

ENTERTAINMENT



Monahan's Dinner Theatre presents Mummy's Curse

By RANDY BANDEROB

OAKVILLE — So there I was, dressed to the nines as I entered Monahan's Dinner Theatre to review The Return Of The Curse Of The Mummy's Revenge.

Although the appetizing aroma of food hung in the air, I quickly quelled my grumbling stomach as I realized I had been conveniently invited after dinner had been served.

Nevertheless I politely followed the hostess to my table situated behind a pillar. Looking around I could see the theatre was almost sold out, and the sixty-odd customers were almost as eager for the show to start as were the performers who could be seen periodically peeking from behind scenery.

At precisely 9 p.m. the lights dimmed and I heard the distinct sound of coughing. Looking around the pillar I saw a group of ladies seated next to the stage using their programs to fan billowing artificial smoke from their faces. But the smog was forgotten the moment Sadista (Jennifer Burke), the Egyptian priestess stepped on stage.

Dressed in an elaborate witch doctor costume, Burke captured the audience with her energy and exuberance as she gave the prologue to the play. She told of the ancient tragic love story of Ankara (Jennifer Ussher) and Kharum (Rothaford Gray) who were sealed in a tomb together 4,000 years ago.

Gray, clad only in a turban and a loincloth, drew many stares from women in the audience who resisted the urge to stuff tens and twenties into his diapers. Beside playing Kharum, Gray also took the roles of the hotel manager, Millhouse the baggage man, and the mummy.

His Stevie Wonder impersonation and comical facial expressions made him a constant source of mirth and an audience favorite.

The show itself is a spoof on all the adventure movies that have flooded the film market over the past few years. We have the three stereotypical male roles; Jeff Slancer (Michael Harvey), the rugged American guide; Finklestien (Bruce Baggett), the German archaeologist, and Billings (James Wood), the British James Bond-type agent.

This unlikely trio of bungling heroes were joined by Slancer's ditzzy girlfriend Susan Warner (Kim Marshall) and Finklestien's reserved daughter Andrea (Jennifer Ussher).

Together, the cast quickly moves through a humorous script which kept everyone chuckling. Between laughs we were treated to some beautifully performed songs, especially by Miss Ussher, whose voice seemed to capture the audience.

My special commendation goes out to the underdogs of the Music Theatre Dept., the theatre production crew. Converting Monahan's stage to a Mombassan hotel, to an African jungle, to an ancient crypt, and back again, couldn't have been an easy task but the props had been cleverly designed for versatility.

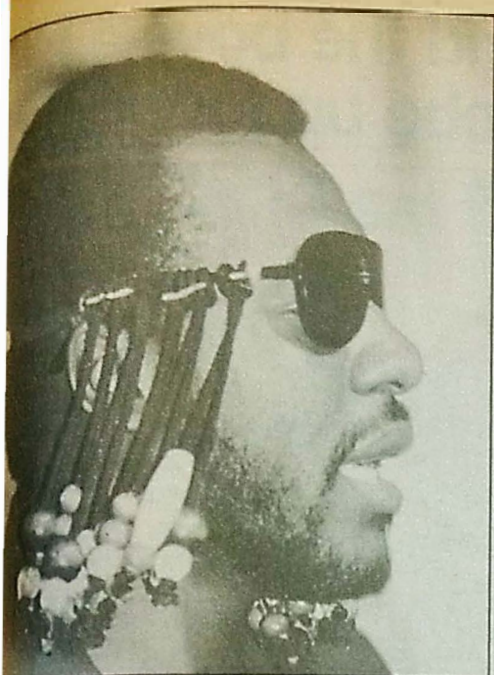
The amount of detail on the set was also impressive, from the cave's rock wall down to the likeness of the sarcophagus, to Andrea's face.

Hats off to the tech crew!

Although I had expected to enjoy myself at Monahan's Dinner Theatre, I hadn't expected the professional quality I witnessed. For \$23.95 a shot, one can combine a fantastic show with what I can only assume was a fine dinner and experience a pleasurable evening.

The Return Of The Curse Of The Mummy's Revenge runs until February 6. Sheridan's next project, Crimes Of The Heart opens on February 12 at Monahan's.

Photos by PAT TURENNE



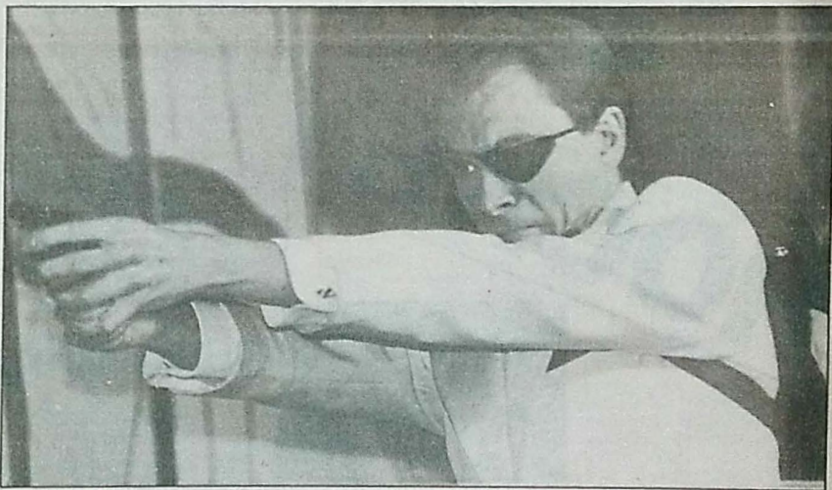
Rothaford Gray delights the audience with his Stevie Wonder impersonation.



Jennifer Burke as Sadista, the evil Egyptian priestess.



The mummy claims Kim Marshall as his second victim.



James Wood portrays Billings, the British secret agent.



Rothaford Gray as the mummy.