



— Margaret Swenseid

Omsk dancers

'Cutest thing I ever saw'

By MARGARET SWENSEID
Cultural Affairs

"It was the cutest thing I ever saw".

"I think it's good relations to have these people here. I fought with the Russians in World War II as an ally and as long as they don't go against me now I'm still with them."

Side bites on the "Siberian dancers and signers of OMSK" at Township Auditorium last Thursday night. The troupe presented a folk spectacular: balalaikas, Russian syllables mashing in throats, arms and legs cracking air; leaping, acrobatic swirls; simulated peasant costumes flashing red, gold, black and gilded patterns.

It could have been a grandiose special on the Ed Sullivan show, or if you'd ever been to Portage, Wisconsin, a drunk Norwegian William Tell Festival.

Mixed into the more "popularized" Russian and American selections - "Bury Me Not on the Lone Prairie,"—were fine and haunting ballads sung by the women's chorus.

One of the show's most striking elements was the faces of the women, etched and moving. As with most American stage productions, people are standardized and regular: perfect features, perfect shapes. The Russian entertainers offered, heaving matrons, dramatic, and genuinely beautiful women.

The rigorous dancing itself with leaps up to five feet, and suspended body swirls and jumps, was staggering.

The last half of the show was the reception in the basement of the auditorium. All the officials, sponsors and sneaking hangers-on played a "Russian hunt," seeking out the probing dancers who were tired and hungry.

Diplomatically, Groucho set up a bar of free deli food "Russian" style: rye bread, muenster and gouda cheese, Michelob beer, pickles. And while eager, coughing Americans settled into their questions and beer, the Russians filled their pockets with pumpernickel and cheese.

USC summer arts closed-1 year early

USC and Sea Pines Plantation Company of Hilton Head Island have discontinued an arrangement which established summer schools of the performing and fine arts on the island. The decision to discontinue the joint operation was made recently, and it will affect the programs anticipated for the summer of 1971.

Both a University spokesman and a Sea Pines Plantation spokesman cited economy reasons for the decision, but the lack of adequate facilities for some phases of the operation was also listed as one of the reasons for the demise of the arts programs.

A spokesman for USC said that Sea Pines Plantation officials made their decision based on certain financial realities and that these considerations happened to be compatible with the University's recently drawn austerity budget.

"In addition to the financial considerations," the spokesman continued, "there was the problem of finding an adequate facility to house the fine arts part of the summer program. The location used by the fine arts people in the past is now being used for local

school purposes, and there were no alternate sites to be considered for this summer of for the immediate future," the spokesman continued.

The performing arts phase of the program, while extremely popular, also has experienced location problems in recent years, the spokesman said. "At one time," he continued, "the shows were staged in a tent which proved to be impractical for a number of reasons. In recent years, the productions have been mounted in the Planters Hall of Hilton Head Inn.

"Despite the cooperation of all concerned on the island," the spokesman continued, "the Inn simply didn't offer the facilities desired or needed. There also was the problem of the slow audience turn-over in and around the Inn which detracted from a repertory theatre operation of the type necessary to make summer academic theatre attractive to the participants."

The spokesman said the music

phase of the operation was discontinued purely for economy reasons.

"We hope we can re-consider Hilton Head Island in the future," the spokesman continued, "particularly when additional facilities have been added to that part of the island where we were operating. Our people and the people of Sea Pines Plantation Company feel it has been a pleasant and worthwhile relationship. We hope the program can be renewed at some future time," he said.

The arrangement between USC and Sea Pines Plantation was to have lasted for five years. It was terminated after four years by mutual consent of both parties.

The USC Theatre Department announced earlier this week its intention not to produce the outdoor drama "The Liberty Tree" in Sesqui State Park near Columbia this summer, citing economic factors as the main reasons for that decision.

Assembly room rules tightened; problems cited

Rules for the Russell House Assembly Room have been tightened because the concession stand, originally established to raise money for the cleaning of the theatre, had to be closed down.

The concession stand violated a University contract with ARA Slater Food Services, therefore it was closed down. And since the closing of the stand, there is no money to pay for cleaning.

Food, drinks and smoking are prohibited in the Assembly Room. Fire laws prohibit smoking and persons sitting in the aisles.

The rules also state that students must have ID cards to enter the theatre. Tickets for registered guests are available.

"When we ask people to obey the rules, they think we're hassling them. We're not," Robert Scott, of the University Union Films Committee, said.

At the theatre

'Super flick'

By JERRY CALABRESE

One could spend a lot of time thinking up superlatives to describe "Five Easy Pieces." All of them would fall short. This is not to say that "Five Easy Pieces" is a super-flick, but it sure comes close.

Jack Nicholson, the third member of the "Easy Rider" crew has come up with the best attempt to finish what "Easy Rider" tried to say.

"Five Easy Pieces" is the story of a guy who is born with a silver spoon in his mouth and keeps choking on it. Of course, this could turn into the typical rich-kid-turned-freak story, but for the most part the film avoids this pit-fall.

I hate to keep referring to "Easy Rider," but there are a great many similarities. "Easy Rider" was the story of three people who wanted no part of the world they were born into. It showed how they attempted to cope with that world, and it showed the end result of their struggle.

What "Easy Rider" failed to show was the world that they were running from. It did not show its good points, and it over played its bad. "Easy Rider" showed the extreme. The extreme fugitives from the normal and the extreme reaction of the group they were running from.

"Five Easy Pieces" goes much further to illustrate the good points of society, and in doing so makes Nicholson's repudiation of that society all the more powerful.

He is not running away from a repressive and crude world that seeks to crush him, instead he is running from a world of beauty and peace, he is running for the sake of running.

"Five Easy Pieces" gives the viewer an excellent look at the not so glamorous aspects of rejection, profound loneliness and lack of purpose.

Unlike "Easy Rider," "Five Easy Pieces" casts no stones at anyone. It neither glorifies the "free" life beyond reality nor chides the orthodox; it is merely a look at the real side of both.

Don't miss "Five Easy Pieces." It may be a long time before you get a chance to see another film of this quality.

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