



Been going to a lot of flicks lately and ready for a change in your entertainment habits? Why not take in some plays at one or more of the eight live theatres here in Edmonton? There is something for all tastes.

and, unlike most cinemas in town, almost every one of the theatrical companies offers advantageous student rates, not to mention good entertainment.

Across the board

A guide to theatre in Edmonton

feature by Robert Simpson

Stage West

Having come to the conclusion that the best way to get people to the theatre is through their stomachs, organizers of Stage West have combined dining with theatrical presentations. Operating out of the Mayfield Inn, Stage West offers a sumptuous dinner before the curtain rises. The accent falls on light comedy, with a renowned guest-personality cast in the major role of each production. The price of

\$13.50 may be a bit of a strain on the average student's budget, but then again, \$10.00 is not overly expensive for a good meal and \$3.50 is not an outrageous price to pay at a theatre.



Finally, Edmontonians have the rare opportunity of enjoying plays in French. The Theatre Francais, which uses the stage at College St. Jean, is made up of non-professional actors who nevertheless maintain a high level of acting competence. The season begins with *La Mouette* (The Seagull) by Chekhov. The second representation features excerpts from Michel Tremblay's daring play entitled *La Duchesse de Langlais*, a brilliant portrayal of an aging homosexual reminiscing about his past loves and glories. Gerard Guenette, who played this role during a presentation at the University last spring, will be back again as the *Duchesse* so don't miss it. A couple of witty comedies and a police play will be presented during the latter half of the year.

...and our own Studio Theatre

Studio Theatre, for instance, is absolutely free for students and provides the rare opportunity of viewing tomorrow's famous Canadian stage personalities debuting at the comfy Corbett Hall Theatre. This year sees Studio Theatre's twenty-seventh season, making it the

longest-running company in Edmonton; judging from the high calibre of directors this year, including Michael Murdock, Richard Shank, and Michael Forrest, it is bound to be another successful season. University drama students will face the challenge of producing

some fairly difficult works such as *Games of Love and Chance*, an 18th century French comedy by Marivaux, and a couple of haunting works of philosophical and social commentary such as William Saroyan's *The Cave Dwellers* and Lillian Hellman's *The Little Foxes*.

Walterdale

Theatre Three

Theatre 3, a company working out of the Centennial Library Theatre, will present a wide variety of plays this season ranging from comedy to thought-provoking and classical works. They too have made a point of choosing Canadian plays and even have a Canadian playwright-in-residence, Frank Moher, author of *The Broken Globe* and a participant in the collective creation of *Happy Birthday America*, a comical look at Canadian-American relations. Theatre 3 opens this year with *A Doll's House* by Ibsen and will subsequently present Tennessee Williams' *The Glass Menagerie* and an innovative version of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*.

Walterdale Theatre also promises some top-rate entertainment for Edmontonians this year with several comedies, a presentation of words and music in celebration of the seasons, a night of one-act plays and *Of the Fields Lately*, a sequel to Canadian playwright, David French's *Leaving Home*.

Northern Light

If you have some free time at noon you can pop over to the Edmonton Art Gallery where the Northern Light Lunch-Hour Theatre will help your digestion along with some palatable entertainment. Shows begin at 12:10 Mondays through Fridays, with an extra show beginning at 1:10 on Thursdays and Fridays. They last from forty to fifty minutes and consist of one-act plays or collages of poetry, prose and song. Just lately, this professional company produced *The Daughters of Debate* by Eilonway Morgan, a Lethbridge high school student whose play won the Alberta High School One-Act play competition for 1975. The Northern Light Theatre will present works varying from local creations to comedies by Noel Coward and Neil Simon, plus *Canterbury Tales*, a musical-comedy based on the works of Geoffrey Chaucer.



Citadel Too specializes in thought-provoking theatre. Three out of their four plays this year are Canadian, beginning with Sharon Pollock's *Compulsory Option*, a convincing study in paranoia which gets the spectators themselves anxiously glancing over their shoulders in search of pursuers. This intimate, ninety-seat theatre house is perfect for the kind of plays Citadel Too has chosen, for it allows the establishment of a good rapport between the cast and the audience, a rapport which sometimes leads to impromptu discussions about the play after curtain fall with members of the cast and directors.

Citadel Too

Citadel

The Citadel is one of the city's established theatrical companies. The stress in their choice of plays this season has been placed on comedies which are sure to provide pleasant relaxing entertainment. John Neville is very busy doubling as director for all the plays and actor in some of them.

So, as you see, the problem in going to the theatre in Edmonton is not so much finding plays worth your attention as choosing between the many interesting ones being staged. But whatever your choice be you are bound to enjoy it, for live theatre is a vibrant, exhilarating art in which the spectator participates substantially through his reactions and feelings.