

Goldfish-swallowers take heart

Studio's latest has fun with the g.o.d.

Studio Theatre's next production of its Stage 79 is *Good News*, a musical comedy by Laurence Brown and B.G. DeSylva, lyrics by B.G. DeSylva and music by Ray Henderson. It is directed by Thomas Peacocke and designed by Lee Livingstone. *Good News* will run from February 8 to February 17. Set in "the good old days" of the 1920's, the play is with love, football and campus hi-jinks. Brooks Hanson wrote in 1927 " ... it is a ripping good show ... funny, humorous and fills the evening with solid pleasure ..."

The story centres around the captain of the Tait college football team, Tom Marlowe, who has flunked Astronomy exam and cannot play in the big game unless either he manages to pass the course or the nasty professor has a change of heart. Things look dark for the team, who risk losing all without Tom. Then Tom's sweetheart asks her cousin to assist by tutoring Tom, and the inevitable happens - he falls for his tutor. More surprises follow as we discover the professor is very tender-hearted, passing Tom at the last moment. Then there is the game - excitement to the last breathless moment!

Thomas Peacocke, director of *Good News* is a recipient of the Canadian Drama Award, former president of the Canadian University Theatre Association and is on the editorial board of the Canadian Theatre Review. His versatile background includes extensive acting in U.S. Summer Stock, on radio and TV and in Edmonton at the Citadel and Theatre 3. He played the Captain in *Play Strindberg* at Theatre 3 last year and will portray Sergeant Cokes for this season. He has acted and directed at Studio Theatre since 1951; his most recent performance was the role of W.O. Gant in this season's production of *Homeward, Angel*. He directed the Stage '78 production of *The Bonds of Interest*. This past summer Peacocke directed two productions at Wild Horse Theatre in Fort Steele, B.C., *Harry Lindley Presents Kootenay Lullabye*. He is currently co-ordinator of the acting division in the Department of Drama at U of A as well as the head of the drama division at Banff School of Fine Arts.

Lee Livingstone, the designer of *Good News* is the resident designer of Stage West (Regina). Her designs include *Lloyd George Knew My Father* and *Vanities* at Stage West (Edmonton) and most recently *Aleola* at Theatre 3. Performances are nightly at 8 from Thursday,

February 8 to Saturday, February 17 (excluding Sunday). There will be a Saturday matinee on February 10 at 2. Tickets are \$2.50 each and may be obtained from Room 3 - 146, Fine Arts Centre by phoning 432-2495. All performances are at Corbett Hall.

