

Arts Magazine



Illustration by Adam Cavill

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Graduation Portraits



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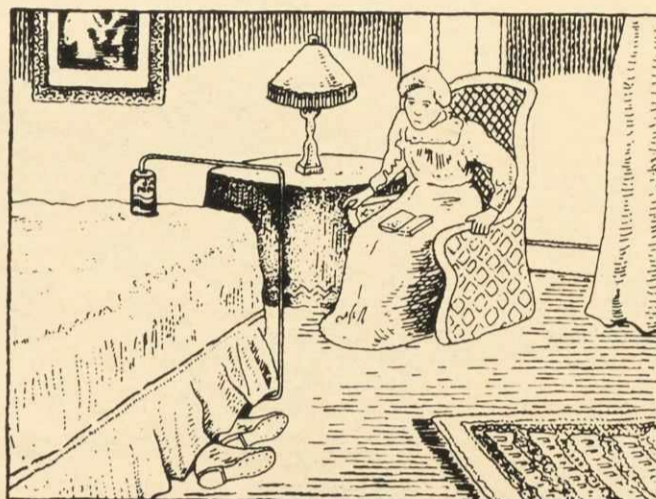
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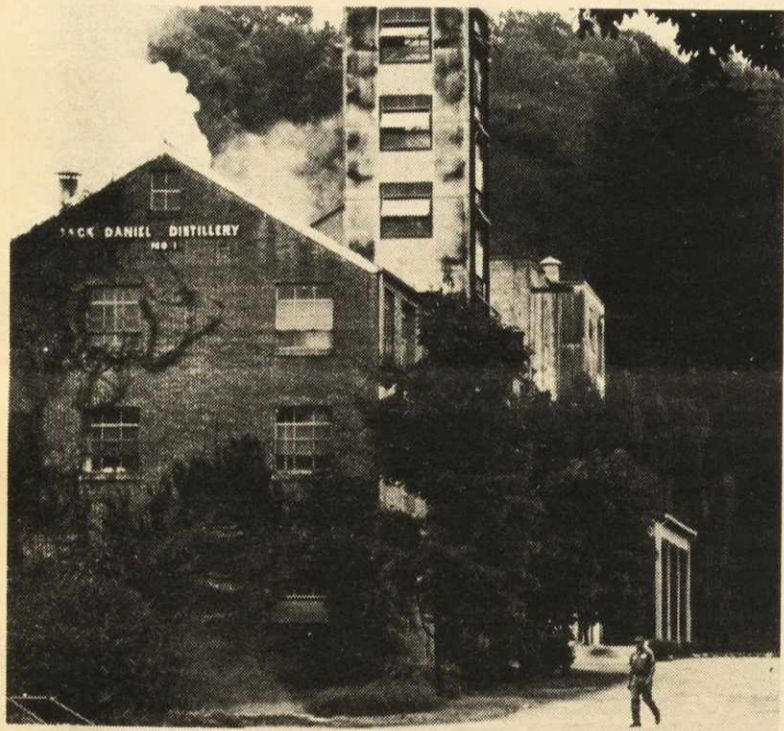
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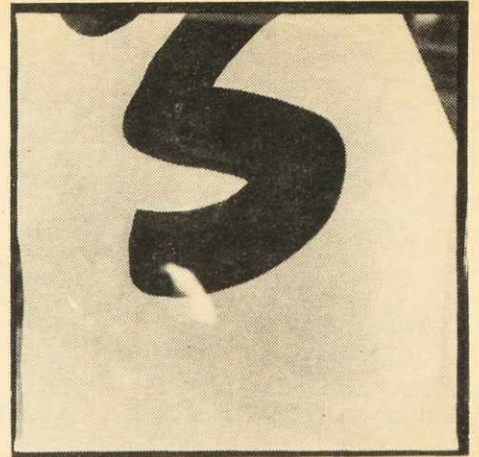
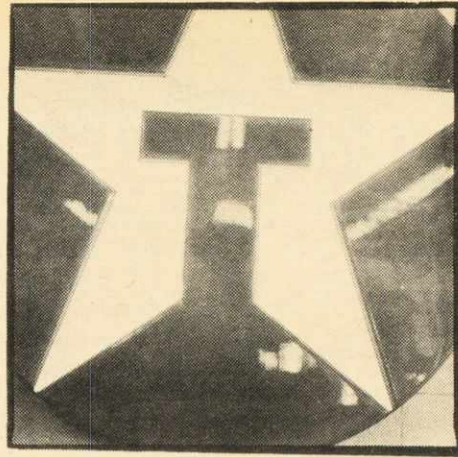
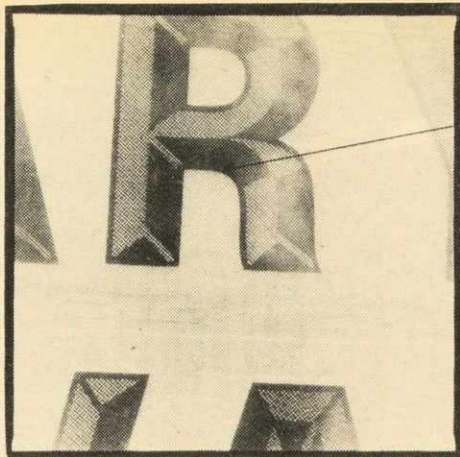
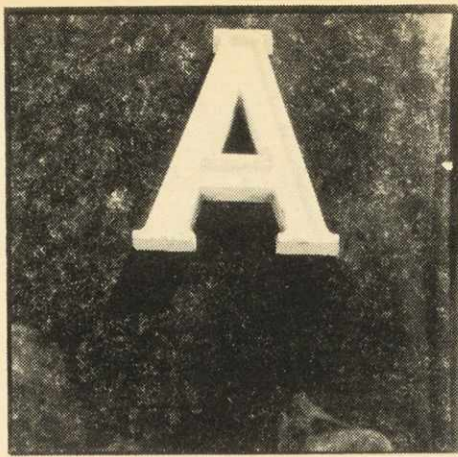
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Designer crafts innovate at Avatar 85

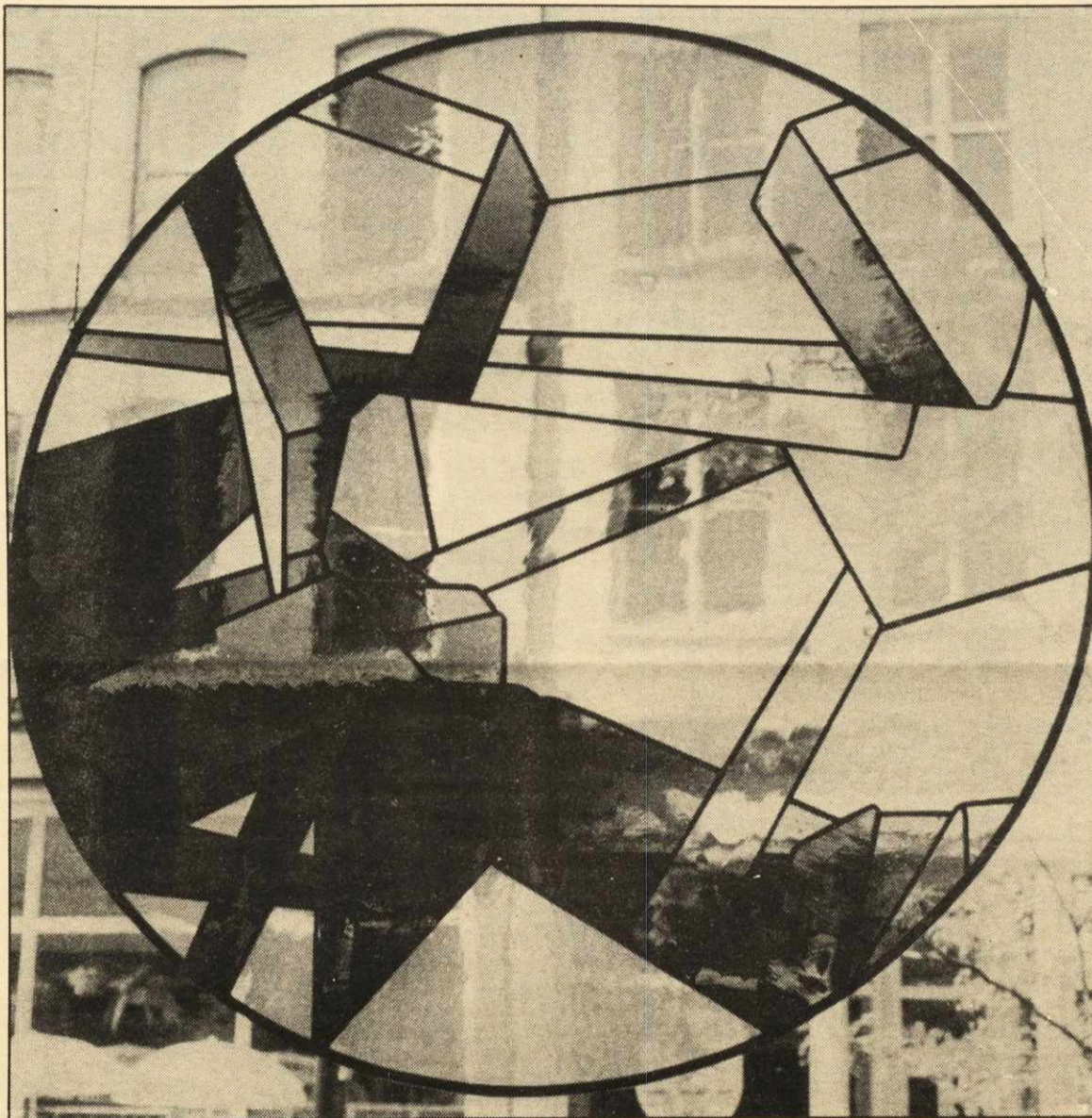
by Phil Doucette

Innovation was the theme of Avatar 85. For the show, a juried exhibition of Nova Scotia Designer Crafts Council from September 10-28, artists were asked to consider the traditional applications of their craft media, and then apply the restrictions of the materials to a new and exciting display of diversity, or, as one of the jurors put it, the show exhibited "Ordinary material made precious."

Certainly the show was colourful. The combination of bright pottery glazes, sparklink stained glass and lustrous jewelry contrasted with the rich textures of wood and fibre to create an overall feeling of opulence and tranquility. The cool and airy space of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design's Anna Leonowens Gallery was ideal for a show of this kind, and the exhibition's success was facilitated by the peaceful viewing environment orchestrated by the installers of the show.

However, this description of the atmosphere of Avatar 85 leads to my only criticism of the exhibition. While craft can be successfully represented as visual art, if careful consideration is not given to the context of the display, the objects lose their individuality, becoming *pictures at an exhibition*, stripped of the essential humanness that is such a vital component of craftwork. The selected works of Avatar 85 are each of tremendous merit, but hanging together in the gallery they seemed almost disembodied. The sense of separation from any emotional interaction on the part of the viewer was very tangible, making the tranquility of the show cold, and the opulence rather impersonal.

The development of the exhibition concept, "the embodiment of concrete manifestation of an abstract concept", was probably the main contributing factor to the specific inaccessibility of the craft component of Avatar 85. The majority of the works in the show were abstract, and the reasons for that abstraction were often ill-defined, or purposeless. The visual statement of each piece was supplemented by a small information sheet on which the artist placed their comments about the inspiration and aspirations of the work. This idea was amusing, because it allowed the viewer to glimpse at the character behind the craftsman, but it seriously undercut the necessity for each artist to ensure that their work was a complete statement of self-contained message and intent. Nonetheless, Avatar 85 was enjoyable. The mediums of stained glass and textiles were very well represented. Of particular interest were the three



Regene Stowe's "Untitled Circle" was one of the more impressive stained glass works at Avatar 85, a juried exhibition by the Nova Scotia Designer Crafts Council - Photo - Phillip R. Doucette.

dimensional glass constructions of Andrew Terris, of which *Labrynth* was selected as one of the jurors' choices, and the fibre garment *Herring Bone* by Ruth Scheuing, also a jurors' choice. Each of these pieces successfully fuses the abstract with a high level of craft work, and delightfully adds a playful dash of self-criticism. The jewellery displayed was elegant, but the larger pieces suffered from a lack of connection with the traditions of the medium.

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Three-day Disasters

by Kathy O'Brien

Some people will go to any length to get a novel published.

In 1984 over 400 people spent their Labour Day weekend steadily writing in an attempt to get what they wrote published. Vancouver's Pulp Press, a small publisher, sponsored the 3-day novel-writing contest, which has been an annual event since 1978.

