

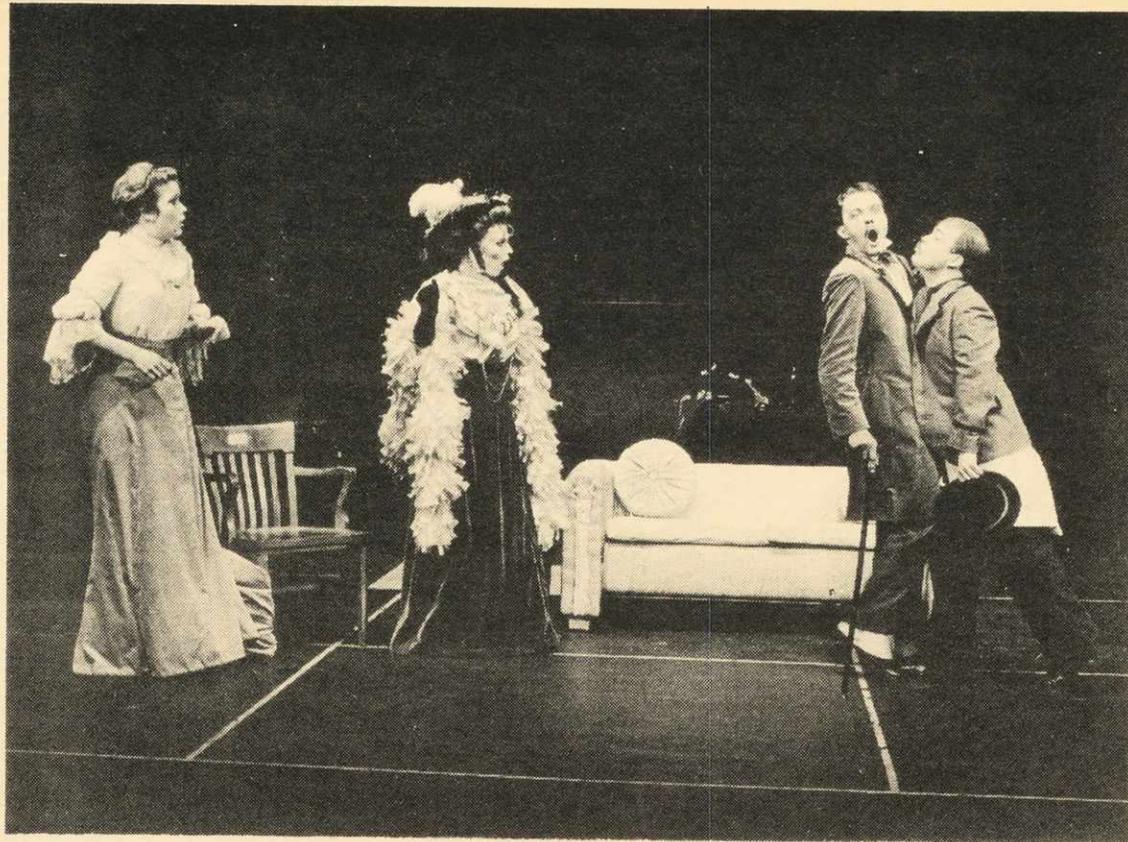
Flea In Her Ear A Lot of Fun...

By **CHRIS MORASH**

A COUPLE OF NIGHTS AGO I sat in on the final dress rehearsal of Dal Theatre's production of George Feydeau's tour de farce, *A Flea in Her Ear*. Did I have fun! The show, which runs at the Dunn Theatre until Sunday, does everything a farce should - it romps, it rollicks, and it's uproarious. Built on a superbly crafted card house of possible improbabilities, of mistaken identity, of misunderstanding, and of amorous misadventure, the script is perhaps the archetype of the farce genre, and director Alan Lund gives it a reading that is at once faithful and fresh.

Lund is probably familiar to most as the guiding light behind the Charlottetown Festival, and in directing this production he brings his ample abilities as choreographer into play. The essence of farce is an irrationality that finds its form in wordplay that makes full use of the ambiguities of language, and in frenzied physicality that depends on split second timing. In this latter aspect Lund gives the production its stylized vividness by setting the many climactic chases and the particularly important entrances to music. Characters darting in and out of the set's many doors become dancers in a celebration of the absurd. However, he does not sacrifice Feydeau's richly funny language to a physical concept of the play, so there are just as many verbal laughs as there are visual delights.

