

arts

# Playing it with a lot of punch

by Donna Seniw

If you want to spend an entertaining evening sometime between now and Jan. 2, Stage West is the place to go.

Not only is *Play It Again, Sam* a good choice for production, but Alan Sues in the starring role captures the audience.

Sues plays a recently divorced film critic, Allan Felix, unsure of his relations with the opposite sex, and looking to his idol image, Humphrey Bogart, for support and guidance. In a more realistic vein, Linda, the wife of a best friend, tries to guide Allan with practicality and assurance. Eventually, illusion and reality meet as do Allan and the opposite sex.

The play is very quick, witty and entertaining, yet realistic because the plight of the self-conscious young man trying to impress the opposite sex is ubiquitous.

Sues portrays Allan Felix in a relaxed, realistic, and humorous manner. I was immediately taken by him; he leads the whole show.

His best friend Dick is an interesting foil, as the cool, unemotional, businessman, concerned only with immediate deals and a definite contrast to the emotional Allan, and to Dick's wife, Linda. Linda, although collected, is warm and friendly — a definite asset to Dick's corporate image.

However, while Dick is busy incorporating, the two similar personalities, Allan and Linda do some business on their own. I found much delight in Kathleen Flaherty's performance as Linda, a characterization that was charming and natural. Sues and Flaherty work well together on stage and are a pleasure to watch.

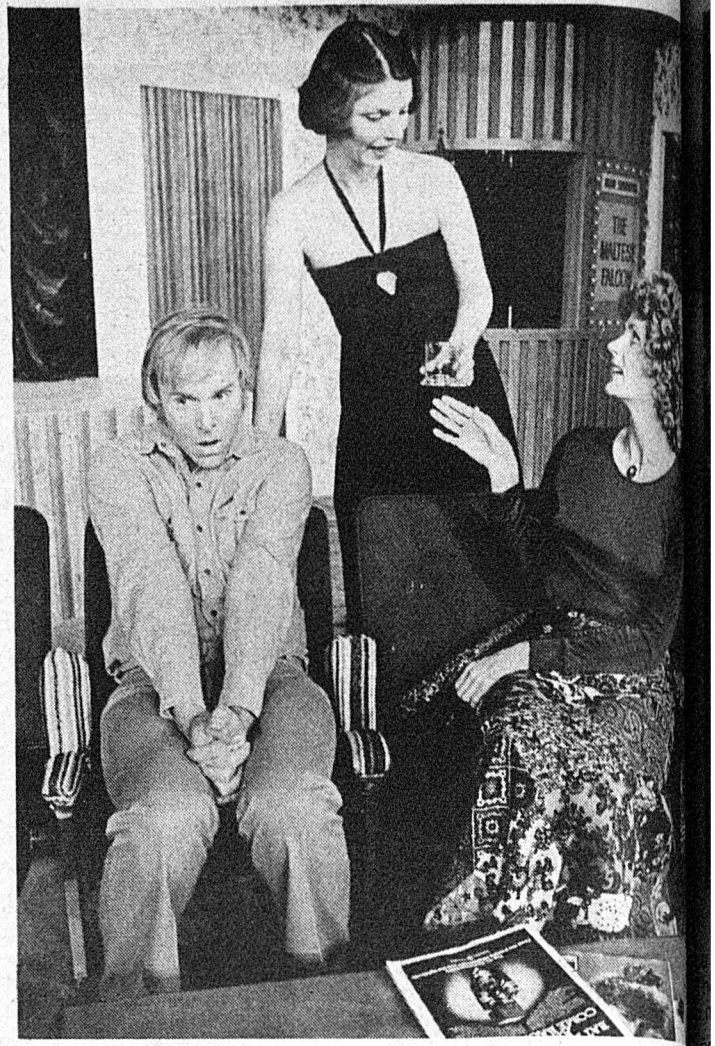
Never with these two did I get the feeling that they were trying to project a voice or an image which was not theirs. Everything

rang true.

In talking with Ms. Saunders and Evans afterwards, they found Sues a very funny person, and an exacting actor. Stage West usually goes into rehearsals for 10 days, but Sues wanted two weeks. Sues said that his methods of achieving relaxation on stage were to breathe deeply before performance, and once on stage, to pick up on the audience's reactions, slowing down if they weren't reacting to the lines. He achieved his audience sensitivity working in nightclubs, where he now rarely performs.

Unfortunately, the supporting characters, with the exception of L. Peter Feldman as Bogey, and Nicole Evans in her three roles, didn't help to carry the play.

I found Howard Storey, as Dick, tense and affected, his voice unnatural. Leslie Saunders as Nancy, Allan's ex, seemed put-



Alan Sues, Kathleen Flaherty, Judy Cook on the set of *Play it again, Sam*.

