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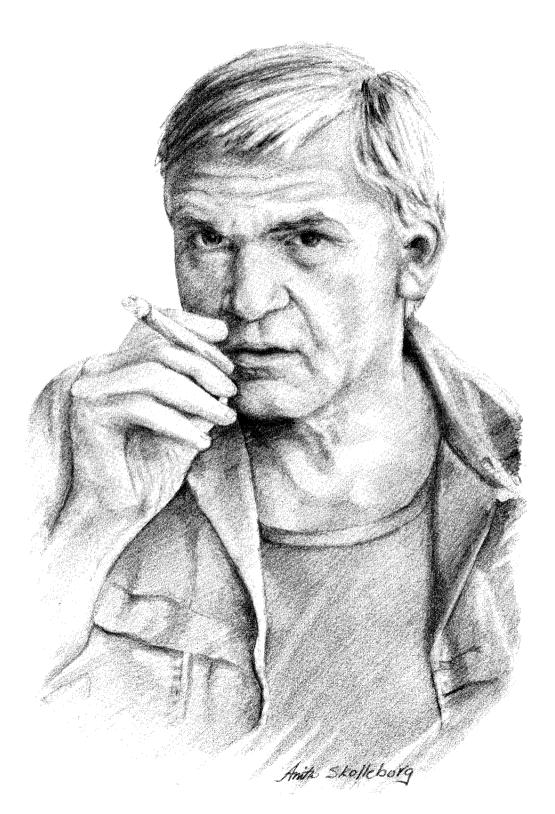
Jacques and his Master

By Milan Kundera

Directed By Charles Siegel

November 16-26 1988

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Milan Kundera The Lightness of Writing

Beauty

Beauty, the last triumph possible for man who can no longer hope. Beauty in art: the suddenly kindled light of the never-before-said. This light that radiates from the great novels time can never dim, for human existence is perpetually being forgotten by man, and thus the novelists' discoveries, however old they may be, will never cease to astonish us.

Border

It takes so little, so infinitely little, for a person to cross the border beyond which everything loses meaning: love, convictions, faith, history. Human life - and herein lies its secret - takes place in the immediate proximity of that border, even in direct contact with it; it is not miles away, but a fraction of an inch.

Comic

By providing us with the lovely illusion of human greatness, the tragic brings us consolation. The comic is crueler: it brutally reveals the meaninglessness of everything. I suppose all things human have their comic aspect, which in certain cases is recognized, acknowledged, utilized, and in others is veiled. The real geniuses of the comic are not those who make us laugh hardest but those who reveal some *unknown realm of the comic*. History has always been considered an exclusively serious territory. But there is the undiscovered comic side to history. Just as there is the (hard-to-take) comic side to sexuality.

Misomusist

To be without a feeling for art is no disaster. A person can live in peace without reading Proust or listening to Schubert. But the misomusist does not live in peace. He feels humiliated by the existence of something that is beyond him, and he hates it. There is a popular misomusy just as there is popular anti-Semitism. The fascist and Communist regimes made use of it when they declared war on modern art. But there is an intellectual, sophisticated misomusy as well: it takes revenge on art by forcing it to a purpose beyond the aesthetic. The doctrine of engagé art: art as an instrument of politics. The professors for whom a work of art is merely the pretext for deploying a method (psychoanalytic, semiological, sociological, etc.). The apocalypse of art: the misomusists will themselves take on the making of art; thus will their historic vengeance be done.

Wisdom

There is a fine Jewish proverb: Man thinks, God laughs. Inspired by that adage, I like to imagine that François Rabelais heard God's laughter one day, and thus was born the idea of the first great European novel. It pleases me to think that the art of the novel came into the world as the echo of God's Laughter.

