



Greed director Erich von Stroheim with basket of film.

Greed is coming

Erich von Stroheim's Greed, one of the wildest of the American film classics, comes to Curtis LH-I Wednesday Nov. 28, at 8 p.m.

Film author and historian Herman Weinberg will present the 1924 drama, based on Frank Norris' novel McTeague, with the complete story of von Stroheim's struggle to assert control and authorship over the finished film. The evening is sponsored by York's film department.

According to legend, director von Stroheim shot the powerful story in 42 reels, running 10 hours. After many disputes, the film was cut to a manageable two hours, leaving von Stroheim most embittered.

Weinberg has edited an impressive volume of the uncut, original Greed from surviving still pictures of the many sequences cut out of the film. Film negatives for these were destroyed long ago, but extensive stills record the film's outline. Pianist Charles Hoffmann will supply the live accompaniment.

Kaspar studies language with cries of anguish, pain

Late in October, the Firehall Theatre, (70 Berkeley at Adelaide), presented Peter Handke's Kaspar, the first Canadian production in English of the play.

Because of the importance of the play (German playwright Max Frisch has called Kaspar "the play of the decade"), because of its increasing appearance on academic study lists, and because the Firehall, in producing it, has shown itself to be a theatre worth watching, we present the following review, after the fact.

By MIRA FRIEDLANDER

"I want to be somebody like someone else once was" is the desperate cry that begins the destruction of language as a means of communication in Peter Handke's play Kaspar.

What does it all mean? In 1828 a boy in his late teens appeared wandering the streets of Nuremberg. He was emaciated, could not walk or talk normally, and would only drink water and eat bread. His only sentence was that he wanted to be a horseman like his father once was.

He became the object of intensive literary and scientific speculation. Five years after his appearance on the streets, he was found mysteriously

murdered. This was the original Kaspar Hauser.

HARD TO COMMUNICATE

Peter Handke has taken the basics of this true story and created a powerful play around the question of language. The play has one character on stage, Kaspar, who is pounded into the conformity of speech by means of recorded voices through a loudspeaker.

The play begins with Kaspar as he must have been, illiterate, clumsy, naive and able to use only his one sentence, "I want to be somebody like someone else once was," to express himself.

Gradually through the speakers, the disembodied voices of society force Kaspar to conform until he reaches the point where he can speak coherently as he thinks.

At this point, obsessed with looking neat and being tidy for the first time in his life, he realizes that he has reached the limit of his ability to communicate and is now ready to die. He makes one big attempt to explain to the audience what is happening to him, what he is thinking. In doing so he breaks society's rules and realizes as he speaks that he is no more able to make the words explain for him than when he only had his original sentence.

At this realization his sentence

structure begins to break down and he is left with a large vocabulary that is totally disconnected and meaningless. Finally, as the play ends, he is writhing and uttering gibberish, tortured in the knowledge that his purity has been destroyed and he is worse off than before.

PESSIMISTIC STATEMENT

Handke's statement is a pessimistic one, virtually telling us that we are trapped in our own creation and that there is only destruction ahead. For this reason it was a long time before anyone would touch this play, and Peter Brooks first attempted it in England with his workshop to everyone's great consternation.

Since then it has gained popularity, but it is to the Firehall's credit that they have mounted the first Toronto production of this great work. It is a difficult theatrical piece, totally dependent on one actor's ability to sustain interest and excitement.

The Firehall's next production, from Nov. 29 to Dec. 15, is Once In A Lifetime, by Kaufmann and Hart, a zany chronicle of misadventures in Hollywood on the day on which "talkies" arrive.

Student rates: Tues., Wed., Thurs: \$2. Weekends: \$3. Reserve at the box office: daytime, 783-9431, evening, 444-7055. Try this number first: 364-4170.

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