

Around town

Dorfman gambles on 'War'

By Rick Kogan

It is called "The Civil War," a stirring rock cantata created by Bill Russo in 1968. It is now available for your viewing because of Ron Dorfman.

He is the show's producer, and the last time we saw him, he was sitting at an outdoor cafe, punching numbers into a calculator. He had an exasperated look on his face, so we simply said, "Hello, break a leg," and moved on.

Dorfman is a writer, former co-founder of the Chicago Journalism Review, a lively publication sadly departed. He is not, never has been, a producer.

But he saw "The Civil War" a couple of months ago, during its brief resurrection at Columbia College, and was so affected by its spirit and substance that he decided to take the precarious leap into show business.

"I have learned a good deal," he told us when we bumped into him at a nightclub. He was carrying a pile of "Civil War" posters. "Whatever the projected costs, just add 50 percent."

"The Civil War" opened Thursday at the Vic, 3145 N. Sheffield Ave. (call 784-1245 for tickets) and will continue through Sept. 30, with two shows each evening Thursdays-Sundays. Though Dorfman conceivably could lose a considerable chunk of dough, he is following his heart and not his wallet. And that is a grand thing.

Council's calendar

We don't recall ever seeing the first calendar published by the Chicago Tourism Council but we've seen the second, and a handsome item it is.

The council has printed some 250,000 of these calen-



Illustration by Mitch O'Connell

dars and would like you to have one. It is one of those fold-out deals and it contains a surprisingly vast amount of information regarding events taking place in and around town from September—oh, that's now—through December. Though it is probably a very handy thing for tourists to have, it is also quite valuable for locals.

Among the many events that have probably slipped your mind are the Apple Fest (9/24), Leif Ericson Day Celebration (10/8), International Kennel Club Fall Dog Show (10/16) and Carolling to the Animals (12/11). And it is good to be reminded that the city does have a Maritime Museum, an International Museum of Surgical Science and an American Police Center and Museum.

The calendar lists sites and events in nine categories, and offers bits of other information. Gripes? Of course. With more than 120 theaters in town, listing but a handful seems silly. Though it may be of some value to cab drivers and escort services, do we really need to know that the Packaging Machinery Manufacturers Institute will be holding its convention here in November? Don't the city's comedy clubs do enough advertising on their own, and get ample space in local newspapers' events listings?

We would like to see future calendars eschew some of the more familiar and popular entertainments—Second City, Park District golf courses (not one of the city's principal fall/winter treats)—in favor of some of our hidden gems.

Where is the Museum of Holography, for instance? But for a second effort, not bad at all. You can see for yourself by picking up a copy at the council's office in the Water Tower Pumping Station, 163 E. Pearson, or by calling 280-5740. And by the way, the calendar tells us the average maximum temperature in September is 75.5 degrees.

Big bash for Buddy

It would be impossible, and dangerous to our already

tattered reputation, to recount at any length the many wonderful and wacky evenings we've spent in the company of Buddy Charles.

Buddy is, if you have not had the good fortune to be wandering in the vicinity of Oak and Michigan in the small hours of the evening and in need of some libation, one of Chicago's greatest attractions. Holding forth from the musical side of the upright piano at Acorn on Oak—can it be almost 16 years now?—Charles has treated a generation of night owls to his inimitable and enlivening brand of entertainment. His exceptionally gifted hands often have been overshadowed by a personality pleasantly overwhelming, forgiving (try listening to people sing "Memories" night after night) and playful. He is a treasure and a distinct Chicago pleasure.

The Society of Singers, the recently formed local branch of a national organization headed by Henry Mancini's wife that provides legal and financial aide to professional singers, has wisely (and justly) selected Buddy as the object of its first "tribute."

It is to take place next Sunday at the Executive House, 72 E. Wacker Dr., and should be a blast. The master of ceremonies is Irv Kupcinet, and those who will be poking good-natured fun at the midnight-hour maestro will be such musically minded pals as Dave Green, no late late slouch himself at Toulouse; Bruce Robbins, an eye-poppingly talented pianist; singer Frank D'Rone and entertainer/club owner Milt Trenier. There will be other singers present and some "surprise" guests are being mentioned; Johnny Frigo and Joe Vito, gigging Sunday, will be there on tape.

Tickets, proceeds of which will benefit the society, are \$35 and \$50. (Call 222-1467 or 239-4114). Cocktails start at 6 p.m., dinner follows 45 minutes later and the festivities begin at 8 p.m. It would be only fitting if they lasted well into the a.m.

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Cover photo of Art Institute sculpture gallery, with William Rimmer's "Saint Stephen," by Bill Hogan.

The Arts welcomes comments and criticism. Write to The Arts, The Chicago Tribune, Room 400, 435 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60611.