

# Camelata spikes performance with pinch of slapstick

By David Zack

Special to the Herald

Camelata came to Calgary and hoped a serious problem when the poet, Kathryn Reed, got sick.

Glenn Swanson, head of a group of five opera singers, joined Camelata singers. Constantino Blomstedt, cello, James Campbell, clarinet, and Mary Lou Felix, soprano, just six hours before the performance, scheduled for 8 p.m. in Mount Royal College's magnificent lecture theatre.

What transpired was rather different from the promised program.

### At a review

Two chamber troupes, Beethoven's Opus 11 and one led by Quiliza were invited by Beethoven. A minor title. And two very technical 19th century Viennese pieces appeared abruptly and ended up emptying the audience.

Appropriately the opera selection was a Romantic piece from Schubert's early opera, "The Comedian", which generous soprano Felix explained is seldom performed because it is so difficult to perform so slowly.

"The Comedian" seemed an appropriate opening as the program developed. There's something very conspiratorial about a hip group of Te-

troupe musicians performing a program which goes beyond being traditional without coming close to being modern. Why did they turn the corner of comedy?

Large Beethoven's Concerto in D major on the same form as the concerto from Verdi's Rigoletto was presented as a contemporary burlesque on the tradition of certain 19th century Viennese concertos to amuse their audiences with exaggerated imitations of Popper and Chopin style flourishes.

However the cello and clarinet carried things one step beyond burlesque by putting on a diatribe in which they pretended not to be impressed by the clarinetist's tricks. They just wanted to upstage him.

Blomstedt, who stretched his cello well out of reach of the action for the most of it out on the piano bench with Swanson, finally, outraged or perhaps inspired by Felix's off the wall singing, the cello got up to sing a bit of an aria himself.

One could not seriously what all this burlesque was about, though some of the audience just grinned at it, and some positively chuckled.

The Camelata troupe fully established their ability to play music seriously before starting to play the book.

who could have called for a simple melody, still full of the backbone of exuberance.

German was 1977. Germain, and what the song Fauri's Chanson d'Amour her French was as it should have been, completely different. Her Schubert songs were pure joy for Fauri Song of Love was impure seduction.

To end the concert Felix indulged herself in a heavy Neris hot sensation arranged to include a very phallic clarinet by Campbell during a New-England hour. The final number, about a girl named Betty who went to church earlier to sing for to be, ended on a blacked end required no encores. The group's point had been made. Anything additional would have been more than superfluous.

As for the Beethoven and Quiliza chamber troupes, they had a job with the two Schubert songs the choice. Ergot, phrasing, superb intonation, without dramatic central-late had all these critical plus- as well as an ability to proceed which is the special- le backbone of exuberance.

traded back and forth between cello and clarinet, masterfully combined by young composer Swanson. The first thing played, the heart of Verdi's opera in a simple melody, still full of the backbone of exuberance. The Clarinet the detour

from the composer's early study of operatic technique. Cello, piano and clarinet song like the voice of young love. Callist Blomstedt's accuracy into David Popper's Huntington Thursday

per's Huntington Thursday deserves more praise than blame. These old concert pieces, which for a time no one ever played on stage, are not even slightly easy to play well.

Blomstedt played his Popper so well everyone was wondering why. Part of the conspiracy, that's why. (Zack is a Calgary free lance writer)

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# ZACK PAPERS <1980>

TRY OZ PRODS  
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## letters unlimited, Calgary CANADA

THERE IS A WAY THINGS ARE DONE ON LARGE SCALE WHICH CHANGES BY LITTLE PRODS. THIS IS REALLY MAINSTREAM SCIENCE FICTION, IS IT NOT+

IT SEEMS NATURAL TO TURN DOWN TIME INTO UP TIME  
WITH ART AND CONVERSATION. THE ART GETS GIVN GIVEN AWAY  
AND COPIED. IT CAN BE DONE QUITE CAREFULLY.

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④ These columns for ART NEWS are in a sense promotion for an art project I did with a group of artists which was called "Not A-t." This is part of global involvement with participatory art.

Time - 1967-69...

FROM EVERY CENTRE  
WE WANDER OUT  
LEARNING  
TO WHISPER  
INSTEAD OF SHOUT.

DOING THE BUSINESS  
THE PLACE CALLS FOR  
LEARNING IT BETTER  
DOING IT MORE..

DAVID ZACK  
12-8-79

## San Francisco

By David Zack

The new Oakland Museum opens in September with a strong California emphasis. There are actually three museums housed in a pleasantly Oriental building near scenic Lake Merritt. The historical and science sections have good art in them. The opening historical exhibition is of California Victorians. In the science wing are tableaux of Indians, looking more alive than most things, even sexy. The science section also focuses on ecology, a subject of some interest to modern artists.

According to Paul Mills, curator, there are 18 outdoor sculpture courts, all green and flowery. One pool has lily-pods, turtles and a great green hippo fountain by ceramic sculptor David Gilhooley.

On the south wall of the art section is a stained glass window by Teleher Benton. Its clear colored vertical bands move patterns which change the perspective of the distant city.