The idea for the contest originated in a barroom when one of Pulp's editors challenged a bookseller to write a novel in three days. Both failed to write a novel, but Pulp Press went public with the writing contest a year later.

Jim Curry won the International 3-Day Novel-Writing contest last year with *Nothing So Natural*. The 78-page novel tells the story of Timmy, a 12-year-old, who lives with an eccentric family, but longs for a "normal existence."

"The purpose of the contest is to encourage writers to write," said Frances Eger, distributor and sales director for Pulp, in an interview with the *New York Times* last fall. That is a noble statement, but by imposing such extreme time limits Pulp does not exactly encourage aspiring authors to write well.

In fact, past winners and other supporters compare the contest more to a sporting event than to a literary endeavor.

"You almost have to be a trained athlete," said Sig Laser, a bookseller who sponsored the contest. Les Leyne, of the *Victoria Times Colonist*, calls the contest "a triathlon for the brain." "I think book reviews of the 3-Day Novel should be put in the Sports section," said the 1983 contest winner, Jeff Doran.

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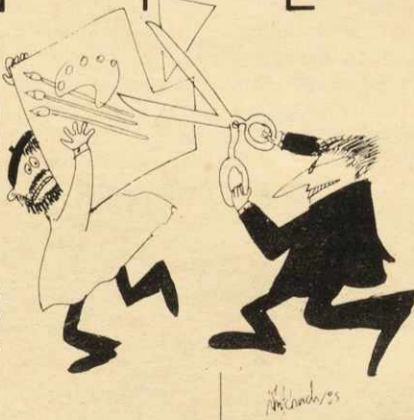
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Quest for Justice

by Bruce Fanjoy

*Twenty years in prison I'll spend
For a time I went to visit a friend
I'm just a victim of circumstance
I'm just a victim of circumstance*

A song fills the 75 seat theatre across from the Kentucky Fried Chicken on Main St. in Wolfville. The seats for now are empty, that is except for a greying, bearded man sitting in the front row.

The man is Jack Sheriff, founder and driving force behind the Kipawo Showboat Company, an amateur theatre group. The song has been written and composed by Francis Hawley for Sheriff's current, and most ambitious project, *Trial of Bruce Curtis — Quest for Truth and Justice*.

Sheriff, a full-time English professor at Acadia University, has a subject that is certainly touching a nerve in this province, if not the rest of the country. It's the true story of an 18 year old from Mt. Hanley, Annapolis County, who, on his first trip away from home, became embroiled in a situation he couldn't handle and is now paying the steep price of twenty years in an American jail.

In the summer of 1982, having graduated from Kings-Edgehill High School, Bruce Curtis went to visit a school friend's home in New Jersey. Unknowingly he became a guest in a home fraught with domestic violence. When the violence erupted Bruce was innocently caught up in it and accidentally killed his friend's mother while fleeing the bloodbath. His trial has been described by many as a judicial farce and raised many questions about the state of the judiciary in America.

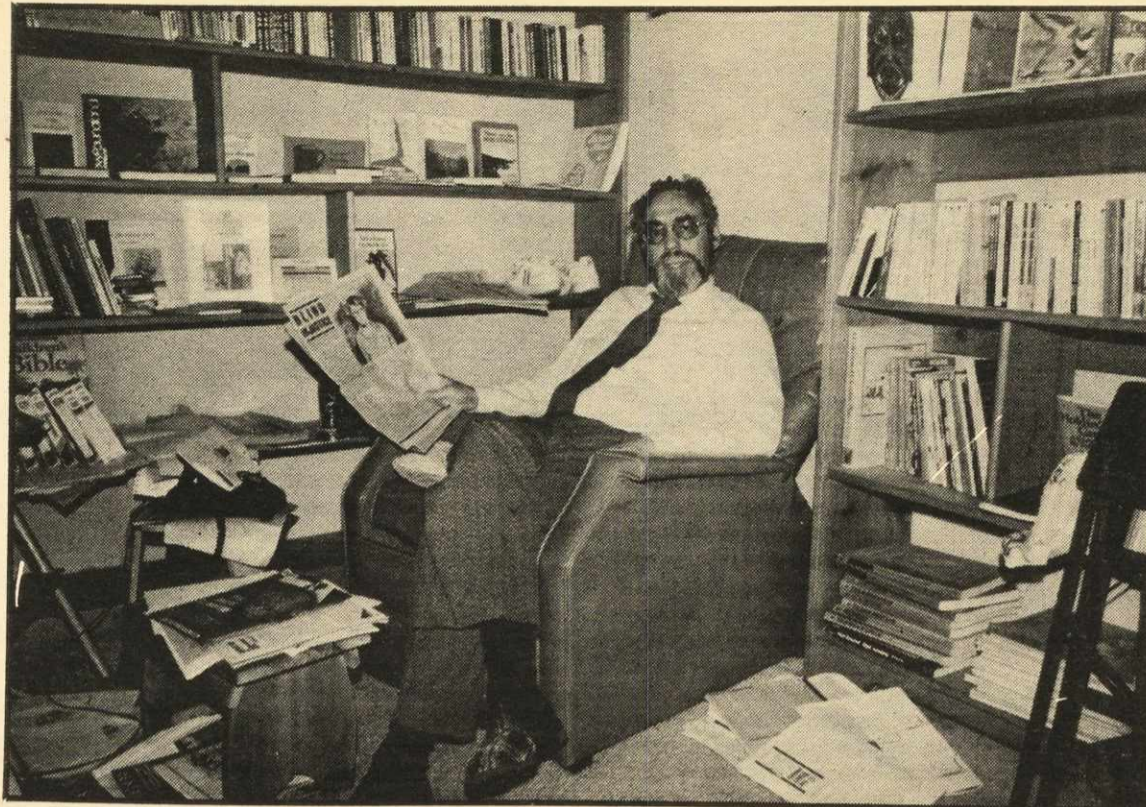
"There is a lot of interest. Everybody wants to see this one," says from his cluttered office in the building.

The title, *Trial of Bruce Curtis*, has an intended double meaning. While Sheriff incorporates facts from the actual trial (he is armed with 900 pages of court transcripts), he does not intend the play to focus on court proceedings.

"To me it's a detective story. Like all great novels, great plays, or great pieces of literature, it's an exploration into human nature and human motives. Why do people do the things they do?" says Sheriff.

Sheriff has been working on the play since May. Twice he has been to Bordertown Correctional Center in New Jersey to speak with Bruce Curtis, the second visit prompting a major rewrite. He has spoken at length with Jim and Alice Curtis and the other characters in the play. Unfortunately, on neither trip was he able to talk to Scott Franz, Bruce's friend who, in turn for a lighter sentence, testified against Bruce. For the most part, Scott doesn't give interviews. While not ruling out any more changes, Sheriff is confident, "I'm feeling comfortable. I think what we have now is fairly workable."

Sheriff is no newcomer to theatre, having established his theatre group in Wolfville in 1958. This summer he won first prize in a national playwrighting competition organized by the National Multicultural Theatre Association for a fictional story, *A Mitzvah for Yaakov*.



Jack Sheriff discusses his latest play, *Trial of Bruce Curtis*

Dal Photo - Bruce Fanjoy

Sheriff is not terribly concerned about expenses and admits to not having a budget.

"There are costs. I've printed hundreds of versions of the play, all these things add up but who's counting," he says. "For 25 years I've been absorbing expenses, that's what my salary's for; not to live it up but to do the things that are important... and I'm doing what's important."

The play will be refined and performed in Kipawo's Wolfville theatre, but Sheriff is hopeful of taking the play on the road. While not committing himself to a date, a likely stop would be Halifax, possibly Dalhousie. Says Sheriff, "I would take it right into Bordertown if I thought it would do any good."

The facts of Bruce Curtis' story have intrigued more than just Jack Sheriff. The story has attracted two Toronto authors. One, Harold Crooks, has a grant from the Canada Council and the second, David Hayes, has a contract with Penguin books.

In the words of Francis Hawley, the song and Bruce Curtis' story continues:

*Now I spend my time thinking
About the way it could have been
A couple of weeks sitting 'round a pool
Talking to a friend
Never dreamed I'd be sitting behind bars
Yes, you never know who your friends really are.* □

Blood and Cantsin Gig

By Gillian McCain and Ken Burke

Under his polka-dot Russian-style hat, Monty Cantsin stands calmly onstage, the banana he's eating clutched in one of his seven-finger gloves. As the tape pumps out, electropop with a french accent, it's time for him to sing his theme song—a sort of "Hey, hey, we're the Monkees" of the avant set. "I am a Neoist," he chants...

Monty Cantsin, a performance artist and avid prophet of Neoism, performed a show at the S.U.B. on September 14 along with local alternative artists Roland Blinn (the Raw Fish Man) and the Misery Goats.

"I want to die in a Teepee
I want to die in an Ice Show
I want to die for FUN!"

Monty's antics on stage featured a blend of performance, music, song and video. The stage is set up with two mikes in front, screens in back, and television sets on both sides of the stage. The show began with Cantsin and his female sidekick (a kind of Walk on the Wild Side debutante who was never introduced) filmed in an anonymous location looking fashionably bored. As the audience continued to watch the television sets we see Monty and his Accomplice in Art looking heart-broken as an unidentified voice talks about "the unforeseen death of the artist". He was fresh from "Blood Campaign", "his retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art in New York" (he wishes) when the tragic event took place—however they've got "the best Monty Cantsin imitator, Monty Cantsin and the First Aid Brigade."

The music is pretty average Quebec synthesizer-rock and is unfortunately taped. Monty (who could pass for a flashier French-Canadian David Byrne) sings songs with captivating lyrics like "I want to die in a teepee/I want to die in an ice show/I want to die for FUN!" As Monty sings and his pseudo-go-go girl dances, images are flashed on the screen behind them. At one point we see lines from their lyrics like "Every six minutes must be total joy/Every six minutes must be a new orgasm" and then in huge letters "MORE MORE MORE MORE MORE". That seems like the basic philosophy—Anything goes... Live for the Moment... Life is boring but have fun anyway...

His actions on stage seemed to be intended to shock the audience but the overall silliness of the events made one want to giggle, not gasp. During the course of the performance we see that Cantsin has many central themes (or fetishes), blood being one of them. During his donation of blood onstage (done fairly demurely—no risk of

slipping and gashing open an arm here), the couple on the television strips halfway down, cleverly splitting the interest of people in the audience—do you want sex (nudity but no sexual advances or connotations of the act) or violence (donating blood but in a non-violent way as possible)? One audience member mumbled, "He must be full of holes, man." After Cantsin's medical art was completed, his female friend rolled out some paper and held it as he tossed his own blood from a vial onto the 'canvas'. Canada's answer to Jackson Pollack? Very traditional avant-garde...

"We are not subjects to a life of science," he sings, predicting "an era of total change—of total ideas." "Try neoism," he offers, like a pitchman for Dristan at the end of a commercial. If this show was a commercial for Neoism, we're not buying. It just can't deliver the goods.

The local artists, on the other hand, were much more captivating without trying half as hard. Although Roland Blinn had amplifier and mike problems (his lyrics were almost indistinguishable) he managed to pull off an enchanting performance nevertheless. His music is raw without being sloppy and his guitar-smashing outburst was charming without being contrived.

"Try Neoism," he offers, like a pitchman for Dristan

The Misery Goats, newcomers to the alternative scene (this was only their second gig) played an impressive set full of verve and wit. Lead singer Paul Caldwell's oddball allure is irresistible. After tapping their drum machine and getting no response he mutters into the mike, "Slight problem—We've got fuck-all in sound". With his shaved head, colorless clothes, and semi-emaciated body he looks like a chic concentration victim. His stage presence seems to have been borrowed from the late Ian Curtis (lead singer of Joy Division) but even with the band's obvious influences their style remains unique. Before beginning *96 Tears* Caldwell says, in a deadpan voice, "This is a really cool tune", pauses and adds, "probably the best fuckin' one

we got". One of the highlights of their set was their version of Husker Du's "Books about U.F.O.'s" slowed down to the pace of an Iggy Pop dirge with an almost "I'm bored" Iggy vocal.

Rumor has it the band is discarding their drum machine and replacing it with a Real Live Drummer. If this is true the Misery Goats can look forward to being a prominent influence on the Halifax underground music scene.

Top Ten Videos

by Jean LeBlanc

Over the past three years the video industry has grown from obscurity to a multimillion dollar industry. Approximately 3000 videos have been created by this time and they are coming faster than ever. With an average cost of \$50,000 they range from a cost of one million dollars for Michael Jackson's "Thriller" to a reported five hundred dollars for Van Halen's "Jump".

