

# arts

## Citadel a challenge to Neville

by Kim St. Clair

"The theatre over hundreds of years has primarily been supported by the middle aged and the middle class. I like to strive for widening the audience, widening the age group, and widening the so-called class group."

These are the goals of John Neville, director of Edmonton's Citadel Theatre. Originally from Great Britain, Mr. Neville acted professionally for many years before coming to Canada. He appeared in three major movies: *Billy Budd*, *Topaz* and *A Study in Terror*.

Three years ago he was invited to come to Canada both to direct and act in Winnipeg and at the National Arts Theatre in Ottawa. Last year he was informed of the vacancy at the Citadel. Asked if he would consider the position, Neville accepted.

Why anyone would leave the professional film and theatre

industries of England in order to direct a young establishment in Edmonton is a good question. On the surface Edmonton has little to offer the theatre-wise. Live professional theatre is relatively new for this city. There isn't any established theatre tradition to rely on, and the Citadel building is very small. What are Neville's reasons for staying.

"I got to know a bit about Canada and the theatre scene, and I fell in love with it. And the reason why I agreed to do the job here is because it seemed to be a very exciting place to be in terms of the theatre."

"I think the thing about theatre here is that so much of it is still in the future. The possibilities are immensely exciting."

Even so, it would seem obvious that places like Ottawa or Toronto must definitely be more attractive than Edmonton. Western Canada is just beginning

to discover the arts. Ottawa and Toronto possess, much more firmly established backgrounds, years of experience to draw upon, and the pick of Canada's best. So why Edmonton?

"The most exciting theatre in Canada is taking place in the regional theatres, and not Toronto.... While there isn't a strong tradition in theatre over a long period, that doesn't necessarily make it a bad place to be, it makes it an exciting place to be.... Everything seems to be possible."

Apparently, Edmonton has a more dedicated core of theatre-goers than other places. There is, in fact, enough support to warrant building a new theatre. It is scheduled to open in the fall of '76 and will hold 650 seats as opposed to the present building's capacity of 280.

One of the interesting changes in format introduced this year is an exchange with Theatre Calgary. The Citadel's present production, *The Rivals* will go to Calgary in exchange for *6 Rooms Riv Vu*, opening Oct. 26. The reasoning behind this move is perhaps explained by Mr. Neville's belief that "...the sort of assinine rivalry that has existed between these two cities for about fifty years is strictly for the Stampeders and Eskimos." The exchange was his idea.

Since Mr. Neville's arrival, the Citadel has advanced into new areas, such as late night jazz and poetry. The Theatre has performed at Fort Saskatchewan



Citadel Director, John Neville.

Jail and currently presents noon hour poetry readings by Canadian and local talent. Last week's reading was by Rudy Wiebe of the U of A.

Perhaps the most important of these innovations is that of "Citadel on Wheels," a six man travelling unit headed by Irene Watts. "Wheels" presents a collage of three dramatic units, one of which is called *Canada speaks*, a program all about Canada as written by Canadians. Much of the content deals with traditional legends and myths of Canadian Indians and Eskimos.

Unfortunately, "Wheels" can no longer afford to visit any reservation schools in Alberta, as the Federal Government has cancelled their annual support of \$5000.

It's refreshing to hear in the midst of widespread criticism of Canadian theatre a hopeful voice such as John Neville's. Perhaps the future will see more of the professional performer gone local in Canada. If so, the outcome certainly should be worth the effort.

"The live theatre will never die."

## rock notes

### Iron Curtain Lifted

As far as rock music is concerned, the Iron Curtain finally has been lifted. Most Eastern European countries have become increasingly aware of and in tune with rock music, according to Joseph Laux of Hungary's Locomotiv GT.

"We are up to date on your rock music", says Laux, who explains that Hungary today has scores of rock groups and rock music halls. "Some (halls) can seat as many as 3,000 persons", he says.

Laux adds that American and English rock and pop records are getting radio airplay both in Hungary and Poland.

Locomotiv GT, which has had nine gold albums in Hungary, is winding up its U.S. tour and plans to return to Hungary for an October-November swing through its homeland. The group has been so busy in the West that it has not been able to play to Hungarians for over a year.

### Greg Allman Tour

A new two-record set of Gregg Allman live will feature 29 musicians including a 14-member string section, a six-member rhythm section, a five-member horn section, and three background vocalists.

Allman plays guitar and organ and sings lead on the L.P., which is titled "The Gregg Allman Tour". Most of the album was recorded at Carnegie Hall last April. It will be released this month on Capricorn.

"The Gregg Allman Tour" also features guest selections by Cowboy, the group that was Gregg's special guest on his solo tour last spring. Allman is planning another tour, which will include the western United States and Europe, for late this year.

### Record Label for Ringo

Following the lead of George Harrison, former Beatle Ringo Starr is forming his own record label, according to Billboard magazine.

