

# ENTERTAINMENT



scene from *Marianne and Julienne*, playing Oct. 15 at EFS

## Film society kicks off season

*Marianne and Julienne*, one of the best films to come out of Germany in years, *Johnny Guitar*, the infamous "Freudian western" starring Joan Crawford, and the still-controversial *The Manchurian Candidate* are three highlights of the Edmonton Film Society's 1984-85 season which begins Monday, September 24 in Tory Lecture Theatre 11.

Active since 1936, the E.F.S. brings to students and faculty a wide-ranging program of

Hollywood classics and critically-acclaimed foreign films guaranteed to broaden the horizons of any filmgoers while providing a good night's entertainment. And, if you buy a season's pass (\$50 for 26 films), you're getting the best entertainment deal in town.

"Our objective is to bring in films of merit that have had limited commercial runs in Edmonton and are unlikely to show up on Pay-T.V. Some of the films in this years program have been unavailable for a long time,

some are recently "re-discovered" classics and all are definitely worth seeing" says E.F.S. president Jack Vermees.

This year's program (which runs from September through March) includes three series: Hollywood Classics, International Films, and a "Film Buff Heave" series. Further information can be found in the E.F.S. brochure distributed around campus. (Try SU Records or SUB Box office). Tickets are available at SU Box Office, Woodward's and at the door before screenings.

### ESO not up to the challenge

## Off to a shaky start

Master Series  
Edmonton Symphony Orchestra

review by K. Arthur

In this initial concert of the 1984-85 Master Series, the ESO presented three formidable works for large orchestra: Variations on a Theme of Haydn by Brahms, Violin Concerto No. 1 by Max Bruch, and Symphony No. 6 by Anton Bruckner. Unfortunately, the ESO was not up to the challenge it set itself. Lacklustre playing pervaded the entire evening, save for the beautiful and inspired contribution of guest violin soloist Cho-Liang Lin in the Bruch concerto.

The concert opener, Brahms's Haydn variations, did not bode well for the evening. The orchestral playing was creditable, yet the performance failed to rise above the routine. Some excitement was generated in the powerful finales, but it proved to be too little, too late.

Cho-Liang Lin was born in Taiwan, and trained in the United States. He possesses a beautifully rich tone and an impressive technique, both of which were in evidence Friday night. His fiery conception conveyed the romantic feeling in the Bruch concerto. Apart from a few slips in timing, the orchestral contribution was caring and supportive, though it failed to match the spontaneity of the guest soloist.

In the program's major work, Bruckner's Symphony No. 6, all of conductor Uri Mayer's good intentions labored under the uninspired playing of the orchestra. Mayer demonstrated good choice of tempi throughout this richly textured symphony, but his orchestra did not allow him to show up the finer details in Bruckner's writing. As a result, the work tended to sound one-dimensional, supporting the structure but revealing none of the depth of this rich score.

Mr. Mayer usually has much to say in his conducting of large romantic scores, and I trust that by next concert he will have a more sensitive and inspired contribution from his orchestra.

## Michel Tremblay bows out with a whimper

The Impromptu of Outremont  
Northern Light Theatre  
September 14-30

review by Gilbert Bouchard

The Northern Light Theatre Company billed their first production of the year as "a mutual massacre." They were close. I'd say it was more of a "mutual self-mutilation."

There were problems with Michel Tremblay's script, and with Northern Light's production.

As for the script, Tremblay is self-indulgent in this, his farewell play. In fact, considering *Impromptu*, it's maybe just as well that Tremblay is turning to novel writing.

The play isn't all bad. In fact, the first act is quite good. The story is of four sisters who meet to celebrate the birthday of the second-youngest sister, Lucille (Judith Mabey). The four sisters, warped by their uppercrust Montreal upbringing and haunted by the presence of a smothering mother, immediately start tearing into each other. None of the sisters is particularly nice, and the whole first act is beautifully cat-like.

The second act is where the problems set in. I'm sorry I stayed past the first act. Nothing happens - most of the (scanty) plot was developed in the first act. All we get in Act II are two long monologues and a few cute side-references to Tremblay's first play, *Les Belles Soeurs*.

Considering Tremblay's fine gift for dialogue, I don't see why we need these long-winded monologues at all. Monologues usually indicate one of two possibilities: the playwright is lazy, or he lacks the skill to write dialogue. In Tremblay's case, it is apparently the former. In fact, considering how poor the whole second act is, I suspect the Tremblay was either pressured into whipping the play off quickly, or that he got bored with the project and wrapped it up too quickly for his own good.

I don't understand why (if we must have monologues) we get monologues from all the sisters but Lucille. The play is centered around her birthday, and as far as I'm concerned, she is the most interesting of the sisters. Why was she ignored?

I didn't appreciate Tremblay getting all nostalgic about his first play. I'm all for a bit of self-praise, but this is ridiculous. It's hard to suspend one's disbelief when the playwright

cheapens his own play with such self-glorification.

The biggest flaw in Northern Light's production is in the casting. The Quebecois accents of the sisters is hideous. Not one of them sounded even remotely French. At best, they sounded affected.

It was a mistake to even attempt the accent. The play is in translation. (Do actors in Ibsen plays always have to speak with Norwegian accents?)

The problem with language goes deeper than atrocious affectation. The women are supposed to be speaking French - there are numerous mentions to the sisters' commands of French, and they often look up words in a French dictionary. With translated plays, you not only "peep into" the lives and homes of the actors; you also "peep into their minds" and languages. If the illusion were consist-

ant, and we could imagine that we were eavesdropping on an actual conversation, the four sisters would be speaking French without the foreign accent that has been superimposed on their speech in this production.

Not only was the imposition of accents a serious dramatic mistake, but the actresses were inconsistent; they tended to drop the accents in more intense scenes. After all, it is hard to both keep an accent and put any real emotion into a monologue.

The acting and direction were both adequate, with Judith Mabey giving the best performance (followed closely by Fran Gebhard as Fernande). The worst performance was by Pat Amies, who is much too shy and reserved for the brassy character (Lorraine) she played.

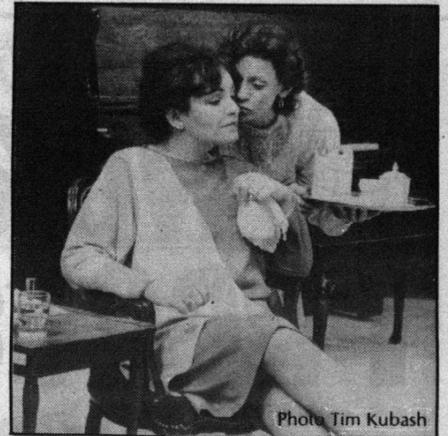


Photo: Tim Kubash

Bitchy sisters in *Impromptu*

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