

## Oh to be fifteen again

-Albert Barret-

At least the Ceylonese Dancers need not feel neglected. They sold 200 tickets in San Diego before cancellation. Last Saturday a 15 year-old boy set a world weight-lifting record in Balboa Park, and was cheered heartily by only 51 spectators. The weight-lifting meet was tucked away in Balboa Park's Federal Building behind twelve badminton courts in the space of about half a court. The badminton players never gave the strainers and groaners a second thought.

Ricky Lujan was the star of the meet. He set a world record for age fifteen by lifting a total of 550 pounds in the two olympic lifts, 235 pounds in the snatch and 315 in the clear and jerk. Lujan looked more like a guard on a high school basketball team than a weight-lifter. With braces on his teeth and long hair, he looked like any teen-ager. But upon questioning, he carried himself like an experienced athlete. "Let me give you the background; I'll go faster," he confided. He has been a Junior Olympic Champ eight times and is currently lifting more than any other 15 year-old in the world, he explained. His father was Cuban heavy-weight champion but fled to the United States when Castro took over.

When Lujan stepped up to the bar he was all business and concentration. With the final clear and jerk, he held the bar overhead long after the judge had told him to drop it—basking in his glory.

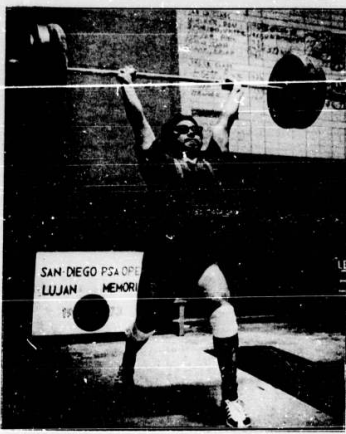
The meet itself was well-timed and easy for a stranger to follow. An electric scoreboard flashed the amount of weight on the bar to the crowd. Two Fabian-haired helpers quickly changed the weights on the ends of the bars.

Most of the crowd were either family or friends or other weight-lifters themselves. One of the lifters in the crowd, a Jon Hill, said there was a difference of "night and day" between weight-lifters and "body builders". Body builders "push iron" only for an increase in muscle and definition. They try to pump up the capillaries to make the muscles look bigger. A weight-lifter aims toward the lifting meets. Much of the sport of weight-lifting is mental, Hill explained. The average lifter can go about ten pounds over his training lifts in meets.

A number of lifters in the crowd commented on the controversial use of steroids. They said that most competitive lifters pass their veins take the drugs for gains in bulk and strength. They admitted the possibility of danger in the practice, but said "everyone does it".

It seems as though weight-lifting is the kind of sport that will always be tucked back behind badminton courts in the U.S. "It's one of the top three sports in Russia, but here it must be one of the bottom three," Ricky Lujan complained. But interest in the sport is growing, if one can believe some of the enthusiasts there, "only one in ten thousand can be able to lift his body weight over his head, now one in five thousand can." □

## ...and a champ



Meyer/Schnepper

## ...and a guru

-Jane Weisman-

Life is tough for a new spiritual leader. The hours are long and the opposition usually powerful. Buddha gave up his life as a wealthy prince to find a way to alleviate suffering. Moses and Mohammed battled tyrants and desert infernos. Jesus died for his beliefs. This myriad of leaders suffered to explain why man exists. And joining them in this unusual endeavor is a boy from India, the fifteen-year old Guru Maharaj Ji.

The young Guru inherited the title "Perfect Master" from his father who died in 1966. While still a toddler, the boy would exhort his father's followers to "get up and do meditation." "If you can become perfect," he explains now, "preaching a life of meditation, you can see God. That's how I did it." In 1970 he began his international mission with a triumphal ride through Delhi in a golden chariot, followed by miles of camels, elephants and devotees.