I've chosen the following videos as the best because of their originality and innovation over other videos. That little something extra that places these videos above the rest was looked for.

1. Just a Gigolo/I Ain't Got Nobody—David Lee Roth

This video contains nearly constant and almost hectic action helping to keep the video interesting and everchanging. The video's strength comes from being the first video to reproduce segments of past videos and fusing them in an exaggerated and humorous manner. This format has proved so successful that it has been copied by Phil Collins in his video, *Don't Lose My Number*. The strongest point for this video is its humor. David Lee Roth spreads havoc throughout the television, video and music industries in an imaginative and hilarious way, from Billy Idol's self-electrocution to "Dave TV".

2. Don't Come Around Here No More—Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers

This consists of a very twisted version of *Alice in Wonderland*. It is special because of its strange and bizarre description of this story. The video contains scenes where Alice shrinks and is placed in a tea cup and another scene where she is turned into a "live" cake and is eaten by the band. Various details complete the effect of being in a weird land of makebelieve, an example of this is using pink flamingos as musical instruments. But the *piece de resistance* of the video is imaginative and deceiving use of the checkboard set.

3. Sweet Dreams (are made of this)—Eurythmics

This is a very imaginative and unpredictable video. Whether the Eurythmics are walking in pastures with cows, showing pictures of nuclear explosions or scenes where Annie Lennox seems to be thinking of taking over the world, the video seems to paint a rather gloomy picture for the future of man. The video's best point is its ability to shock the viewer, from Annie's blazing orange hair to Dave Steward's typing on a computer in a cow pasture.

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Quick'n'Dirty'n'Bad

continued from page 3

Writing more than 20,000 words in only 72 hours does require much physical stamina, but if the finished novel is unreadable there is little point to the endeavor. As Truman Capote said of Jack Kerouac's *On the Road*, "That's not writing, it's typewriting." And *Nothing So Natural*, like other 3-day novel winners, illustrates Capote's point. It is badly written, and highly unlikely that a serious publisher would have given Curry's manuscript a second glance.

Curry's novel is unpolished. The plot and character development is sketchy, and although the writing is clear, it is lacking in richness. There are no descriptive passages to savour and no metaphors which stand out. It is somehow hard to believe the publisher's claim that *Nothing So Natural* is a "searing tragi-comedy." The novel is neither tragic nor comic. Perhaps a more precise word would be dull.

A quote by Tommy, the father of the family, sets the mood for this uninspiring book. "There's nothing more natural than walking. It's the most satisfying state a man can achieve. Except when he's on the can."

This book aims to be funny, but rarely is. What little humour there is tends to be very crude. Witness Tommy, in one of his more amorous moods: "I need tit," he says to his wife. "Come on, Muth, give me one right between the old jowls. Smack one right in here. Whip me one out, Muth..."

Although there are elements in the story that are pathetic, Curry handles his material in such a flat way that the story is ultimately unmoving. Although Tommy's wife is overworked and must put up with an abusive husband, Curry does not make the reader feel sorrow for her. Simply telling us that "poor mom had to work so hard" does not evoke sympathy for the woman.

Death often makes for tragedy, but Curry treats the death of Tommy's daughter Betty in a very casual way. Betty is barely mentioned until the last pages when all of a sudden she commits suicide. Only three pages have been devoted to Betty, and her emotional state is unexplored; her suicide means nothing—no emotions are touched.

Although the other characters are dealt with in greater length, none of them are truly "fleshed out." Tommy, the chronically unemployed, constantly complaining, alcoholic, is the predominant figure in the book. Although Tommy is probably the fullest of the characters, he is still far from "real". Furthermore, Tommy is so unattractive that his unlikableness permeates the book.

Another major flaw in *Nothing So Natural* is lack of direction. The novel moves quickly, bouncing from one scene to the next but aimlessly. It would be helpful if *Nothing So*

Natural had some kind of a plot or theme to hold the story together.

Finally, to tell his story well Curry needed much more than 78 pages. As it stands the novel is so poorly developed that it more resembles an outline than a finished novel. This is another common fault of all 3-day novels so far.

Dr. Tin, 1978 contest winner by Tom Walmsley has many of the same problems as *Nothing So Natural*. But besides being badly written it is also extremely offensive in content. In one section of the book the "hero" goes to dude ranch where the residents participate in sado-masochism. Walmsley glories in describing acts of violent sex and human degradation. The hero, A.J., "has been toilet slave for the entire party (with the exception of the slaves who have been eating each others' shit on stage). A.J. is drenched and dirtied, strapped in an old bathtub..."

Compared to traditional novels, 3-Day novels have a "different flavor", says Calvin Wharton, an editor at Pulp Press. He praises the 3-day novels for their "immediacy" and "roughness". The novels certainly are rough, but it's debatable whether roughness is a desirable trait.

"It is not necessarily true that a novel written in a short space of time is of a lesser quality," says Wharton. To illustrate this point Wharton notes that Voltaire's *Candide* was written in only three days. Perhaps it is true that someone of Voltaire's genius could write a memorable and important work in a very short period of time. But for most people the writing of good fiction requires a great deal of time and care. It's questionable whether Voltaire would approve of a passage like:

Their mouths met, saliva mixing like lava, and they rolled on the bathroom tiles imprisoned by the claws of a greater passion than they ever knew existed. (from *Dr. Tin*)

These novels are so bad it is hard to understand why any company would bother publishing them. Ultimately, the writing contest can only be seen as a cheap form of promotion for Pulp Press. The event offers opportunities to the contest winners, however, Jeff Doran has been awarded a Canada Council grant to write a play, and *Dr. Tin*'s Tom Walmsley went on to become a "famous" playwright.

The novels do more harm than good to Canadian literature, however. The contest cheapens and undermines the Canadian publishing industry and other more worthy Canadian writers.

Whether seriously or in jest, *Globe and Mail* critic, William French, called the 3-Day Novels "a uniquely Canadian contribution to world literature." Whether Canadians can be proud of this gift to the world is debatable.

Masked Media



Encyclopedia Investigations

by David Olie

It may be the political/cultural event of the year in Canada. No, it's not the Queen Mum's latest hat. No, the Pope is not back in town. No, the federal Tories have not decided to change the nation's colours to red, white and blue.

What it is, is Mel Hurtig's new *The Canadian Encyclopedia*.

Hurtig is a man with a mission. A mission to bring Canada to Canadians. Despairing over his fellow citizens' basic ignorance of their own country, and loathing the encroachment of American continentalism, Hurtig has laid his own considerable fortune and reputation in the publishing industry on the line to produce *TCE*.

So far, the gamble seems to be paying off. In fact, the response to *TCE* has been so positive that retailers are finding it difficult to keep the three-volume set in stock. This, despite a pricetag of anywhere between \$125 and \$200, says there must be a market out there for resurgent Canadian nationalism.

It would be impossible to go in depth into all 1992 pages of *TCE* in this space. Frankly, though, my first concern with the Hurtig opus was the same as my concern with most things that attempt to address "the essence of Canada". That is, what treatment will the Maritimes get?

(Now, maybe I'm guilty of having a bad attitude here. I mean, should I really be assessing the success or failure of a nationalistic venture on the basis of how well it addresses regionalism? Hmmm. Oh well, onwards.)

The first thing to greet the eyes of the paranoid Maritimer upon opening *TCE* is the frontispiece, paired with a similar illustration in the rear of each volume. These attractive, full-colour prints are clearly intended to represent what Canada, and therefore *TCE*, is all about. Collectively, about three dozen famous Canadians of past and present are shown in the montages, as well as various scenes, objects and landmarks deemed to be uniquely Canadian.

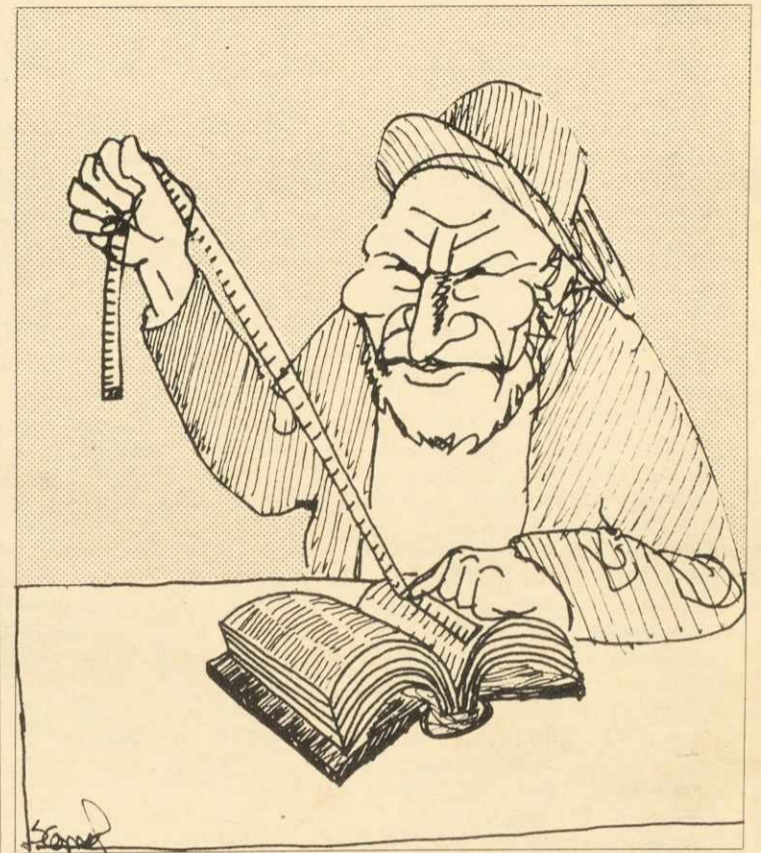
In all that, the only thing representing the entire Atlantic region is, you guessed it, the Bluenose.

None of the famous Canadians were born here or are even associated with the region. No Sir Robert Borden, no Lucy Maude Montgomery, no Joey Smallwood, no Anne Murray; nothing. Hurtig is not off to a good start.

Next, the paranoid Maritimer devises a test. He selects two historical figures: each a newspaper editor turned politician, contemporaries, each having had about equal influence on the development of Canada. One is a Maritimer, Joseph Howe. The other is an Upper Canadian, William Lyon MacKenzie.

The results are surprising. Howe's entry is 280 millimetres long, as compared to MacKenzie's of 268 mm. Each has a photograph of almost identical size. Overall, this seems to be perfectly fair treatment, and the paranoid Maritimer loses a little hostility.

Just by way of comparison, he then looks up the same two men in the old



Encyclopedia Canadiana. Here, Howe gets a whopping 673 mm, leaving MacKenzie behind in a cloud of dust with only 309 mm. Not only that, but Howe gets a portrait sketch, while MacKenzie gets none. Chalk one up for *EC*.

However, there are reasons for this that go beyond Howe's sterling character. The *EC* is a bit long of tooth, as they say, having been first produced more than 25 years ago. In the intervening years, MacKenzie, the old radical, has had his reputation rehabilitated somewhat. In the early sixties MacKenzie was something of an embarrassment; today he's just another wild and crazy Canuck. *The Canadian Encyclopedia* reflects this altered perception in its entry, and the paranoid Maritimer, being something of an old radical himself, is finding it harder and harder to fault Mr. Hurtig.

The differences between *TCE* and *EC* show a major aspect of encyclopedia-writing: its political nature. *Canadiana* comes from a time when it was still rather risqué for Canadians to suggest that *Encyclopedia Americana* and *Encyclopedia Britannica* did not entirely meet their needs. In its time it was a great leap forward. Today it's clearly dated.

Hurtig's venture goes a large step beyond, and does so in progressive fashion. As already suggested, it has a definite political perspective, that of an independent, politically and culturally distinct nation.

While flipping through the pages of *TCE* the not-quite-so-paranoid-anymore Maritimer happens to notice the listing for a politically hot topic: foreign investment. Here comes the Hurtig viewpoint loud and clear:

"FIRA (The Foreign Investment Review Agency) approved about 90% of the proposals it reviewed and was not a significant barrier to the exten-

sion of foreign ownership. It was angrily criticized for its occasional rejections and its slow response to proposals and was dismantled by the Conservative Government in 1984."

Take that, free traders! With a Conservative government in Ottawa being the main force behind the move to closer ties with the U.S., anyone rejecting this move is almost bound to take a progressive stand on the issues. Today, the Canadian nationalists are on the left, or at least in the centre.

As a further example, the listing under "forest economics" makes a strong pitch for greater control and conservation of our forest resources, and then lists a single suggested reading: Jamie Swift's *Cut and Run: The Assault on Canada's Forests*, a radical manifesto for the salvation of our trees.

