

# On Stage: Blood Relations

By MICHAEL J. SMALL

As I sat down in preparation for the show, I was impressed at the time apparently spent on constructing the set... It gave one the impression of a pleasant, homy atmosphere, coupled with a rather cold, impersonal contrast. Further, while waiting for the show to begin, the audience listened to some rather anxious, eerie music -- no doubt in order to set the mood for the performance to come.

The play had a strong opening scene, with a drowning heartbeat and rhythmic humming -- a nice touch... Also, I was amazed at how long actors were able to stand motionless when pretending to be pictures during the opening scene. Moving along, I also found the way in which Lizzie Borden's story was presented to be intriguing, the play becoming in essence a play within a play -- the story taking place after the fact, with Lizzie's parents already dead and gone.

I loved the way Lizzie's poor family life was presented to us the audience, who are treated almost as the jury at her trial on several occasions. We see the Mother, a woman who's only ambition seems to be to drive Lizzie out of her father's will... and an uncle who only wants to take advantage of an old man.

I think the actors pre-

formed really well overall, with only a few things I didn't like. For example, they didn't do a great job at accents... sometimes the accent would be there, sometimes not. However, their acting was great. Especially when the Father slams an axe into the table in anger, the same axe used to kill him later on. Further, the role of the lawyer I also rather enjoyed... it was very convincing.

Lizzie's torments were

**L**izzie Borden  
took an axe,  
Gave her mother forty  
whacks.  
When the job was nicely  
done,  
She gave her father  
forty-one.

*...or did she?*

clearly shown to the audience, it was almost as if we were given the chance to observe her slowly loose grip with sanity... Near the end, it's clear Lizzie no longer has any regard for human life, no sense of right or wrong... she now sees people as just animals, no better than the slugs we kill in our gardens. The way the final murder scenes unfold were also really well done,

with really good music, and a nice fade to black when the acts are committed... followed by a return to an eerie green - nice. One final note about the performance, I loved the ending... it leaves the audience still wondering whether or not she actually committed the double murder...

As for the actors themselves, those interviewed, all expressed positive opinions on the play, and their performance on the second showing... The first showing, Paul reasoned, is a nervous performance, one where you don't expect things to run perfectly smooth. Paul also showed an interest in the era of the play, and was intrigued by the story of Lizzie Borden... as for the way the story was presented, he says "Bruce has excellent vision..." Trish, the woman playing Lizzie, felt the performances were especially strong... She says, "We Rocked!!! No better play in the world!!!" Matthew enjoyed playing the part of Andrew (Lizzie's tired old father), he also said he enjoyed the acting experience, getting to know new people, and looked forward to the party.

All in all, it was a great play, one I really enjoyed. I would recommend this play to any who enjoy a good mystery or intrigue story.



## Music Department Recital Series

By CRYSTAL DAWN CROSSAN

As the 1996/97 school year draws to a close, UPEI students are caught up in the rush of term papers, tests and studying for exams. At the Music department, the music students have already begun their recital series. Recitals are being performed for just about every instrument by students who take their music seriously. The entire Music Department is a blur with students racing from class to practice. The halls are filled with music at almost any hour possible... it's recital time once again.

So why should non-music students attend these recitals? Trombonist Jason Giles spoke to me about the value of these performances. "It's exposure for the department... gives the music students a chance to perform in front of their peers... shows the other UPEI students what goes on at the Music Department as well as who is in the department." These recitals can also be used in place of a jury, which is a performer's final exam.

There are still a few recitals left; so, why not take some time out of your work schedule and go over to the Dr. Steel Recital Hall for a recital or two? As Jason says, "It's great entertainment for music students and non-music majors alike."

For a complete schedule of UPEI recitals and performances, please see NOTICES, page 14.



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