

Quebec comedy bound for United States

Quebec's highly-successful comedy, *Brew*, already seen by a record-breaking 900 000 people across Canada, will make its US debut next month.

Opening at the Pennsylvania Stage Company in Allentown, Pa., between New York and Pittsburgh, the three-man company will present the English version of their play, already acclaimed in English-speaking Canada.

The comedy that started out as *Broue* in an 80-seat theatre on Montreal's St. Laurent Boulevard five years ago was so successful in French that actors Marcel Gauthier, Michel Côté and Marc Messier took a year of English lessons in order to perform the show in English.

Gauthier, together with Côté and Messier, conceived the original idea for this story of a day in the life of a Montreal tavern. They believe it is not only the humour but the universality of the characters which has such wide appeal.

In Trois Rivières, people turned out at 5 a.m. in sub-zero weather to buy tickets; 5 000 were sold in five hours, and after that, the scalpers were charging double.

Origins

Brew (or *Broue*, which means the foamy head on a glass of beer) had its beginnings in 1978 when a law was passed in Quebec stipulating that there would be no more permits to open new taverns, and that all existing ones must be changed into brasseries.

"We had to do something about it," explained Gauthier with a grin, "to salute an old institution."

What they did was approach four other

Quebec writers to help them provide a series of 10- or 15-minute sketches about the characters who wander in and out of the Chez Willy Tavern. The three actors play all 16 roles, but they say that at the end of the show the audience is still left guessing as to who played what.

The English translation was made by two Ottawa writers, David McDonald and Michel Frémont-Côté. Later, as the script changed, there were contributions from Don Ferguson and Dave Broadfoot of *The Royal Canadian Air Farce* and actress Fiona Reid.

English première

Brew had its English première at the Centaur Theatre in Montreal, but Côté laughs and says he was so nervous he doesn't remember being there. The play sold out for five weeks.

"Vancouver was a wonderful adventure," he says. They had been apprehensive about audience reaction in a centre so far away from Quebec, and Gauthier agrees. "That was a real test. But the human beings that you meet are the same everywhere."

Gauthier and Côté used to play peewee hockey together in their home town of Lac St. Jean, Quebec, and got their first taste of show business as children in the local drum and bugle corps. They graduated together from the National Theatre School in 1973.

The pair are clearly delighted with their success. "*Brew* has changed everything," exults Gauthier, and Côté adds, "We have become big stars in Quebec. If we go to the supermarket now, everybody knows us."



Quebec's *Broue* (from left to right): Michel Côté, Marcel Gauthier and Marc Messier.

Artist named Banff award winner

Betty Goodwin, 61, one of Canada's most outstanding visual artists, has received a top annual award for her contribution to the arts in Canada.

The Banff Centre School of Fine Arts National Award for 1984 consists of a gold medal designed by Dora de Pedery-Hunt, a \$5 000 cash prize and a term appointment as artist-in-residence at the Banff Centre located in the picturesque Canadian Rockies.

Born and still resident in Montreal, Betty Goodwin was one of three contemporary artists chosen to represent Canada in the 1982 OKanada exposition of Canadian culture in Berlin.

Her prints, installations and drawings have been exhibited at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, and in galleries in the United States, Europe and Japan. She was also a featured artist in the 1980 Pluralities show at the National Gallery of Canada, which marked the institution's one-hundredth anniversary.

Previous winners of the Banff Award include writer W.O. Mitchell, painter and photographer Charles Gagnon, actor and arts administrator Walter Kaasa and writer Margaret Laurence.

Prize honours Glenn Gould

An international Glenn Gould Prize for distinguished contribution to music and communications has been established by the Glenn Gould Memorial Foundation.

The \$50 000 prize, in memory of the late Canadian pianist, will be awarded every three years. The first prize, which also includes a commemorative work to be commissioned from a Canadian artist, will be awarded October 4, 1987, the fifth anniversary of Gould's death.

The award, which received a \$150 000 cornerstone donation from arts patron Floyd Chalmers, will be administered by the Canada Council. The 1985 International Bach Piano Competition will donate proceeds from the competition to support the prize fund.

An international jury to select winners will be chosen jointly by the Canada Council and the Glenn Gould Memorial Foundation. The winner, who does not necessarily have to be a musician or composer, will be obliged to conduct workshops and seminars in five Canadian cities after receiving the award.