

THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT

# GALWAY Arts Festival

## Reviews

### 'The House of Bernarda Alba'

Some critics might find it incongruous for a Swedish theatre company to perform a Spanish play, but this splendidly comic version of Federico Garcia Lorca's 'House of Bernarda Alba' shows how universal the themes really are. It is to the great credit of Theatre Manjana and the direction of Nola Rae (a renowned mime artist herself) that even without the language of Lorca they manage to convey the richness of the story superbly.

On the death of Bernarda Alba, his wife has locked herself and her five daughters away from the threatening world. Despite this, however, the daughters are infatuated by one man. In this version he is amusingly reduced to a dress suit on a hanger. With all the repression in this household of women, when the thread holding them together snaps, it does so with stunning results.

The extremely clever use of mime and props works wonderfully well most of the time. Occasionally, however, the cast went ever so slightly over the top with pratfalls and other mime techniques of exaggeration. Yet these are small cribs in a production that is both enjoyable and challenging.

M.V.

### Review: Galway Youth Theatre's 'As You Like It'

Normally during the Arts Festival it is all too easy to miss a really good show because you are - quite literally - overwhelmed by all that's on offer. There is no excuse, however, for missing Galway Youth Theatre's excellent production of Shakespeare's 'As You Like It', which continues at Nun's Island Arts Centre until Saturday. If you happen to be allergic to the Bard, don't let this put you off, because the whole thing has been subtly modernised. The clever direction by David Grant and the music by David Parnell has made this production one of the real highlights of this year's Festival.

You will recognise some of the cast from recent Galway Youth Theatre productions. John Ruddy plays a marvellously over-the-top Orlando, and Shane Gately tackles the challenge of playing the two Dukes with aplomb.

But it is Lucy Heaney and Lisa O'Reilly as Celia and Rosalind who deftly carry the show. Special mention must also be made of three members of the large cast. Niamh McGrath has another chance to show off her comic talents as both Charles the Wrestler and Corin. My personal favourite character was Monsieur Jacques, played with lovely hauteur and panache by Lisa Dwan. Finally, the finale to end all finales has Karen McConigly surprising us all. Tickets for 'As You Like It' are available at Galway Arts Centre (091 565886)

## The 8th Film Fleadh Awards

### NEW IRISH:

**1st Place** - 'Palace of Dreams' by Donal Haughey (Galway Film Centre), a documentary on the old Claddagh Palace Cinema  
**2nd Place** - 'Hugo & Lena' by Donal Haughey and Brid Manifold (Galway Film Centre)  
**3rd Place** - 'Chick-the Barber' by Ger Prendergast, a documentary on Galway's most famous barber, who

also runs the Olympic Boxing Club where Irish Olympic Boxing contender, Francis Barrett, got his start.

**Animation** - 'The Chameleon' by Rory Bresnihan

**T.C. Rice Award** - 'Bent Out of Shape' by Orla Walsh (American Distributor)

**The Tiernan McBride Award for**

### New Irish Shorts

**1st Place** - 'Pips' by Naoise Barry, set in Chicago 1954 with a nuclear strike imminent

**2nd Place** - 'Masochist' by Fionn Comerford

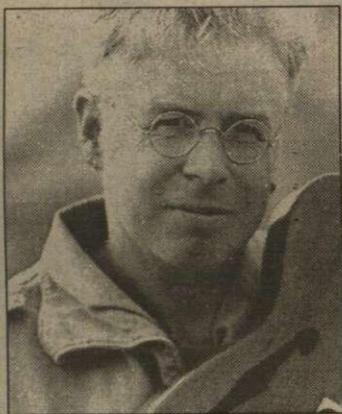
**3rd Place** - 'The Resurrection' by Gabriel Levy

(All three shorts from Dun Laoghaire College)

# Roisin Dubh Scores a Hat Trick for Race Week

If you're looking for a musical break from racing next week, Roisin Dubh offers you three superb nights of entertainment, starting on Monday, July 29th with Canadian singer/songwriter Bruce Cockburn, who's followed on Tuesday, July 30th by Townes Van Zandt, and on Wednesday, July 31, the legendary Holmes Brothers.

Bruce Cockburn is making a return visit to Ireland after his



• Bruce Cockburn

sell-out tour last year. Starting his musical career in the 60's playing music on the streets of Paris, since the release of his first album in 1970, he has gone on to record and release twenty-two more, and he's won a total of thirteen Gold Records, three Platinum, and ten Juno Awards.

Bruce is also an outstanding example of 60's idealism that has translated itself into active work on behalf of Native American rights, Central American political issues, and the preservation of the environment, and he's been honoured with the Order of Canada, as well as being current chairperson of the Canadian branch of Friends of the Earth.

