



## a little Leeway

by Wayne Lee

## An artist in our midst

There are millions and millions of slugs like me who wouldn't walk across the street to see a free performance by Marcel Marceau.

After watching him on some godawful commercials and seeing some brief performances on television, and hearing Marceau credited with keeping pantomime alive in the 1900s, I've frankly often wondered why he bothered.

Mimes are a nice little diversion on the streets of Westwood or a country fair, but like ballet, it's tough to take a whole lot of them at one sitting.

Or so I thought until I witnessed a performance by Cary Trivanovich of Simi Valley. This kid is dynamite. Boffo.

If Marceau is half as talented as Trivanovich, I now understand how Marceau kept pantomime alive. I'd now encourage anyone to walk a mile through snow and pay to see Marceau.

Trivanovich is a sort of hip pantomimist. He refuses to wear whiteface and "those little tight pants and ballet slippers." He mixes contemporary acts with classics. He's classy. He's also extremely funny. He's an artist.

Pantomime is a Greek word meaning "all mimic." The performer can't say a word, but still tells a story. Nobody knows exactly when the art form started, although it was used with great success in the early days of the Roman Empire. Pantomime was a big hit in Europe in the 1700s and 1800s. It started dying in this century.

What Muhammad Ali did for boxing, Marceau did for pantomime. He brought it back to life.

Given half a chance Cary Trivanovich may carry it well into the years 2000.

Half a chance is what he isn't get-

ting at the moment.

Trivanovich can't even get an audition with the Ed Sullivan shows of today — Johnny Carson, Merv Griffin and Dinah Shore.

He fully understands why. "There are literally thousands of mimes out there and most of them are sloppy, frankly. I can understand why the television shows don't need the hassle," Trivanovich says.

He's even philosophical about it. "I don't need the big time. I really don't. I'm practicing my art and I'm making a good living, and I'm having fun," he explains.

Trivanovich has appeared at more than a thousand high schools in more than 20 states. He relates. He's only been out of high school five years himself.

His audiences are wowed. They're soaking up a great performance, live. Some sort of hope he doesn't make it big because then they might not be able to afford him.

Trivanovich not only has an act, he has an act. He stunned local Rotarians here the other day with a performance fit for royalty.

"The Mask" he picked up from Marceau. It is an incredible display of facial dexterity. You can't really describe it because it is too difficult to comprehend. It would be considered impossible unless you saw it yourself.

"The Party," which Trivanovich constructed as a class project at Simi Valley High, is absolutely down home. The young man is funny, precise, startling. Moreover, he has presence. Real presence. He ought to be a big star and he doesn't expect to be.

One thing is certain. He is a great pantomimist.

It is a compliment to this city that such a talent blossomed here