The progressive slant goes even deeper. There is, for instance, a substantial listing under the heading "Homosexuality". And it is a fine, well researched and written entry, telling in a brief space how Canadians have historically mistreated gays and lesbians, why it's hypocritical and wrong to do so, and making a distinct pitch for change. On this entire topic, of course *EC* is resolutely silent.

The Canadian Encyclopedia, despite the fears of the paranoid Maritimer, is mainly successful in its efforts to pull Canada together. Sometimes it's the little touches, such as placing the accent marks over Québec and Montréal. Most of the time it seems to be sheer force of will and dedication to the cause. And a cause it is. Hurtig has put together a whole movement, the Council of Canadians, for which his encyclopedia is intended to be the manifesto.

If this isn't the political/cultural event of the year, what is? □

AGM

The annual general meeting of the Gazette Publications Society will take place on October 15, 1985, in the Student Union Building. Time and place to be announced.

All students are members of the Gazette Publications Society.

The Halifax Conference

B Y K E N B U R K E

Clap clap clap.
The final session of The Halifax Conference: A National Forum on Canadian Cultural Policy was a time for applause. As each of the conference's appointed speakers moved behind the lectern and said their piece, the audience of artists, cultural bureaucrats, and combinations of the two warmly responded.

They clapped as Sociologist Thelma McCormack criticized them for their "condescending attitude towards the public" and during the conference dissected the new conservatism in government. They gave a similar ovation of playwright Rick Salutin as he read out the Conference Declaration, a dramatic statement reaffirming the principle of public funding of the arts free from government interference or politically-motivated aid. And they gave a hearty round of applause to then-federal minister of culture Marcel Masse after he launched a "blistering" attack on the Conference Declaration (wrote the *Globe & Mail*) and defended his right to set whatever policies and make whatever grants he wanted.

Clap clap clap.
If decorum won over politicians and influenced Tories, the battle for adequate arts funding would be over already. But instead, it's just beginning, again.

Organized from Sept. 21-22, to both coincide with and precede a meeting of provincial culture ministers and their federal counterparts, the Halifax Conference had an agenda heavy with issues vital to the future of the Arts in Canada. Besides dealing with last year's Tory budget cuts and possible cuts to come, the Conference's 300 delegates split up into a series of "Task Force workshops" to create a cultural policy worthy enough to face the future. From Federal/provincial jurisdictions to the merits of private sector funding, it was the delegate's task to sort out the options and start charting the best path through the ice fields that lie ahead. All in one short day.

The reasons why the three hundred delegates gathered at Mount St. Vincent university campus that sunny September weekend had as much to do with the ghosts of past history as the threats of the present. The history of cultural activism in Canada is full of momentous conferences and dramatic commissions (see Sidebar) as well as hard work in invisible chores. After the huge public meeting in Halifax last Jan. 27, when over a thousand artists and non-artists crowded into the Rebecca Cohn Auditorium to protest Tory funding cutbacks, arts coalitions across the country have been looking to tap that energy again. Perhaps they long for yet another legendary generate conference where the analysis fuses into a perfect blend of passion, reason, and foresight. You can't blame them for trying.

If ever there was a time for Canadian artists to organize, it would have to be now. "Artists as a class are the poorest people in the country except for old age pensioners and native people living on reservations," says historian George Woodcock, noting that the majority of artists in Canada live below the poverty line, which was \$8,970 a year in 1982. The entire arts funding system is also under attack through budget cutbacks and a philosophical shift to the right that threatens to take back many of the advances won by previous generations of artists.

If ever there was a time for Canadian artists to organize, it would have to be now.



"Canada is a forgetting country," says Rick Salutin. "We forget these achievements at our peril."

The warnings of danger ahead for arts funding began immediately after the Progressive Conservatives' federal election victory last September. The Tories had promised to make heavy cuts into the budget for their announced "first priority" of deficit reduction, and arts had always been low on the priority list at budget time. Although the slashes revealed in Michael Wilson's November "pre-budget" weren't as deep as some feared, they were twice as rough on arts funding compared to other sections of the budget — a six percent reduction compared the average drop of three percent. The CBC was especially hard-hit, losing \$85 million, or 9.5 percent of their yearly budget.

Besides the cuts, it's clear some significant changes are being considered in the way culture is handled by the feds. Two task forces are loose in the country right now — one "on Funding of the Arts in Canada" and the other "to review the Canadian Broadcasting System."

A "Study Team on Culture and Communication" also recently filed its report on all government Arts and Culture funding on August 30, although study team chair Sidney Handlemen says the report may never be made public.

Like the hushed-up task force which recommended the dismantling of the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, this "study team" was also set up by ultra-conservative Tory Defense minister Erik Nielsen, so supporters of arts funding are justifiably nervous at the report's possible impact.

"Its recommendations will remain a

secret until we begin to feel their sting," says visual artist Stephen Phelps. "Its mandate was particularly insidious, I'm told."

Conservatism and culture was more than grumbled about at the Halifax conference — it was actively studied. York University Sociology professor McCormack presented a paper before the conference entitled "Arts and the New Conservatism", which investigates the phenomenon causing so many artists so much grief...and seemingly gaining momentum as it moves along.

McCormack identifies three different types of conservative existing within the new conservatism, and notes the specific problems they can cause for progressive arts funding policy.

Type A is the one who's been getting most of the press because of their flashy ideas — the rigidly traditional free-enterprise conservative. They're against government involvement in the private sector completely — and they most assuredly consider art as belonging to the realm of free enterprise. These conservatives look south to Ronald Reagan for their inspirational cultural policy.

"I recently heard the head of the National Endowment of the Arts in the United States discuss President Reagan's policy for the arts," she says. "It is," he said, "very simple: reduce inflation."

The idea follows that a reduced inflation rate would lead more people to use their profits for corporate donations to the arts. Type A may be far more prevalent in America than Canada, but it certainly differs from McCormack's two other new conservative examples in its purity of stated principle. Type B distinctly differs from a Type A conservative in their approach to the arts. Funding the arts is not a horror to them, says McCormack; even increasing funding to the arts may be necessary for their desired effect. "However," she says, "what this type of conservative wants for the money is not more art, but different art, an art that imitates life as the conservatives see it, an art that reflects the values of Canadian conservatism just as many of the great masterpieces of the Renaissance celebrated the Church. No more social photograph

that keeps reminding us of the Great Depression; no more poetry about alienation; no more plays about dispossessed refugees," says McCormack.

What the Type B conservative is looking for is art forms, content, and critics to fit their worldview. Finding that ideal — the new Ayn Rand — may take time and money, but as McCormack phrases it for them, "creating a mystique of conservatism will cost something, but what a good investment!"

Type C is far less ideologically minded than either of McCormack's other archetypes. The issue is fairly simple for this creature of public service — what they want is control. They're usually government bureaucrats who want more control of the policies in their defined area. A "hands-on approach" is their motto, and it leads to possible censorship — as in the recent case where the BBC in Britain was pressured not to run a documentary on Northern Ireland. It also cuts the ground from under the "arms-length approach" where arts funding is administered regardless of public affiliations and/or personal beliefs.

The common denominator in all these groups is their intolerance to arts funding without strings attached. Along with this approach follows the idea that not all art should be supported — at least not the art which doesn't appeal to them.

"When you scratch a conservative, sooner or later you will always find a social Darwinist who thinks he or she is protecting the standards of survival of the fittest, painful as that process may be," says McCormack.



"When you scratch a conservative, sooner or later you will always find a social Darwinist."

Survival of the fittest was a theme which ran through much of the Conference, though maybe unwittingly. Much of the thanks for this unwritten agenda should go to a certain Jim Wilson. With immaculately groomed silver hair, a series of tastefully coloured blazers, and a matter-of-fact demeanor, he was the private sector's low-key prophet of gloom and doom at the conference. Wilson is both vice-president of Harris Steel and a past president of the Burlington Cultural Centre. The message he had for the artists in attendance was simple — get lean, mean, and competitive or get dead.

While it was decided that, as video artist Sara Diamond said, "a lot of cultural production defies the marketplace," there was no attempt to come to consensus on the role of "unmarketable" or "leading edge art" in the arts community. Was experimental art only to get funding because people didn't want to buy it? Was there ever any reason to think community access to art was a right and not a privilege for those with the money to pay? No answer. No attempt at one either.

There wasn't time available in the two-and-a-half hour task force meet-

ings to discuss points that were sticky, or controversial to the majority, the points raised were problems delegates saw in the system as it worked for them: i.e. grants weren't suiting them, they aren't eligible for grants, the tax system makes it impossible for the m to make a living, and so on. These points are all necessary to discuss in order to find solutions for the artists, but what many delegates failed to see was where the world didn't end — at the edge of the arts community.

With very few exceptions, the missing element in the Halifax Conference was delegates concerned with their audiences' welfare. Artists' rights may have been talked about extensively, but many of the rights these artists and organizations were arguing for was the maintenance of the status quo: the right to sell the product to the going rate even if the tickets have to be set at 20.

Lost in all this understandable concern over the nuts and bolts of pulling in a living wage was where the community fits in.

"We have to re-examine what we mean by the public," said Thelma McCormack at the final assembly. "We have not done much talking about arts vis-a-vis the public. It we persist in a hierarchical, uneven relationship, we'll have more uneven relations," she said.

In his speech at the beginning of the conference, playwright Rick Salutin (*1837, Les Canadiens*) spoke about bridging the gaps between the artist and audience as well. "We need allies," he urged, "so when we go to the politicians, they cannot categorize us as just another interest group for their piece of the pie. And we've overlooked our most obvious allies — our audiences."

As disconcerting as it was, the spectacle of arts delegates dutifully applauding a federal minister who had just rejected the aims of their conference was just one of the many ironies of the Halifax conference. Instead of beginning a genuine debate on some of the point of difference at the Conference, there was little discussion time set aside and an entire evening of the day-and-a-half event was left open for reception and party. Instead of attempting to gain support for the arts by attempting to change the elitist system so that more Canadians can afford to enjoy the arts, the means of public lobbying chosen by the Conference was "that every arts group in Canada spend one percent of its budget on a co-ordinated campaign to build public support for arm's length (funding) and the arts via petition, letters, and education of the public." In other words, instead of trying a community outreach approach, they opted for a P.R. campaign to sell arts to the ignorant public. If Marcel Masse hadn't resigned, it would still be making him smile today. With that kind of an opposition to arts cutbacks and government control, he'd be able to do just about anything he wanted.

B Y K E N B U R K E

"Governments should support the cultural development of a nation, not attempt to control it." — Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent, from a speech announcing the formation of the Canada Council.

The history of Canadian cultural policy before Mulroney is more than just "a reflection of the erratic growth patterns of any young, developing nation," as a document prepared for the Halifax Conference states. It is the basis for understanding many of the proposals and counter-proposals flying about in this latest round of the culture wars.

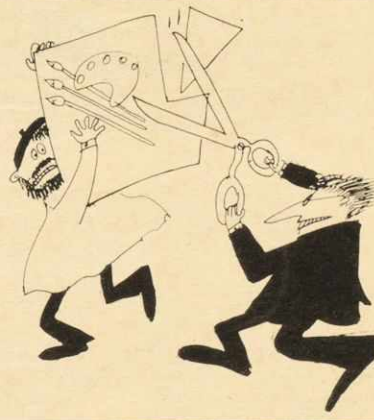
As playwright Rick Salutin said at the opening of the Halifax Conference, "We make our contributions on the shoulders of those who came before us. Earlier generations of Canadian artists did not have the table set for them — they had to make the table. Whatever the problems, a certain foothold has been achieved."

The political struggle to gain that foothold began before the great Depression of the 1930's. Canadian art which reflects back something of the country and people was still a relatively new thing. The post-World War I economic boom had resulted in wealthy citizens offering their patronage to scattered artists such as Tom Thompson and the Group of Seven, which in turn led to their development of something approaching a "Canadian style." While many of the artists' economic gains were washed away in the Depression, the idea of Canadians developing a vital, indigenous culture was no longer an alien one. By 1927, a Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting was able to clearly state, "Canadian listeners was Canadian Broadcasting." With the tentative emergence of Canadian arts also came the realization of what foreign cultural

domination meant. For example, when the CBC came into being in 1936 it was partially the result of years of lobbying by a grassroots organization called The Radio League, whose motto was "The State or the States."

