

# Jazz city to blow up Edmonton

Nothing about *Jazz City*, the first international jazz festival of its kind and magnitude to be held in Canada, seems second-rate. And the good news for Edmontonians is that the combination of hard work, delicate negotiation, and refreshingly high levels of enthusiasm and energy displayed by organizers will prevail to make the Edmonton Festival a rousing success.

From August 17 to 24, Albertans will be treated to a week-long musical program featuring some of today's most prominent jazz artists, tentatively including Oscar Peterson, Joe Pass, Dizzy Gillespie and Benny Goodman. Logistically, the project will involve the coordination of approximately 300 people and \$180,000.

While Edmonton Jazz Society President Taras Ostashevsky admits delays in receiving a \$100,000 grant from the 75th Anniversary Festival of the Arts he still remains optimistic about the festival. To date *Jazz City* organizers have received the first installment of the grant, with a second to follow soon. This should enable organizers to finalize their negotiations with certain artists they had hoped to sign, Ostashevsky says.

The key to *Jazz City* success may lie in its innovative format. A decision was made to forego a traditional festival program of two or three days of intensive performing by a number of groups in favor of a series of concerts spanning an entire week. The week-long series allows audiences a greater exposure to exceptionally high-quality artists and provide greater diversity, according to Ostashevsky.

Aside from regularly scheduled evening concerts, planners have arranged daily performances by featured artists at a variety of locations across the city. Similarly, workshops with artists at the Grant MacEwan School of Music, and a Saturday afternoon children's concert, are aimed at bolstering community involvement in the festival.

The concerts will be held at the Jubilee Auditorium, the Centennial Library Theatre, and the Shector Theatre at the Citadel.



With luck, Jay MacShann (lower left), Benny Goodman (above) and Dizzy Gillespie (lower right) will be playing Edmonton this summer.

Opening and closing performances at the Jubilee Auditorium will feature festival headliners.

Festival planners have also attempted to include representative artists from across the jazz spectrum. Tentatively scheduled for Monday, August 18th is a Kansas City Blues program featuring the Jay MacShann Blues All Stars, accompanied by Eddie "Clean-Head" Vinson, Ray Bryant, Arnett Cobb and Buddy Tate.

The big-band sound will be delivered by the Lew Tabakin/Tohiko Akyoshi Big Band on Thursday, the 21st, at the Shector.

Friday, the Art Ensemble of Chicago, renowned exponents of the "new" school of jazz, will pay a return visit to Edmonton, followed on Saturday night by the Elvin Jones Quartet and, possibly the McCoy Tyner sextet.

The Kenny Wheeler Quintet and Jack DeJohnette Quartet will highlight the Centennial Library's program, along with PJ Perry and the Phil Woods Quartet.

With festival receipts forecasted at \$50,000, the Edmonton Jazz Society will conduct a variety of fundraising activities to make up an additional \$30,000 to



break even on the event. Ostashevsky says he doesn't think the project will lose money, though. And he insists that *Jazz City '80* will be the precursor of an annual event.

For ticket information and a finalized concert schedule, contact the Edmonton Jazz Society.



## There's no business like Shaw business

Theater review by Marni Stanley

The Citadel's current main stage production, George Bernard Shaw's *Arms and the Man*, is as luscious and self-indulgent as the chocolate creams that are so central to its plot.

Francis Hyland has directed the play as a colorful, delightful comedy touched here and there by

commentary on warfare, but for the most part Shaw's political concerns are played down while his wit is played up. As an added bonus, the cast, almost to a man, speaks the Shavian dialogue with the precision and pacing it requires.

The play opens in the bedroom of a young Bulgarian girl, Raina (Gabrielle Rose), who is engaged

in worshipping a portrait of her fiancé, an intolerable dandy of a soldier named Sergius (Geza Kovacs). It seems that Sergius is out campaigning against the Serbs and just as she bestows a kiss on the picture, into her room pops a very tired, and very attractive, Serbian officer. We soon discover that the Serb is really a Swiss and that Raina is a civilized (she washes her hands daily) girl who knows about hospitality. Of course rivalry follows but in the end all the right couplings are managed with just enough social upheaval to delight the Fabian Shaw.

There are two outstanding performances amongst the many very competent ones. Michael Ball's Petkoff (Raina's father) is a masterful characterization. He gives the "barbarian Bulgarian" a wonderful charm, seemingly in spite of himself, and he manages to make the word "library" sound as if it held the key to life. Didsbury born Robert Haley is the down-to-earth Bluntschli, the Swiss Serb. The blunt in his name is not, as nothing is in Shaw, there by accident. He uses his whole body very well on stage and the range of gestures and attitudes he manages to a long way towards making Bluntschli human.

This production is very pleasing to the eye. Gary Dahms' costumes are enough to start a rage in Bulgarian dresses and Lawrence Scherer's expansive sets fill every inch of available space to its best advantage. The beautiful warm wood tones are nicely highlighted by Bill Williams' very competent lighting and the overall effect is one of co-operative design; each aspect is complemented by the others.

Take in *Arms and the Man* if you have a chance. It is the perfect counterpart to essays and exams and though it may not be very nutritious it goes down very pleasantly. With the exception of *Brief Lives* this is probably the Citadel's best production of the season simply because it treats the material with the respect and the professionalism it deserves.

## Benefit for Cambodian refugees

Three Edmonton bands and a solo artist will perform in SUB Theatre to raise money for the people of Kampuchea (Cambodia).

The benefit concert, scheduled for April 12, will feature Edmonton's well-known Fat Chants, traditional folkies Comely Cog, and singer performer Lloyd Litke, a veteran local musician. Wrapping up the concert will be the high power rock and roll band, Shifter.

The concert has been organized by some Gateway staffers and members of the Synergic Arts society. While these two organizations are sponsoring the event, additional assistance has been supplied by the U of A Chaplains' Association, 630 CHED, BASS Tickets, and other groups and individuals.

Most important has been the donation of the theater for the concert.

"The Students' Union gave us a big break by waiving the rental charge on the theater," says Beno John, one of the concert's organizers. "That certainly made the concert a viable idea."

Because all of the musicians are performing for free, the organizers hope to raise about \$2,500 for Cambodian relief.

"All of the money raised will go to a recognized relief agency currently operating in Cambodia," John



Comely Cog is one of the bands playing for the refugees. says, "and no one is making a penny on this."

Tickets for the benefit concert are \$5.00 and are available at HUB Box Office, Keen Kraft Music and The Gateway office. Tickets, if available, will also be sold at the door on the night of the concert.