But why does God laugh at the sight of man thinking? Because man thinks and the truth escapes him. Because the more men think, the more one man's thought diverges from another's. And finally, because man is never what he thinks he is. The dawn of the Modern Era revealed this fundamental situation of man as he emerged from the Middle Ages: Don Quixote thinks, Sancho thinks, and not only the world's truth but also the truth of their own selves slips away from them. The first European novelists saw, and grasped, that new situation of man, and on it they built the new art, the art of the novel.

The Art of the Novel

Of all the novels of the 18th century, it is Laurence Sterne's Tristram Shandy I love best. A curious novel. Sterne starts it by describing the night when Tristram was conceived, but he has barely begun to talk about that when another idea suddenly attracts him, and by free association that idea spurs him to some other thought, then a further anecdote, with one digression leading to another - and Tristram, the book's hero, is forgotten for a good hundred pages. This extravagant way of composing the novel might seem no more than a formal game. But in art, the form is always more than a form. Every novel, like it or not, offers some answer to the question: What is human existence, and wherein does its poetry lie? Sterne's contemporaries - Fielding, for instance - particularly savored the extraordinary charm of action and adventure. The answer we sense in Sterne's novel is a very different one: for him the poetry lies not in the action but in the interruption of the action.

It may be that, indirectly, a grand dialogue took shape here between the novel and philosophy. Eighteenth-century rationalism is based on Leibniz's famous declaration: *Nihil est sine ratione* - there is nothing without its reason. Stimulated by that conviction, science energetically explores the *why* of everything, such that whatever exists seems explainable, thus predictable, calculable. The man who wants his life to have a meaning forgoes any action that hasn't its cause and its purpose. All biographies are written this way.

Against that reduction of the world to the casual succession of events, Sterne's novel, by its very form, affirms that poetry lies not in action but there where action stops; there where the bridge between a cause and an effect has collapsed and thought wanders off in sweet lazy liberty. The poetry of existence, says Sterne's novel, is in digression. It is in the incalculable. It is on the other side of causality. It is *sine ratione*, without reason. It is on the other side of Leibniz's statement.

Valet and Master

With an illiterate peasant as his servant, Don Quixote left his house one day to do battle with his enemies. One hundred and fifty years later, Toby Shandy made his garden into a large model of a battlefield; there he gave himself over to memories of his soldierly youth, faithfully assisted by his valet Trim. He limped, just like Jacques who, ten years later, entertained his master during his voyage. He was as chatty and opinionated as, a hundred and fifty years later in the Austro-Hungarian army, the orderly Josef Svetjk, who so amused and horrified his master, Lieutenant Lukac. Thirty years later, waiting for Godot, Vladimir and his servant already find themselves alone on the empty stage of the world. The voyage is at an end.

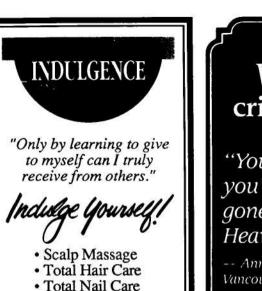
The valet and his master have crossed the whole of modern Western history. In Prague, a city of the big farewell, I heard their dwindling laughter. With love and anguish, I held on to that laughter the way one holds on to fragile and perishable things which are doomed.

Idyll

A word rarely used in France, but a concept important to Hegel, Goethe, Schiller: the condition of the world before the first conflict; or beyond conflicts; or with conflicts that are only misunderstandings, thus false conflicts. "Even though he enjoyed a colourful erotic life, the middle-aged man was basicly of an idyllic temperament..." (Life Is Elsewhere). The desire to reconcile erotic adventure and idyll is the very essence of hedonism - and the reason why it is impossible.

Selections from *The Art of the Novel* by Milan Kundera, translated from the French by Linda Asher. ©1988 Grove Press, Inc.

