Madwoman

By Emanual Goldman

(Mylanded from Cambridge Phoenix)

is a story about the triumph of good over evil. Therefore, it is a fantasy.

Thus begins The Madwoman

of Chaillot, at the Cheri III

Theater. But what do they mean by good and evil? As in the
gospels, the good are the poor, the loving, the kind, the evil are
the rich, the abusers, the greedy.

With stunning dialogue, play-

wright Jean Giraudoux constructs

the establishment. A carte that

wants to buy up Paris for a

supposed oil bonanza has a

board of directors consisting of
caricatures of a war-mongering
general, a reverend-evilapist, a

Communist (Moscow) commit-

tee, a billionaire stockbroker,

and an unscrupulous prospector.
The epitome of evil is the chair-

man of the board, played by Yul

Brynner.

The chairman, himself from a

peasant background, is utterly
divorced of kindness. When the

board meets at a sidewalk cafe,

he is constantly infuriated at

pepper, the other common folk, inform

he is a novice-his studies

by good and evil? As in the

mock trial, in which the

members of the board try to

lock the members of the board into the

very earth that they came to exploit.
The highlight of the film is

the trial, which in the

magicker (Danny Kaye) provides

proxy defense of the wealthy.

Charged with abuse of others

and the worship of money, he

defends himself by declaring that

the other way around, that

money worships him.

In spite of himself, gold falls into

his lap. And what does he do

with it? He subsidizes philan-

thropy, research, the arts, and

the poor. Why does he want the

oil so badly? For Paris! For a

moment, he proudly replies: "to

make war!"

Private property has rarely

received such a comic and

change to the world. The

viewer should be forewarned that

the presentation is highly

one-sided.

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