In 1941, over 150 artists from across Canada met at Queen's University at a "Conference of Canadian Artists" now known as *The Kingston Conference*. Besides forming the Federation of Canadian Artists (FCA), conference delegates called for a more

The Radio League's motto was "The State or the States."



central place for the artist in Canadian life. A conference demand for a War Art program was soon backed up by a petition signed by over one thousand FCA members, and the program was initiated.

By 1944, the FCA and other arts organizations held a "March on Ottawa" and presented *The Artists' Brief* to the House Committee on Reconstruction and Re-establishment. Among their recommendations were the establishment of a government body to promote the arts, community cultural centres, and copyright protection for artists. The FCA and other

organizations merged to become the Canadian Arts Council (CAC) in 1945, and continued to pressure the government for the formation of a National Arts Board.

In 1949, the Federal government appointed a Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters, and Sciences, which became known as the Massey Commission. In the same year, the Saskatchewan Arts Board was founded as the first "arms-length" non-political arts agency in Canada.

Trudeau's view was basically that the control of a nation's cultural life, and especially of its arts, is essential for the consolidation of political power, and cultural policies should be directed towards supporting a government's principal aims," wrote George Woodcock in his book, *Strange Bedfellows: the State and the Arts in Canada*.

Soon special government grants for festivals, events, and tours promoting national unity and bilingualism began increasing at the same time the Canada Council's budget remained frozen, losing money every year to inflation. Gertrude Laing, Chair of the Standing Committee on Broadcasting, Film, and Assistance to the Arts in 1978, said, "The willingness to fund 'National Unity' through the arts, but not adequately to fund the arts themselves, is evidence of an attitude to cultural policy that gives me great concern."

In 1980, a Federal Policy Review Committee was formed by the federal Liberals to update the Massey Report. Better known as the Applebaum-Hebert Committee (after its co-chairs), it received 1300 briefs and filed its report in November, 1983 to a decidedly mixed reaction. So far, very few of its recommendations have been implemented, especially the more controversial ones, which include the elimination of all CBC television production and drastically altering the role of the National Film Board.

Arif Hasnain Directs

By GREG CARVER

Arif Hasnain settles comfortably back into his chair at the Grad House on a warm September day. It is just two months since Hasnain came to Halifax to start work for Dalhousie Theatre Productions (D.T.P.) as its new artistic director but he seems calm about the task ahead.

Hasnain is well-qualified for the position at Dal — to say the least. A graduate of the National Theatre School, Hasnain spent the past fourteen years directing plays in both Canada and the United States, and was the Artistic Director of the Manitoba Theatre Centre from 1976 to 1980. In recent years, Hasnain has trained both student and professional actors at various colleges and studios in Ontario. Unlike some theatre directors, he emphasizes the similarities between students and professionals more than their differences.

"You find the same thing in both professional and student situations," Hasnain says. "The director's job is to create a cohesive whole; some people shine, others shine less. You have to deal with the differences." He feels that this is an individual trait, not a fault. "You must take people as they are," he adds.

Hasnain plans to approach the theatre with students first in mind, but also run it on a professional basis. He says Dalhousie Theatre Productions is part theatre department and part school; "Decisions as to who does what have to be coordinated with the training program." As Artistic Director, Hasnain must choose the season according to the needs of the students, especially those in the acting program.

"In professional theatre," he says, "the director chooses a play first, and then tries to cast it. Therefore, casting is always a big problem. However, what makes university theatre unique is that I know who the people are already." Despite the built-in casting advantage, this makes the selection process more difficult since all choices must suit the students.

As well as picking plays, Hasnain will be responsible for hiring the directors and coordinating the technical personnel for the theatre. He is also already planning next year's D.T.P. season. This year, he's busy trying to build on last season's records for both attendance and subscriptions.

Dal Theatre's professional approach to student productions is inherent in all areas of its work. The theatre tries to run according to Actors' Equity (union) rules as much as possible. In equity productions, actors rehearse for eight hours a day for three solid weeks. However, students rehearse for four hours a day, and spend additional time studying. For obvious reasons, the university has a certain flexibility regarding



Arif Hasnain may have less co-operative students than himself when he takes over as DTP's artistic director this season. Dal Photo: Todd K. Miller.

equity rules, as the university presents different working circumstances.

Although Hasnain is new to Dalhousie, he did help choose two of this season's four productions: Lanford Wilson's *Fifth of July* and Anton Chekov's *The Three Sisters*. In addition, he is directing the second production, *Rose*, by Andrew Davies. Rounding out the season is Oliver Goldsmith's classic comedy, *She Stoops to Conquer* in the second term.

"At one point, I was going to direct *Fifth of July*," Hasnain said of D.T.P.'s first production. "It relates to people who have come through the sixties and are getting ready for the new era.

Fundamentally, this happens to all of us," he adds. "We relate to something in the past; something precious, and we feel a bit lost in the future." *Fifth of July* runs October 16-20 in Studio One, and will be directed by Richard Hilger.

Although Hasnain says he'd like to direct any play this season, he says he's especially happy about doing *Rose*. *Rose* is a very interesting piece of work," he says. "It is an adult play about adult problems and it touches me in terms of its sheer humanity and sense of humour."

The production is a witty look at a woman in modern society. *Rose* will be presented in Sir

James Dunn Theatre from November 27 - December 1 and is a special presentation in honour of the Dalhousie Women's Centenary.

Chekov's *The Three Sisters*, to be presented in Studio One from February 5-9, promises to be such an approach. Directed by Alan Andrews, this production will be a premiere of a new adaptation presented in a "unique" setting.

"Very rarely do you see Chekov presented in a non-proscenium fashion," says Hasnain, "because that's how it's always done. This production will use space in a unique manner to bring the play to life with less formality."

"Some directors will present realism while others will interpret a play differently, depending on both the play and his feelings," says Hasnain. Shakespeare has continued to grow on us, and people find different ways to express him. This makes theatre a very exciting and individual art form.

"Most of our impressions of Shakespeare come from the 19th century, not from the actual time the plays were written. Concepts of style, if true artistic statements, must relate to where we are now. That's how art changes."

Hasnain says the university is more likely to use different approaches than a professional theatre, since a broad range of styles and forms must be covered for the students' education. While innovation is encouraged, Hasnain believes that students need solid grounding in well-made pieces before going on to newer or more innovative ones. "Most training sessions attempt to give the student as much solid fare as possible," he says.

As for Dal Theatre's selection process, Hasnain says it is wide open territory. However, budget restraints make it difficult to present certain larger productions such as musicals, especially with Dal Theatre's recent budget shortfall.

Dal Theatre is totally university funded; the budget is close to a freeze situation and last year the theatre had a deficit. This year, the department wants to improve the situation.

"Basically, the university gives us money for the department, and we must then rely on money from the box office," says Hasnain.

As well as having a new artistic director, Dal Theatre has experienced other departmental changes. Kelly Henderek, from Edmonton, has joined the acting staff and will be coaching voice, text, and first year acting.

Hasnain's term at Dalhousie will be for three years. In that time, he hopes to take Dal Theatre Productions, now in their third year, further in their development. "I would like to see a stronger training program for the acting students, and an increase in public awareness," he says.

Fifth of July is currently in rehearsal. "The rehearsals are going very well," says Hasnain. "all of the people are excited, and it looks like it will be a terrific opener for this season." □

Top Ten Videos

continued from page 4

4. *The Riddle*—Nik Kershaw

I think this is the best adaptation of a video to its title. The video is filmed inside a corridor shaped in the form of a question mark. Inside it is filled with jokes, games, fables, nursery rhymes, mysteries and even a joker. It also includes a whirlpool in the floor and a wall mirror made out of water. It's very carefully thought out, well planned and demonstrates the idea of the riddle with a great deal of precision.

5. *Criminal Mind*—Gowan

This begins with a boy reading a comic book about a criminal. The story is told in such a way as the comic book figure comes to life in the form of both a cartoon character and as Gowan. There is innovative use of full size posters as well as the use of a futuristic "truth" machine. The winning point of the video comes from following the song's lyrics very effectively in showing that Gowan (the criminal) really does have a "criminal mind".

6. *You Might Think*—The Cars

This video has excellent use of computer graphics and uses them in a very humorous and entertaining way. Examples are having a submarine in a bathtub, having the lead singer "Rik", in a lipstick tube and a King Kong size "Rik" dropping a girl instead of letting himself fall. The winning point of the video, however, is a computer generated horsefly with Rik's face on it. This has both originality and humour at the same time, a rare commodity to find.

7. *Do You Really Want To Hurt Me*—Culture Club

I feel this video is innovative because it shows how the arrival of something different is rejected by people because they don't understand it. In the video it shows that Boy George shocks the establishment whether located by a pool or in a courtroom. Another part which sets the video apart is Boy George's androgenous look. This was the first mass media look at a style which has invaded high fashion and has now begun to enter into the common fashion look.

8. *Thriller*—Michael Jackson

Special effects are what make this video stand above the others. The graveyard scene and Michael's transformation into a werewolf are examples of the precision that went into making the video. As well, other details help complete the video. The most important is Vincent Price's narrative, creating a sense of approaching doom and anxiety.

9. *Money For Nothing* (uncut version)—Dire Straits

Computer imagery highlights this video. This has two computer generated workmen singing the song and in fact living it intercut with a Dire Straits stage performance. They sing about how they work and sweat all day while these people on MTV get millions of dollars for getting as much as "... a blister on his little finger ...". The computer imagery, includes a computer generated man watching MTV. His face suddenly goes blank and he is drawn into the TV set. The computer also places the band playing inside a microwave oven. The video shows the resentment people have towards musicians they feel have become unwarrantably famous.

10. *Close To The Edit*—Art of Noise

This video stands above other videos because of its uniqueness. It is a daring and innovative video that doesn't seem afraid of doing anything; attacking a piano with a chainsaw, to tempting a dog with a sausage. The editing and presentation of the video are also excellent and really bring the video's interesting action together. □

Pandora lifts Women's Cover

By LOIS CORBETT

When I saw the photograph of two women piling pulp on the front cover of *Pandora*, a new magazine published here in Halifax, I thought hell, doesn't that look familiar.

My family's home is wood-heated and every fall my sisters and I had to help our father cut the fuel needed to heat our home for another fierce New Brunswick winter.

Wood cutting is hard, cold and sometimes muddy work. Complaining didn't make the load lighter. But in the winter we were happier warm than cold.

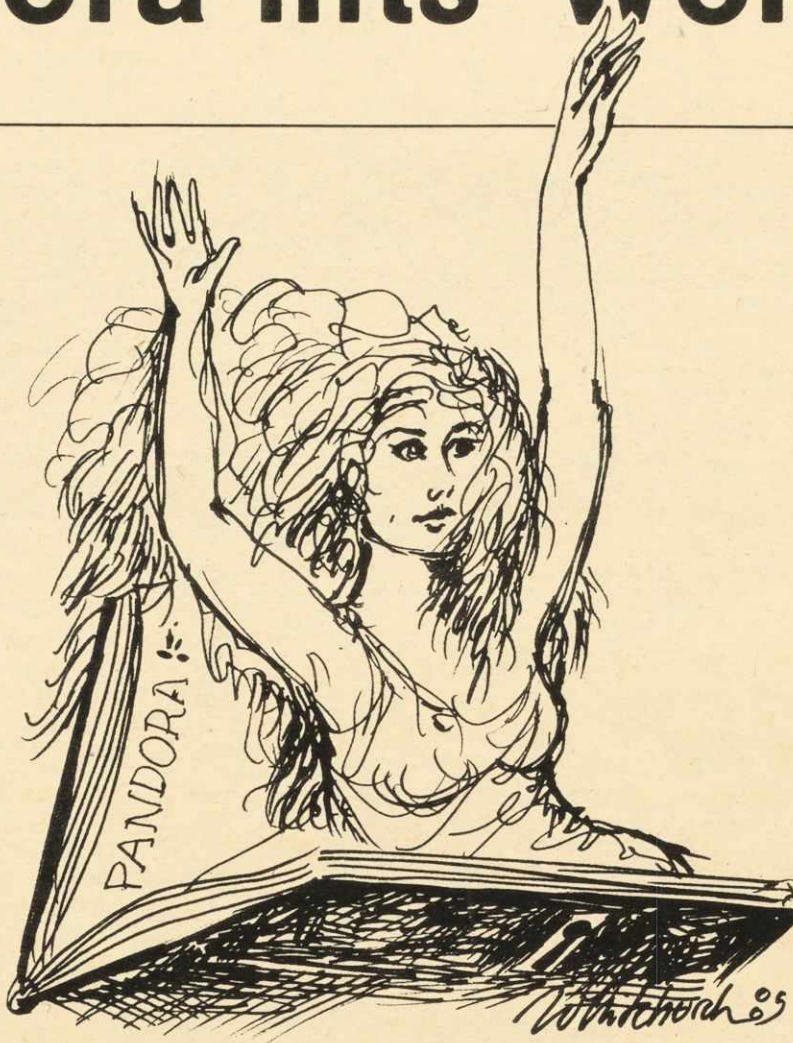
The women on *Pandora's* cover are happy and hard working, and while it is the latter than makes them sisters with all women, both characteristics make me identify with their plaid shirts and blue jeans. Women are everywhere, doing everything, this cover says, and you better believe it.

