

Thorsby talent explodes with brilliant expose

by Milfred Campbell

The Saskatoons of Wrath, by Poltergeiswosky, Garvin. \$3.75 (\$2.89 at your local IGA with a ten dollar purchase) 480 pps. (the last 180 pages are optional — but comes free with a 15.00 purchase).

Who says we can't have our own k-k-k-kulture? Certainly n-n-not Garvin Poltergeiswosky, a retired bulk feed salesman who has reaped his latent talent in this new book he wrote in his spare time in Thorsby, Alberta. With warm poignant wit he traces the turbulent history of the proud Dumbrowski family who migrated from Minnedosa, Manitoba to Thorsby, Alberta.

Poltergeiswosky traces the dramatic rise of the Dumbrowski family from a bunch of lousy garlic eating peasants — oops, did I say that? I didn't mean that, anyway the Dumbrowski family buys out those goddamn Hutterites and start up a sausage

factory which later diversifies into pickles and frozen pyrogys.

The story is told through Zuk Dumbrowski, a shy, pimply boy who goes to university and studies business management because he loves Irma Lizotte who also goes to university to study home economics. Zuk finally seduces Irma with his notion of starting up a new soft drink made from Saskatoons. They elope behind the pig sty during their summer break on Zuk's farm.

But meanwhile Numbo, the father takes to gambling and ends up losing the business to a Ugandan East Indian who turns the established sausage factory into a frozen curry plant. Numbo, in quiet desperation, kills himself by overturning the tractor on himself. Irma marries the Ugandan, and Zuk with numb determination takes to politics where years later he becomes the deputy minister of education and triples foreign student's fees.

Petro wealth

by Hank Luce

EDMONTON - Here, amidst the belching gas flares of Alberta's petrodollar wealth, it's not uncommon to see ostentatious manifestations of that peculiar North American species, the nouveau riche.

Even so, it was not without surprise that Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Mellish, neighbors of Grandpa Munsterish advanced education minister Bert Hohol were awakened one night last week by eerie squawking noises.

Recounted Mellish: "We wuz just dozing off after watching Merv Griffin when we heard this noise and Mildred looked out the window and there wuz a pair of peacocks, making love."

This latest bit of erotic flimflamery is but one of the many reasons the government of Premier Peter Lougheed is said to be losing touch with the populace.

Indeed, recall some observers, this is not the first occasion Hohol has used fornicating peacocks to terrorize the neighborhood.

Groused one: "He's used quails on occasion."

But that appears to be the least of Mr. Hohol's problems. With credibility seeping into *de rigueur* attacks on Hohol's performance, the minister has increasingly taken to finding scapegoats for his department's acknowledged ineptitude.

"It's all the fault of the beavers," proclaims Hohol airily. "If they hadn't started chopping down trees, mankind wouldn't have realized wood can be used to produce paper."

And, he exulted, "Without paper, the commie newspaper reporters couldn't print their libellous stories."

Further, puffs Hohol, the government is backing him up in his stance.

Says Premier Lougheed, "Oh shit. I mean he didn't really say that. You're not printing this, are you. Oh shit. Joe, will you find out just what the hell Hohol's up to now."

Mr. Hohol, emulating Peter O'Toole's role in *The Ruling Class* at the time of the interview, said the media "is just trying to

manufacture news" vis a vis his performance.

Stepping down gracefully from the cross and shedding his flowing white robe, Hohol chirped, "But I'll get them, you'll see."

Pouted he: "I know I'm God because when I pray I'm talking to myself. And that's why we have to get higher fees from foreign students."

But this eloquence was not enough to convince French *maitre en scene* Claude Chabrol

(Les Biches) that Hohol is material.

"Zere was film on 'ow call 'im Idi Amin which was umorous," said Chabrol, "but man, zis 'o-ol, 'e is just another ze many aspirants oose only in life is to be photograp leading film with very beau French girl, zis attitude just not do."

The feisty minister, etheless, refused to be perturbed. Sniffed he: "There's more to than granola with oatmeal."

Peace River Festival deemed "a succes fou"

by J.C. LaDalia

This year's annual Jules Massenet Festival at Peace River was an even greater success than previously. Not only did it present three Alberta premieres but, for the first time, music by other composers of that glittering epoch was performed, thus wisely broadening the festival's base.

For this listener one of the highlights was clearly the revival of *L'Adorable Bel-Boul* which Massenet complete in 1874 but suppressed. It was presented on a double-bill with the fey but appealing *Berengere et Anatole*. Nicolai Gedda was in exceptionally good form and Regine Crespin, making her Peace River debut, was quite ravishing. Her floating *pianissimi* in the great duet were as grace-bestowing as some earth-borne angel's kiss. The staging, although small-scaled, was quite intelligently conceived, lacking the problematic intrusions which so disfigured last year's *Le Roi de Lahore*, and Antonio de Almeida conducted the visiting Vegreville Philharmonic with precise and stirring results.

The following afternoon Gedda gave a recital of songs by Massenet, Chausson, Duparc and Hahn. The seldom-performed Chausson *melodies* were delightful. We heard the five *Serres Chaudes*, with texts by Maeterlinck. "Lassitude," the third *melodie*, was especially affecting, and Gedda's sustained and creamy tone was as fine as ever when heard in such *intime* works. Chausson's last song before his tragic cycle accident, "Dans la foret du charme et de l'enchantement," was conveyed to us with all the mysterious languor it contains.

That evening we listened to Baker as the Magdalen in Massenet's oratorio *Marie Magdeleine*. This was a sumptuous performance which revealed the composer's religious-erotic palette in such swirling, pastel tones that the Easter story has forever lost its pristine tinge for me. Indeed, it makes Act II of *Parsifal* seem like Schutz's *Lamentations* at their most austere. Dame Janet's incandescent

intensity surpassed even authoritative performances in London, and New York and Giuseppe Placido Domingo as Our Saviour ("Seigneur," as the French pique say, always reminding me somewhat of Carmen Miranda) brought smouldering piety to his recital. The choirs of Vegreville, Bonny and Fairview (fresh from triumphing the Three Choirs Festival in Falmouth where Spohr's *The Last Judgment* took pride of place) sang with clarity and finesse.

The next afternoon Almeida presented the North American premiere of his orchestral *Massenetiana*, which reconstructed incidental music by that composer from *Nana-Sahib*, *Le Crocodile*, *Perce-Neige et les sept gnomes* was a revelation. We knew Massenet's orchestral mastery in the searing symphonic interlude *Werther*, and the profound searching "Meditation" from *The Song of Songs* but we were not prepared for the anguished sense of loss which *andante* from *Nana-Sahib* bared, which evoked Faure's final chamber masterworks (but ten years in advance) or the Schmitt Piano Quartet of 1908 with its ardent *tristesse*.

My Aix-en-Provence friends slipped out at the interval, emotionally drained to do other things, renew ourselves at the grave of Twelve-foot Davis, beneath which lights and hills of Peace River in their tranquil, beatific way. Thus missed what, by all informed counts, was a solid and attractive (although not galvanizing) performance of the Lalo 3rd Piano Trio, the Trio di Fawcette, also missing their Peace River debut. It must have been pleasant relief from Lalo's but overplayed 1st Trio, which becoming quite a warhorse, *orchestra de la guerre*, as they say in France. We welcome the Trio di Fawcette has been a more than satisfactory festival from the standpoint of helping new artists flexing their professional wings for their first flight. *Bonne chance*, we cry, *heartfelt bonne chance* we wish them.

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