Ten months ago devotees of the Maharaj Ji put together the Divine Light Mission Information Center in La Jolla. To explain the Guru's teachings, the Divine Light Center sponsors *satsangs*, "union with truth" meetings, welcoming the public. On a cold February Sunday evening, about seventy people and three dogs crowded into the In Between, a crisis center in Ocean Beach, to witness a Divine Light *satsang*. Most of the listeners were young. Every wooden bench was filled, and the overflow sat on the floor.

"When scientists split the atom, they found pure white light. This pure energy is what you will see when you take Knowledge from the Guru Maharaj Ji," a young black man, his hair stuffed in a gold cloth cap, said softly to the crowd. He was the only member of the Mission dressed casually, in a Levi jacket and jeans.

Other members of the Mission were easily identified by the sportcoats, slacks, and the buttons they wore containing a picture of the round-faced Guru.



The women wore white blouses and long skirts. The clean-cut appearance of Mission members contrasted sharply with the informality of the listeners.

The room glowed with the heat of the crowd. It seemed as though people had either come to get out of the cold, to satisfy curiosity, or maybe to see if this new idea could untangle their lives. Some picked up the Mission's newspaper, asked for a phone number to call, and went home to digest their impressions of the testimonials they heard.

"Knowledge can only be given by the Guru or one of the mahatmas, his personally trained disciples. At the climax of my private five-hour session, the mahatma reached out, touched my forehead, and opened up my third eye." A pale, lanky man stood stiffly before this group at the In Between. He looked over the heads of the crowd, his eyes filled with emotion while telling his story.

Between testimonials, the black man played his guitar and a flute player accompanied him. In the back of the room, three Mission members sat cross-legged, eyes shut in meditation. A man with frizzy, brown hair explained that members meditate 24 hours a day on the Holy Name, in addition to morning and evening *satsang* meditations.

A smiling photograph of the young Guru hung on the wall behind the members, as they spoke of their devotion to the Perfect Master. At the end of the *satsang*, an open invitation was issued to everyone, to visit their ashram, or shelter, any evening after 7:30 p.m.

Anyone captivated by the philosophy of Guru Maharaj Ji could visit the ashram at 7928 La Jolla Shores Drive. A visitor would find the house set back from the road, a VW bus, with its parts scattered around, parked in the carport.

The Mission's young public relations man greets visitors at the door with a warm handshake. "Welcome to our ashram. Five brothers and two sisters live and work here." He introduces himself as Bill and leads the visitors through the entry hall into the dining room. A low table

surrounded by pillows is set for the evening meal.

In the kitchen, a woman with long black hair, is slicing onions. "We are all vegetarians, but the Guru Maharaj Ji doesn't require any special lifestyle. People of all faiths are welcome to take Knowledge."

The house is extremely quiet. Only the sounds of water running in a shower, and the sizzle of frying onions.

Bill ushers visitors into the stark, white living room. A faded gray brocade couch faces a white satin-draped altar. The altar seems to be constructed of tables and chairs covered with fabric. A single rose, a potted plant, and a gold Valentine's candy box decorate the altar. Hanging up near the ceiling, a banner reads, "Guru Maharaj Ji — Bearer of Living Water."

"We live here by strict rules, but it is really a love school," Bill gazed across the room at a blue-toned picture of his Perfect Master. "Everyone here has a job, and we all help with the housework."

According to Bill, life in the ashram is not easy. The brothers sleep in the dining room, and the sisters sleep in the bedrooms on the opposite side of the house. All rise at 5 a.m. for two hours of meditation before work.

"I was a little bit crazy before I took Knowledge five months ago. I was looking for peace when I went to a meeting in Los Angeles and met Guru Maharaj Ji."

Two brothers enter the room, bow before the altar, and sit down palms upward, to meditate.

"I had doubts until I saw the room fill with light from the Maharaj Ji. It was pure white light, not just a halo or aura." Bill pauses to make sure the visitor is following his train of thought. "I knew then I could find peace."

The fragrance of frying onions fills the house. Bill explains that a year and a half ago, there were only six devotees in the United States. Today, after two visits from the Guru, 40,000 people have taken his Knowledge.

