

University's composers speak out

by Dave Coy

When asked about the major musical influences on this composition, Dr Alfred Fisher replied, "I've never heard a piece of music that didn't influence me in one way or another." His music was featured in concert last night at Convocation Hall, with that of two other noted composers from the U. of A, Drs. Malcolm Forsyth and Manus Sasonkin.

"How can you live in a world of music and not be influenced by one thing or another?" Fisher asked. He named many composers who he appreciated, but said, "They're all equally important to me."

But he was emphatically *not* advocating an eclectic approach to composition or aesthetics. "I hate eclecticism—I'm not a composition of bits and pieces, I am a unified whole. My music

is a unified whole as well. It is not borrowed from any other kind of music."

"I don't like this 'I like all kinds of music' attitude," he declared. "That is a CBC mentality, not mine. It is brainless, it doesn't comprehend our capacity to understand and create."

"What is education, if not to create discerning minds?" asked Fisher pointedly.

Dr. Malcolm Forsyth also spoke about his music, "I write for orchestra, and brass and woodwind ensemble." He cited pre-Second World War composers as his central modern influences, specifically Stravinsky and the English school (Britten, Tippett) and also Albin Berg.

His part of the program consisted of "Very short tidbits; a brass quintet originally written for a ballet—it consists of four scenes, with a

little bit of staging. There's also a brass quintet I wrote earlier this year for a TV show (to be broadcast December 1 on CBC)."

"The longest and most serious piece was the one for horn and piano, entitled 'Dreams, Drones and Drolleries.'"

When asked about the nature of his music, Dr. Fisher responded, "Are you asking me if it's going to be challenging to listen to and understand? Of course! I don't write music as wallpaper."

"I write music as an experience with art, otherwise I'd write TV jingles."

The concert also featured the work of the U of A's internationally noted Dr. Manus Sasonkin. It was presented in conjunction with Canada Music Week (see Up & Coming).

The Australian film industry has received a lot of justly deserved praise in recent years. It is doubtless the most vital modern national style of filmmaking. For nearly the next whole month, the Towne Cinema is featuring the best of this "school" in an Australian film festival. One of the highlights is the work of director Peter Weir. Showing December 8 and 9 is *Gallipoli*, his brilliant 1981 study of the relationship of two young Australian men who go off to the Crimean War. December 10-12 Weir's obsessive, mystical masterpiece *Picnic at Hanging Rock* is showing. If you haven't yet seen it, don't miss it this time. (P.S. the Arts Editor has plans to see at least five of these smashin' Strine films.)

Down Under Special treat from



Mr. Sloane entertaining

Entertaining Mr. Sloane, by Joe Orton
Citadel Rice Theatre
Until December 5

by Larry Curr

The Rice Theatre's latest effort at black humor is a pithy, demented comedy about a menage a trois that makes Three's Company look as pure as Snow White. But the humor, and the accompanying dark statement about moral decay, can be credited almost entirely to the author, Joe Orton, rather than the Citadel's less than inspiring production.

The set piece, a shabby flat in London circa 1964, is complete down to the incredibly tacky lamps and clothing. Jeremy Henson's Sloane, the object of carnal attention from bot his landlady Kath and her brother, Edward, reminds one of a blustery, younger, Roger Daltrey. His mercuric fits of rage and violence, complete with two murders, are barely believable, however, unless one is prepared to accept the worst stereotypes of the nihilist youth of the mid-sixties (or today in Brixton for that matter).

But Orton's alternatives to a youth who is totally devoid of all moral sensibility are hardly more appealing, and their crimes differ only by degree.

Irene Hogan as Kath turns in an excellent performance as a pathetic middle-aged woman whose most profound thought in her entire life is that her china shepherdess "is such a lovely piece." She has been both repressed and oppressed by her elder brother Ed, to the point where a quick tumble in the hay with her boarder is her only chance to fulfill both her sexual and motherly instincts.

Hogan's performance is filled with nuance and her ability to plead and wheedle her brother while abusing her elderly father is utterly believable.

The part of her brother, on the other hand, is the weakest in the production. Whether it is Orton's failure to fulfill our expectations of a homosexual, stiff-upper-lipped, Victorian or Geoffrey Saville-Read's failure to put his finger on the part, Edward remains only a shadow of his scheming self. His hatred of women and all things "soft" does not fit well with his liberal treatment of Mr. Sloane's many transgressions of his rules.

It is left to the ageing father Dadda to carry the moral weight of the play and Edward Greenhalgh is more than up to the part. His growing awareness of his painful mortality and his willingness to stand alone against the vicious threats of a cowardly youth who will not accept responsibility for his actions come across as heroic. It is most evident that his moral sensibility is not shared by the others when his daughter's biggest concern at his death is giving up his pension book.

Orton, who led a life as bizarre as his characters - he was bludgeoned to death by his homosexual lover only three years after he dedicated this play to him - successfully captured the spirit that governed the lives of the abandoned youth of the Sixties. That he choose not to exult the guilelessness that made murder seem so easy suggests he was little impressed by the nihilistic spirit of sixties London.

What is a pity is that his message will fall on the uncomprehending ears of today's youths who are more concerned with obeying the dictates of tradition than with flaunting its more absurd manifestations....There are many more potential Kath and Ed combinations out there today than there are Mr. Sloanes.

