

Music And Drama

Edited by Lauretta Thistle

Adding Up The Score

Ottawa's venture into open-air theater closes on Saturday night. After five weeks crammed with incident, excitement, uncertainty, and sometimes, disappointment, the project is ending on a high note, with a lively production of *Out of the Frying Pan*.

Conceived by Joan Jackson, and sustained by the efforts of dozens of volunteers, the enterprise has had ups and downs. It had extremely poor treatment by the weatherman. It provided a great deal of enjoyment for the participants. From the audience's point of view, the standard of performance was uneven, sometimes surprisingly good, at other times—well, not good. Finally, it lost many customers because of the proximity of the baseball game.

Let's look at some of these facts more closely. First, the weather.

Three Cancellations

Until the middle of this week, only three of the scheduled 21 performances had actually been cancelled because of rain. But that isn't the whole weather story. Oftentimes heavy daytime rains had left the ground soggy and the seats damp. Evening after evening was too cold for sitting out in comfort. More than one person admired the forethought of the middle-aged ladies who swathed themselves in motor rugs and took their drama in comfort.

The participants are ending the season with a "sorry-it's over" feeling, though most of them are full of suggestions about how their set-up could be improved. Their enthusiasm augurs well for a second attempt next year.

The failure to make money surprises nobody. After all the dire predictions of ruin that were made to Miss Jackson, she feels that the theater did well to break even. Attendance was poor, but it was enough to cover expenses of three to four hundred dollars a week. With better weather (and with a more favorable location) the picture might have been much brighter.

At Times, Frantic

The uneven standards of performance were almost inevitable, since the whole project was arranged in a great hurry, and there was more than a little of the frantic about the preparations for most of the plays.

With long-range planning, casting done well in advance, and adequate rehearsal time, most of these difficulties would disappear. Engagement of a full-time director would be ideal.

Baseball, of course, is serious competition for the voices of actors. Everybody knows that a baseball fan can cheer and groan with greater volume than a theater fan. Moreover, he does it more often.

Inverse Proportion

But the amount of distraction the baseball games accounted for should not be exaggerated. For long periods during the performances there would be no interruption. Only very loud bursts of cheering winged their way to the bandshell.

(Presumably, then, the number of interruptions was in inverse proportion to the success of the home team).

On the other hand, there's no use taking an "If you just don't notice it, perhaps it will go away" attitude towards this competition. As long as baseball continues, the bandshell theater will lose customers.

Its Good Points

The advantages of the bandshell site are chiefly obvious to the actors themselves. They have in this building an adequate, if peculiarly shaped stage, good dressing rooms with showers, storage space and workrooms.

If the basic facilities (a rea-

sonable stage and backstage space) could be provided in a better outdoor setting, the summer theater project might well become profitable. Enthusiasts have a good talking point in the fact that this year, in spite of short-term planning, poor weather and many distractions, the venture did not bring financial loss.

Several suggestions have been made for better sites. Major Hill Park, behind the Chateau Laurier, has obvious advantages. One thinks, longingly of natural settings on the Experimental Farm. The Gatineau region has several possible settings.

A Gatineau summer theater would not have to depend entirely on summer cottagers or on Ottawa folk with cars for its patronage. It has been suggested that special buses could be provided, and suppers sold on the grounds, to attract city folk who'd enjoy an evening's outing.

The Summer Theater project, then, has had a precarious existence this summer, but it has spawned all sorts of speculation. Probably we're not being unduly optimistic in saying that it has provided grounds for hope for the future. The next step seems to be to begin now laying plans for next year. —L.T.

Composer And Drama Producer Win Awards

John Beckwith, Toronto musician, and Donal S. Wilson, Vancouver theater student, have each been awarded \$2,000 scholarships for advanced professional study, it was announced in Ottawa today by Walter Herbert, director of the Canada Foundation.

The scholarships were financed by the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association under a scheme which was initiated in 1949. The competition for this year's awards attracted applications from nine provinces and from a number of Canadian students now studying abroad.

John Beckwith, at 23, has already succeeded in several spheres of musical activity. As a composer, the category in which he won the C.A.H.A. award, he has had seven works performed publicly and has won distinction in musical competitions and symposiums in Canada and the United States. Recently a CBC Wednesday Night featured a program of Beckwith compositions, including the *Great Lakes Suite*, and *Four Songs to poems by Edith Sitwell*. He is one of the few Canadian composers whose works have been published commercially.

