

Band lacks own style

By GEORGE OSGOOD
Collegian Arts Writer
"Two for the Show" — Trooper; Legend; MCA2214

Until this album came in the mail, I had never heard Trooper. After listening to them play, I realized that I hadn't been missing a thing.

It's not that "Two for the Show" is totally bad; it's just that it really isn't much good at all. It's the kind of album that should be played before a concert while the audience is filling the auditorium; it's nondescript and would certainly make the concert-goer appreciate what follows. Even Bobby Sherman.

record review

It turns out that Trooper is a Canadian group out of Vancouver. They're produced by Randy Bachman of Bachman-Turner Overdrive, but even he can't get blood from a stone.

The title cut, the first song on the album, is not too bad. Bachman plays the lead guitar line and his efforts save the song from total oblivion. Drums are purely Ringo Starr, plunk-plunk, blam-blam stuff. The tune is catchy, though, and Bachman's riffs come through sweet and clear. "Two for the Show" provides a faint glimmer of light on an otherwise dismal album.

The group seems captivated by the lyrics of each song. They must be, because, on every song, each line is repeated at least twice. On two songs, each line is repeated four times. If the lyrics were excellent, this would only be very dangerous, but with lyrics like these (from "Loretta")

She's got a phoney I.D. but it's plain to see

She's not quite 17 goin' on 23

The boys at her school all leave her alone

'Cause a night with Loretta means you won't make it home.

It's quickly and unconditionally fatal, especially when you realize the band is playing it for straight.

At least, I think they're playing it straight. I was given some doubts, though, by "Santa Maria," a fairly smooth rocker with a "Ride, Captain, Ride" theme and melody line. Unfortunately, the song's setting is a sardine boat, which somehow destroys the mood.

The album is full of James Gang and Grand Funk riffs that haven't been heard in America in four or five years. Maybe they're big in Canada in 1976. "Ready," a Doobie Brothers imitation, comes off pretty well, with decent congas from Barry Keene and a good keyboard lead by Frank Ludwig that is reminiscent of ZLP's "Nutrocker."

New York actors fill champion roles in Playhouse production

By BARBARA COIT
Collegian Arts Writer

New York actors are enigmas, particularly to those of us who freak out at the complexity of Big Apple life. The thought of interviewing two of those enigmas can be chilling for a reporter.

Fortunately, the thaw was fast. T. Richard Mason and Richard Greene are humans, made from the same stuff as a Penn State student. The difference is not that they are necessarily more sophisticated, but that for the next two weeks Mason and Greene will be two characters in Jason Miller's award-winning play, "That Championship Season." The play opens Thursday at the Playhouse, the final production of the Festival of American Theatre.

The plot centers on five has-beens who relive the only triumph of their lives: a

basketball game. No matter that it was a championship 20 years ago; the characters live it as though it were yesterday. Mason plays Tom Daley, an alcoholic degenerate who travels from one city to another, ending up in hospitals and skids. His brother, James, played by Greene, picks Tom up, dries him out and sends him off clean. This loyalty is impressive, if not fanatical.

In order to play the part of the alcoholic brother, Mason spent two weeks in New York's Bowery. Mason says he also draws on his Irish heritage: a "long line of drinkers."

James is not so typical a character. "There is a James in every man," Greene says. "An actor draws on his complications — on his possibilities. I understand James' desperation."

For both men, acting is a highly personal thing.

Green says, "Actors are not usually articulate." In trying to explain how he gets into his characters, Mason says, "Actors who are articulate are usually bad."

Neither of those premises seems true for Mason or for Greene.

Acting for them runs the gamut from Shakespeare to soap opera. "Range," Greene says, "is a challenge. You are your own instrument. When you become proficient at something, go on to another."

"That Championship Season," according to Greene and Mason, is an "actor's dream." Mason says it is Chekhovian because all the characters are interdependent. It requires a good team performance, Greene says. If one character loses concentration, it is everyone's loss.

There are cannibal roles, like Othello, Hamlet and Lear, that can consume an

actor; Green says, paraphrasing Sir Lawrence Olivier. "Championship Season" is similar. "It's a total experience," Greene says. "We are all drained."

Green's and Olivier's notion about Shakespearean roles is that the roles must consume the actor because the actor can never be as strong as they are. "You learn humility by playing those roles."

