

*Musical duo radiates good feelings*

# Pollocks still helping to keep Age of Aquarius alive

## arts scene

by HEATHER SOLOMON

### MONTREAL —

You may not see "Richie Loves Linda" spraypainted on Montreal overpasses but their reputation as the musical duo *Love and Magic* sends out the same message.

The Pollocks, married for over 17 years, have found the secret to keeping the 1960s Age of Aquarius alive in the jaded 1980s and into the new decade. It's not necessarily her hip-length hair or his beard but their ability to transfer to audiences the good feelings emanating from their love for each other.

Currently, they are the favorites of the synagogue, municipal and golden age circuits "from luxury condos like the King David to very small senior homes of even five residents." The Pollocks are also making headway in the children's market and as cocktail hour entertainers at private parties.

But the streets, where they began as buskers, still draw them back for an annual wedding anniversary celebration, held for the

past three years in Montreal's underground Metro.

They met at a student hostel in Copenhagen, Denmark 20 years ago while making the "obligatory" youth tour of the Continent, England and Israel. Brooklynite Richie, who had attended the University of Denver, and Montrealese Linda, who went to Wagar High and Sir George Williams University, wrote each other love letters for two years before reconnecting in Montreal.

"I grew up in Cote St. Luc and was supposed to marry a wealthy accountant/doctor/lawyer," says Linda. "When Richie arrived in Montreal he wore an embroidered vest with no shirt underneath and for luggage he had a tiny paper bag with his demo tape of Good Time Man, a song he'd just sold to Screen Gems in New York. Richie was not what my parents had imagined."

But on Oct. 29, 1972, her parents helped them celebrate their marriage at Tifereth Beth David Jerusa-

lem synagogue and knew that their daughter had made the right choice.

The couple began singing together in 1973, on a nostalgic return to Copenhagen, when the guests of the inn they checked into saw Richie's guitar case and demanded a song. Since Linda had heard his original pieces over and over again while her husband, who plays by ear, committed them to memory, she joined in to set him at ease.

The unison singing blossomed into harmonies on the streets of Europe, Hyde Park in London, Greenwich Village, Fisherman's Wharf in San Francisco and Old Montreal.

After four years of the New York rat race during which the Pollocks struggled for the elusive hit in publishing companies and demo studios, they "retired" to Florida for eight years. There they discovered the lucrative possibilities of the \$200 per hour "set" for which they began supplementing originals with other composers' material.

They are now known as the "human jukebox" with everything from Dylan to Streisand, Hebrew (for all the holidays) to Irish tunes, story songs and Broadway medleys in their repertoire. Their credits also include children's musicals, books,

commercial jingles and plays.

In April of 1987 the Pollocks came to Montreal for Linda's father's funeral and never left. "We sang here and got incredible reactions," says Linda. They were the only English-language act invited to sing in the five-day Tadoussac Music Festival on the Saguenay River and were featured in the international Buskers Festival in the Maritimes. Their Metro appearances yielded private bookings by music lovers including the Montreal Convalescent Hospital.

At Villa Mount Royal they are unofficial music therapists. "Everybody is transformed. They're lit up, their hands are going. They're smiling because we are having a joyful experience and everyone has the capacity for joy. All they have to do is see it reflected to them," says Richie, now a landed immigrant here.

For evening bookings and on weekends, Linda's brother Alan Friedman, a singer/songwriter/electric bass player, joins the Pollocks to make a trio. "We're not a typical band. We haven't got drums and we're not really for dancing though people do get up and dance to us," explains Linda.

Adds Richie, "We're not



Linda and Richie Pollock perform musical miracles as the duo *Love and Magic*, jazz or rock or blues. We're sunshine yellows, folk-singers. Our music is like a can opener for people's

emotions. We found out that success has nothing to do with money. We're successful because we can in-

teract with audiences and have this effect."

Love and Magic can be reached at 683-9893.