there lurks underneath the tenet that there is no cure via the techniques currently employed, if in fact there is a disease. Yet there are two worlds and two laws-one for society's "healthy" and one for society's "sick".

The merit of the play, and hence its success is not its social critique, its dramatization, or its plot-it is the acting. Joan Orenstein is at once an uneducated misfit and a ruling tyrannical force - powerful enough to destroy. Similarly Howell and Fergusson are the personalities of Mitchell's constructed characters. Janet Doherty is perhaps the only flaw, and is as usual, her inactive, inept self.

The whole movement resides in

the three women. As well as a verbal performance is needed a physically flexible and creative talent. At all times the play is realistic solely because the characters are believable. Joan Orenstein has so totally erased the barrier between performer and character that the audience is unaware there was a barrier, and close beside her are Howell and Fergusson. Doherty chances to reaffirm this barrier but is engulfed by the three women, especially Orenstein, so much so that her ineptitude results in little more than audience agitation.

In a supreme performance Orenstein, Howell, and Fergusson become both figuratively and literally "Back to Beulah". And in this supremacy they elevate both W.O. Mitchell's play and the reputation of the Neptune Theatre Company.

The guitar as orchestra

Beckerman's talents

by Jeff Round

Was it Berlioz or Beethoven who called the guitar a "miniature orchestra"? No matter - Wagner clinched the matter when he said that the orchestra was a large guitar. The fact of the matter is that the guitar has one of the widest ranges of greatly varying tone colours - probably larger, in fact, than any other instrument save the human voice. That this is all true (I tell you no lies) was shown consistently last Sunday in a very fine concert by Danny Beckerman.

Beckerman is a young (just 20) Canadian guitarist possessed of excellent technical capabilities and a fine ear tuned into the bright and beautiful prism of tonal colours for which the guitar is renowned. While in the city for his performance Beckerman stayed at the home of his former teacher Carol van Feggelen, currently a member of the Dalhousie Faculty of Music.

Beginning his programme with two short works by John Dawland, Beckerman quickly affirmed his technical proficiency, displaying an intense concentration in his playing. The performance of Bach's *Lute Suite in E Minor* was prefaced with a dedication by Beckerman to the memory of a fellow guitar student who died recently in Germany. This superb piece brought to the fore Beckerman's masterful technical

abilities and the beautiful tone which he so easily produced. The first half of the programme was concluded by a shorter work, in two connected movements, by Haydn.

Beckerman opened the second half of his programme with two pieces by Canadian composer Robert Feurstein. For those of us who like "modern" music the first piece, *Icaco*, was a rather beautiful one. Not overly dissonant, but with a fine form, the piece differed noticeably from the rest of the programme. Briefly commented on by Beckerman, he explained that the piece was "not without its humour." Rather an unnecessary statement for any piece of music, it is to be hoped that this was not proffered by Mr. Beckerman as an apology to those whose tastes are not as flexible as his own, and that he will include more of such deserving music of a diverse nature in future performances. *Forces*, the second piece by Feurstein, was highly chromatic, and falling more in the impressionist vein. Adeptly handled, it was a piece marked by flowing motifs of a changing nature, but it did not prove as interesting as *Icaco*.

Manuel Ponce's *Sonata No. III* served to display Beckerman's ability to handle the rhythms and accents of Spanish music (which any

self-respecting Spaniard will tell you cannot be done right by anyone but another Spaniard.) Pleasing as it was, it was out-matched by the more-decidedly Spanish sounds of *Spanish Dance # 10* by Granados.

Another Spanish-sounding piece, the popular *Prelude #2* by Brazilian Heitor Villa-Lobos presented by Mr. Beckerman as an encore, marked the end of a fine concert which hails a rewarding career for a bright, young artist.

Gin Kee Hing Restaurant

真奇香酒家

Take-out
or Delivery

423-9331

5970 SPRING GARDEN
ROAD

Graduate Studies in Economic Policy

Carleton University
Ottawa, Ontario

The Department of Economics invites applications from qualified students for admission to its graduate programs.

PH.D. PROGRAM

The Ph.D. Program focuses on the application of economic analysis to Canadian policy issues. Policy areas of specialization include

- Industrial Organization
- Money and Trade
- Public Finance
- Urban and Regional Economics

M.A. PROGRAM

The M.A. Program is designed for a thorough analysis of economic theory, quantitative methods and practical application in most fields of economics.

THE DEPARTMENT

Many faculty members with policy analysis experience, active workshops in policy areas of specialization, and the University's proximity to government departments make Carleton an ideal place for graduate studies in Canadian economic policy.

FINANCIAL AID

Very attractive fellowships and assistantships are available to qualified candidates.

INFORMATION

Further information and application forms can be obtained from:



Supervisor of Graduate Studies
Department of Economics
Room 890 Loeb Bldg
Carleton University
Ottawa, Ontario
K1S 5B6
(613) 231-3615

THE SUBMARINE

THE SUBMARINE (5384 Inglis St. 423-7618). Attention Submarine Lovers - this take-out spot offers 20 different varieties (large and small) from ham and cheese to smoked meat on rye to the Continental Special featuring 4 different types of meat and cheese, all garnished with pickles, onions, lettuce and tomatoes, topped with dressing. Black Forest Cake - by the piece or a whole cake for a special occasion - made right on the premises. Cold meat trays available for parties. Hours: Mon.-Wed. 11 a.m. to 1 a.m. Thurs.-Sat. 11 a.m. to 2 a.m. Sun. 4 p.m. to 12 a.m.