Green trained for acting at Wayne State University. It was a rigorous experience. If he got more than four hours sleep a night, he was lucky, Greene says. "It was wonderful training," he adds.

Mason grew up in New York City near a family "full of creative energy." One of the children, in fact, became a concert pianist. Mason says he wanted "to be connected to a creative process."

That connection was acting. He first studied acting at a school in Maine. After three years, the school was axed and he headed back to New York, where he studied at the H.B. Studio.

H.B. is for Herbert Bergoff, an influential acting teacher. Later he studied with Uta Hagen. Mime, dance, voice, speech and Shakespeare, of course, were all part of his learning process.

Both men act not only in New York but also in the "provincial theatre," including Penn State's Festival Theatre. The drama in provincial theatres is a strong force in American theatre.

"There's not a lot of opportunity in New York," Greene says. "Over-commercialization has consumed any room for mistakes and sticking your head out," Mason says.

"There are a lot of pimps in this business," Greene said, referring to New York. "You have to learn to get around them."

Actors must also learn to get around other obstacles, such as type-casting. Greene says Hollywood is the purveyor of the myth: "he makes good faces. It's cheap and external," adds Mason. Both men feel that the casting of actors solely on the basis of looks is a perversion. "He makes faces," is a standard joke among actors. Charles Bronson fits the mold perfectly. One person who has started a new movement and broken the mold is Dustin Hoffman. Hoffman can be anything, from the Little Big Man to Benjamin the graduate. "Bronson will always play Bronson," Green says.

Collegian arts

New Beatles album could be comeback

By MARGARET HERRING
Collegian Arts Writer

With the Beatles' new album, "Rock and Roll Music," on the market, their single, "Got to Get You into My Life," a current hit and sporadic talk of their regrouping in the news, the question is who is interested in the Beatles?

Sales of Beatle's albums in State College haven't fluctuated much since 1970, the year the group disbanded. Capitol Records, however, is currently trying to promote more sales. The company recently gave The Record Ranch a mirror decorated with the picture from the "Rubber Soul" album cover, for which 600 persons registered to win. According to The Record Ranch, Capitol is making Beatle records available at a good price. Although the company may not be seriously promoting a Beatles comeback, according to The Record Ranch, they are nevertheless making a good profit by re-releasing old material.

In England, many of the singles from Capitol's "Rock and Roll Music" are reaching the top 20. Most of the hit songs are the old material which created "Beatlemania," music with no message save "good time rock and roll."

Super Max of WRSC feels that the Beatles are not making a comeback but their music is. Their early music, which appealed to 13-year-olds in 1963, no longer appeals to the 26-year-old of 1976.

"There's a whole new batch of 13-year-olds who still don't know who the Beatles are, were ... except as oldies," says Super Max. "All these poor 13-year-olds don't know that this brand-new group has been around for 13 years."

Requests at WRSC usually come from college students and housewives who still remember the Beatles when they were together. The younger kids are not requesting any Beatles music. "Most people who call on the Hitline ask for the later stuff, pre-'Abbey Road,' but post-'Sergeant Pepper.'" I've never had anyone call me up and ask for 'I Wanna Hold Your Hand' — ever," Super Max says.

Will the Beatles regroup? Probably not is the general opinion. But their music will remain. As teens grow out of the rock-and-roll style of early Beatles music and into other areas, new 13-year-olds will just be discovering them. Of the Beatles' music, the post-"Sergeant Pepper" material will probably survive as reminiscent of the 60's and as a tribute to the multiple talents of John, Paul, Ringo and George.

Backstage preview set

A Behind-the-Scenes look at "That Championship Season" will be held at 3 p.m. Friday in the Playhouse. Free tickets are available at the Playhouse box office and at the University Auditorium box office.

night in 211 Eisenhower Chapel.

A special student preview of "That Championship Season" is scheduled for 8 tonight in the Playhouse. Tickets for \$1 go on sale at 10 this morning at the Playhouse box office.

The Free U class on sexist ideologies will discuss "Women and Psychology" at 7 tonight in 211 Eisenhower Chapel.

Collegian notes

The U.S.G. gayline will be open from 7 to 11 p.m. tomorrow and Friday. For information, call 863-0588.

The Metropolitan Community Church will hold a Bible study at 8 tomorrow

Homophiles of Penn State will hold a general meeting at 8 tonight in 365 Willard.

Festival of American Theatre

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