

editor: Miroslav Wiesner

deadline: Wednesday Noon

ENTERTAINMENT

CBC Radio airs two exciting new programs

The Trials of Ezra Pound

In 1945, American troops in Italy arrested one of the most influential writers in modern literature, imprisoned him in a metal cage, and kept him on display in the centre of town.

Ezra Pound was a brilliant American poet, a distinguished scholar, a respected editor and an inspiration to T.S. Eliot, James Joyce, Robert Frost and Ernest Hemingway.

Pound moved to Rome in 1924 and, during the Second World War, made regular anti-semitic, fascist speeches on radio supporting Mussolini. His public broadcasts attacking Roosevelt, the American constitution and capitalism were considered fascist propaganda and a crime against the United States. Pound was subsequently arrested in Rapallo, Italy, and charged with treason.

THE TRIALS OF EZRA POUND, a drama special written by Timothy Findley, aired on CBC Radio Monday, March 26. This two-hour drama examined the moral dilemma of reconciling the brilliant, creative artist with the destructive, twisted anti-Semite and fascist.

In 1946, in a Washington courtroom, Pound faced a hearing to determine if he was mentally fit to stand trial for betraying his country. The charges against him were serious and the stakes high. If the court could prove Pound was competent, he would have to stand trial. If convicted, he would be punished like any other traitor: death by hanging.

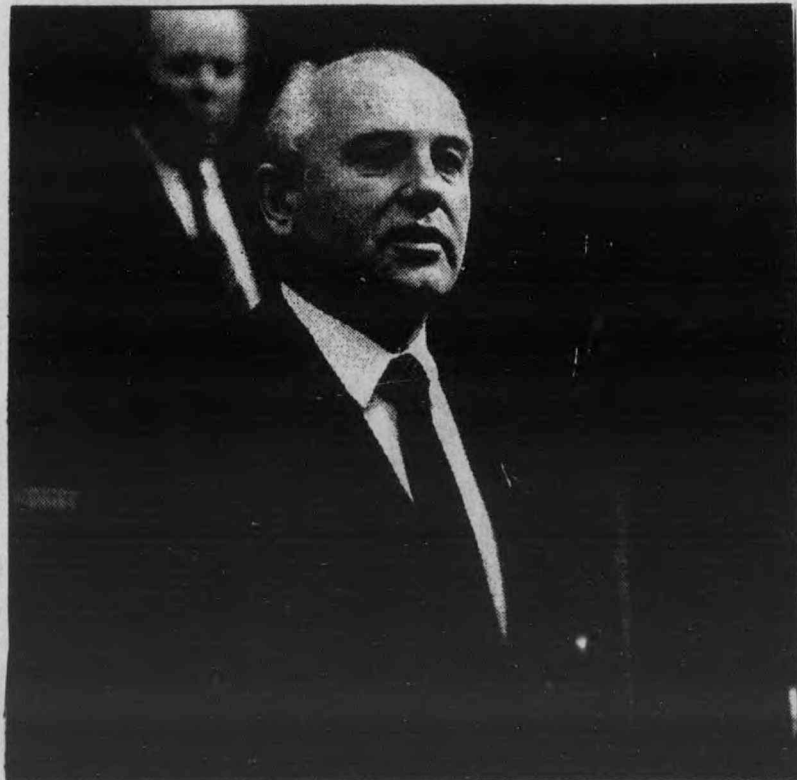
Although Findley based THE TRIALS OF EZRA POUND on actual transcripts from Pound's hearing, the play is a dramatic treatment of the life and times of Pound, using the courtroom setting as a starting point for the exploration of Pound's complex and creative mind. Since writing the novel "Famous Last Words," in which Ezra Pound is a leading character, Findley says he has been "haunted by the virulence of Pound's fascist politics and anti-semitism. These two facets of his writing are completely at odds with his poetic genius. It is this contradiction that I have attempted to untangle in THE TRIALS OF EZRA POUND."