Pandora on the inside is much the same. As an alternative to the malestream media this 28 page newspaper celebrates all that women do and revels in all that is female. There are articles about birthing and childrearing, haying and fishing, loving and laughing. It includes photos of women who work in television, in darkrooms, in peace and in law. It has happy articles, written by women about their experiences. It has angry articles, written by women about their experiences.

Pandora is an exercise in true journalism. It admits that writers, as all people, are shaped by their experiences and their attitudes. It displays its biases immediately for all to examine.

Malestream media doesn't do that. Newspapers, periodicals and book publishers operate on criteria that are established by men, not by women, and their priorities clearly are not women's. Their profit depends on their ability to keep advertisers happy and their stories depend on that large circulation that makes those money-men excited. Commitment to any cause but the big buck is unlikely, and commitment to a feminist cause is unheard of in malestream media.

But *Pandora's* commitment is evident. Betty Ann Lloyd, the magazine's co-ordinating editor, says the purpose of the paper is to provide a women's



"We wanted something that was really different, something that covered everything from a radical feminist's point of view to those held by women who probably wouldn't identify as feminists."

alternative.

"We wanted something that was really different, something that covered everything from a radical feminist's point of view to those held by women who probably wouldn't identify as feminists," says Betty Ann.

Betty Ann doesn't call *Pandora* a feminist publication because she doesn't want to frighten women away. But she never denies the newspaper's

feminism either.

Betty Ann works at King's College in Halifax as a technical assistant, and she smiles when she thinks about her students' reactions to *Pandora*.

"They say it isn't real journalism, that is, it isn't reporting, facts without interpretation. But if that is what journalism really is, it doesn't make any sense. It's a cop-out not to say what you really think," says Betty Ann.

Betty Ann says it's a joke to believe that people who work for the *Globe and Mail* are objective. "Every bit of their background comes through in what they write and what the paper prints, so we get a white, middle class, male perspective. And it's called journalism."

Because *Pandora's* perspective is different, the malestream media thinks it's abnormal. Abnormal, because it doesn't conform to the norm that male media has established.

"Even the way news is written, that C.P. style is a male norm," says Betty Ann. "It is disengagement, distancing, dispassionate. That's not women's way of writing, thinking or reading, but in our society every way has to be a man's way," she says.

Activists challenging the status quo have to expect skepticism, but *Pandora* women don't let it get too close. The new publication more than makes up for any criticism it may receive.

Women's stories have not always been told. Our contribution to the work force, to literature, to art and to other aspects of our culture and society have been overlooked, as if non-existent. But women have always been here, and *Pandora* wants to start changing the story-telling.

Linda Christiansen-Ruffman went to the Nairobi and she wonders, in *Pandora*, if the male reporters who work for the *Globe and Mail* attended the same "End of the Decade" conference on women's issues as she did. "They covered . . . the words of the wives and daughters of powerful men and expected verbal bullets between warring state regimes," she writes, "they could not acknowledge the patriarchal forms and games which dominated the official conference."

Redefining the peace movement so it addresses the fundamental questions of racism, immigration, education and sexism is a concern of black women, says Karen Hudson. "Before peace can be attained, a re-orientation of society must occur," she says.

Pandora also unites women on strike with other working women. Carmel Maloney, a representative of the Canadian Air Line Employees Association says flight attendants' jobs are being eroded by conflicting government policies.

"While verbally committed to increasing employment opportunities," says Carmel, "the federal government introduces and promotes such policies as 'transportation deregulation', which threatens established full time employment."

Rose Johnson is a doctor trying to work inside a profession that often abuses the female body and its own power privilege. "A woman came to me and told me how her doctor kept her on nerve pills because of menopause. My immediate response was to say that was outrageous. She, of course, already knew that in her heart, but she had no validation for it," says Rose.

Rose questions her role as a doctor and a feminist. "I am in a position of struggling within that system to create the kind of world I want," says Rose.

Pandora includes articles, all written by women, about housing in Halifax, women fishers, the CIA-backed war against Nicaragua and women in video, as well as abortion, lesbianism and daycare. Betty Ann says women had no problem finding things to write about, but the editorial collective had a difficult time squeezing the submissions into the available space.

"We had originally planned on putting out 20 pages," says Betty Ann, "but we had more than enough for the 28. After that we knew we had to stop."

Women's stories need to be told, and women need to hear from others who share their experience. *Pandora*, much like its namesake, the wonderful goddess who allowed people understanding and knowledge by lifting the cover from the box of all things; good and evil, hunger and fullness, poverty and wealth, shares the experience of all shapes, sizes and colors of women.

But women don't have forever. Our past has almost been lost in men's history and our future will soon come under an influence men dictate. *Pandora's* women have lifted the lid, barely in time, and its women will remember and be remembered.

Pandora is available at Red Herring bookstore (Argyle/Blowers), from the Pandora Publishing Association, (5533 Black Street, Halifax, N.S., B3K 1P7), and at the Dal bookstore.

Curing Patriarchal Medicine with Art

By BONNIE BOBRYK

Modern medicine and gynecology are often viewed as being in the 'best interests' of women. Some women, like Barbara Louder, have a different view.

Walking into the didactic exhibition *Caring, Curing, Women and Medicine* at Eye Level Gallery, the viewer is confronted with wooden

sculptural objects, cartoons, photographs, and text. The artist, Barbara Louder, has combined these media to create a series of works questioning various aspects of modern medicine. Some of the issues she raises are the circulation of dangerous contraceptives, involuntary sterilization, operating without informed consent, and exposure to environmental hazards

causing still-births, deformities, and miscarriages.

Barbara Louder's analysis came from both personal experience with medicine and extensive research.

"My thoughts on women and medicine began to come together as I read about the history of women, health care, midwives and witches," she said. "I started to remember my own experience — my coming to terms with feelings of alienation and asking, where did this come from? I wanted to link this to political analysis."

After reading the illustrated descriptions of various IUDs and surgical tools and then viewing the large, carved representations of them it becomes clearer where women's alienation from gynecology may have originated. These objects resemble nothing so much as archaic instru-

ments of torture. Initially they are attractive because of their sculptural, polished appearance, but after going through the exhibition, they invoke feelings of disturbance.

"I was already making wooden, carved fetish-like objects when a friend brought over a contraceptive device," said Barbara Louder. "I wanted to relate carved representations of contraceptives to sculpture and art objects. I'm trying to use recognition of art objects — that is, certain codes having to do with our appreciation of art." As a result, the objects in the exhibit are deliberately made to have a finished, hand-crafted quality. "They have to do something other than provide visual pleasure to the viewer," she says. "Consequently, they become paradoxical in relation to the actual objects."

Oversized cartoons with two nurse and doctor characters accompany many of the works. The nurse explains concepts and questions the doctor. In a piece about operating without informed consent the nurse questions the doctor on the large number of operations he has performed on women and whether they were all necessary. Below the cartoon is a narrative by the artist of her own similar experience and a photograph of the hospital where she had her operation. Alongside is a long-handled carved object with curved, forklike tines at one end, based on a skin retractor, a medical instrument used during surgery. "There is a metaphorical incongruity about this nurse speaking forthrightly about her views," said Louder. "She is an audacious character — continued on page 11"

Tavern Food

R E V I E W

Eating may not be the first, second, or even the third thing that comes to mind when thinking of taverns, but it is an activity that goes on alongside the barstools and Muchmusic screen.

We know all this at *Gazette Arts Magazine* because we've eaten at a tavern or two ourselves. The food's usually cheap, you can wash it down with an ever-more-expensive glass of draft, and it can be a perfect atmosphere for talking anything over. And since most other students know this as well, we're straying from greasy spoons for our second venture into the eats industry. This review is taverns and nothing else. What places we overlook, we'll catch up to later on. Again, enjoy!

Maxwell's Plum (Grafton & Sackville) is a real plum among taverns.

Don't be put off by the semi-slick exterior, nor the prime location — at the corner of Grafton and Sackville, we're talking Young Urban Professionals at Play territory. But inside, the ambience is cheerful and the fare is surprisingly cheap. Maxwell's strives for the cosy-English-pub look and succeeds without being cloying. There's no fake imported English kitsch on the walls. All the kitsch and memorabilia is Canadiana, thank you very much.

Draft is the standard \$1.10 a glass, and there is a staggering variety of imported brews available. It's like the "Atlantic News" store of taverns. Service is friendly and efficient. The most pleasant surprise is the menu — everything is under \$5. This includes real steak — 8 oz. of sirloin and 12 oz. of prime rib, both priced under \$4. Other items run the range from chicken in various forms, to seafood, some appetizers, and hefty salads with excellent homemade dressings.

A word of warning — the chicken wings are for lovers of spicy foods only. Don't believe the menu when it lists the sauces as Mild, Medium and Hot. It's actually closer to Hot, Hotter, and Will Singe Your Mother's Hair. It rates an impressive four and a half forks.

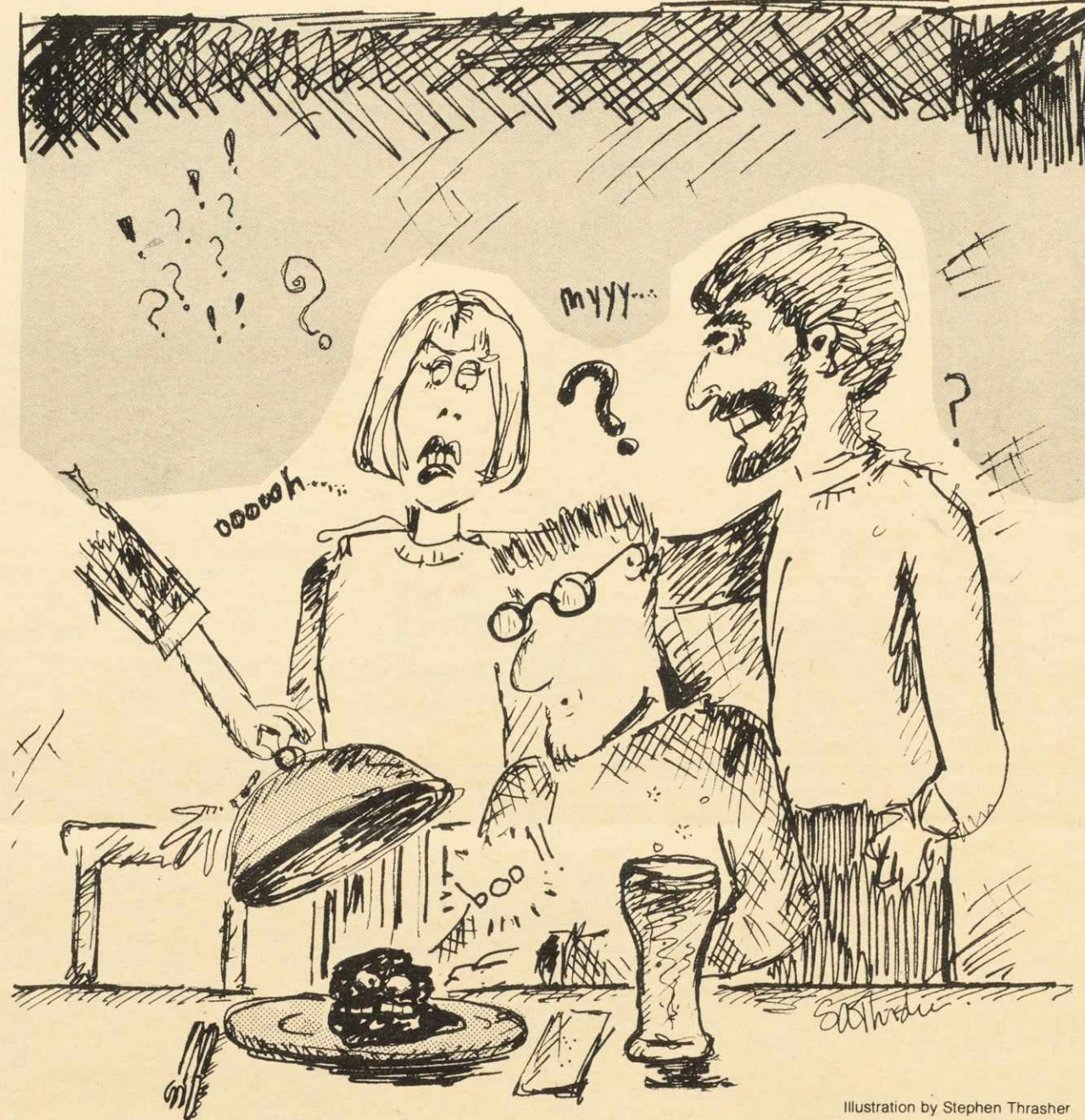


Illustration by Stephen Thrasher

The Lower Deck (at Historic Properties) offers the customer a natural attraction which other restaurant/taverns lack. If one can avoid the tourists the waterfront location is great. But even this wouldn't help a tavern very much if it had nothing to offer inside its doors.

