



Mr. Wustman is about to record an album with Pavarotti

Renowned pianist plays

Interview by Mike Spindloe

For the next two weeks, until October 10, the U of A Music Department has been fortunate enough to secure a visit by well known pianist and teacher John Wustman. Mr. Wustman, from the University of Illinois, enjoys an unparalleled international reputation for his concert work with such classical superstars as Luciano Pavarotti, with whom he will be recording an album at New York's Carnegie Hall in the near future.

During his stay on campus Wustman will be sharing his talents in a number of ways with our students and the general public. His lecture series, which began Tuesday, continues today and next week with lectures October 6th and 8th, in Fine Arts 1-29. Topics include "The Accompanist's Role in Interpreting Text" and "Stylistic Consideration in Lieder Repertoire." He will also be working with music students in master's classes and presenting two recitals.

The first of these, Sunday night at 8 p.m. in Convocation Hall, will consist of performances by Wustman accompanied by Harold Wiens, Elsie Hepburn, Kay McCallister and Alan Ord, all U of A music professors. The program will include the works of Schumann, Schubert, and Brahms.

The second recital will consist of student performances, drawing from the best material developed in master's classes. This will take place on Friday, October 9, also at 8.00 p.m. in Convocation Hall.

At his first lecture this Tuesday, Mr. Wustman dealt with a topic with which he has been intimately involved over the past five years or so, that of reductions of orchestral works for piano. This may sound fairly simple to the uninitiated, but when one considers the number of individual parts played by members of an orchestra, retaining the essence of a piece while boiling it down to the capabilities of two hands on a keyboard becomes an exacting art. As Mr. Wustman notes, "the piano can give the impression but not the reality of what is going on, and you cannot make a piano sound like an orchestra."

The reason for this process of approximation is the making available of pieces that vocalists or instrumentalists can then perform with just piano accompaniment. Most of the repertoire to which the process can be applied consists of operatic arias for vocal accompaniment and concertos for instrumental accompaniment. Over the last five years Mr. Wustman has "reduced" literally hundreds of pieces, making vast improvements over existing reductions. He sympathizes however, with his predecessors in this field, noting that the work is difficult, slow and often frustrating. His own reductions remain unpublished as of yet, and thus used mainly by his own students, but he remains hopeful of finding a publisher in the near future.

As a teacher of music, Mr. Wustman displays enthusiasm, humour and exactness. One facet of his teaching technique is to have piano students read from the full orchestral scores, thus learning to pick the most important parts out for duplication on the keyboard. He also acknowledges the value of listening to recordings of a work but stresses that they are no substitute for one's

own perception. "One can learn a great deal from sound recordings, but they are ultimately the recording engineer's conception of what parts are most important."

Mr. Wustman's two week stay at the U of A is an unusually long one in his hectic schedule, which regularly takes him to various parts of North America and overseas as well. He also believes in the value of setting long term plans and objectives and to that end intends to undertake a performance cycle of the entire repertoire of songs by Franz Schubert, all 650 or so of them. He feels that this is appropriate way to celebrate the impending 200th anniversary of Schubert's birth, which will occur in January of 1997 — at which time the performance cycle will be completed. Mr. Wustman prefers this more comprehensive tribute to one of the great composers to "a flurry of activity."

Judging by the response to the first lecture on Tuesday, U of A music students (and staff) are in for a flurry of activity and an exciting and exhilarating time themselves over the next two weeks.

Photo Bruce Gardave

Theatresports improvise for lots of laughs

"Well I never knew being pasta could be so interesting..." That's what I heard on the way out of Theatresports, last Sunday night. Everyone had a smile on his face.

I can't think of a better way to spend four bucks. On Sundays, four dollars at the Theatre Network buys you three hours of side splitting laughter. You get to see people imitating pasta just because someone in the audience yelled the word out.

To view this fun barrel of monkeys and crazies you must first pass a skill test — finding Theatre Network. Sounds easy right? Not after forty minutes of wandering around and figuring out that the address must be inside the Northlands Coliseum. I'll give you a hint. Check directly north of the bus stop. You might find it — about the third time you walk by!

The search is well worth it; you'll laugh for the rest of the night. The evening is divided into several games. In each game, various teams try to get points by improvising routines on audience suggestions. Each game has its own rules and point values. The team with the most points (read laughs) wins. And the audience always wins.

"Theatresports was started in Calgary by a drama professor named Keith Johnstone," says Olivier Moreau, the manager of the Theatre Network group, "and now it's played all over the world. In fact, we are going to play Olympic Theatresports next year in Calgary. It should be real interesting — especially because some of the groups won't speak English!"

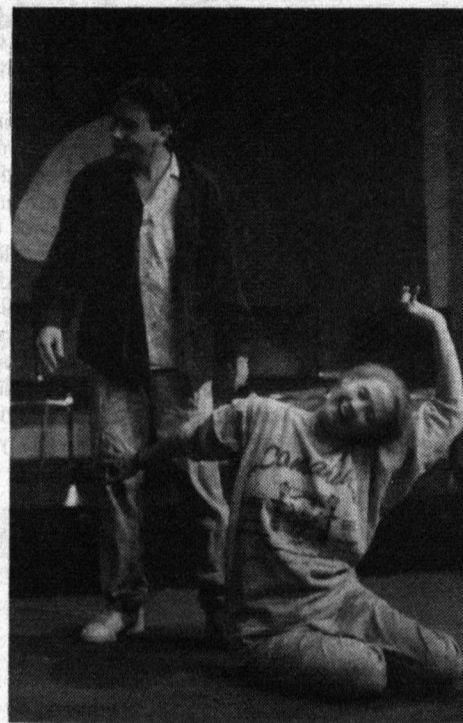
The Theatresports group here in Edmonton started seven years ago, and it keeps growing. "Our season runs from September to May, with a little break around January. After that we hit the road, we're going to tournaments in New York, Vancouver, and Calgary. We're also going to the Australian Expo in Brisbane, that should be quite exciting," exciting.

