



Andrew Lewarne and Dan Lett in *Dreaming and Duelling*.

Dreaming and Duelling a swashbuckling success

Al Locke

Christopher Newton, Artistic Director of the Shaw Festival, and Young People's Theatre's Peter Moss are two of the brightest people in Canadian theatre. When they combine their talents, their efforts must be a success. *Dreaming and Duelling*, directed by by Newton in Moss's theatre, is such a show.

The stage is a gymnasium, complete with climbing ropes, sports equipment and a typical gymnasium floor.

The play begins with two men armed with sabres circling one another with the ritualistic parry of the fencer. Sabres flash, each of the men communicating through the sword. In the ancient chivalric belief of duelling to the death to defend honour, each knight aims for destruction.

The buzzer sounds and the duel is over, class is over and the spell is over. The two knights become Joel Goldner and Eric Cullen: students.

Now the fantasy of one man's mind takes over. Joel finds the glow of fencing all consuming. His fantasy of knightly crusades grows, and begins to take over his life. Fantasy becomes reality. Joel longs to be a knight and in the course of *Dreaming and Duelling* becomes one. In doing so, he manipulates his friends and enemies in his elusive battles.

Joel Goldner's creation is as charming as Don Quixote's fantastic world. As Quixote picked a sidekick in the foolish Sancho Panza, so does Joel in the innocent Eric Cullen. This is Joel's first mistake: he chooses a rationalist to accompany him in entering a fantasy world. Displacement between Cervante's romantic picture and reality unfold from here. Cervante's red and brown Spanish landscape is the lacquered green base of a money-oriented society; the woman Don Quixote fought for is replaced by today's liberated woman capable of fighting her own battles; and the *Man of La Mancha* the man in the *Wasteland*. Joa and John Lazarus's brilliant script delivers the best of *Don Quixote* had to offer while providing the only possible solution to twentieth century man.

Henry Frehner's lighting was exquisite. Frehner, lighting director of *The Three Penny Opera*, has used sharply defined areas of light to demonstrate 'personal spaces'. When the characters are in communion/conflict with each other, they are individually lit. When the communion/conflict is universal, the entire stage is illuminated.

Dreaming and Duelling features two York alumni. Dan Lett, who appeared at York in *The Sand* and *Cortolanus*, and Andrew Lewarne who plays 'typical jock' Skelley. Peter Krantz (as Eric Cullen) and Ann-Marie MacDonald (the Dulcinea figure) round out a fine cast.

Dreaming and Duelling is a tribute to Canadian theatre in every manner shape and form. To do a tribute to a tribute, see YPT's and the Shaw Festival's latest effort. You can until February 28th. 'Contributions' are \$5.00 for students and \$9.00 for adults.



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