## Sad opening at Stratford

Southam News

STRATFORD, Ont. - Is the Stratford Festival afflicted with a death

Having already admitted that it's in a mess financially, it now seems intent to prove that it's in a mess artistically.

Moliere's The Misanthrope, which landed soggily on the boards of the Festival Theatre Monday night, is a sad and leaky launching for the 1981 Stratford season.

The most charitable thing that can be said is that it suffers gravely from delusions of adequacy - unless, of course, it is the intention of new Stratford management that the ideal classical theatre should reject flesh and blood in favor of the odor of moth balls and de-

This production is a disgrace to virtually everyone connected with it - including a lot of people who should know better. One of the latter is its director, Jean Gascon, who made an inglorious return after seven years to the theatre he once

no PLAYBOY

performance of his Strat-ford career in the title role

signment it is to portray the character in despair with his society, tends mainly to behave like an actor in despair with this actor in despair with this production. His major demay result by blaming all vice is his grimacing mannerisms; it's all rather like a bargainbasement Malvolio, the character whom, incidentally, Bedford has played with distinction on two previous Stratford out-

The Misanthrope is supposed to be a blockbuster productions and also the potential salvation of a season which is currently \$1 million down in its advance sales from the same period a year ago. The season is opening in the wake of public forecasts by incoming artistic di-rector John Hirsch of a possible \$2 million deficit by the fall.

The depressiong calibre

STARTS 7 P.M

BIKINI BANDITS

OVE ON

Shows 7:00

Warning: Completely concerned with sex. B.C.

C HISTINGTIO

No admittance to persons under 18

JAMES BROLIN ANTHONY QUINN · LINDSAY WAGNER

Warning: Some coarse language and swearing,

occasional violence. B.C. Director

Here's to Our friends.

arning: Occasiona suggestive scenes. B.C. Dir

OCEON CINEMAS (MATURE) Shows: 7:10

odeon cinema 1

R.P. THEATRE

Some members of the ago. new Stratford hierarchy their troubles on the controversy over the Festival's artistic succession which rocked Stratford last winter and to make much of the limited time they have had to assemble a season.

The problems have cer tainly be real ones but they can't take the new Festival leadership com-

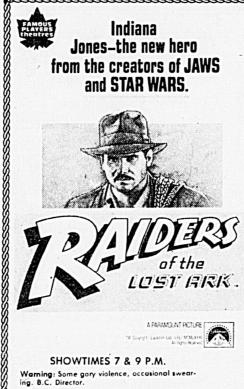
headed.

Another accomplice in the carnage is that normally magnificent actor, Brian Bedford, who delivers the least interesting of The Misanthrope — a production the festival is stuck with through to the end of September — is not a happy omen for the furture.

or the least interesting of The Misanthrope — a pletely off the hook. The fact is that this year's schedule is offering eight productions half the size of Robin Phillips's final remarkable season a year

Yet, virtually the same







PLAZA 400 CINEMAS





**PEANUTS** 









JUDGE PARKER

By Paul Nichols

By Jonny Hart

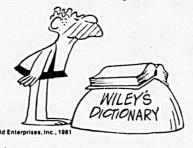


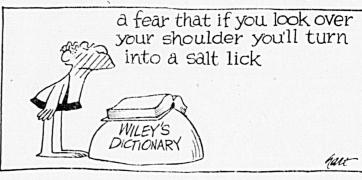


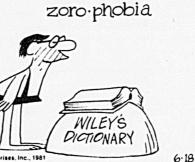


B.C.

saline-phobia







the fear of your acupuncturist showing up wearing a mask and a cape WILEY'S DICTIONARY gart

**BLONDIE** 

By Young & Raymond









**DOONESBURY** 









**TIGER** 

By Bud Blake

By Gary Trudeau



THE HEART OF JULIET JONES

By Stan Drake





