

Greenhouse makes inroads east of Toronto

BY KAREN PARKER

Folk music is a major part of the cultural scene in Nova Scotia and many local artists prosper in

the pubs and coffee houses around Halifax. But if you're not playing traditional tunes or you're from "out west", the east coast can be a hard market to

break. With his first visit to Halifax last week, folk artist Jeremy Greenhouse proved that this is not always true. A gig opening for the Mahones and Irish Descendants at the McInnes Room, an appearance on *Breakfast Television* and a series of evening shows at the Thirsty Duck kept Greenhouse and his band busy.

Growing up in Southern Ontario and listening to his father play songs by legendary artists like Gordon Lightfoot and Bob Dylan, Greenhouse gained a strong musical background. He studied violin at McGill and then went on to earn his Masters in Musicology from the University of Victoria in British Columbia.

While in BC he developed an interest in folk and traditional music. Influenced by the work of artists such as Stan Rogers,

Greenhouse began to perform in local clubs. Before long he was in high demand, not only as a folk musician but also as a fiddler.

Since then, Greenhouse has performed with some of Canada's premiere folk artists, including the Stoaters and the Last Family. But now he's back to concentrating on his own music. He recently relocated to Minneapolis and is currently completing a cross-Canada tour.

Jeremy Greenhouse has released two CDs. His first, the folk-inspired *Things That You Believe*, came out in 1994. His latest album, *Unravelled*, was released in 1996 and garnered

rave reviews from RPM Magazine. *Unravelled* features appearances by some of Canada's most talented folk musicians, including J. Knutson, Michelle Campagne (Hart Rouge) and Geoff Kelly (Spirit of the West).

Greenhouse's live show features his guitar and vocal abilities with songs from both of his CDs as well as a lot of new material, and a few traditional fiddle tunes thrown in for good measure. With beautiful ballads, witty celtic-inspired drinking songs about the War of 1812 and lots of other creative, original material, he is not to be missed.



Cross-casting in *The Merchant of Venice*

BY PAUL MANSFIELD

Cross-casting is not entirely a new idea. Historically men have often played the female roles in Shakespeare's plays. But in Dal Theatre's production of *The Merchant of Venice* almost all male parts are played by women and almost all female parts are played by men.

While waiting for the play to begin, I read through the program notes expecting to see the usual things like a list of the cast and a summary of the story.

The cast was there but not the story summary.

Instead, the program was a description of old Shakespearean theatre productions in which the female parts were played by young boys. Flipping through the rest of my program, I read about topics such as "Cross-dressing in Shakespeare's Plays" and "Gender-bending in History".

But even that didn't prepare me for the first five minutes of the play. The actors started to appear on stage, and while I was trying to remember the play (having read it in grade 10), I was also trying to figure out the gender of the characters, and the actors. After a few confused minutes I managed to adjust and was ready to follow the story.

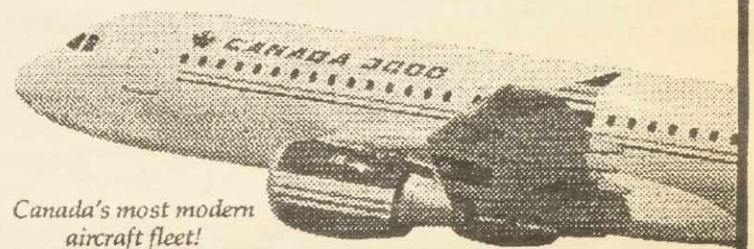
The Merchant of Venice quickly focuses on Bassanio (Sara Holmes) and Antonio (Konima Parkinson-Jones) discussing the money Bassanio owes Antonio. Bassanio needs some more money for a scheme involving a young wealthy woman. Antonio would like to help his friend but is having a cash flow problem — all his money is tied up in investments. That is where Shylock (Jessica Bastow) comes in, playing the Jewish businessman. The tension is high as Antonio and Shylock make a deal, and the play continues to centre around their story.

