

Costello gives brash, spectacular show at Boston College

ELVIS COSTELLO

With Nick Lowe.

Boston College, Friday, March 31.

By PAIGE PARSONS

A PERFORMER'S COMEBACK after a two-year absence from the music scene isn't always a sure bet. But judging from the opening night of Elvis Costello's college tour last Friday, there seems no need to worry about the quality of his performance; instead, worry about getting a ticket next time he comes around (April 13 at Brandeis University). His upcoming summer tour dates are sure to sell out.

Last Friday's show was billed as both solo and acoustic. Surprisingly, the lack of accompaniment served to highlight the innumerable talents of our star. The power

of his performance was witnessed when he broke a guitar string after his first number, but the mishap didn't stop him — armed with another guitar, he blasted into his current hit, "Veronica." Technical problems — a loose connection — plagued him during the song, but undaunted, he recovered several times without missing a beat. From then on, it was smooth sailing for Costello, who continued to play for another two hours.

During his last tour two years ago, Costello added variety and spontaneity to the shows by inviting the audience to spin his "Fabulous Spinning Songbook." The enormous roulette wheel contained the names of all of his songs; Costello followed the luck of the wheel for entire performances. Apparently, the concept was a hit, because at the midpoint of Friday's

show a red satin heart appeared to serve the same purpose. The 8-foot heart had pockets containing rolled-up banners listing the "thirteen-and-a-half deadly sins," said Costello. Blindfolded fans drew banners from the heart and were asked to name a "matching" Costello song. The process resulted in some very strange combinations, linking the sin of 'Lust' with "Allison" and the sin of 'Awesomeness' with "The Angels Want to Wear My Red Shoes." Too bad no one chose the sin of "drunkenness" or, better yet, "Geraldo Rivera."

The highlight of the evening was a dazzling version of his classic "Pump It Up," which was the only non-acoustic song of the entire evening. Costello picked up his electric guitar and started a rap beat on a drum machine with spectacular results.

His strong voice carried like rough silk over the raw power of his guitar, producing one of the best live versions of any song I've ever heard. Never before has feedback been such sweet music to the ears.

Opening for Costello was Nick Lowe, Elvis' long time tour-mate and friend. He, too, was unaccompanied and played an acoustic set. Lowe included classics like "Cruel to be kind" and his top-ten hit "I knew the bride when she used to rock-n-roll" as well as new material from his soon-to-be-released album. He was very entertaining, but the material didn't always lend itself to an acoustic performance. With only a guitar to embellish the songs, one tune sounded quite a bit like the next, and none packed the punch of the original, more rockabilly, versions.

Terry Gilliam's ponderous fantasy Baron Munchausen doth collapse

THE ADVENTURES OF BARON MUNCHAUSEN

Directed by Terry Gilliam.

Screenplay by Charles McKeown and Terry Gilliam.

Starring John Neville and Sarah Polley.

Now playing at the Harvard Square and Nickelodeon Theaters.

By MANAVENDRA K. THAKUR

ALL OF THE QUALITIES THAT MADE Terry Gilliam's previous two films notable are plainly visible in *The Adventures of Baron Munchausen*, but something must have gone terribly wrong while Gilliam was making it. Instead of brilliantly manipulating the distinction between dreams and reality, instead of confronting viewers with images packed with overwhelming detail in the best Mad Magazine tradition, the film merely piles one fantastic scene on top of another, succeeding mainly in proving that fantasy too can collapse under its own weight.

In this film, Gilliam addresses the same close-minded worship of rationality that

he attacked in *Time Bandits* (1981) and *Brazil* (1985). *Time Bandits* succeeded because its characters tumbled from one adventure to the next with little sense of any overriding goal or reason. *Brazil* was more structured, but Gilliam charged his creative talents to the fullest to prevent anyone, including the characters, from predicting where the film's jolting turns and twists would lead.

