

Dublin's Donnelly battles evil in Dracula

by Dragos Ruiu

It took thirty-four years for Donal Donnelly, from Dublin, to wind up in Edmonton. He is currently playing the role of Professor Van Helsing in the Citadel production of Dracula.

In that 34 year career there have been many high points. Donnelly has appeared in a list of plays as long as your arm. He has also been in many television shows and movies; most notably, the recently acclaimed John Huston film *The Dead*.

Fate brought him to Edmonton, working with William Fisher and Sandy Dennis in *84 Charing Cross Road* at Stage West. William Fisher has since become Resident Director of the Citadel Theatre.

"They phoned me and asked if I would be interested in doing this role and the role of Underwood in Bernard Shaw's *Major Barbara*," explains Donnelly.

His distinguished career started at the Gate Theatre in Dublin, where other such notables as Orson Welles and James Mason performed early in their careers. "It was quite different in those days. We took three year apprenticeships, and we belonged to everybody. We learned all aspects of theatre. You didn't just act, you worked on props, as stage managers, on lighting..." says Donnelly with a hint of an Irish accent.

It was early in his career that Donnelly developed his interest in G.B. Shaw. "The man had an astounding career; he was a prolific playwright, a premier drama and art critic, a music composer, he helped found the Labor Party, he was an early feminist..."

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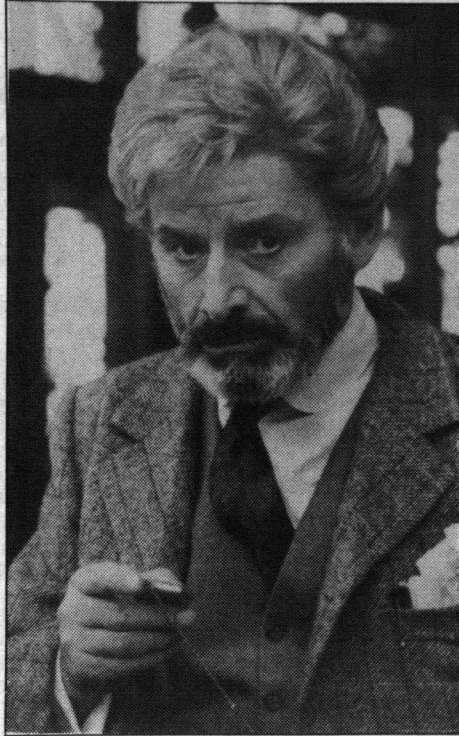
Donnelly's interest in Shaw culminated in a one man show about the playwright entitled *My Astonishing Self*. This show has played literally around the world in London, Hong Kong, Zurich, New York, L.A. and many other cities. Donnelly plans to revive the show after his current two play stint at the Citadel.

His present role is that of the arch-enemy to the infamous Count Dracula. "I'm the standard bearer into the battles against the forces of evil." This production of Dracula is a 1927 adaptation of Bram Stoker's famous 1897 novel.

"This isn't a fun melodrama," says Donnelly. "The audience is drawn into the reality of the action. It is scaryfyingly supernatural, full of splendid effects. Even though the audience suspects that good will finally triumph over evil, the finale always draws a horrendous gasp. And the victory takes a terrible toll on my character."

The audience is what makes theatre exciting for Donnelly. "It's very sensual. You can feel that tension from the audience during the play."

Since the play is set in the thirties, the role required little research for Donnelly. "I lived through the thirties," he says. As for the future, at 57, Donnelly has no plans to retire. "That's a terrible word. No-one should retire. Death or impairment is the natural way of retiring."



Dragos Ruiu

Donal Donnelly

At 57, the experienced actor is playing Dracula's Foe in the current Citadel production.

Entertainment Digest

Citadel Theatre

The Citadel is holding a public open house this Saturday, September 24 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Meanwhile, the main-stage season begins this week with *Dracula*, which runs until October 16.

Poetry Contest

The League of Canadian Poets is holding its second national poetry contest. Unpublished poems not longer than 75 lines can be submitted with a \$5 entry fee to the League at Ryerson Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, M5T 2P3. The deadline is December 1, 1989. The entrant's name, address, phone number and title(s) of poems should also be included on a separate sheet of paper.

Organ Recital

The Sundays at 3 organ recital series begins this Sunday with a concert by Frederick Swann at All Saints Cathedral, 10035 103 St.

Piano Recital

Pianist Kathy Huget will give a free piano recital in Convocation Hall this Sunday, September 25 at 3 p.m. Admission is free.

Yardbird Suite

The Edmonton Jazz Society presents guitarist Joshua Breakstone with the Charlie Austin Trio, Thursday through Saturday at the Yardbird Suite. Admission is \$7 for members, \$10 for guests. All shows start at 9 p.m.

Provincial Museum

The Museum is presenting a map exhibit entitled "From Terra Incognita to the Prairie West", beginning October 1. For more information, contact the museum.

Record Convention

Edmonton's second annual record convention will be held at the Kinsmen Field House on Sunday, November 13. For more information and table bookings please call David at 432-7503.

Metro Cinema

The Cinema presents *Pig Pen*, a 1969 Pasolini film, this Friday and Saturday, 8 p.m. at the NFB Theatre in Canada Place. This is a program change from *Escape from Segovia*, cancelled due to a distributor's error.

SPEAKER

The Graduate Students' Association, Student Awards Office, and the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research present:

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9:00 - 11:00 SCIENCES AND ENGINEERING
13:00 - 15:00 MEDICAL AND HEALTH SCIENCES
16:00 - 18:00 SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 5, NORTH POWER PLANT

Open to Graduate Students, Senior Undergraduate Students and Faculty

Please Be Sure To Register For Each Session In Advance
Either By: Phone - Graduate Students' Association, 432-2175
Mail - Fill Out Form in September Current

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 27

Refreshments and Snacks Served



SERIES