Mr. Beckwith's plans for further musical education include studies under Paul Hindemith and Darius Milhaud.

From Little Theater

Donal S. Wilson, 24, of Vancouver, applied for the CAHA scholarship to assist in the financing of a post-graduate course, at the Yale University School of the Theater. He gained his basic education the hard way, working at a large number of jobs to finance his way through the University of British Columbia to the degrees of Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Education. Through association with the Vancouver Little Theater and the UBC Players Club he gained a wide knowledge of theater, and is regarded as one of the most talented young actors and directors in Western Canada. Last year his work was singled out for distinction at the B.C. Drama Festival and the Portland (Oregon) Civic Theater Association.

He Saw 250 Plays In Less Than Two Years

A young man who has seen 250 plays in less than two years was back home in Ottawa the other day.

Guy Beaulne, former producer with Ottawa's French drama group, *Le Caveau*, and drama critic for *Le Droit*, has found his two years in Paris exciting and profitable.

Theater, radio and television occupied his time. He studied and observed these three branches of drama in Paris, Zurich, Rome and London. Since radio and (soon) television offer more immediate future than theater in Canada, he now goes to Montreal to do radio work.

The television shows he saw in Europe filled him with enthusiasm.

Fine "Othello"

"I saw a wonderful presentation of *Othello* in London," he said. "It was a well-studied adaptation, really a masterpiece. They got such intimate feeling, such fine studies of the facial expressions of Iago, for instance, and they put great stress on the meaning of the words."

"In Paris the television producers are still working along cinema lines—they go in for shifting of the camera, sudden close-ups, and other tricks of film technique."

In Paris Mr. Beaulne's days were filled with study. Thanks to scholarships provided by the French government, by the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association and the Institut Canadien-Francais of Ottawa, he had two full seasons in Paris.

Classes With Jouvet

His formal studies consisted of classes at L'Institut de Phonétique (of the Sorbonne), including classes with Louis Jouvet. Informally, he studied with Denis D'Ines, dean of the Comedie Francaise.

One of the experiences he valued most was the opportunity to attend rehearsals of plays produced by Jean-Louis Barrault.

"It's quite an achievement to do that, for rehearsals in Paris are strictly secret. Barrault is a short, very nervous, high-strung man, but very kind. Within 15 minutes he had his arm around

my shoulder, and he talked at great length. He's much more approachable than Jouvet."

Mr. Barrault, whom Ottawans will remember for his miming in the film *Les Enfants du Paradis*, hopes to bring his company to Canada some day, with Gide's translation of *Hamlet*, plays by Claudel and others.

Rent Raised

Living in Paris is expensive. Mr. Beaulne reported, "almost as expensive as in Canada—and that's bad!" But in the next breath he said that he had rented an apartment for the French equivalent of \$1.50 a month.

Yes, that's right, \$1.50 a month. It didn't last, of course. Rents were bound to be raised, and soon Mr. Beaulne was paying \$1.75.

Three weeks spent in London on the way home brought him one of the most exciting experiences of his trip—a topnotch production, in English, of Moliere's play *L'Avare* (*The Miser*).

"This Old Vic production had more of the real flavor of Moliere than anything I saw even at the Comedie Francaise. I did not believe it could be done, but now I am convinced."

Looking At Canada

Speaking about theater in Canada, Mr. Beaulne said that his two years' sojourn abroad had taught him two things:

First, patience.

Second, the importance of amateur groups, and the necessity of supporting and subsidizing them.

"I was official observer for Canada at the Congress of International Theater, last year in Zurich, this year in Paris. I told the delegates that the standard of non-professional productions in Canada compares very favorably with professional productions in Europe.

"Canada could not be represented at these meetings because we have no organization authorized to represent drama groups."

Would Benefit Greatly

Canada is missing many advantages by not joining the international body, Mr. Beaulne



Guy Beaulne

thinks. Scholarships, exchange of information and facilities for touring companies are the benefits he listed.

He sees united effort as the best hope for the future of amateur drama in Canada. "If our drama people unite under some central national organization, they can arrange for professional producers to travel from place to place.