What drives a Theatresports player? "It's

spontaneity," says Olivier, "the throwing caution to the wind. You get instant gratification or criticism; it's a real rush when it works; and it can be devastating when you flop. It has a lot of great moments, you have to think fast on your feet. Not like a normal play... you don't always regurgitate the same lines. Each show is different."

"We get a lot of people from the audience taking part. They come to see the shows, get to know the games, and after a while they say 'I can do that.' It's great, it's fresh, and you have to rely on your instincts."

If you've never seen Theatresports you have to check it out. I guarantee that it's humanly impossible to sit through the evening without laughing. It's on every Sunday night at eight at Theatre Network.



Theatresports actors laugh it up

Photo Dragos Ruiu

Author Kinsella discusses new collection of short stories

Interview by Moreen Murray

Through the miracle of modern communication, I was able to interview over the telephone the renowned Canadian writer, W.P. Kinsella, in which he talked about himself and his newly released collection of short stories, *Red Wolf, Red Wolf*.

Kinsella himself defines his present work as a "collection of non-Indian non-baseball stories." In talking to Kinsella, it quickly becomes evident that his humour is not restricted to the written page. However, his humour and imagination are basically the

Storytellers go back to the time of cavemen —

only elements of his personal life he permits in his fiction. He proclaims in the forward to this book "I use little autobiography in my fiction; I always maintain my life is too dull to write about." When asked to elaborate on this statement he is quick to state that "nine out of ten peoples' lives are rather boring — the tenth person's life therefore is to create something unbelievable and tone it down so that people will believe it. Really, I spend most of the year in my condo overlooking the ocean — not very exciting fiction material....the reason a lot of fiction is dull is that too many people write about their lives."

"Storytellers go back to the time of cavemen — to Ug standing up in the cave,

pounding on his chest, after killing a brontosaurus, to tell his tale, and, if the story wasn't interesting, people would sneak off to their caves," says Kinsella. The storyteller grew up on a farm outside Edmonton, an only child, and the isolation provided the impetus to write stories to amuse himself. He took on a variety of odd jobs as he grew older and for a long time abandoned writing completely.

"You have to understand," Kinsella points out, "that growing up in the late 50's, short stories were not selling well at all... most of fiction wasn't as a matter of fact. You couldn't make a living at it so you had to take jobs to keep bread on the table. I did however, do some freelance journalism."

Kinsella returned to university at the age of 35, which he describes as "wonderful": "I was much more motivated as an adult than at 18 years old." He moved to Iowa for graduate school which was a "good experience" and then to teaching, which was "not a good experience — they wanted me to put 70 people in my creative writing class." He fictionalizes his experience in the short story "Apartheid."

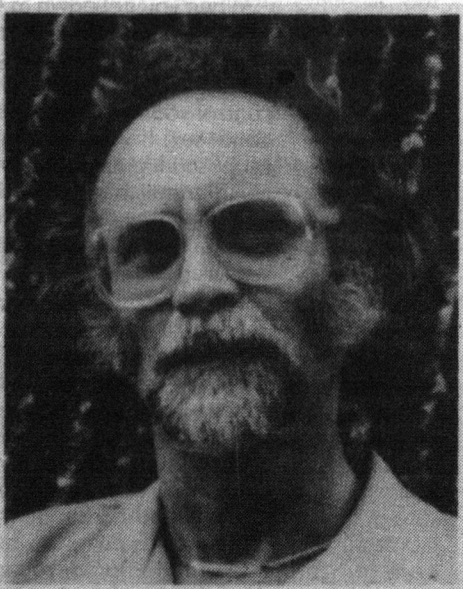
As a writing medium, why did he choose short stories, rather than novel length fiction? "I like writing short stories better, however, they are a difficult medium, even though they are brief — because the difference in a short story is that every word and sentence counts. Also, now the short story is gaining more popularity — it's closer to TV, that is, the stories are brief and needn't hold the audience's attention for very long."

A few of the stories in his latest collection focus on baseball, a theme of his previous collections. "Baseball is conducive to so much fiction writing — unlike other games, there is no time limit, foul lines diverge forever, and most importantly — it creates

larger-than-life characters. It can also be played anywhere."

He doesn't feel his newest collection is much of a departure from his past works, as ".....most of the stories are humorous — even the darker stories. The stories centre on the theme of a stranger entering a person's life and changing the course of that life or at most disrupting it. The stories are also about the past and the various ways of dealing with the past."

In his future he hopes to see a collection of baseball stories set in Canada, a possible novel and lots more books. Judging from the person and his new collection of short stories one would hope to see more of this stranger's presence in our often dull lives.



W.P. Kinsella tackles the short story with humour and imagination.