Symphony excels itself once again

Edmonton Symphony Orchestra
Jubilee Auditorium
November 12, 1982

review by Beth Jacob

A scintillating performance of Samuel Barber's "Piano Concerto" by guest artist John Browning was the highlight of the symphony's Master Series concert last weekend at the Jubilee Auditorium.

Though quite a recent work (the concerto was first premiered in 1962), Barber's style of conservative lyricism makes the work easily accessible to the standard symphony audience. The orchestra was on its mettle and lived up to the challenge of both the piece itself and also to John Browning's marvellous performance.

Browning's performance was in impressive display of artistry and technique. His

playing exuded confidence, stemming from his intimate knowledge of the work. Rhythmic passages were clearly articulated and the arpeggios shimmered in the wonderfully lyrical second movement.

However, the best was saved for last. The virtuosity displayed in the pounding rhythms that opened the third movement was remarkable, contributing significantly to the excitement that was generated onstage. A truly memorable performance. (Mention must also be made of the beautifully executed solo passages by the first chair oboe.)

After such an outstanding performance of a new and interesting composition, the other two works on the program seemed rather bland and a bit old hat in comparison. Tchaikovsky's "Symphony N ..." is great music to wallow in if you're in the mood, but on Friday it seemed more like a comedown. This was not the orchestra's fault, for they gave a competent if unremarkable rendering of the piece. Beethoven's "Leonore Overture No. 2" also received adequate treatment, although there were some problems with the brass mix, particularly in the march-like section.

Regardless, for myself anyways, the superb rendition of the Barber concerto will cause me to remember the concert as something rather special

This critic knows reality

Diva
Varscona Theatre

review by Jens Andersen

I haven't read any of the reviews of this movie, but the rumor mill reports that the cinephobahs at the *Sun*, the *Journal* and elsewhere are drooling all over this one. In fact, I hear that John Dodd of the *Journal* delved deeply into things like the "bathtub" motif, the parodies of film noir, and the heavy significance of the number "2" in the film.

All this is a bit esoteric for a simple soul like myself. What I saw in the film was simply a slick whodunit, containing so much *deus ex machina* that credit should have been given the U.S. Cavalry for spiritual guidance. Car chases, cliff-hanging suspense: it is all there.

The only other remarkable feature of the film is all the weird stuff: the arty shots, the

"Vietcong" girl who rollerskates around the apartment of the eccentric artist who is painting a wave using a wobbling aquarium full of blue water as a model and inspiration, the surreally painted garage, etc.

This, and almost-human characters (compared to Hollywood movies anyway - can you believe an opera star who hasn't the faintest idea that critical acclaim might mean she has a good voice?), these things, I suspect, are what makes the other critics enthuse.

Which brings me to the subject of film critics. Here I can only echo Mike Royko, who, in his masterful hatchet job on *Last Tango in Paris*, came to the conclusion that many film critics have spent so much time staring at the silver screen that they haven't been exposed to enough reality. Which could explain the reaction to a ho-hum movie like *Diva*.

Up & Coming

November 24 A program by young students in the Suzuki program, sponsored by Talent Education, will be presented at The University of Alberta in the Fine Arts Building, Room 1-29 at 8:00 p.m. It will consist of Canadian string music and will be convened by Mr. Robert Hryciw, who teaches violin in the Suzuki program and who will speak about Canadian string music.

November 26 (1) A lecture on Canadian Music will be presented by Dr. Rita Steblin, professor of Music History at the University of Alberta, at 11:00 a.m., in room 2-32 of the Fine Arts Building.

(2) A piano recital will be given by distinguished pianist Joachim Segger in Convocation Hall at the University of Alberta, at 8:00 p.m. The program will include music by Schuman, Fisher and Pepin, the latter two are well known Canadian composers.

November 27 A recital by students of the Alberta Registered Music Teachers' Association's Edmonton Branch will take place at Alberta College in Room 144, at 8:00 p.m. The convenors for this recital are Mrs. Theresa Hryciw, 434-1646 and Mrs. Donna Noton, 468-1109. Please contact either of them regarding students who can participate in this special program. The deadline for submitting information is November 15. A reception will follow the program. Let us make this recital as exciting as last year's. Mrs. Emily Oskin will be Social Convenor for the reception and Mrs. Lois Cox will be the Master of Ceremonies for the recital.

November 22-26 The CBC national program R.S.V.P., based in Edmonton, will include Canadian music content in its broadcasts.

November 22-27 Exhibits of Canadian Scores, records, brochures about Canadian composers, will be presented at the Edmonton Public Library and the Music Library of the University of Alberta.

Canada Music Week events are being sponsored by: The Alberta Registered Music Teachers' Association, Edmonton Branch; The Department of Music of the University of Alberta; Talent Education and The King's College, as well as Alberta College.

All events are open to the public and are free of charge.

Tickets are available from the SUB Box-Office (2nd Floor, SUB) and various club members.

DINWOODIE

2nd Floor SUB

Note: These events are open only to U of A students, staff, and guests. Absolutely no minors admitted!

The Mods with guests: THE THIEVES
Friday, November 26
Sponsored by U of A Rowing Club
\$4.00 advance SUB Box office
\$5.00 at the door

DARKROOM
Friday, December 3
Sponsored by Bash-on-a-Budget Ski Club

SLASH & THE BLEEDING HEARTS
Saturday, December 4
Sponsored by Tae Kwon Do Club

LINE!
NOVEMBER