His latest release is 'Dart to the Heart', a brilliant recording produced by T-Bone Burnett and mixed by Glyn Johns, featuring guest musicians K.D. Lang and legendary bassist Jerry Scheff, who's played with everybody from Elvis Presley to Elvis Costello.

Townes Van Zandt is widely

regarded as one of the most powerful and affecting songwriters composing today. His strong and often devastating lyrics are inspired by the dark side of the American dream, and his insight and compassion have been compared to novelists like John Steinbeck and Norman Mailer.

Special guest on his current tour is Michael Weston King, an old friend from Van Zandt's native Texas. Townes Van Zandt has just released a new acoustic album entitled 'The Kings Highway', and audiences can expect to be treated to some of the songwriter's new compositions along with his older standards.

Last, but certainly not least, The Holmes Brothers, who just happen to be among the very finest exponents of authentic Soul and Gospel music in the world. Galway fans will already be familiar with the pure honey tones of the Holmes Brothers, and for those who aren't, here's your chance to experience something very special indeed.



• Townes Van Zandt



• The Holmes Brothers

## 'Wild Flowers & Cleopatra'

That's the intriguing title of a new exhibition of watercolours by Clare Cyran which opens in The Kenny Gallery on Monday next, July 29.

The wild flowers are those of Connemara, of the boglands and the lake shore and the lilyponds - poppies and daisies and waterlilies, which also feature in vases of flowers in still life paintings and studio scenes.

Cleopatra is the name of the artist's cat, and the exhibition features a number of studies of 'Cleo' playing, or lying in the Sun, or rolling on her back.

The artist, Clare Cyran, is one of Ireland's most distinguished watercolourists. Modest about her work, her technical brilliance, original ideas, sensitive interpretations, and exquisite feel for colour have resulted in a chorus of praise, both in Ireland and abroad.

The exhibition will be opened by Clare Boylan, the well known novelist and short story writer.

• Galway Music Centre, in association with Galway Arts Centre, will present 'Chuffed and Obscure', live at Nun's Island Arts Centre on Thursday, August 1, from 7.00 to 10.00pm. Admission: £1.50.

## At the Cinema

### The Truth About Cats and Dogs:

Occasionally a film like this comes along with a naff title and on the surface a dire plot that you find is actually a lovely little film, well worth passing all the sickly sweet posters in the foyer to see. That's the case with this oddly named new release at the Omniplex. Director Michael Lehman has produced a little gem. One or two critics have likened it to a female 'Cyrano de Bergerac', and certainly the similarities are there. In the same way as 'Cyrano', it carries the message to look beyond the surface before dismissing somebody, and that it's often the apparently 'plain' person with the brain that is the real attraction.

Jeanne Garofolo is Aby, a Radio Vet with a passion for art and Sartre, who decides she is not good looking because too many times the elevator door has closed in her face. When finally interest comes her way in the form of a photographer in trouble with a roller-skating dog (Ben Chaplin - the photographer, not the dog), she finds herself with a problem. Somewhere along the line she has managed to convince him that although her voice and mind are her own...the body belongs to her neighbour (Uma Thurman).

Thurman has great fun playing the dumb blonde who really wants to be a news reader. Ben Chaplin you may have seen in a recent BBC comedy, the name of which slips my mind, as the character who occupies the living room sofa while dressed in surfing gear and clinging to a surf-board.

But this film belongs, as it should, to Jeanne Garofolo, who takes some won-

derfully sarcastic lines and attitudes and makes them her own.

P.S. Watch out for a truly amazing phone call!

**CHILDREN'S CHOICE:** During the recent successful Film Fleadh, two superb children's films were showcased that will hopefully soon feature at the Omniplex.

The first of these is 'The Boy From Mercury', which reminds us all of what it was like to be ten years old and convinced that we couldn't possibly be related to the family in which we found ourselves. Somebody - God, or maybe the hospital - must have made a terrible mistake. For the director, Martin Duffy, it is actually more a reconstruction, as he considered himself not only to be from another planet but even knew which one it was! While kids will certainly enjoy this film, it's also a wonderful chance for adults to wallow in some affecting nostalgia.

'James and the Giant Peach' is an adaptation of the Roald Dahl story. Once again, it's a film that both children and adults will enjoy. Although directed by Henry Selick, it has the fingerprints of producer Tim 'Batman'/Beatejuice' and co-scriptwriter, the late Dennis Potter, all over it.

Watch out for both of these fine films, and thanks to the Film Fleadh for giving us a sneak preview.

M.V.

(We apologise for not including film reviews recently. Pressure of space due to Galway Arts Festivals involves a degree of sacrifice. We'll try to ensure it doesn't happen again (or at least not too often).