

Drama societies reach limited heights

By Tom Regan

Three one-act plays were presented by **Stage Directions** by Israel Horowitz, **A Kind of Justice** by Margaret Wood and the **Induction** by Dennis Noble were presented by the King's Drama Society in co-operation with the Dalhousie Drama society Monday night in the King's Theatre under the King's Chapel.

Student drama can be a most interesting medium at times. In its best moments it can reach heights that professional thespians have difficulty attaining in a lifetime. And of course, sometimes it can reach only limited heights, due to the inexperience of the actors and directors involved. The three plays at King's fit more into the latter category than the former.

The play **Stage Directions** by Israel Horowitz is first of all a poor selection to perform. The play is acted out entirely in stage directions with no spoken dialogue. It attempts to tell the story of a brother and two sisters who meet for the first time in four years, following the death of their parents. Using stage directions as dialogue it is an interesting gimmick, but unfortunately is nothing more than that.

It is a gimmick that is hard to sustain, and the players seem to lose the flow of the play at times, if there is a flow to this play at all.

The acting in the play is not bad. Paula Webber as Huby gave the strongest performance and the play picked up noticeably following her entrance. Mike Earle as Richard and Cym Gomery as Ruth were good but had a tendency to throw away lines. Earle especially seemed to suffer from this.

Joanne Cadogen could have given her performers something much stronger to work with. They seemed at times lost and unsure of their movements and as mentioned above, just threw away too many lines. In a play that uses a gimmick as a 'hook', the director has to take a strong hand and control every movement of the players.

The acting was much stronger in the second play of the evening although the lack of direction was much more noticeable than in the first. **A Kind of Justice** is the story of what happens to the remnants of an army when they come upon two women in a village they have just demolished.

Di MacKenzie as one of the women, and Darrell Dexter, as a very realistic army captain, were strong but Dexter's character was a little too one-sided without enough shading. Beth Tuck had a hard time carrying off the part of the old woman aged 81, but age characterizations are the most difficult to perform. Joe Mroz, as the lieutenant, gave a good performance but was too unsure of his movements.

Bernie Michalik, who performed well as the sergeant, needs to brush up on his directing. The play suffered from a total lack of movement. In one scene, Dexter and MacKenzie had a five minute dialogue during which neither one moved. In a play that is only 15 to 20 minutes long, this is a noticeable weakness. The players seemed unsure of their movement and in Joe Mroz's case, not sure of what to do with their hands or props.

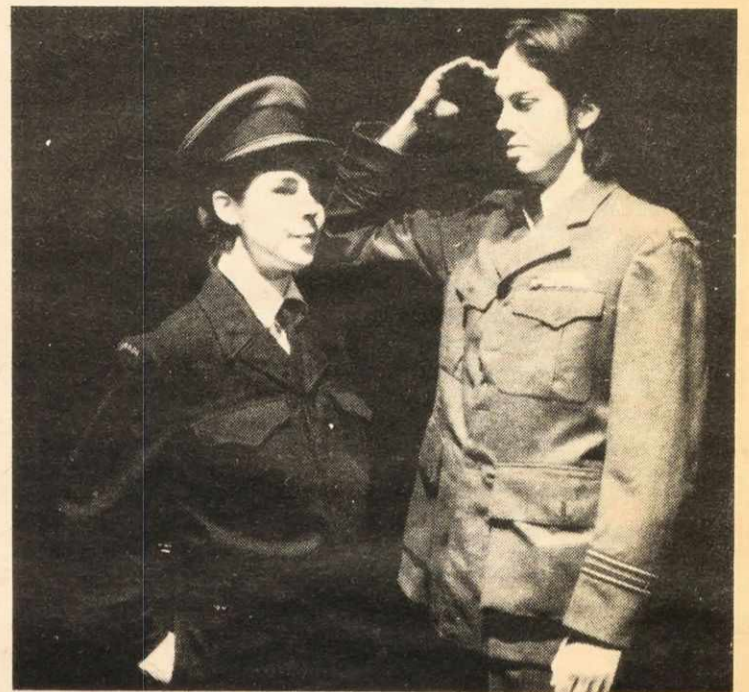
The third play, **The Induction**, which is the story of two draft dodgers at an induction centre started out nicely but lost steam until in the end it had almost

evaporated.

