



CANADA

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## STRATFORD 1958

Since its sudden and spectacular appearance on the Canadian theatrical scene five years ago, the Stratford Shakespearean Festival has earned a reputation as one of the Continent's top classical theatres. During those years it has also established beyond doubt the existence of a large and enthusiastic audience for legitimate theatre in Canada and has proved that there is native talent to cater to that demand. The Stratford Festival is not simply the achievement of a handful of artists from the larger Canadian and English centres. It has been made possible by the dedication of thousands of theatre-lovers working in this country over the past quarter of a century.

The acquisition of a permanent home last year, far from representing a final fulfilment of the Festival, presents the Foundation with many new challenges. Having the alternative of remaining such in the future or struggling on to new and different objectives. The past year has been highlighted by several attempts to enlarge on the work already done and to integrate the Festival still further into the theatrical life of the country.

December 1957 saw the first TV appearance of the Stratford company in a production of Ibsen's poetic classic, "Peer Gynt", directed by Michael Langham and Douglas Campbell. A second innovation last winter was the launching of a Festival tour which took "Two Gentlemen of Verona" and "The Broken Jug" by former Stratford actor, Donald Harron to London, Toronto, Montreal and New York. A playwriting

competition aimed at encouraging Canadian playwrights by providing definite hopes of production was sponsored jointly by the Festival and the Toronto Globe and Mail. To acquaint more Canadians with the work of the organization, an extensive programme of exhibits and newsletters for schools and interested institutions was inaugurated. Finally a series of school matinees offering special student rates to the Highschools of Ontario has been introduced this season to reach the younger playgoers.

The twelve-week season of the 1958 Festival is the longest and most varied in its history. Three Shakespearean plays, "Henry IV", "Much Ado About Nothing" and "The Winter's Tale" are being presented.

While Stratford has always welcomed theatrical talent from other countries, this season has seen the emergence of a Canadian director and a Canadian designer who have taken their place on the Stratford artistic staff. George McCowan and Marie Day, both veterans of several seasons with the Festival, collaborated with Michael Langham and Tanya Moiseiwitsch in the production of "Henry IV, Part I".

Although the Festival began as and remains primarily a theatrical enterprise, the ancillary activities which have grown up around the plays have become steadily more important. A two-week Film Festival, a four-week Music Festival featuring a production of "The Beggar's Opera" with CBC-TV's Robert Goulet,