

**THEATRE:
THREE DELIGHTS**

"Cabin by the Lake," by Roy Waldau; "Pantomania," by Phil Bruns; and "Pierre Patelin," adapted by John Glines, presented by the American Repertory at the Davenport Theatre. Directed James Karr.

I admire the new group at the Davenport for its spirit. Here comes the but. But their choice of material reeks of the collegiate influence. "Cabin by the Lake," the first of the three selections, is a mild, somewhat funny playlet about a plain young girl who is trying to marry a plain young boy. Phil Bruns follows with pantomime. Then comes "Pierre Patelin," a play one of the group must have dug up out of the dusty archives of some college library. It is one of those monumentally boring thirteenth-century (or so) costume plays. John Glines, as the lawyer, makes it partially palatable with his mad comic performance.

—Millicent Broyer

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The Night People

by JEAN SHEPHERD

In Memoriam

The other day I suddenly began thinking about vests. The kind that have shiny cloth backs with a strap across them. I don't mean Ivy League tartan types, but the real thing that was issued with two-pants suits. They had about six dozen buttons up the front and usually were draped, when in action, with a gold chain and the tooth of some defunct animal, or perhaps a railroad emblem.

I mention railroad emblem because the most imposing vest in my memory always had one made of gold that bore the Rock Island's insignia of tracks receding into the distance toward the setting sun. It belonged to my uncle, who worked all of his life for The Rock, and whose finest hour came when the company rewarded him with a lifetime pass.

When we visited him he invariably took us kinds to the station for a quick trip on a local for a couple of stops on the line, and then back home again on the next train. This was a real gas for a couple of small fry from the south side of Chicago, to whom the Western Avenue streetcar run had all the glamor that the Super Chief has to a reader of Screen Life. Once in a while, when he was in a really expansive mood, he'd take us to the office. This was the headquarters for what he called the Chicago Division, and somehow for me today, the title

itself still has a peculiarly solid individual ring. A mixture of looking through wastebaskets loaded with long strips of adding-machine tape and lunch bags, drinking lots of spring water from the cooler, and being allowed to peek away at a real typewriter.

Everybody in the office seemed old and gray. They all wore vests too, and there were big clocks on the wall. White faces with the names of banks in gold lettering below. The Division office was filled with a slow deliberate tick. It was always very hot, and somehow when I think of vests I invariably seem to hear steam radiators hissing away.

His home was a hot stuffy apartment on the South Side. It rang all night with banging radiators as well as the slow tolling of a Sessions clock with Doric columns framing the face. They had a round oaken dining table covered with a lace cloth that smelled of dust and old curtains. In the center of the table was a bowl made of orangish-colored glass shaped like a scalloped sea shell and full of wax bananas and apples and a pear with brown flecks that looked realer than the genuine article. My aunt, who never had a child of her own, kept a jar of Nabisco wafers for the kids. They were always stale and rubbery, but I guess she didn't know the difference, or thought we didn't, at any rate.

Uncle Al did two things that fractured both me and my brother, who is, two years my junior. We must have been about 8 and 6 at that time. When we stayed overnight at my uncle's place, he would wake us in the morning by crowing like a rooster. That was his big joke. That, and the great record. He had a record that was nothing but people laughing hysterically. He must have played it for us 5000 times.

The last time I saw Uncle Al was at his funeral. I was in my late teens, and had seen him but rarely in the intervening years. Our family had moved from the city and lost all but Christmascard touch with him and my aunt. Now he was dead. I'll never forget the sudden feeling of sick terror I felt when I viewed him surrounded by white satin and roses. He was small and pink and they had dressed him in a dark-blue single-breasted suit and white shirt. There was a black tie—but no vest. I have no idea what they did with his Rock Island watch fob, but it was gone too.

I suppose it was like seeing Abe Lincoln in Bermuda shorts or something, but all I know is that I couldn't look at him without feeling something awful in my stomach. There were a few old men sitting around in the hard chapel pews—probably those who had worked with him at the Division—but no one in the family knew them, so they didn't speak to them. Next to the casket was a wreath of yellow roses encircling a set of tracks leading to the setting sun. The card read: "From the Boys at the Chicago Division." There aren't many vest-wearers left.



SCULPTURE BY SEVEN

Works and drawings of seven little-known sculptors from around the world are now at the temporary home of the Guggenheim. Among them are representatives of the modern taille-direct techniques—grained wood, hollow terra cotta, welded and forged bronze and iron. These are not clichés derivative in form from the familiar sculptors of our time, but original expressions of new artists who are at home with the modern vocabulary of sculpture.

The Rumanian, Hajdu, is here with abstract polished marble as well as an enormous copper relief. Paolozzi reflects the recent trend of British sculptors in abstract welded bronze, and Alicia Penalba, from Brazil, the only female in the show, has two cast-bronze abstractions.

Terse Abstractions

Young Eduardo Chillada represents Spain in hard tersé forged-iron abstractions that somehow seem to incorporate the icy feeling of the Basque mountains near which he works. Etienne-Martin from France and Michael Lekakis of New York display abstract fantasies in a variety of woods.

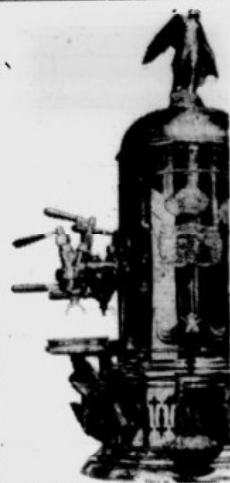
The most original talent of the group is that of Japan's Shindo Tsuji. Two abstractions in terra cotta, amusingly displayed a few inches above the floor in sand traps, synthesize the free forms of Western tradition with an ancient Japanese technique used for funerary urns.

Chillada's drawings, which are like French "correspondences," have tremendous charm, being somewhat more poetic and softer than his forgings. And Miss Penalba's drawings have a delicacy and lightness which is unfortunately missing from her sculpture.

This small show indicates that, even under adverse temporary conditions, James Johnson Sweeney continues to use his fine eye and discover new talents.

—Tustin Rice

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