

Theater Group Presents Equus

Beth Russo

On October 20, 21, and 22, St. Andrews Department of Theatre presented *Equus*, written by Peter Shaffer. *Equus* won the Tony Award for Best Play of the Year in 1975. Allen Strang, the lead character, was portrayed wonderfully by Matt Sutherland. Allen is a disturbed young man, who feels that the piercing stares of horses mocks a moment of impotency. As a result, he blinds six horses. Charles Mann played Dr. Dysart, a psychiatrist with passion and intensity. Sutherland and Mann worked well together in portraying the tormented youth and the

confused psychiatrist. Other important characters were Alan's father and mother, played by Hamilton Goodman and Ingrid

Sholz, and Jill, a girl who gets involved with Alan, portrayed by Mary Catherine Gibson. The climax of the play was the scene where Alan, under hypnosis, reenacts his crime.

The audience was left feeling drained, after Alan slashes at the horses, with the rest of the cast chanting "Equus." The curtain call was well received, and rightfully so, because this was a thoroughly enjoyable production.

Hiroaki Sato

**That First Time:
Renga on Love and
Other Poems**

Pam Whitfield

Just what is a renga? Sato has his own definition which, incidentally, is a renga itself.

"Tilted and distracted, I decided to compose a renga — the renga being the poetic form best suited to someone who can't concentrate."

Sato has even included a guide to composing this "poetry made lazy," notes on renga and on writing renga in English, at the end of his book. Sato seems to beat Walt Whitman at his own game, the expression of individuality, for what better way to do this than through sexuality?

The sensual undercurrents in the early poems give way to sexual overtones in the group of renga sequences. Sato is a man who has loved, lusted, and lost, and doesn't mind telling about it. He shares short, intimate moments such as this verse from "Three Pieces For Nancy":

*When Nancy matutinally bends forward
for underwear her whole being blooms
into a perfect globe, an arse smiling.*

Sato tends to be both reverent to life and irreverent toward society's conventions.

His tongue-in-cheek descriptions of the more mundane show him laughing at himself, his friends, and people in general. He even manages to ask some very important questions like, "Why in porn is the director the husband of the female lead?"

But Sato is serious about his subjects. One especially haunting poem, "Grandfather," describes a rice paddy village wrestler who's final round was fought against cancer.

Sato's poems will be remembered not so much for their clever use of language as for their ability to touch a chord in the human heart, one which resounds with the affirmation of "this is who I am." Published by the St. Andrews Press at a list price of \$14.00, *That First Time* is available to students and staff at a 30% discount and may be purchased from Lea Howard, ASC, or Lisa Gaw, Fortner Room. to students and staff at a 30% discount and may be purchased from Lea Howard, ASC, or Lisa Gaw, Fortner Room.

Reviews



Frank Strang (Hamilton Goodman) scorns the young horseman (Mark Simmerman) during the rehearsal of St. Andrews' production of *Equus*.

**Desmond Egan Terre Et
Paix, Poemes d'Irlande
Presses Universitaires de
Lille**

Tanya Olson

Desmond Egan, the Irish poet who will be here at St. Andrews next year (89) for the Ezra Pound night at Writers' Forum, has a new selection of poetry out entitled *Terre Et Paix, Poemes d'Irlande*. *Terre Et Paix* is a selection of Egan's poetry from 1972 to the present, but it manages to present these old poems in a new light, mainly by juxtaposing side by side the English and French texts. Whether the reader knows any French beyond "croissant" matters not, for the French translations serve to bring out the strongest points of Egan's writing, especially his sense of musical and rhythmic ability. This rhythm is present in the English texts also, but reading without comprehension in French brings out the true musical quality of the poetry, especially in the selections from *Athlone?* and *Seeing Double*.

This lyrical ability sometimes makes Egan strikingly reminiscent of Ezra Pound in several places. Despite the fact that Egan writes several poems about Pound ("Late But! One For Ezra") and notes him as an influence, it would be unfair to both to call Egan the Irish Pound. One influence that Egan and Pound both share is the Japanese *Noh* and haiku, a fact especially apparent in the poems from Egan's early years, such as the selections from *Leaves*.

Egan is most delightful though when writing about the tales of an Ireland past

and the troubles of present Ireland. When writing about the past ("The Pursuit of Diarmaid and Grainne," "Three Songs From 'The Story of Oisín'"), Egan is at his most musical as one can practically hear *The Chieftans*, *The Dubliners*, or even the Edge playing an Irish tune behind the words.

When writing about the future of Ireland, Egan is at his most poignant, most notably in "Young, Gifted and Unemployed," arguably the best poem in the whole series and one which discusses the problem Irish youth face in finding work in their own country. The only real disappointment with this selection of poems is that it is not a collection, although Egan has one of those out also, as several favorite poems are missing (the rest of "Poems for Northern Ireland," "New Symbolists," Irish translations, and

"Pound's Castle"). It is difficult to get too much of Desmond Egan, who at his best is an Irish poet successfully carrying all the luggage that tradition implies, but is still able to step away from all that and still be magnificent.

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