"The Mission bought the Guru a Cessna to help him get around easier," Bill smiles proudly. When the Guru comes to San

(continued on page 2)

GURU

Diego next month he will stay in the La Jolla ashram.

"I went home and told my father, who is an atheist, I had seen the Light. He threw me out of the house!" Bill laughs, his brown eyes far away under round glasses. It is hard to imagine a father throwing a son out who is dressed in a business man's vest, shirt and tie.

"But now, my parents are happy, and I can go home again. My mother was just leaving when you arrived. She even comes to some of our sittings now."

Bill says he gets along much better with his family now that he has taken knowledge.

"I was a physically hard experience. We lived with the poor food, flies and decay like the natives always do. But it was great; we were forced to rely on his Holy name."

The seven devotes from San Diego stayed a month visiting the ashrams of India. Ten months ago a mahatma came to San Diego and announced he would give knowledge to anyone who returned the next day. Bill says fifty people returned, and that was how the Divine Light Mission started its local branch. The brothers and sisters of the La Jolla ashram take their new life

very seriously. "When we greet a brother or sister we say 'Truth is the consciousness of bliss,' this is what our lives are based on now. We don't need drugs or anything else."

Like an efficient public relations man, Bill clears up the facts about a story published after Indian officials revoked the Guru's passport a few months ago. The newspapers, and Time magazine, brought the Maharaj Ji to international attention after officials seized a suitcase containing \$3,000,000 in cash.

"One of the aides forgot to declare the suitcase with the money and the one filled with watches and jewelry. They were gifts from his devotees to give to the poorer brothers and sisters in India." Bill says customs officials interrogated a group of mahatmas for eight hours, but the disciples meditated throughout the ordeal.

"Guru Maharaj Ji's passport was returned, but they still haven't given us back the money."

Even in his native land, life is difficult for the new spiritual leader. India has one political party with a platform based solely on anti-Guru Maharaj Ji sentiment.

Yet, the devotees of the young cherubic Guru are determined to add his name to the list of great leaders. Certainly the chances for success are helped by the current fashionability of a turn away from social activism toward a more inward, eastern attitude about life. And the Guru Maharaj Ji stands a good chance to gain recognition in the spiritual legion, if all his followers are as sincere and reverent as the seven members of the La Jolla ashram.

There are no clodhoppers at Ballet & USIU

IT GIVES US HOPE

-Carla Jules-

Ballet USIU, which opened February 21 at the Center for Performing Arts on Cedar Street downtown, offers more to dance lovers than just a pleasing, varied, and at one point, very moving evening. It gives us hope. For John Hart, formerly assistant director of the Royal Ballet and now head of USIU's ballet department, has plans to form a new ballet company in San Diego, and he has a good start. With two resident San Diego companies already, this may seem at first a ridiculous case of supply far exceeding listless demand. But, as the program of seven original (seven original) composition shows, USIU has what the other two companies lack: youth, a desire to experiment, a real camaraderie, many more than two or three strong principal dancers, and, thank God, an adequate, in fact, satisfying corps. No need to worry about cringing

(which can degenerate into an attitude of contemptuousness. As it did, I think, in the performance of "Trio" — all the women are queens, all the men their servants or princes. It is also based on a hierarchical view of society with the "courtly love" couple and the asexual body as its basic units. "Moon Garden", for example, with its three male-male couplings, simply could not be danced without suppressed laughter from the audience if the women were as tall or worse yet, taller than the men.

"It's perhaps because of this that the audience responded so well, with more than admiration and aesthetic appreciation, to the last two ballets, Esther Turner's "File #T.N.C." and Wayne Davis' "Crystals on her Mind." In the case of "File #T.N.C." it was with laughter, for the whole affair was a zany, impossible double plot with spies, diamonds as big as the Ritz, Latin ladies, and multiple changes of costume on stage which all began improbably enough with an outline of the story being shown on a movie screen. Granted, "File" was not entirely successful — I found the music too mindfully formal for all the hurly-burly — but this is a minor matter. What is important is the experimental, quirky mind at work which refuses to regard ballet as a purely formal art (art with a capital A). But the best came last. In fact, only Wayne Davis' "Crystals" had been danced, the evening would have been well worth it. It is exciting visually, thanks, in great part, to the lighting and costumes which are superb (the choreography often tends toward West Side Story or Inflamed June Taylor Dancer). And it is intense- (continued on page 3)