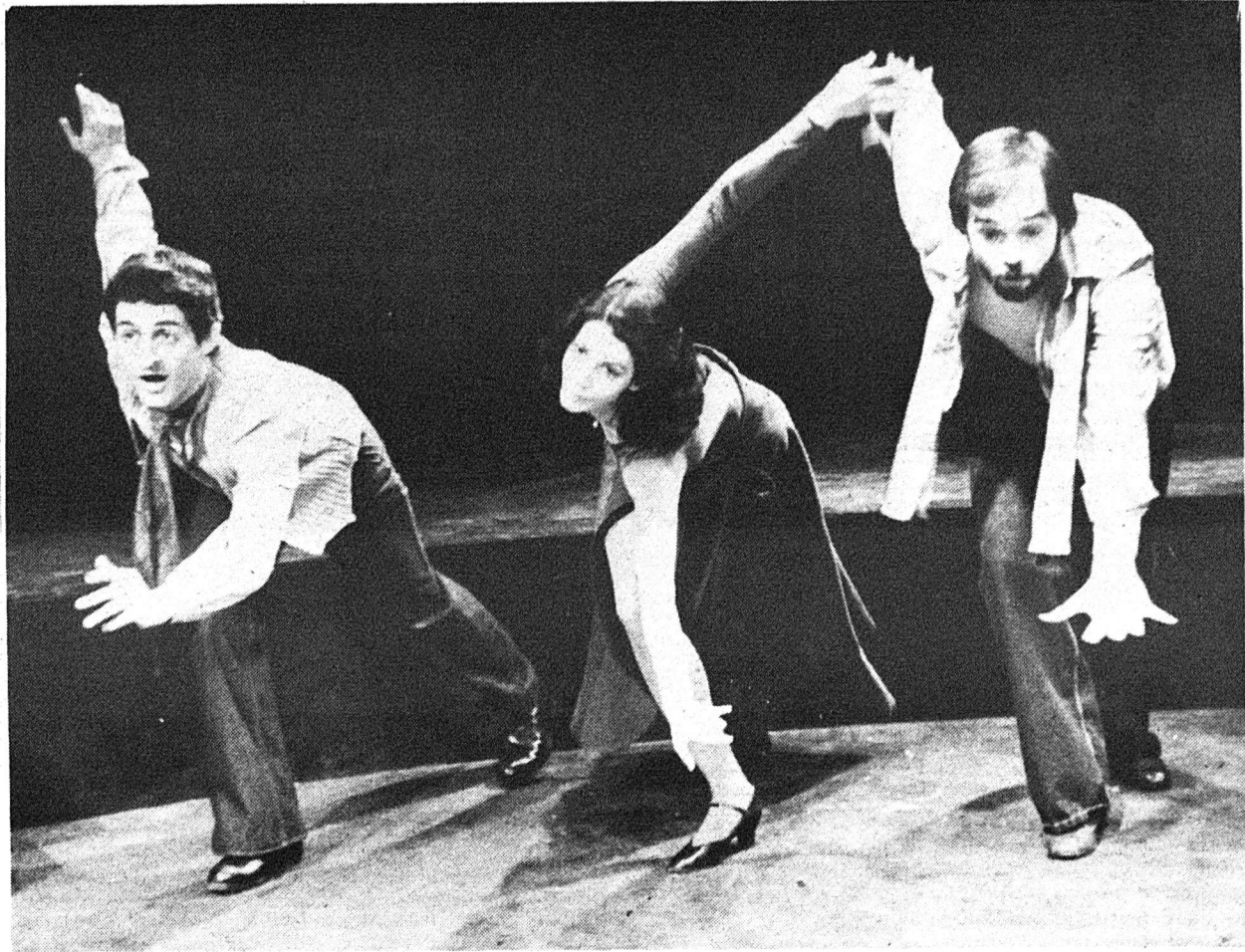


Photo Zan Korba

From Theatre 3's "Seasons".

Theatre 3 musical cliché and sketchy

Seasons" Theatre review by Michaleen Marte

The play might be described as something light and bubbly—much like a bottle of Baby Duck. Unfortunately, this reviewer cannot take credit for this precise and very apt impression. I derived it from a comment made during the wine reception which was made after the performance. The comparison, though a spontaneous one, seems to sum up all that one might expect from Theatre 3's *Seasons*.

A good musical should invite words such as brilliant, enthusiastic and delightful for the feeling that it builds for the audience. But this group of threejectives cannot be honestly applied in the case of

Seasons. Perhaps words like pretentious, ponderous and passe might be better substitutes.

I may be the wrong person to be reviewing a musical drama, since I have found few that are truly appealing. A musical with any sense of quality should hope to satisfy the following criteria. As any drama, it must have a definite plot or story-line which is continuous throughout. Like any ordinary play, novel or piece of fiction, there should be an introduction to a central idea, a development of the idea to a climax and finally a resolution of the idea to conclude the work. The musical is a peculiar form of drama in that instrumentation, song and perhaps dance are the means by which a complex range of thought and emotion should emerge. Therefore the standards to judge the success of the musical is in plot and music as a form for its development.

The problems of *Seasons* can be found in consideration of these standards. Try as I might, I could not detect a story-line which held the entire "play" together and could be followed towards its end. Of course there is a main theme, captured in the vague title of *Seasons*. It is the ups and downs, joys and woes of any profession, which in this case is the theatre. So we are taken through the optimistic spring of calls and appointments that begin an acting career. There is the summer of auditions and attempts to break into the "big time". The "post-mortem audition blues" becomes the fall. Winter is the unemployment line. Spring is the second act, as a renewed determination to "get on with the show", ending in resignation on the rough road, the easy come easy go life of the theatre. This may sound plausible, but I must admit I am stretching things a bit.

Such a story does not exist on the basis of the play we are given. There is no traceable progression of theme. The final half of the performance confirms this suspicion.

Unfortunately, the loss of one is accompanied with the loss of the other. The actors use the motions of song and word to express a message which is stunted in its original conception. I am not saying that the cast of three don't do their damndest to have us believe that we are seeing and hearing something sparkling and original. David Brunetti, Faye Cohen and Val Ryder are best when they sing and interact together—and weakest when they are alone or apart. Certainly there are a variety of good musical compositions offered by Rick Fox. But sadly enough the overworn clichés used for lyrics seriously limit the expression of many good ideas. The experience of *Seasons* is much like a moderately good record album. It cannot be appreciated for a unifying concept of composition but for a few, individual songs on their own merit.

It should be noted that the humor in one of the closing songs "Nothing to Lose", is rather harmful to the play itself. It seemed to imply that it was a part of the dismal failures created by Canadian theatre. The statement is that the musical has nothing to lose since nothing has yet been achieved in its area. This is definitely a negative and dangerous point of view to project. *Seasons* presupposes that it will be backed up with many other experiments that have sunk. However I cannot argue, *Seasons* is destined to be classed as but a mediocre and domestic product to be passed up for better.

Dept. production

A new Canadian play by the university's M.F.A. candidate in playwriting, R.C. Carpenter, will be staged on January 27 and 28 in the Drama Wing of the Fine Arts Building, Room 3-125.

Titled *Moran*, the production is directed by Henry Wolf, a visiting professor and established international director. The English Department's Dr. [Name], Music student Manus Sasankin and Education student Marie Gynane headline the show's

Ms. Carpenter is a professional writer with several publication credits. *Moran* is her first work to be produced at the U of A. For more information on this production, contact the Department of Drama Office.



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