Ringo reportedly has

entered into an agreement with Polydor Records for the distribution of his new label, to be called "Ring-O' Records". There are no immediate plans for Starr to record for the label himself, as he -- like Harrison -- is still bound to the Apple/Capitol labels. An announcement is expected soon on what acts will record for the "Ring-O'" label.

Polydor artists and repertory manager Wayne Bickerton has told Billboard that "talks are going on at the moment about whether to launch the label in the later part of this year, or wait until January....really it all depends on Ringo Starr."

### Zappa Cancels Tour

Frank Zappa, leader of the Mothers of Invention, has cancelled a planned British tour claiming that theatre managers are discriminating against him.

Melody Maker reports that five theatres, including the Royal Albert Hall, are objecting to Zappa's performance because his music allegedly contains "obscenities." In 1971, Zappa's "200 Motels" concert was cancelled by the Albert Hall at the last minute when the Hall's management objected to some of his lyrics.

This year, other concert halls are raising similar objections. Zappa is challenging the Albert Hall's cancellation in British court.

But for the moment, Zappa says, "Although I have been to Britain at least once a year since 1967, this year I'm afraid I won't be coming."

Zappa, who's latest album "Apostrophe" recently reached the top twenty in the U.S., is currently on a tour of mainland Europe.

### Famous Con-artist writes Memoirs

Warner Communications' paperback subsidiary has finalized its purchase of the rights to former President Nixon's memoirs, according to Daily Variety. The memoirs may be packaged in two volumes, but first Nixon must write them.

## Canadian poets to read at GMCC

The third annual series of public readings by well-known Canadian poets, presented by Grant MacEwan Community College in co-operation with the

Canada Council, will continue October 16th with Marian Engel. A former book-reviewer for the New York Times, she is known for her works *The Honeyman Festival* and *No Clouds of Glory*.

## For Lunch - a look at the Battle of the Sexes

Continuing its highly successful lunch-time special productions, the Citadel Theatre will be presenting the cast of *The Rivals* in *The Way of Love - The Way of Strife* on Wednesday, October 16th at 12:15 (noon) at the Citadel.

The program, directed by David Schurmann, is a look at the Battle of the Sexes through the ages, with poetry, stories, quotations and scenes from various plays.

The writers vary from Ann Jellicoe, author of *The Knack* to Shakespeare, with Susan Wright and Richard Partington enacting a scene from *The Taming of the Shrew*. Harold Pinter is featured with Brigid Johnston and Bernard Cuffling in a short scenario from his play *The Lover*, while later in the program, Margaret Bard and Colin Miller play in *The Applicant*.

Other selections include the Company in Lord Byron's *Don Juan*, Owen Foran and Margaret Barton in Shaw's *Village Wooing*, with a touch of Noel Coward and a pinch of Aristophanes thrown in for good measure. Add some James

Thurber and Rupert Brooke, and you've got a fine pot-pourri of love and all its ramifications!

## World premiere

On October 23, Theatre 3 opens its 1974/75 season with the world premiere of Mary Humphrey Baldrige's *The Photographic Moment*. Written by an Alberta playwright, and with a 1930's Alberta setting, the play seems certain to wake strong memories in many Theatre 3 patrons.

Set on a farm near Atlee, Alberta, *The Photographic Moment* uses the bitter experience of depression and drought to expose the strong forces that hold a family together and those that pull it apart. Mary Humphrey Baldrige has turned the poverty and barrenness of the period to good effect in examining themes of love and perception which are timeless.

*The Photographic Moment* opens October 23rd in the Centennial Library Theatre and runs until the 3rd of November.

Alden Nowlan will be at the College October 23rd. Best known for his work *Bread, Wine and Salt*, which won the Governor-General's Award for 1967, he has had ten books of poetry published, the most recent being *I'm A Stranger Here Myself*. He has twice won the President's Medal of the University of Western Ontario for the best Canadian published short story.

Academic Vice-President of the University of Alberta, Henry Kriesel will read from his works October 30th. He has published two novels, *The Rich Man* and *The Betrayal*.

November 13th the College will feature Miriam Mandel, author of *Lions at Her Face*. Mrs. Mandel was awarded the Governor-General's Award for the best book of poetry in 1973.

Dale Zieroth, claimed by the critics to be one of Canada's most promising poets, will be at the College November 20th. His most recent publication is *Clearing: Poems From a Journey* although he is probably better known for *Mindscapes*.

An evening with local poets will be held November 27th, the final reading in the series. Works by well-known Edmonton poets including Bert Almon and Ivan Sundahl will be presented.

All readings will be held at 8:00 p.m. in Room 117 of the College's Cromdale Campus, 8020 - 118 Avenue. The public is invited to attend at no charge.

Further information about the series may be obtained by calling the English Department of Grant MacEwan Community College at 429-2503.