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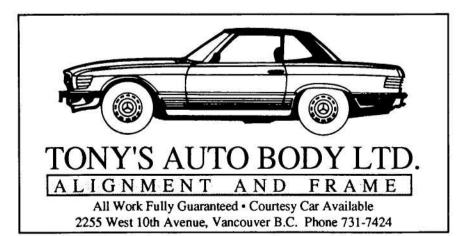
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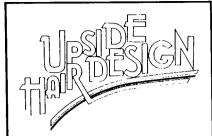
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-Jacques and his Master-

An Homage to Diderot in Three Acts

Directed By Charles Siegel

By Milan Kundera

PRODUCTION

Set Design and Lighting Design By Robert Gardiner CAST	Technical Director
(in order of appearance)	Costume Cutter (Ladies) Jean Driscoll-Bell Costume Cutter (Gentlemen) Leslie White
Master Roland Brand	Wigs Terry Kuzyk
Jacques Jamie Binkley	Stage Manager
Chevalier de Saint-Ouen	Wardrobe Mistress Catherine King
AgatheSuzanne Buchan-Grieder	Costume AssistantsJill Buckham, Catherine King Douglas Falbo, Bill Rasmussen
Justine Susan Bertoia	Lighting Operator
Young Bugger	Assistant Lighting Designer
Old Bugger Denis Johnston	Assistant to the Director LaVonne Girard Properties Assistant Corin Gutteridge
Innkeeper Lisa Beley	Scene Painters
Marquis des Arcis Jason Smith	Make Up Nick Davis Crew Amethyst First Rider, Lilli Wong
Mother/Agathe's Mother Eliza Green-Moncur	
Daughter	Scenic Artist David Roberts
Police Officer/Waiter/Peasant	Box Office
Agathe's Father/Waiter/Peasant	Production Robert Eberle
Bailiff/WaiterOmar Diaz	Acknowledgements
There will be two 10 minute intermissions.	Vancouver Playhouse
Jacques and his Master	Dr. Marketa Goetz-Stankiewicz
is produced by special arrangement with	Dr. Ann Scott Les Ferch
Elisabeth Marton - Tonda Marton 96 Fifth Ave. New York, N.Y. 10011	Charles Tremewen

An Historical Perspective

Czechoslovakia 1968: The Theatrical and Literary Scene.

Václav Havel's bitingly funny play The Memorandum is running at the Theatre On the Balustrade in Prague; Josef Topol's psychological chamber play An Hour of Love has its premiere near by at the Theatre Behind the Gate; Milan Uhde's farce about kings as asses and asses as kings is making headlines in Brno; Pavel Kohout's circus play about a tragic clown August, August, August draws crowds to Prague's Vinohrady Theatre; Ivan Klima's Kafka play The Castle is being translated for performance in Germany; Pavel Landovský's existentialist farce Rooms by the Hour is being rehearsed at the Drama Club Theatre in Prague; Peter Karvaš's Stoppardian play The Great Wig has had a long run at the Bratislava National Theatre; Alena Vostra's haunting On the Knife's Edge is reviewed enthusiastically in Prague Theatre journals; Josef Škvorecký, the well-known novelist, is translating and editing Hemingway and Faulkner; the writer Jiří Gruša is editor of the weekly New Books; Milan Šimečka teaches philosophy at Comenius University in Bratislava; Milan Kundera, writer and professor at the academy of Arts in Prague, lectures to eager students about the problems and potential of literature.

End of haphazard list of cultural activities which, if exhaustive, would fill many pages.

Czechoslovakia 1988: The Changed Scene.

Seven of the above writers are still living at their home. The rest have emigrated and are scattered in Austria, Germany, France and Canada. The former, however, are not found in any official collection of contemporary Czechoslovak literature; nor would a literary tourist be able to see their plays on a Prague stage or discover their works when browsing in one of the many bookstores in Prague. These writers have become non-writers and their works lead a shady existence in their home country, circulating underground as "unbooks" in typescript, typed by anonymous loyal

hands and read eagerly in faded sixth or eighth carbon copies. They are keeping alive a throbbing culture that has not been able to speak its mind in broad daylight because literature becomes a dangerous and subversive weapon when a regime wants to impose a closed system of absolute power.