The core of the opening art exhibition is a survey of California art, from an old print of Drake getting crowned by welcoming Indians through the crafty good cheer of Arthur F. Mathew and a solid sampling of Bay Area figure painters of the '60s. I moves into the ethnic with Grafion T. Brown, Serpent John—Charles White, and to the present with Roy De Forest and Ranier.

### Candy Store Phenomenology

It's quite a way from the pebbly concrete slabs of the Oakland Museum to a rustic shack northeast of Sacramento called the Candy Store Gallery. Its summer show has a rare unity of feeling. It illuminates two related trends in Bay Area Art which can be observed fragmented in San Francisco, Los Angeles and New York galleries. For five years Adeliza Mellugh has been showing northern California fantasy painters and funky-numeric sculptors who center on the Davis campus of the University of California. Robert Arneson, professor of ceramics, shows one large flower pot (flowers as well as pot made of lightly glazed clay) and some new tough grey pots, pots like the moon. One has a birth stamped on it: "YES BIRTH BAY TEA IS NATIVE TO NEW SOUTH WALES." Also shown are David Gilhooley's small papier-mâché monkeys and sloths, with their intent expressions people find so funny, and some strange new busts by Clayton Bailey with bright green air-fern hair.

The other wing of the school is headed by another Davis professor, Roy De Forest. He shows six new drawings from his "Kate Van Horne" series. They differ from the artist's earlier work in their direct expression of contrasting mental orientation of a man and a woman. A good deal of erotic content emerges from the figure of a man made of rough red brick tugging on a brick wagon past a horse-loving girl into the spread purple leg of a faceless well-padded mystery woman. With De Forest drawings are colorful works by another phenomenological fantasist: Harold Schlotezhauer exhibits fanstidious pastel cartoon like a child's view of the TV world, where burly comics and int-re pitchmen and all the horrors on the evening news come across as bright harmless dumb teddy bears.

### Core Art

The Albreaux Gallery closed in June after its owner was arrested for exhibiting obscene material. Confiscated were Gerald Gooch's precise drawings of young kids scapulating, Clayton Bailey's ceramic *Salt and Pepper Shakers*, and some of S. Clay Wilson's vigorously drawn comic-book pirates enlarged on nylon. The show was representative of strong trends in Bay Area art, a trial late in the summer didn't monopolize headlines.

## San Francisco

By David Zack

San Francisco's Fine Arts Palace, renovated with cast concrete at cost of \$12 million, has been turned into a unique museum directed by Frank Oppenheimer, brother of physicist J. Robert.

The inside is big enough to hang blimps in; huge canvas topologies of scenes from old Biblical spectacles are always so much in shadow they have the dim mysterious aura of great old art.

First traveling art show there was "Cybernetic Serendipity," a selection of superb technical whimsies that originated at I. C. A. in London a year ago. It includes computer poetry, music and drawings plus a white stool that vibrates when bombarded by cosmic rays, a flash device that imprints a crossed circle on your retina anywhere from five minutes to an hour, a miniature Moog synthesizer people can make their own random music.

Sharing the space with the English show is a constantly changing exhibit organized by the local E. A. T. Large blue column with electric eyes enable spectators to supply music for their ballet; a redone pinball machine offers an unlosable game called M. O. M.; one can sit in a space capsule and see oneself mirror through three types of infinity.

Most of the exhibits are labeled in computer English. So this compact language with the art in the amazingly nutty surroundings, one realizes computers can understand a high order of poetry, whatever they write themselves.

### Nut Art News

Mel Henderson staged his "Yellow Event" last month at 11 A.M. one Wednesday morning. About 2,000 yellow cabs, plus a few yellow trucks, vans, motorcycles, cars, wigs and raincoats assembled at the corner of Castro and Market, right where the street car from State College shoots out of its rustic tunnel. A helicopter hovered and a small plane circled overhead, filled with cameramen. Police and cab supervisors came in force. They laughed as much as anyone, quite a bit. By noon cabs stopped coming, and more than a hundred people were left at the intersection, shouting each other cheerfully with all kinds of movie equipment.

There was a strong show of work by Chicagoans at the Candy Store Gallery in Folsom last month. Joseph Yoakum is sure to develop a reputation as a primitive as fascinating as Edward Hopper, though his subject is different. Yoakum is now 80, a recluse. His drawings are of places he visited in the spirit, such as La Mounds, Nebraska (which has a red white and blue rainbow in it) and Mount Kinakuanui, Hawaii. They are very precisely drawn, mainly in blues, greens and browns, full of trees and tectonic lakes and passages. All the drawings and a few portraits are of the entrance of the Earth Mother's womb. A portrait of Ethel Waters shows her a nice shell-pink.

Yoakum showed with James Nutt and Gladys Nilsson of the Hairy Who gang. They brought his work in the West Coast.

A fine black artist, Casper Banjo, had a neighborly show at church in Oakland last month. Banjo, a student of Gerald L. at Laney College, shows highly personal and poetic multi-media evocations of tribal masks in a strongly contemporary spirit.

Speaking of spirits, that of Dave Gilhooley was in evidence at Sonoma State College last month. Some of the outstanding artist's new work was sent from Regina, Canada, where spending several years. Besides animal pipes, papier-mâché masks and mandrills, and a few domestic pets in clay, there's a large cookie jar depicting intrepid frogs encountering the grey Beings in the course of their exploration of outer space.