Happily this is not the case. A warm atmosphere and genuinely friendly service greets the customers as they enter. The long tables are spread over two smallish rooms and a terrace.

The tasty fish and chicken-finger dishes are average size, with french fries below par. You could avoid these though by ordering one of the warm-up dishes such as the French-onion soup or the seafood chowder. They're big enough for a meal by themselves.

The kitchen closes at 7:30, when beer takes over as the main staple. The prices are comparable to other taverns with \$1.60 per 12-ounce draught, and around \$5.00 per main course. With an admittedly not every extensive menu, this is not the place for

burger fanatics. The Lower Deck caters more to the seafood lovers and tavern hunters of Halifax. It ranks three forks.

Lawrence of Oregon's (1726 Argyle) is spicy maybe, but definitely not pricy.

The beverage room, located at 1726 Argyle, offers an Italian menu with over 25 items, only one of which is priced beyond five bucks.

If you can manage to tolerate the unfinished plywood decor and sometimes out-to-lunch service, this could be a place for you.

The portions are bountiful; you certainly don't need to ask for more when you're through, even if you want to. You don't need to ask for ketchup or salt or pepper either; it is provided. And they handle spices, so vital to zesty Italian food, exquisitely. Besides, there's always more draught to set your mouth straight with.

The chicken parmesan, stuffed tomatoes, and pizza won our unreserved approval. The cannelloni and lasagna were received with mixed

blessings, but they were eaten. Ravioli was the only big loser.

"It tasted like dishwater," spat one refined companion, obviously accustomed to elevated standards of palatal excitation.

Ravioli and all, we have to award four forks to Lawrence of Oregon. The price: volume ratio is pretty hard to beat, and for students, that's pretty well where it's at.

The Midtown Tavern (1684 Grafton St.) is located in the heart of downtown, where its wonderfully tacky atmosphere borders on kitsch. Red fake leather chairs, ugly brown walls and the omnipresent television set (which seems to be permanently channelled into sports programs) make the atmosphere, well, anything other than intimidating.

The 9-inch pizza is a substantial meal and a fantastic buy for \$3.05. *Real* pepperoni and *real* mushrooms (none of the canned variety for this establishment) make a delicious topping for the chewy, crunchy and crispy crust. And no complaints can

be heard uttered as the other customers scarf down steak, club sandwiches and fish & chips.

The Midtown Tavern has been offering good food and great service to Haligonians for 36 years. Standard tavern food is the norm — the factor that sets the Midtown above many of its competitors is the consistent culinary quality. It ranks four forks.

The LBR, or Ladies' Beverage Room (at the Lord Nelson Hotel on Spring Garden) has one very good idea that raises their ranking a notch — discounts for students. With a student ID, their regular fare is halved in price (not counting the brews). Other taverns in town, please take note.

Unfortunately, there's a few areas where the LBR could learn something from other taverns in town when it comes to food. The fries that come served with your burger, steak, or fish are julienne ones of the

storebought kind and storebought taste. A Nelson Victory Burger at half \$2.85 comes with an unbuttered bun, a coupla fried onion bits on top, and a handful of mustard, ketchup, and relish squeeze packets to D.I.Y. The half-inch burger (their top of the line) is on the bland side and looks too much like a computer formed it.

Their "English Style" fish and chips is missing in English accents, too. The fish is often undercooked inside enough to be mushy even though it looks golden-brown enough on the outside, and it lacks in taste as much as the burgers.

The atmosphere inside is a reassuringly old grungy tavern feel, with no big-screen sports or music videos to distract or a jungle of ferns and market-calculated bric-a-brac. The most striking features are the old chairs, the cartoons by Chambers on the wall and the distinctly un-YUPpie regulars. The bar service can leave a lot to be desired, especially when a polite request for a glass of water nets a warm-bordering-on-hot glass of liquid. It works out to three forks, with one of those due to the student discount.

The Bonnie Piper (Maritime Centre Basement) perhaps more so than any other pub in the city, specializes in the basic meat 'n potatoes approach to food. Nothing fancy, nothing ethnic, and nothing, with one exception, particularly good.

The one exception is the renowned Hip of Beef. This dish is as much an anatomy lesson as a meal, as you watch the server behind the food bar take your choice of slices from an entire roasted cow's leg. This is then served with roast potatoes, vegetables and salad, with lots of gravy and all the Ben's bread you need to sop it up. This is not a fave hangout of vegetarians.

The rest of the menu's choices are similarly served, such as the pork chops, which tend to be dry. Fish and chips and a few other dishes are served to you at the table; you don't need to stand in the food bar line to get th'

Like other pubs, the main virtue of putting on the feedbag at the Piper is that the bag is always full. One way or another, you don't leave the Piper with an appetite. But non-essentials, such as flavour, tend to get lost somewhere between the kitchen and your table. If you have an aversion to large quantities of salt and pepper the Bonnie Piper is not the place for you. Two forks.

Reviews by: Kimberley Whitechurch, Ken Burke, Bill Overend, Scott Inniss, David Olie, Gillian McCain.

continued from page 9

not allowed. Her resistance and assertiveness are important to have as an element in the work."

"In other another sense, the cartoons are didactic or rhetorical," she says. "They get across information I didn't want to put in the main body of the piece."

Corporate power over women's bodies was the theme of several pieces in the exhibit. One examined the selling of dangerous IUDs banned in the Western World to Third World women. Another piece looks at multinational Union Carbide to link its contradictory corporate practices.

In the works, the cartoon nurse informs the patriarchal doctor that Union Carbide also owns research facilities for nuclear weapons testing — in fact they tested "Little Boy", the bomb dropped on Hiroshima. Below are two photographs, one of the protestors outside of Union Carbide and one of a Union Carbide building. These flank an advertisement for Union Carbide. It shows a mother bathing a baby and extols the virtues of making home more comfortable. In italics the ad ensures that producing better materials for the use of industry

and benefit of mankind is the work of Union Carbide.

A subtle approach was used in a piece on industry-made environmental hazards. If it condom box labels had been altered, the boxes photographed, enlarged 3-5 times, and folded back into box form. The altered labels were of genetically-damaging environmental hazards such as PCB, U-235, VDT, the cancer-causing drug DES, and pesticide 2,4,5-T. At first glance, the label seems a part of the package. Underneath is a notebook which outlines actual cases of miscarriage, stillbirths, defects, and cancer which resulted from women's exposure to each of the environmental hazards listed on the boxes. These cases came from a public health survey conducted in one industrial area of Toronto.

Throughout the exhibition, the pieces are a reminder that women's bodies have been abused and controlled by both contraceptive manufacturers and the medical profession. The different issues brought forth in these works are complex and diverse but they share the commonality of questioning who is in control and the politics of power. □

Avatar 85

understand that this was a result of a lack of submissions for jurying. Single inclusions of works in wrought iron, wood and handmade paper complete the survey of craftwork being done in Nova Scotia, although the exclusion of leather-work was noticeable.

Of the 44 artists selected by the jurors, it is interesting that 30 were female. Perhaps this is an indication that craftwork is admirable in being an environment favourable to the recognition of the talents of women.

The introduction to the gallery catalogue for Avatar 85 offers the exhibi-

tion as a testament to the creative vitality of a remarkable community. The craft community of Nova Scotia is certainly united in its concern for motivation, and innovation in the exploration of the role of craftwork in society. Despite the flaws in the presentation of the exhibition, it remains a most significant exhibition of superior craftwork. If public education is the

key to a secure future for the crafts, then the Nova Scotia Designer Crafts Council is certainly well on its way to achieving the high profile that craftwork in Nova Scotia deserves.

ENDPIECE

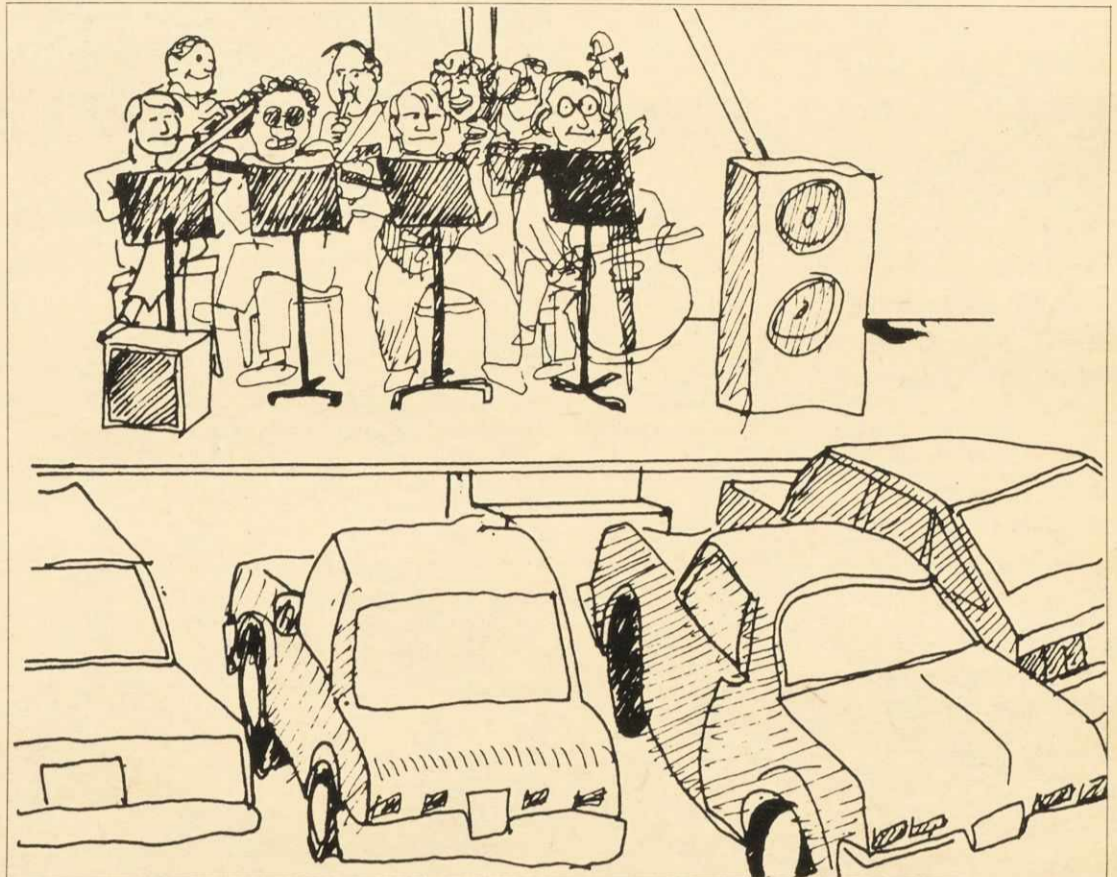


Illustration: Stephen Conrad/Dal Gazette

By MARY ELLEN JONES

Many musicians talk about performing before hard audiences, but this summer, I had an audience that was more than hard — it was metal.

While travelling in a government-sponsored stage band this summer, I was committed to perform in front of different kinds of audiences. Each had different characteristics, but some differences were more different than others.

Our 14 member band was an "experimental summer expenditure" for Buchanan's government, ultimately commissioned to represent Nova Scotia during the Saint John Canada Games. "TEAM '85", we were christened. Along with our patriotic duty at the Games, we were tied to a tour of the Maritimes where sometimes we felt our tour dates outnumbered the audience members.

Because the band was such an experimental summer project its promotion was chaotic, to say the least. Signs notifying the potential audiences of our concerts were about as visible as Pieter Botha's sense of humour. In one town TEAM '85 rolled into, our pre-concert hype consisted entirely of one hand-printed piece of foolscap taped to the window of a greasy dive. We were so impressed we walked on in, unappetizing as it looked, and ordered ourselves a meal. We complimented the management on their window display.