For the Czechs, known for their deadpan humour and their understated ironic view of the world, this situation has the definite air of the déjà vu about it. After all, they have become used to censorship in various hues. Lodged at the very centre of Europe, the coveted lands of Bohemia and Moravia mostly had someone else run their country: the Austrians during the days of the Habsburg Empire, the National Socialists during Hitler's occupation, a Sovietoriented government after 1948 until the political thaw of the midsixties, and then again after the Soviet tanks rolled into Prague in August 1968. In various degrees of intensity, Czech culture has repeatedly been driven into sharply watched hiding, into an intensely active ghetto existence where books are concealed in the most unlikely places, carried around in briefcases as valuable but dangerous cargo, avidly discussed, interpreted and analyzed behind the thick closed doors of an apartment or under the benevolently silent trees surrounding a country cottage. It is an odd mixture of sadness and elation that arises when one realizes (and there exists numerous volumes in many languages that illustrate this situation) that samizdat literary culture in Czechoslovakia has been blossoming in a somehow miraculous way, nourished by the talents and intense dedication of writers and readers for whom literature still represents the voice of truth.

There exists, of course, also an official literature and the theatres (some thirty of them in Prague alone) are playing nightly to well-attended houses. But the best of the national literature - best because it speaks of things that cannot be contained in a prescriptive system has been silenced. It remains to be seen what the vast and unpredictable changes of the present will bring.

The View from the West - The International Scene.

What the Western world knows about this is necessarily fragmentary. Translations of samizdat texts appear here and there, and snatches of writings of genius pop up arbitrarily in the vast and overcrowded areas of international literary markets. Like corks they bob on the surface, carried along on the waves of changing interests, seemingly homeless, yet closely tied to a submerged net in unplumbed depths. These literary corks pop up in bookform in translations, from Swedish to Hebrew, from French to Chinese; or else in international journals, on Swiss television, Norwegian radio, British theatre stages, Canadian publications of poetry in translation. Moreover several of the writers mentioned above have become wellknown literary figures: Václav Havel's plays and essays have been translated into two dozen languages and his Faustian play Temptation was performed by the Royal Shakespeare Company in Britain. Josef Škvorecký, a Czech-Canadian writer now, is read in various languages throughout the Western world. Jiří Gruša's novel The Questionnaire has become a text on the curriculum of North American universities. But it is Milan Kundera who has become one of the foremost figures in contemporary literature. In fact, his novel The Unbearable Lightness of Being has become an international bestseller of unmatched proportions. What is the reason for his vast success? Is it his particular sense for the possibilities of the novel, as he says himself? Is it his ability to merge a philosophical stance and political, indeed documentary, aspects with erotic content? Is it the fact that a troubled Central Europe has found an eloquent, if disturbing spokesman in Kundera? Or is it that his cerebral style and the classical clarity of his language are easier to translate than the linguistic playfulness typical of other Slavic writers? These questions may have to remain open; perhaps they are indeed mute questions. One point, however, can be claimed: the writers of a small nation in the eye of various political hurricanes have found a chorus of voices the sound of which carries far beyond their geographical border.

Marketa Goetz-Stankiewicz

Marketa Goetz-Stankiewicz is a professor of Germanic Studies and Comparative Literature at UBC

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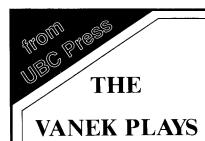
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The Art of the Novel by Milan Kundera, translated from the French by Linda Asher. ©1988 Grove Press, Inc., New York, N.Y.

The Art of the Novel is distributed in Canada by General Publishing and is available at the UBC Bookstore.

A Note On University Productions Inc.

For six years University Productions Inc. has endeavored to produce quality publications for individual authors, private companies, arts organizations as well as educational institutions including high schools and universities.