"Drama centers, supported by subsidy, should be established in every province. It's time we gave thought to prevention of errors, instead of letting untrained groups come to the Dominion Drama Festival to be criticized."

Include Ottawa In Summer Tour

On August 21 Ottawa will see a play which has yet to be tried out on Broadway. The *Devil Also Dreams*, starring Claire Luce, which comes to the Capitol Theater on that date, is on a short pre-Broadway tour before going into the Booth Theater, New York.

It's a comedy murder mystery, written by Elissa Rohn and Fritz Rotter, and it concerns the efforts of an ageing playwright to hold the interest of a temperamental actress.

In addition to Miss Luce, the cast includes such stars as Francis L. Sullivan, Bela Lugosi and Richard Waring.

Music On Your Radio

Sunday

Sunday Morning Recital: Ellen Reynolds, soprano; Doris Killam, accompanist. CBO—10.30 a.m.

Every Pleasure in Full
 Measure Handel
 Sheep May Safely Graze Bach
 Battli, Battli Mozart
 At Times My Thoughts Come Drifting
 The Smith Brahms
 Les cloches Debussy
 Air champetre Poulenc
 Blackbird Song Scott
 Silent Noon Williams

The Concert Album: Recorded Music. CBO—11.30 a.m.
 Symphony No. 5 in B flat Schubert

The Concerto: Recorded Music. Pablo Casals, cellist. CBO—12.30 p.m.

Cello Concerto in B flat major Boccherini

Your Invitation To Music: Marie Powers, mezzo-soprano; James Fassett, commentator. CBO—3 p.m.

Concerto No. 2 in E flat major for Horn and Orchestra Mozart
 Philharmonia Orchestra of London, conducted by Walter Susskind;
 Dennis Brain, horn soloist
 The Medium, Acts I and II Menotti
 Marie Powers, mezzo-soprano; original Broadway cast

The NBC Symphony: Rose Bampton, soprano; Wilfrid Pelletier conducting. WNBC—3.30 p.m.

Overture to Italian in Algiers Rossini
 When I Have Sung My Songs Charles
 You and the Night and the Music Schwartz
 Alice in Orchestralia Gillis-LaPrade
 Orchestra and Mayehoff, narrator
 Claire de Lune Debussy
 Fetes Debussy
 Vissi d'arte, from La Tosca Puccini
 Bampton
 Artist's Life Waltz J. Strauss
 Orchestra

The Little Symphonies: CBC

Montreal Orchestra conducted by Roland Leduc. CBO—9.30 p.m.

G major Symphony, No. 88 Haydn

Monday

CBC Summer Concert: Pierrette Dalbec, soprano; CBC Orchestra conducted by Jean Beaudet. CBO—8 p.m.

La Gazza Ladra Rossini
 Danse from La Vida Breve De Falla
 Dream of Love Liszt
 Song of India Rimsky-Korsakoff
 Homing Del Riego
 Pierrette Dalbec and Orchestra
 Danse villageoise Champagne
 Egyptian Ballet Luigini

The Railroad Hour: Lucille Norman, soprano; Gordon MacRae, baritone; Norman Luboff Chorus and Carmen Dragon's Orchestra. WNBC—8 p.m.

Rise and Shine, from *Take a Chance* Youmans
 MacRae
 April in Paris, from *Walk a Little Faster* Duke-Harburg
 Norman

Night and Day, from *The Gay Divorcee* Porter
 MacRae and Norman
 Through the Years Youmans
 MacRae
 Lover Rodgers-Hart
 Norman
 The Song Is You, from *Music in the Air* Kern
 MacRae and Norman

Vocal Recital: Rise Stevens, mezzo-soprano; Symphonic Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Howard Barlow. WNBC—8.30 p.m.

After the Ball Is Over Harris
 Orchestra and Chorus
 People Will Say We're in Love, from *Oklahoma* Rodgers
 Stevens
 The Swan Saint-Saens
 Orchestra
 Vol che sapete, from *The Marriage of Figaro* Mozart
 Stevens
 It Might As Well Be Spring Rodgers
 Stevens and Chorus
 Overture Orpheus Offenbach
 Orchestra
 A Kiss in the Dark, from *Orange Blossoms* Herbert
 Stevens and Chorus