Jamie Tanner, who played Harold, held his character the longest and even carried the play to some extent, although in the end was just floating. Jennifer Witham as Mabel and Ken Tufts as Norman had a pleasant beginning but faded quickly.

This play also suffered from a lack of movement. It seems that the players were just left to wonder around as they saw fit. There seemed to be more attention paid to characterization by Frank Beazley, but the play just died in the end.

In all fairness to the actors, actresses, and directors they had very little time to prepare the plays. This could account for many of the problems with the productions. Better play selection and more attention to direction could have made a first rate student effort.



Nancy Holland (left) and Jamie Tanner in a scene from 'The Induction'

'Watts Up'—zany comedy

by Margaret Little

Theatre or What produces one of the zaniest comedies ever on a rather serious subject—the history of Canadian radio broadcasting.

Actors and actresses take us from the beginning of the 20th century to the moon rocketing 1980's.

Songs, drama and photography blend to create an outlandish cabaret. Although it begins slowly with an absurd portrait of Marconi inventing the wireless, the cabaret picks up with the frenzied twenties.

The skits zip the cabaret along with light quips on Don Messer's, the Queen and the Lone Ranger. The songs only add to the humour with tunes—sure to be classics—

such as "Cheeseburger in Paradise" and "Happy Days are here again in 1930."

Behind the technical aspect (including 140 slides and 100 sound takes) and professional actors—something is not quite right to make the whole effect a farce. Sometimes the quick remarks are simply not funny. Other times the technical aspects overshadow the humour.

Despite some disorganization and an unresponsive audience, the energy of the show is high. Terry Pulliam, writer, director and actor calls it "a crazy energy show" and that it is!

The cabaret began as an extension of the group's radio program on C-100 Sunday at

9:30 p.m. Their first cabaret at Ginger's Tavern—**None of the Above**—was such a success (900 people in five days) that the group began thinking seriously of cabarets.

The cabaret-style is ideal for the bar situation, said Pulliam. Unfortunately, the audience at Zapatas did not reverberate the enthusiasm on the stage.

The group, officially known as **Watt's Up** will be back at Gingers on April 16 to perform **Theatre or What** for two weeks (every Wednesday through Saturday evening). If the technical aspects are corrected and the first scene revived, the history of Canadian broadcasting can make a stupendous recovery.

A SNEAK PREVIEW OF APRIL PERFORMANCES at the REBECCA COHN AUDITORIUM

DALHOUSIE
ARTS CENTRE
BOX OFFICE:
424-2298



DALART TRIO

Wednesday, April 2,
8:30 p.m.
Tickets: Reg. \$5.50/\$4.50
Stu. Sr. Cit \$4.50/\$3.50

BACH'S ST. JOHN PASSION

Friday, April 4
8:30 p.m.
Tickets: Reg. \$7.00/\$6.00
Stu. Sr. Cit \$6.00/\$5.00

JOSE MOLINA BAILES ESPANOLAS

Tuesday, April 8
8:30 p.m.
Tickets: Reg. \$8.00/\$7.00
Stu. Sr. Cit \$7.00/\$6.00

NOTRE PETITE VILLE

Wednesday, April 9
8:30 p.m.
Tickets: Reg. \$5.00/\$4.00
Stu. Sr. Cit. \$4.00/\$3.00

LES FEMMES SAVANTES

Thursday, April 10
Matinee 2:30 p.m. Evening 8:30
p.m.
Tickets: Reg. \$5.00/\$4.00
Stu. Sr. Cit. \$4.00/\$3.00

THE INK SPOTS

Saturday, April 12
8:30 p.m.
Tickets: Reg. \$7.00/\$6.00
Stu. Sr. Cit. 6.00/\$5.00

MAPLE SUGAR

Wednesday & Thursday,
April 16 & 17
8:30 p.m.
Tickets: Reg. \$6.50/\$5.50
Stu. Sr. Cit. \$5.50/\$4.50

STAN GETZ QUINTET

Saturday, April 26
8:30 p.m.
Tickets: Reg. \$10.00/\$9.00
Stu. & Sr. Cit. \$9.00/\$8.00

VANCOUVER CHAMBER CHOIR

Monday, April 28
8:30 p.m.
Tickets: Reg. \$5.50/\$4.50
Stu. & Sr. Cit. \$4.50/\$3.50