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events

THEATRE

POOR LITTLE MICHAEL FINNegan Mission Playhouse, Saturdays, 8:30 P.M. LOVE AFFAIR ON CHANNEL 2 THEM YESTERDAY, GEORGE AND DELLA, three short plays. Theatre for the End of Time, 5225 Sarmiento Road, Tuesdays through Saturdays, 8:30 P.M. Through March 8.

SAY WHO YOU ARE, Old Globe Main Stage, Balboa Park, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays & Sundays 8:00 P.M., Fridays and Saturdays 8:30 P.M. Through March 18.

ARSENIC AND OLD LACE, Patio Playhouse, Thursdays, Fridays & Saturdays through March 3, 8:30 P.M. DINNER BRIDGE, FACE CARDS, Crystal Palace Theatre, Fridays, Saturdays & Sundays through March 11, 8:30 P.M.

OLD TIMES, Mission Playhouse, Old Town, Fridays 8:30 P.M. FIDDLER ON THE ROOF, Valley Music Theatre, Thursdays and Saturdays at 8:00 P.M., Sundays at 7:00 P.M. Through March 11.

HOW THE OTHER HALF LOVES, Coronado Playhouse, Fridays through Saturdays until March 24, 8:30 P.M. THE BOY FRIEND, North County Community Theatre, 1300 Grand Ave., San Marcos, Fridays and Saturdays, 8:00 P.M., Sundays, 8:00 P.M. through March 18.

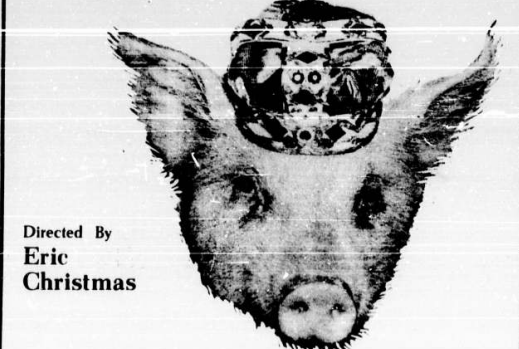
MUSIC

CHAMBER MUSIC CONCERT, Recital Hall, UCSD Mathew Campus, Thursday, March 1, 8 P.M. ELECTRONIC MUSIC CONCERT, Recital Hall, UCSD Mathew Campus, Thursday, March 1, 8 P.M. PORTER WAGNER SHOW, Golden Hall, Community Concourse, Thursday, March 1, 7:30 P.M. SAN DIEGO SYMPHONY with MARY WAGNER, Thursday, Community Concourse, Thursday and Friday, March 1 and 2, 8:00 P.M. DAVE EVANS, TRACY LAIRD, Friday, March 2, 8 P.M. MANUEL LOPEZ RAMOS, guitarist, Campus Theatre, San Diego City College, Friday, March 2, 8 P.M. ROD RODGERS DANCE COMPANY, UCSD Gym, Friday, March 2, 8:00 P.M. THE LOS ANGELES