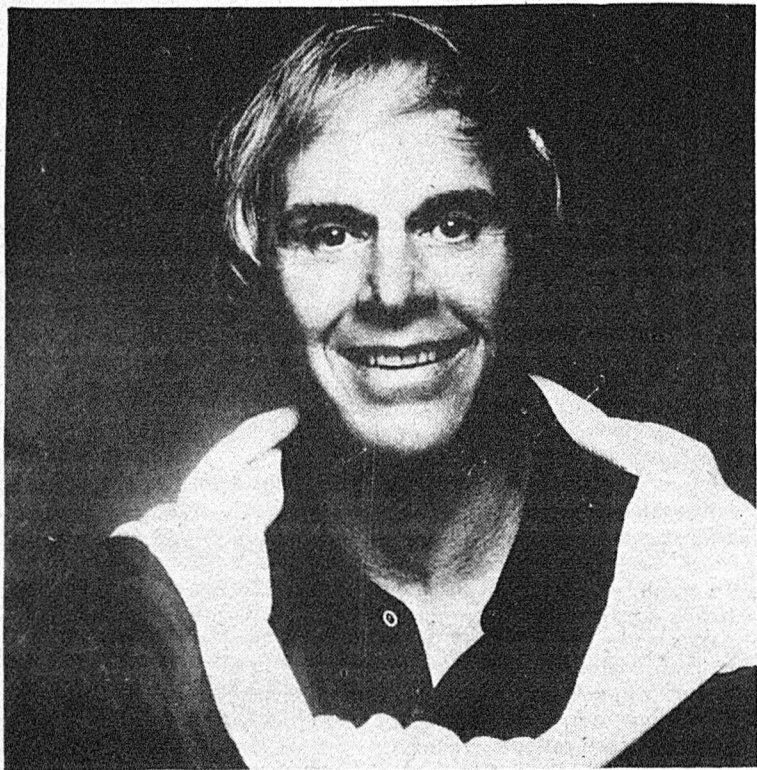
on and stagey. She was playing a stereotype, a petulant, newly liberated woman, and she came across as too much stereotype and too little Nancy. Awkward, tense movements.

Judy Cooke, played a model and an intellectual girl. Allan was trying to impress both women, unnaturally played by Ms. Cooke.

I found Nicole Evans a real delight, because the three different characters she por-

trayed were presented humanly and realistically. She and Kathleen Flaherty unaffected in their performance. Generally, timing and audience awareness was good, the funny and enjoyable to watch.

I was pleased that the line, *Play It Again, Sam*, came with a punch. Well done.



Alan Sues

# Revolution and cocktails don't mix

by Beno John

*Guerillas* by V.S. Naipaul, Ballantine Books, 1976, \$1.95

The setting of V.S. Naipaul's latest novel is an island in the Caribbean, an island characterized by its multicultural population seething in the contemporary mileu of conflicting political interests. Naipaul's fictional island is a thinly-veiled representation of his own country, Trinidad, and in general it can be considered an accurate portrayal of the entire Third World, where differing cultures and people attempt to deal with each other within the borders of one nation.

The island is seen through the eyes of two characters Roche a "concerned" Englishman who spent time in South African prisons for his participation in protests against apartheid, and who comes to the island with a vague idealism and offers his services to the emerging consciousness of the island, embodied by Jimmy Ahmed, a

plastic radical who won a reputation in London circles, but fails in applying his radical sentiments to his 'back to the land' project.

Jane is a chic Englishwoman, who follows Roche to the island with a glib attitude towards emerging Third World aspirations, a woman whose attitude has come from random bits of fashionable topics juggled around in the literary-cocktail circuits of the London scene.

With these three key figures Naipaul paints a stark picture of the buried, complex passions of a country emerging from the effects of colonization; trying to discover some common ground of understanding - other than the economic grounds that force them all to dance to the tune of American bauxite companies.

Naipaul's characters never realize the gravity of their situation; Roche and Jane's dogooder sentiments are considered cute anachronisms, but

are none-the-less completely taken advantage of by islanders, and the firm works for. The company is one, dating back to colonial times, and as the progresses we discover the company has stayed alive, by changing its image to the times.

The real forces on the island are hidden from the characters and as a result, subdued in narration - but the sharp reality or anybody familiar with political intensity of places this can feel the fact smoulder towards the inevitable conflagration. It turns out even Jimmy Ahmed is a part of the play of forces, his protest merely a front for guerrilla operations that are being carried out in the hills and jungles of the island.

Naipaul's tone is angry, the anger draws attention to the crucial fact: that the developing nations' attitudes towards Third World are often marred by sweeping liberal attitudes prevents them from seeing situations objectively. It is naive ignorance on their part will make conflagrations like Angola an example of the needs the demands of the Third World are misunderstood or ignored.

*Guerillas* is a step away from Naipaul's earlier writing. It draws less attention to the comic and ironic style of Naipaul's work. In fact some of the narrative in *Guerillas* is rushed in places. But what is in narrative is compensated by sharp-edged characterization and a passion for the subject. Naipaul is dealing with, in *Guerillas* the most tense, and the most relevant he has written to date.



Société Radio-Canada


CHFA 680

06:00 - 09:00 AU CAFE SHOW...

17:30 - 18:00 REFLETS...

Is the T.F.E. on the verge of closing?

This theatre is, at the moment, facing serious difficulties. Before the next performances, "Les Dactylos" and "Les Chinois" from Murray Schisgal, December 3, 4, 5 and 10, 11, 12, **AU CAFE SHOW** and **REFLETS** will examine the problems.



## fridays

**NOW OPEN FOR SUNDAY BRUNCH 11 AM - 2 PM \$1.69**

Try our Breakfast Special  
Bacon, 2 eggs, toast and coffee  
**1.59**

Lunch & Dinner Specials Daily  
**1.49**

Open: 7:30 - 6:30 till 11 for sandwiches & snacks  
Beverages: 3:00 - 11:00 Mon - Thurs  
3:00 - 12:00 Fri & Sat