Our production of the Frederic Wood Theatre magazine was our first endeavor into the publishing arena. Over 2,000,000 pages later we feel we are finally achieving what we set out to do in 1983: The consistent publication of a 'magazine' that serves as a welcomed source of information for the theatre audience.

While serving the theatre audience, this publication, this 'second stage', also provides an important vehicle for authors and visual artists, individuals who are instrumental in the theatrical process but seldom have their work presented directly to the theatre audience. Many visual artists including Karsh, Brian Jackson, Robert Gardiner, Mara Gottler, Steve Hynes and Anita Skolleborg have contributed to make the publication more attractive. Writers such as Marketa Goetz-Stankiewicz, Jerry Wasserman, and Dominique Baudouin have endeavored to make it more interesting.

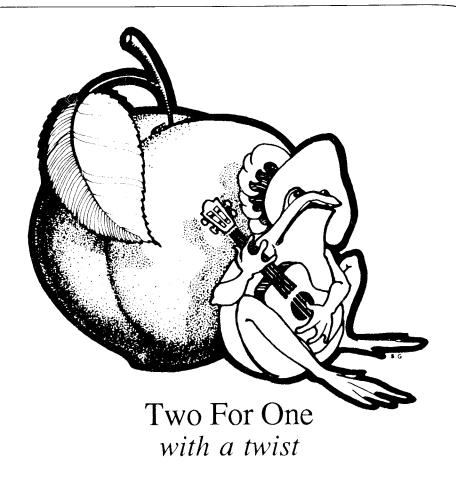
The private sector, through our advertising agent Doug Henderson, has also played an important role in making the publication a financial possibility. Consistent advertisers such as the Frog and Peach Restaurant, Video Matica, Panache and the Punjab Restaurant demonstrate in a practical way how free-enterprise can work with the academic and artistic community.

On-campus businesses such as UBC Media Services and the UBC Bookstore also support the publication and thus bolster an intra-university cooperation that benefits all parties involved.

I want to thank all these and others who have contributed, and continue to do so, and thus make the Frederic Wood Theatre Magazine a worthwhile endeavor. We welcome your comments on our publication and would be happy to answer any enquiries regarding advertising and other publishing projects.

J.G.M.

Please direct all enquiries to: Joseph G. MacKinnon, Publisher C/O University Productions Inc. P.O. Box 46408 Station G Vancouver, B.C. V6R 4G7 Phone: (604) 732-7708



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James Barber said recently:

Character is more important than theme, and developing it takes time, patience and a special ability to out-bluff the bank manager. Good, comfortable, character restaurants, which offer honest eccentricities instead of waiters in sailor suits, are hard to find, and known generally only to a few similarly eccentric, demanding clients. They don't get much publicity because they can't afford it, and there are too many new theme restaurants churning out press releases.

Jack Moore observes:

If you have never been there, The Frog and Peach is a Tenth Avenue treasure of a place where for years an eccentric man named Diederik Wolsak has been allowing his more talented customers to do drawings of frogs (and peaches) on napkins, which are then framed and become a large part of the decor.

In James Barber's *Best Eating In Vancouver*, two restaurants were rated the best Continental Restaurants in Vancouver: The Frog and Peach and The Restaurant at Pacific 819. A few weeks ago Baz Lee of '819' sold his establishment and joined forces with The Frog and Peach.

Jack Moore writes:

He is like Diederik, one of the very best red-hot restaurant guys in the city. To say these two will likely do something interesting at The Frog and Peach is to underestimate the situation completely. Neither of these guys is capable of letting any restaurant become stale or humdrum, and both of them in the same place constitutes a sort of creative hive. So there is more to come out of this.

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Jack Moore Concludes:

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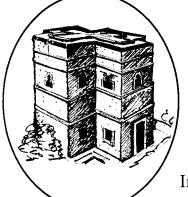
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