Critically-acclaimed actor Douglas Rain starred as Ezra Pound with George Touliatos (Matlack); Michael Ball (Cornell); Neil Munro (Dr. Muncie); Donald Davis (Dr. Overholser); Colin Fox (Judge Laws); Timothy Findley (W.C. Williams) and Marion Gilsenan (Dorothy). THE TRIALS OF EZRA POUND was produced and directed by Damiano Pietropaolo for CBC Radio's Drama Features Department.



It is 1946. A great American poet stands accused of treason for spreading fascist, anti-Semitic propaganda during the war. Now his life is in the courts. Will Ezra Pound hang on his own words? Or will his life be spared for the asylum? Join the court in session. March 26th.

With actor Douglas Rain. Screenplay by Keith. Directed by Damiano Pietropaolo. Drama



The Gorbachev Revolution: Promises and Perils

In the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, the impossible continues to happen. For many, the rapid change there promises great opportunities and great risks.

CBC Radio Host Gwynne Dyer and reporter Paul Wilson provide peerless insight into the key ideas and people behind glasnost and perestroika on the GORBACHEV REVOLUTION: PROMISES AND PERILS, a seven-part series airing on CBC Radio Sundays at 11:05 a.m.

Dyer, with his elaborate knowledge of Soviet history, and Wilson, who has extensive contacts in the Eastern Block, have spent months in Russia and Eastern Europe interviewing politicians, business leaders, soldiers, students, academics, artists and people on the streets, in offices and on factory floors. When nations and governments come apart, by treaty or revolution, they have to put themselves back together. THE GORBACHEV REVOLUTION addresses many of the questions about the historic "fall of '89." What type of electoral systems will have to be set up? How permanent are these changes? How much democracy will they lead to? Could there be a conservative backlash? What will happen to the secret police? How do you begin to correct environmental wastelands, after years of unchecked abuse? Has the Cold War really ended? And what does all this mean for the West?

For Bernie Lucht, executive producer of THE GORBACHEV REVOLUTION, the greatest challenge is "keeping up with the dizzying pace of change. I've never dealt with anything like it before. Gwynne and Paul were in the Soviet Union and Central Europe last fall when they recorded much of their material. Some of that is still useful. As we approach this broadcast, they have returned to the field to get material that will be as up-to-date as possible. My nightmare is that we will finish a program Saturday night and by the time it goes to air Sunday morning, it will be history."

Dyer has a Phd in military and middle eastern history and is a highly-regarded international journalist and syndicated columnist, particularly for his expertise on Soviet and Eastern European affairs. He is perhaps best known as the writer and host of the N.F.B.'s acclaimed documentary series, War.

Wilson was a teacher in Czechoslovakia from 1967-1977, during the beginning of the Czech underground movement. He witnessed the Prague Spring of 1968, Alexander Dubcek's policy of "Socialism with a human face," as well as the creation of Charter 77, the first human rights movement in the Soviet Bloc, co-founded by (today's Czechoslovakian President) Vaclav Havel in 1977. Wilson was expelled the same year for his association with the Plastic People of the Universe, a rock band he played with for a number of years. Since his return to Canada in 1978, he has translated the works of several leading Czech writers, including Josef Skvorecky, Bohumil Hrabal and Havel. Wilson earned the Governor General's Award for Fiction in 1984 for his translation of Skvorecky's classic novel, The Engineer of Human Souls.

THE GORBACHEV REVOLUTION: PROMISES AND PERILS is produced by CBC Radio's Drama and Features Department. It will be repeated on CBC Radio's "Ideas" beginning Wednesday April 4 at 9:05 p.m. Est.

Episode 2: SEVENTY YEARS WASTED (April 1) The Soviet people now face the difficult task of coming to terms with their past: the state's hidden history of purges, lies, mistakes and massacres. They have to find a way of believing their history has not simply been a ghastly mistake. In this hour, we hear how people are gradually admitting the truth about the past to themselves and learn to talk about it in public.