

# Entertainment

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## Studio Theatre so much more

by K. Baier and Susan McLaughlin

Imagine a scenario. A season of quality theatre events ranging from modern repertory, to classical, to Canadian, performed and directed by talented professionals, and all very affordable even for a student's budget. Sound impossible? Not according to Carl Hare, Chairman and Artistic Director of Studio Theatre. At twelve dollars for five plays, "the price of a season subscription is less than a ticket to see a show at any other theatre in town and we think that is pretty much of a bargain."

Affordable yes, but what is this Studio Theatre all about? In case you have yet to discover the delights of this unique dramatic experience that features the work of student professionals, here is some background. Studio Theatre began sometime in the Forties and is currently entering its thirty-seventh season. Present Artistic Director Hare recalls performing in Studio Theatre shows as a young student. Now he coordinates the Theatre's two forms of productions, the acting shows and the Master of Fine Arts Thesis productions. "Studio Theatre acts as a showcase for our professional students in B.F.A. and M.F.A. programs." The nature of the performances in the season is determined by the needs of graduate designers and grad directors, so "each year has its own personality, its own needs."

In planning a season, coordinators must ensure that everyone gets "a sufficient balance of roles individually so they can be seen to their best." This season was uniquely developed for the five women and nine men in their final year. "They are a very musical and movement oriented group", and this season's line-up should prove to be very exciting for everyone involved.

Although the purpose of Studio Theatre is to provide exposure for B.F.A. and M.F.A. students, it is also to entertain a rather large

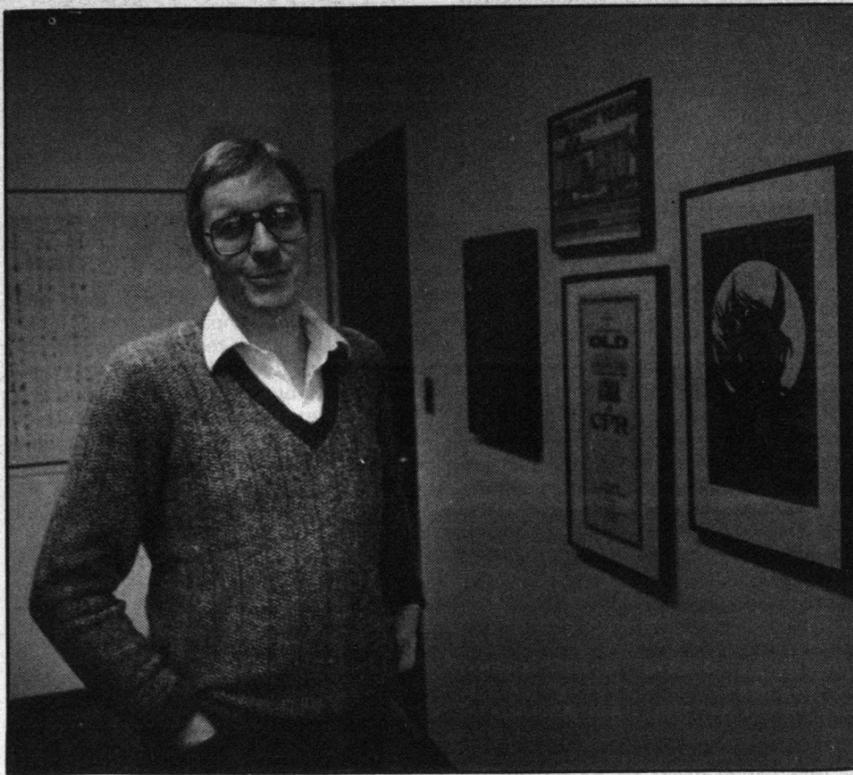


photo Rob Schmidt

Carl Hare of Studio Theatre promising exciting season

viewing public. Studio Theatre enjoys a subscription audience of 1500 to 1700 people. In fact, until a year ago, Studio Theatre was the largest subscription series next to the Citadel!

In addition to presenting Fine Arts faculty

and student talents, Studio Theatre also hosts a guest director each year. This season they welcome the very eminent British director David William, who directed *The Winter's Tale* at Stratford this year. William will be directing *Love for Love*, a classic piece that

inevitably proves to be a smashing success.

The Season opens October 23rd with Steven Schwartz's *Godspell*, "a highly imaginative musical interpretation of the teachings of Jesus." Biblical parables are retold in this refreshing drama through exceptionally beautiful music including rock, folk ballad, vaudeville and gospel. All music for this production is performed by the University of Alberta Music Department.