The state on which this energetic performance takes place is a silvered art deco creation of scenographer Peter Perina. This is roofed by a huge fan-shaped mirror that reflects the movements of the performers below, both in the drawing room of Victor Emanuel Chandebise, and in the disreputable Hotel Coq D'Or. It is a design that captures the highly polished surface and ornate stylization of the play itself. At the same time it provides an acting space that throws a maximum amount of focus on the actors and on costume designer Martha



Sheri Pederson and Kathryn Roe look on in amazement as Sheldon Davis as Poche attempts to leave his mark on Paul D. Smith's cheek in a scene from *A Flea In Her Ear*. Photo: John Davie.

Snetsinger's detailed outfits.

On the whole, the acting is consistently strong. The characters are given the sort of caricature-like solidness that the play calls for, ranging from the relative realism of Stephen Tobias' Etienne Pluchoux, to the

cartoon-like Baptistin of Paul Williams. Particularly notable is Sheldon Davis, who plays the roles of both Victor Emanuel Chandebise, the insurance director, and Poche, the hall porter, with energy and imagination. Also impressive is

Doug Carrigan, who makes the most of the virtuoso role of Camille Chandebise, the young nephew with the cleft palate. John Jay, looking rather like Sigmund Freud in his frock coat and goatee, does some interesting work in the role of Dr. Finache,

and Sheri Pedersen turns in a very strong performance as Raymonde Chandebise. Also strong are Kathryn Roe as the woman with the remarkable name of Lucienne Horuenides de Hestangua, Scott Owen as Augustin Ferallon, and Paul D. Smith.

In fact, everything about this production has the solid vividness of clarity of definition that good farce needs to succeed. It zips along at a steadily building pace, seldom lagging, so that the audience is carried along into the same frenetic state of mind as the characters themselves, living on the sensations of the moment. If you enjoy farce you won't want to miss this production served up by two masters, Feydeau and Alan Lund.

Used & Rare Books



**BACK
PAGES**

1520 Queen St.
Halifax
Nova Scotia
423-4750

Live



**Doyle Lawson
& Quicksilver**

Sat., Feb 16, 8 pm.



**Theatre Ballet of
Canada**

Sat., Feb. 23, 8 pm

THE CENTERTAINMENT SERIES

in the Sculpture Court

Wed., Feb. 20
JENNIFER BREHM
(guitar)

in the Art Gallery

Fri., Feb. 15
MARLIS CALLOW
(flute)
DOUGLAS JOHNSON
(guitar)

Thurs., Feb. 21
VOICE STUDENTS
(1st, 2nd & 3rd year)

Nova Scotia's Arts Centre

The Cohn

BOX OFFICE — 424-2298

Alexander's

announces

STUDENT SPECIALS

...Mon. Tues. & Wed. (4:30-9:00)
enjoy a mouth watering 7 oz wing-steak
only \$2.25

...remember...Wed. is "LADIES NIGHT"

...be there at 10:00 PM and be eligible for our drawing for a
\$50.00 gift certificate from "Renaissance" clothiers

...also Alexander's Pizzas only \$2.25/each

...Special Prices in effect from 5:00 - closing all 3 days!

...join us on SATURDAY for our famous BRUNCH
(11:30 - 2:30) —Steak n' eggs with toast & homefries,
or an omelette
only \$3.25

or catch the "HOPPING PENGUINS" each Saturday
matinee (3:00 - 6:00) for great party reggae and rock...

BONUS

SIMPLY CLIP-OUT THIS AD AND BECOME ELIGIBLE FOR
A 15% DISCOUNT ON A 7 OZ WING STEAK DINNER
DURING SATURDAY MATINEES (3:00-7:00 PM)

Limit of one per customer

The
BINNACLE

with
comfortable, casual
quality
clothing...

Royal Robins.
Boston Traders.
Henry Grethel.
Canterbury.
Far West.
Patagonia.

5240 Blowers St.
423-6464