I really enjoyed this play even though the cross-casting was a new experience for me. The story is funny and exciting. Nerissa (Richard Davidson) and Portia (Matthew Kennedy) stole the show in spots. They had the audience roaring with their facial expressions and style.

Bastow was fantastic as Shylock, she played the role so well I don't think anyone left the theatre thinking very highly of her/his character.

One of the interesting quirks of the production was the use of modern technology despite the historical time period, including characters with bank card keys for opening the boxes of gold, frankincense and myrrh, and a state-of-the-art electronic neck-cuff for the prisoner.

Overall, it was an extremely enjoyable production. If you are looking for a night of fun and entertainment I would recommend watching these inspiring and soon to be professional actors work the stage.



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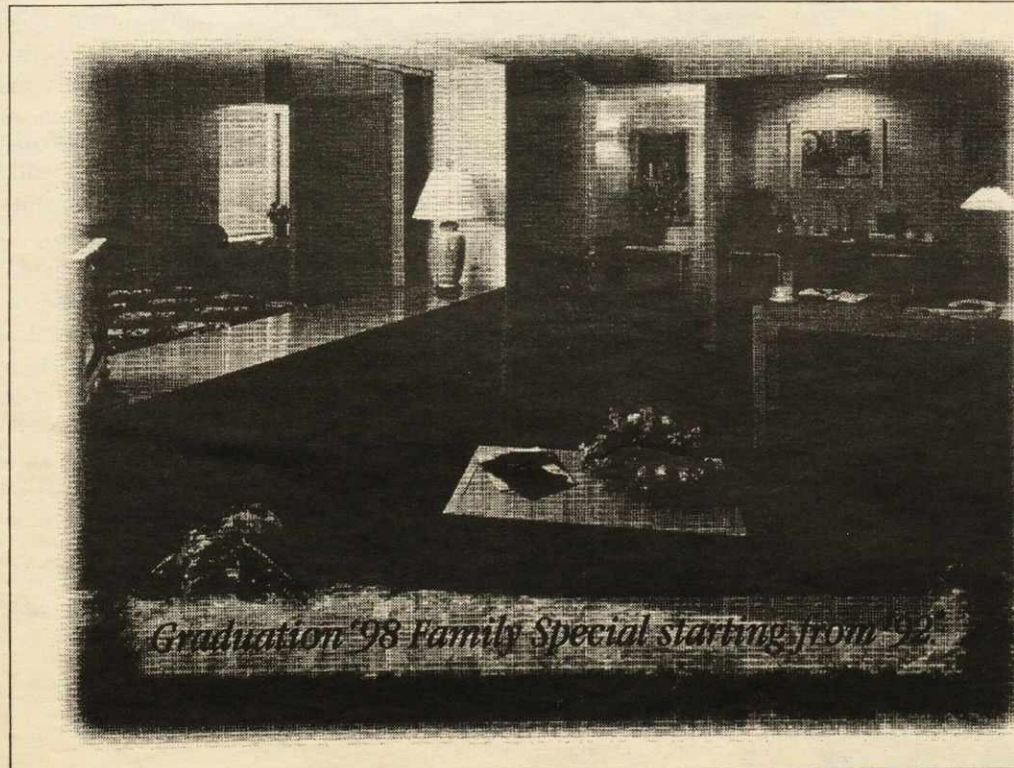
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VANCOUVER	—	—	18:50	—	—	—	—
CALGARY	—	—	18:50	—	—	—	—
TORONTO	16:10 ¹	14:35 ¹ 18:25	10:30 ¹ 14:30 ¹¹	15:40 ¹¹ 22:55 ¹	14:20 ¹⁰ 17:20	11:35	—
ST. JOHN'S	—	13:25	—	18:00	—	—	—
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ORLANDO	—	06:00	—	—	—	—	—
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