

GATEWAY TO THE arts

PAGE EIGHT

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 1964

Priestman May Become Permanent Asset, Could Offset Departure Of Windy Group

By Elan Galper

Last Sunday's symphony concert was a valuable indication of what Edmonton concertgoers may expect in the coming year. The reason—the conductor, Mr. Brian Priestman, who conducted last year's performance of Beethoven's Ninth, has just announced his willingness to become the Symphony's permanent conductor next year. The acquisition of a resident conductor can only have a beneficial effect on the orchestra, which may counteract the sad departure of many wind-instrumentalists due to Army maneuvers.

The concert consisted of two symphonies in the terse and gloomy key of B minor, the three arias, with the acclaimed Canadian bass Mr. Donald Bell as soloist. The opening work, Schubert's *Unfinished Symphony*, was performed with an intense sense of drama and concentrated emotion which managed to mask well the rather episodic nature of the first movement. The second movement, however, was just slightly on the heavy side.

The two arias from Handel's *Messiah* and a concert aria by Mozart showed good evidence of the sympathy existing between the conductor and the soloist. In all arias, the instrumental accompaniment was well controlled, allowing the soloist to display his well-developed mastery of technique. The encore-piece, an aria and recitative known to many as Handel's *Largo*, was rendered with exquisite delicacy, the conductor accompanying at the piano.

The last work on the program, Borodin's *Second Symphony*, was adapted by him out of thematic material from his unfinished opera *Prince Igor*. But what

Shelley said about translations from one language to another must also be true of translations from one musical form to another: it cannot be done successfully, since the seed must grow anew and not be grafted. Hence, melodic as certain moments were, the whole work lacked "symphonicity." The first movement was overdominated by the recurring, somewhat Tartar theme in unison strings, tossed about from one instrumental group to another with meticulous technique—but little developmental

Boring Bandit

Violence Mars Sicilian Struggle

By Bob Pounder

A long, disjointed and often boring picture called *Salvatore Giuliano* was presented Monday evening by the Edmonton Film Society.

It deals with the career of the Sicilian bandit who got his start in the violent movement for Sicilian autonomy which sprang

up after the last war, strongly backed by popular approval and Mafia funds. Giuliano had a short period of supremacy, but violent death at the hands of his most trusted accomplice soon brought his end.

This story has considerable potential for a motion picture. However, Francesco Rosi, the director and writer, has chosen to present it in documentary style, with no attempt at characterization or personal involvement. But what is perhaps most irritating is the constant shifting from present to past to present without warning, and, to my mind, without adding a thing to the protracted plot.

The rapid time changes in most *nouvelle vague* movies from France serve an important purpose in highlighting individual traits and filling in details, or in setting the stage for experimentation. But in the case at hand, the intricacies of the story are such that throwing them into a jumbled order tends to create a labyrinth of Minoan proportions.

The film does have in its favor, I hasten to add, the towns and

countryside of Sicily, which must surely be one of the most photogenic spots in Europe, bringing the same kind of joy to the photographer as the slums of Manchester, Sacre Coeur and the Via Veneto.

The crumbling villages with their explosive inhabitants, as in *Salvatore Giuliano*, couldn't be better. There are pathetic scenes showing husbands and sons being dragged away from their womenfolk by the Carabinieri, and one outstanding sequence in which a horde of women, black-clad and wailing, comes roaring up the narrow stone streets like a collective banshee, in an attempt to save their men. Oh, very Sicilian.

But there are too many drawn-out scenes in which the camera follows the bandits up hill and down dale, or travels along streets for what seem like eternities, methodically showing too much detail. The stifled yawns were many. When the audience cannot become involved with the characters, realism and perseverance do not balance the scales for two hours.

Prime Pianist

Van Cliburn Masters Music

By Michael Massing

Last Thursday a full house at the Jubilee Auditorium was treated to an exceptional concert by the famed young American pianist, Van Cliburn.

Van Cliburn does not play after the manner of an interspective Rubenstein; rather, his youthful, vigorous temperament, always very much alive, is dominant throughout.

Cliburn moved with ease through the long strenuous program he chose. First came two intermezzi and the *G Minor Ballade* from Opus 18 Piano Pieces by Brahms. The first intermezzo belied unsteadiness. However Cliburn rallied in the second, successfully evoking its quiet, meditative mood. The *Ballade* was exciting with never a harsh tone.

The *Appassionata Sonata* by Beethoven followed. Although well performed, Cliburn did not

pay enough attention to the text, distorting time values to achieve the effect he wanted, something unnecessary in Beethoven. However the spirit of the piece was not marred, the "passion" evident throughout. Dynamic control was excellent, with crescendos and fortes building effortlessly.

Next came the *Sonata* by the American contemporary composer Samuel Barber, a test of musicianship, endurance and memory for the pianist. In a truly amazing performance, Cliburn mastered all three. Cliburn's rendering evoked interest, from the strong march-like rhythms of the first movement, to the spirited and difficult final fugue.

The second half of the evening was entirely devoted to one of Chopin's greatest works, the *Sonata in B minor*, Opus 58. This was played in good style with broad romantic phrases and warm tone, particularly in the first movement.



SOMETHING'S ROTTEN IN THE STATE OF—Studio Theatre is presenting *Hamlet* by a playwright whose name escapes us. Walter Kaasa as Hamlet and Jean Clarke as his mother Gertrude are shown in a scene from the production, playing next week. Courtesy U of A Photo Service

Locals Challenge Hamlet For Shakespeare's 400th

To produce a Shakespearean play is always a great challenge, and when the play chosen is *Hamlet*, the challenge is even greater. However, to celebrate Shakespeare's 400th Anniversary, it was felt that the greatest possible effort should be made.

In keeping with the Studio Theatre policy, as many roles as possible have been cast from the students in the Drama Division, and in the case of *Hamlet*, director Tom Peacocke was fortunate in having such alumni as Walter Kaasa, Ted Kemp, John Rivet, Elsie Park Gowan, Michael O'Brien, Fred Hook, Al Lust, Robert Prather and Jack Pecover for the roles calling for more mature actors.

Walter Kaasa, whose previous

Shakespearean roles at Studio Theatre have been Caliban in *The Tempest* and Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice*, will play Hamlet. Ted Kemp will play Polonius. He has been seen in many roles at Studio Theatre, notable as Warbush in *The Curve*, The Aged Actor in *The Fantasticks*, and Zophar in *J.B.* John Rivet, seen last season as "J.B.", will play the Ghost and the First Gravedigger. Elsie Park Gowan will be the Player Queen, Michael O'Brien, Guildenstern, Fred Hook the Norwegian Captain, Al Lust the Player King, Robert Prather, Voltimand and Jack Pecover, Cornelius. Sets and costumes in the late Gothic period have been designed by Gordon Peacock, head of the Drama Division.

STUDIO THEATRE

is presenting

HAMLET

FEBRUARY 18 - 22

"TWOFOR" TICKETS ARE GONE . . .

. . . SOME GOOD SEATS STILL AVAILABLE