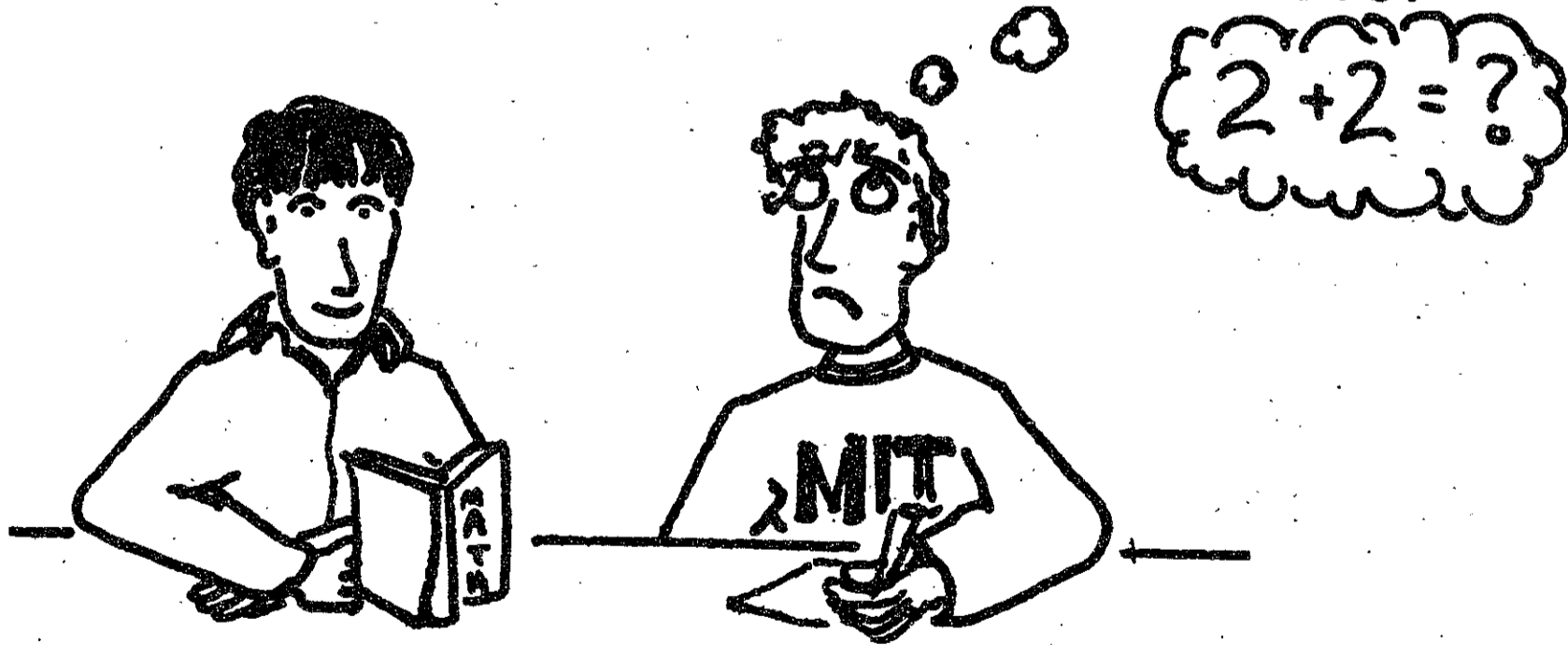
In *The Adventures of Baron Munchausen*, however, Gilliam hobbles himself right from the beginning by forcing his characters to work toward the ultimate goal of rescuing a city besieged by some angry Turks. Consequently, when Baron Munchausen (John Neville) flies off in a balloon made of women's knickers to enlist his friends in the fight to save the city, Gilliam has little choice than to "accidentally" introduce another comrade at each stop along the way. Once this plot device becomes apparent, the film quickly degenerates into an arduous waiting game to see what will happen once the group is finally reunited. By creating this waiting game, Gilliam not only undermines the potential

(Please turn to page 10)



Baron Munchausen (John Neville, 2nd from right) and his comrades prepare to outwit the Sultan in *The Adventures of Baron Munchausen*.

Be a
High School Tutor
 for Cambridge School Volunteers..



See the difference a few hours of your
 time each week can make!

Interested? Call Arthur Lent at x5-7183.

Sponsored by Tau Beta Pi