We serenaded rain puddles. We performed for fog. We threw ourselves into reels and jigs on stickily hot days for lone TV cameras. It doesn't do much for band morale to play a gig in the middle of a lake some bureaucrat picked as the ideal site; our audience made up of sleepy ducks resenting our intrusion. Performing for audiences without the intention or the ability to clap is a real downer.

Just as we were beginning to feel

our summer spent practising and writing charts would all be in vain, TEAM '85 Victory Tour turned towards Cape Breton.

Here the audiences not only materialized but were downright enthusiastic. They just had a funny way of showing it.

Unlike other performances, a great deal of promotion had been circulated before our arrival in North Sydney. There was an air of anticipation among the band members — we felt somebody might show up.

The day was a scorcher. We were all working on a sunburn and collectively smelling like a Solarcain factory, but what kept us going were the 50 benches staring at us in front of the bandshell, waiting in readiness for a full house. It took an hour to set up the band. We moved about like chickens in a supermarket rotisserie in anticipation of the throng's arrival. After all, we had heard of Cape Bretoners' legendary love of music, and after the ducks, we were ready for love.

The water behind the bandshell looked tempting, but we decided to stick it out to see who would actually turn out. We waited for what seemed an eternity. Just as we felt TEAM '85's goose was cooked, they began rolling in — literally.

They drove up in their old convertibles, tatty pickups, and decrepit volkwagons and pulled into parking spots right behind the inviting benches. From the sounds leaking from their metal capsules, these car-bound Cape Bretoners seemed rowdy and ready for a concert. But the benches remained incomprehensibly empty.

We waited for them to move to the benches and they waited for us. The sun kept its steady pressure on us in our bandshell and our fans-to-be in their hardtops. Did they think this was an A&W with live muzak? A simulcast on their car radios? We had no idea, but we began to play.

After we stopped our first number,

we then realised why they remained in their sticky leather seats. At the end of every song for the entire two hour show, the air was filled with a symphony of blasting, crescendoing and decrescendoing beeps, honks, and blasts from caper cars. The honking horns filtered throughout North Sydney in a subtle cacophony of tones and semitones coming from our newfound fans in metal box seats. We felt like the main feature of a Drive-In Theatre without the necking. At least we didn't notice any.

They were equally impressive in their knowledge of when to honk and when not to honk. They eyed the conductor for clues that the music was absolutely, finally over before they bleated out their approval. There were a few times, however, when an enthusiast's elbow slipped and windshield wipers or headlights were switched on to the annoyance of other car inhabitants nearby.

It was a faceless but receptive audience. Perhaps they stayed in their cars not because they were timid, but because this was the best way they could think of to show their appreciation. Just how loud is a pair of clapping hands, anyway? Maybe they felt intimidated by our greatness. Or it could be they were just looking for a quick escape route.

Most were attentive until the very end except for one lone car. In the middle of our show-stoppers, a white convertible with whitewall tires attempted to make its getaway. As the car neared the end of the parking lot and was just about to turn back onto the highway, our excited conductor noticed what was happening and turned away from the band which was in the middle of our rendition of "Danny's Song". "Where do you think you're going?" he yelled into the mike. Daunted, the car's guilty occupants turned it around and remained for the rest of the concert. If a car could blush, it did.

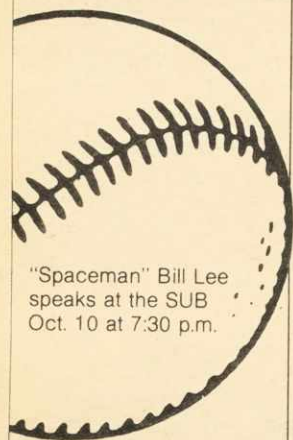
Dream of Life

Sometimes with you in my sight
I just don't feel like seeing
It is this time i dream of life
and what is for our being
Water in the driest desert
stands aside for nothing.
This world is not beyond your wildest dreams.
Upon conception, a paper, a pencil I am
a reporter for my mind.
Searching corners where gold may be,
down spiral staircases my thoughts descend
hoping but to find ideas.
Old, new, it does not matter,
what matters is I hold the rail.
Thoughts that fail to find the open door
will never cease their tireless, timeless efforts.
Up ahead the conscious path crumbles,
falling amid uncertainty,
minds eye begin to see.
I feel myself but feet away,
from meanings that I seek.
Like morning fog my doubts disperse,
when heated by the light.
I found you my friend,
behind the open door.
tell me your ideas
a dream of life.

Ken Faloon

October

Sun



6

Hammett, a film about the ex-private eye who wrote *The Maltese Falcon*, will be playing at The Cohn at 8 p.m. Ticket prices are \$4.00 regular and \$3.50 for students and senior citizens.

13

Nashville, the All-Star Robert Altman film about Nashville and America, will be playing at the Cohn at 8 p.m.

CBC News Sunday Report — the new Prime Time News Program goes on air tonite.

20

All week is **Amnesty International Prisoner of Conscience Week** — from Oct 20-27. Stay tuned for listing of events and speakers.

27

The Company of Wolves, sophisticated British screamer, will be playing at the Wormwood's Dog and Monkey Cinema until Oct. 31. Shows are at 7:00 and 9:00 except on Oct 31, one screening only at 7:00.

ATLANTIC
FESTIVAL
ATLANTIQUE

The region's best filmmakers will be at the Atlantic Festival Atlantique this year, and so will the rest. Be there yourself.

M

7

Run For Your Wife, the hilarious British comedy will be playing at the Cohn until Oct. 9. Shows start at 8:00 p.m.

Alana Miles is appearing at the Middle Deck, Historic Properties, from October 7 - 12, and there's a cover charge.

14

The Middle Deck has **Eugene Smith** as the featured act from Oct. 14 to the 19th. Cover charge.



My New Partner at Wormwood's oct. 11-17

21

Canadian pop singer and more **Shirley Eikhard** will be at the Middle Deck from Oct. 21 until Oct. 26. Cover.

28

Something called the **S.S. Boogey Band** is playing at the Middle Deck beginning Oct. 28 and finishing up November 2. Cover charge.

Gilbert and Sullivan fans will love hearing their greatest hits performed by the London Savoyards at The Cohn at 8:00 p.m.

T

8

"Figurative Ceramics", an exhibit by Peter Bustin, will be at Gallery 3 of the Anna Leonowens Gallery at NSCAD on the Granville St. Mall.

Four short Films on **Women and Image** will be shown at the Dalhousie Art Gallery at 12 and 8. Free admission.

15

Masters of Fine Arts students at NSCAD are having a **group exhibit** at Gallery 2 of the Art College's Anna Leonowens Gallery from Oct. 15 through Oct. 28.

A film portrait of Canadian artist Paraskeva Clark will be followed by a film about American artist Helen Frankenthaler at the Dalhousie Art Gallery. Films begin at 12 and 8, and there is no admission charge.

Don Cuvelier Associates' exhibit, **"Design Office"** is at Gallery 1 of the Anna Leonowens Gallery at NSCAD from Oct. 15 until Nov. 2.

'Avant-garde' pop recording artist **Jane Siberry** will be performing at the Cohn tonight at 8:00 p.m.

22

Behind the Veil: Nuns — Part I will be shown at the Dalhousie Art Gallery at 12 and 8. There is no admission charge.

29

Behind the Veil — Part II will be shown at the Dalhousie Art Gallery at noon and 8 p.m. No charge.

The Cohn presents the **Happy Together Tour** — a return to the 60s with **The Turtles, The Grassroots, The Buckingham** and **Gary Lewis and the Playboys**. Shows begin at 7 and 10.

W

9

Three NFB Shorts: Kate and Anna McGarrigle, Masters of the Performing Arts and The Concert Man at the NFB theatre at 7 tonite. Admission FREE.

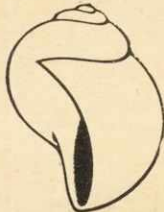
The SUB's McInnes Room is the site for a movie double feature of *The Graduate* and *The Breakfast Club*, beginning at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$3.

16

Carlos Montoya, the renowned Spanish flamenco guitarist, will be playing the Cohn at 8:00 p.m.

Miller Brittain, a film about the life and career of the misunderstood Maritime painter, will be shown at the NFB Theatre at 8 p.m. Free admission.

23



Atlantic Festival Atlantique will run at the NFB theatre until October 27.

30

Lonely Boy and Big and the Blues, two short films, will be shown at the NFB theatre tonight at 8 p.m. Admission free.

Mary Travers (of Peter, Paul, and ...) will perform music to provoke thoughts of peace and caring at the Cohn tonite at 8:00.

A **Hallowe'en Triple Feature**, with three scary films that are so scary we can't announce them yet, will be shown at the SUB's McInnes room starting at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$4.

Th

3

Gazette Arts Magazine meeting at 7 p.m. in the *Gazette* office (3rd Floor SUB) to discuss future issues and coverage. Anyone interested is more than welcome.

The exhibitions **Aileen Meagher: A Retrospective, Pioneer Women at Dalhousie and Franz Kafka: 1883 - 1924** will continue at the Dalhousie Art Gallery until Oct. 27.

Les Grands Ballets Canadiens will be playing for three nights at the Cohn beginning at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$14.50 regular and \$13.00 for students and senior citizens.

City Lights, Charlie Chaplin's most universally beloved film, will be shown at the NFB tonight and tomorrow night. Shows at 7 and 9.

10

Shadow of a Doubt, Alfred Hitchcock's thriller starring Joseph Cotton and Teresa Wright, will be shown at the NFB until Oct. 13. Shows at 7 and 9 each evening.

17

La Strada, Federico Fellini's 1954 Academy Award winning film will be shown at the NFB until October 20. Shows begin at 7 and 9:15.

24

The Wormwood Dog and Monkey Cinema presents the **Atlantic Festival Atlantique**, a forum for the newest and best film and video production in the Atlantic Province until Oct. 26. Screenings, workshops and special forums are also scheduled. The group **Rocks** will be appearing at the Bonnie Piper from Oct. 24 - 26.

31

Opening of the exhibition **Eric Cameron: (to be further continued)** and **Marine portraits of Nova Scotia Vessels, 1926 - 1918** will be held at the Dalhousie Art Gallery at 8 p.m.

4

Legend in his own time, **Tommy Hunter** begins his 21st season on CBC television tonite.

Paris, Texas, Wim Wenders' masterpiece starring Harry Dean Stanton and Nastassja Kinski, will be playing at Wormwood's Dog and Monkey Cinema until Oct. 10. Shows are at 7:00 and 9:35.

11

My New Partner, a burlesque French cop comedy will be playing at Wormwood's Dog and Monkey Cinema until Oct. 17. Shows at 7:00 and 9:00.

18

Teen pop scream idol Paul Young will be at the Metro Centre on Oct. 18, with tickets set at a hefty \$18.50.

Vision in Creative Writing, a book discussion series will run for the next six weeks at the Halifax City Library. Every Friday from 1:30 - 3.

Man Under Suspicion, a West German political thriller will be playing at Wormwood's Dog and Monkey Cinema until October 23. Shows are at 7:00 and 9:15 each evening.

25

Frank Mills will perform the music that made him famous tonight and tomorrow night at the Cohn at 8 p.m.

1 NOV

Dangerous Moves, this year's Academy Award for Best Foreign Film will be playing at Wormwood's Dog and Monkey Cinema until Nov. 7. Shows at 7 and 9.

Eric Cameron will discuss his work at a Brown Bag Lunch in the Dalhousie Art Gallery at 12:30. Bring your own peanut butter and jelly sandwiches pleasee.

S
5

Monsieur Verdoux, Charlie Chaplin's 'comedy of murders', will be shown at the NFB until Oct. 6. Shows at 7 and 9:15.

The exhibition **From Different Starting Points: 150 Years of Art in the AGNS Collection** will continue at the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia in the Main Gallery until Nov. 17.

The Art Gallery of Nova Scotia will continue to show **Selected Prints and Drawings** from their collection in the Second Floor Gallery until Dec. 5.

12

Oliver Twist, a B & W film starring Alex Guinness will be shown at the Halifax City Library today at 12 and 3. Admission free. Also...Oct 17 at 7 p.m. and Oct 18 at 7 p.m.

19

An exhibit by Jan Skelton titled **"Environmental Portraits"** will be at Gallery 3 of the Anna Leonowens Gallery at NSCAD from Oct. 15 - 26.

26

Henry V, starring Sir Laurence Olivier will be shown at the Halifax City Library at 12 and 3. Also...Oct 27 at 2:30 and Oct 31 at 7:00.

2



Aileen Meagher paintings at DAG till Oct. 27