In repertory with *Godspell* and running until November 15th is Beth Henley's award winning *Crimes of the Heart*. A comedy of substance, the play is set in Mississippi and narrates the complex relationship of the McGrath sisters.

William Congreve's ever popular *Love For Love* starts on January 29th. Written in 1695, this Restoration drama is a poetic play of tangled courtships, questionable insanity and wit... a crowd pleaser that has been proven to be "highly amusing".

*Ten Lost Years*, based on Barry Broadfoot's novel, opens March 26th. It is a chronicle of personal memories from the Great Depression creates a highly sensitive "production people love seeing". An amalgamation of anecdotes, song and mime combined with a wide range of characters guarantees this play to be a success. Again, the U of A music department provides musical accompaniment.

Closing the season and in replacement of the previously advertised *Jennie's Story*, is *Female Transport* by Steve Gooch. This production is a shocking story of women prisoners en route to Sidney Cove Australia in 1806. It is sure to be "a very exciting play" revealing the hardships endured in the "name of maintaining law and order".

Performances will take place in Corbett Hall. Those interested in obtaining more information may call Studio Theatre at 432-2495.

## Tough guys is tough to swallow

**Tough Guys ★★**  
Touchstone Films  
Capitol Square

by Dean Bennett

"If you want to fit into society you have to do it in a certain way to be accepted."

—Parole officer Richie Evans to ex-convict Harry Doyle

Well, by the same token you have to make a film in a certain way to have it accepted by Hollywood. It's called the formula film and *Tough Guys* is certainly that.

The formula Hollywood film has identifiable, sympathetic male lead(s), female co-stars who provide the love interest and are little more than window dressing; a simple, easy to follow plot that offends no one; lots of humor (both verbal and visual) that preferably lends itself to sexual innuendo; chase scenes with high production values; and a soundtrack containing current popular hits so the film can also be plugged on MTV. *Tough Guys* has all these elements and not much more.

The story is about two ex-cons — Archie Long and Harry Doyle (Kirk Douglas and Burt Lancaster respectively). In 1955 they tried to rob the Gold Coast Flyer train — unsuccessfully. As the film opens Doyle (70 years old) and Long (67) are just getting out of prison after serving a thirty year stretch and the Gold Coast Flyer is about to make its final run.

Much of the film is taken up by cutesy visual ha-has as the old fashioned ideals of the fifties encounter life in the 1980's. Doyle and Long (dressed like they belong in the 1920's) are contrasted with all the trendy stereotypical situations: gay bars, punk hairstyles, punk bands, slam dancing, aerobics,

etc. Pretty predictable stuff.

Archie and Harry aren't happy because life on the outside is not much better (maybe worse) than life on the inside. Our heroes are trod upon, ignored and humiliated by all but three other characters (their two girlfriends and Richie the parole officer). The rest of the people — including hotel clerks, boy scouts, clothing store attendants, and street gangs — are all sarcastic, ignorant slime who conspire to thwart Archie and Harry at every turn. In fact one of the conditions of their parole is they can't see each other for three years. How's that for unfair (or believable). Because society won't let them earn an honest living with dignity Archie and Harry return to what they do best — crime.

The film, directed by Jeff Kanew, plods along with no real purpose. Stealing the Flyer again, although alluded to throughout the film, is never really built up to. The hijacking scene seems like just one more vignette rather than the culmination of the movie.

All the characters are boring and static. Lancaster and Douglas are a little less boring and static simply because they had a lot more lines to say. All the typecasts are there: the hardboiled police detective Deke Yablonski (Charles Durning), Richie (Dana Carvey), the young idealistic college graduate Richie Evans, and Belle, the warm hearted sixty year-old former showgirl with a heart of gold and a torch for Doyle (played by Alexis Smith).

Speaking of carrying torches, the love angle — one of the film's prerequisites (see paragraph two) — exemplifies the, pointlessness of the plot. Doyle falls for his old flame Belle and Long shacks up with a 25 year old nymphette named Sky. Both love in-



Douglas and Lancaster making very small talk.

terests go nowhere and by the time the film is two-thirds over the women have disappeared completely from the story.

*Tough Guys* is billed as an action comedy. Well, the action is pointless and has been done before (it has also been done a lot better) and the jokes are few and far between. If anybody should have to spend three years apart it should be *Tough Guys* co-writers James Orr and Jim Cruickshank.

### Dean's Rating System

- ★★★★★ Gone With the Wind
- ★★★★ Good film; one you'd take home to mother.
- ★★★ Okay a passing grade: a 6 on the stanine
- ★★ Only on \$2.50 Tuesday
- ★ Shanghai Surprise