PHILHARMONIC, Civic Theatre Community Concourse, Saturday, March 3, 8:00 P.M. UCSD CHAMBER CHORUS, Recital Hall, Mathew Campus, Saturday, March 3, 8:30 P.M. YOUNG PEOPLE'S CONCERT, San Diego Symphony, Civic Theatre, Saturday, March 3, 10 A.M. and 12 noon. MARY WAGNER, pianist, Mayan Hall, Southwestern College, Sunday, March 4, 4 P.M. USD SYMPHONY AND CHORUS, Psalm of Thanksgiving, Camino Theatre, USD, Sunday, March 4, 4 P.M. RITA CANTOS, soprano, BARBARA BRANNAN, harpsichordist, GREG NESTOR, guitarist, Jewish Community Center, Sunday, March 4, 2:30 P.M. ARTHUR LAMBERT, pianist, Recital Hall, Cal State University, Sunday, March 4, 8:15 P.M. LORIE KIRKELL, cellist, and DIANE GALAS, pianist, Recital Hall, UCSD Mathews Campus, Sunday, March 4, 2:30 P.M. CONTEMPORARY CHAMBER MUSIC, UCSD Recital Hall, Mathews Campus, Sunday, March 4, 8:30 P.M. REV WILLIAM FORSHAW lectures on G.B. Shaw, Athenaeum, La Jolla, Monday, March 5, 10 A.M. SECRETS OF SUSANNA, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, Monday, March 5, 10:45 A.M. FELD STRING QUARTET, Central Public Library, Tuesday, March 6, 7:30 P.M. LAURINDO ALMEIDA, guitarist, Aztec Center, Cal State University, Wednesday, March 7, 8 P.M. RAIETIENI HENI Concerto, Wednesday through Saturday, 8:30 P.M. JULLIARD STRING QUARTET, Sherwood Hall, La Jolla, Thursday, March 8, 8:30 P.M. AMERICA, Civic Theatre, Community Concourse, Thursday, March 8, 8 P.M. GALLERIES JAPANESE, Peach Festival, doll collection, Museum of Man, Balboa Park, Sunday, March 4 and 11.

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SPORTS

BASKETBALL, Cal State U. vs. Fresno State Sports Arena, Saturday, March 3, 10:00 P.M. HOCKEY, Gulls vs. Seattle, Sports Arena, Friday, March 2, 8:00 P.M. BRUCE BEASLEY, June sculptures, Fine Arts Gallery, Balboa Park, through April 1. MAX BECKMANN GRAPHICS, German expressionist, Fine Arts Gallery, Balboa Park, through April 1. HUNG HSIEN, contemporary Chinese woman painter of the Film Moon Group, Fine Arts Gallery, Balboa Park, through April 8. KIBBY UNLAWEAVER AND SUZI FITZPATRICK, mixed media and portraits at 935 1/2 Turquoise Street, Pacific Beach. ANITA STORCK, paintings and drawings, Central Library. ALLAN MILLER, Paris and Accessories, photographic prints, La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art. LES LAWRENCE, ceramic sculptures, Boehm Gallery, Palomar College. MARTHA SMITH AND OFA JALLU, La Jolla Art Association. THE TURQUOISE SHOP COLLECTION, Barbara Taylor Roy still life, landscapes and portraits at 935 1/2 Turquoise Street, Pacific Beach. Please submit items for the events calendar by calling 276-3866 or send them to: Reader, P.O. Box 80803, San Diego, California 92138.

MEET THE MASTERS, lecture series, Technology for Arts Saw, illustrated lecture and slides with Visuals, James Copley Auditorium, Fine Arts Gallery, Balboa Park, Tuesday, March 6, 10:45 A.M. Reservations must be made by March 3, lecture 8:15, lecture and luncheon \$2.50. GARY SVANDBY, poetry, reading, Monterey Hall, Cal State University, Thursday, March 1, 8:00 P.M. Free.

LECTURES

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BALLET

and fear; gestures basic to this ballet are the holding of a cigarette, leaning down or a drink, the undulating of hips, not the arabesque. She's sustained by her sweet dreams (here the expected, everlasting dream of her true love, oh well) and raped by the world (there's a gripping gang rape scene in red light) until exhausted, she dies. Deborah Hadley is nothing short of extraordinary as the girl. She is a clean, astoundingly poised, and delicate dancer, like light, and brings a remarkable depth of pain and bewilderment to the role. Among other particularly good dancers in Ballet USIU were Tamara Hadley whose verve and healthy sensuality were especially displayed in "Taramella", Lydia Morales, Bill Edward, Charles Flemmer, and Mara Shapiro who brought down the house in "File" with her roly-poly, strutting comeds. Performances through March 3.

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