

# Arts & Entertainment

## Hare and Sparks bring U of A drama experience to Citadel

interview by Mike Spindloe

For Kevin Hare and Stephen Sparks, the title of the play they are currently involved in may be significant with regards to their careers in acting. The title of the play is *Great Expectations*, based on the novel by Charles Dickens, and the two actors, having just graduated from the BFA Drama program at the University of Alberta this spring, are making great strides to be already doing such a production at the Citadel.

Asked if they expected anything like this to happen in such a short time, both answer in the negative. Sparks adds that "it's a big treat for both of us to be working here already. We certainly don't take it for granted. We don't know what's going to happen next."

The fact that both actors were cast in the same production has a background that may not be completely coincidental. Hare claims that "we both did general auditions and got called up for this play." The two were already friends, however, having attended the U of A together as well as working for the Summerstock Shakespearean Company in Calgary earlier this year.

The obvious rapport they display during our interview is carried over onto the stage, they both say. As well, they share a buoyant sense of humour that manifests itself in a steady back-and-forth stream of banter. Asked how they like working at the Citadel, Hare replies, "It's great. They put my name on my coffee cup. And when it's time to rehearse, they say, 'would the artists please get on stage!'" Sparks adds, "It's different from other companies. They have taller ceilings and semi-individual dressing rooms."

On the subject of doing a play set in Dickensian London, Hare notes that "you have to have better posture than usual," and, more seriously, that "since the whole thing is based on literary prose rather than dramatic material, you lose a lot in descriptions and personalities of characters in the transition to the stage." Sparks adds

that "Barbara Field did a great job scripting it, which must have been a mammoth job."

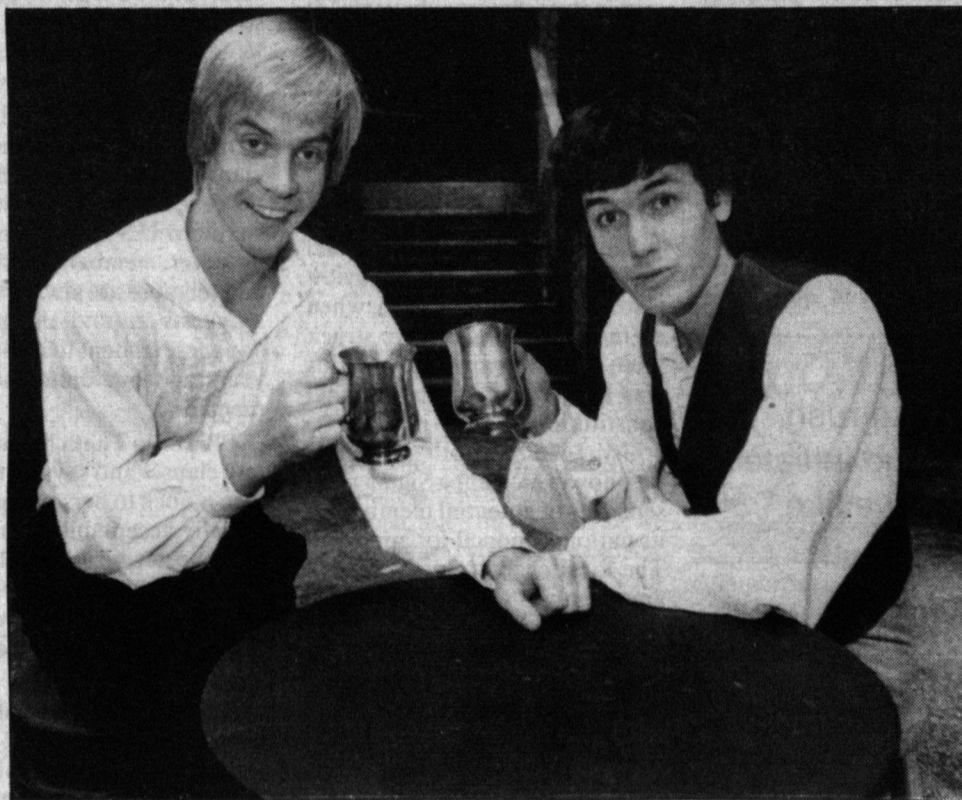
Despite the lapses in detail which are bound to occur, Hare points out that the novel is "a wonderful data source to go back to and find out what the person is thinking at that moment. For me, it is all in the first person, since I play the older Pip, and he's the narrator. We try to be faithful to the book, as much as possible."

Sparks plays Herbert Pocket, who befriends Pip when Pip first arrives in London. Pocket, according to Sparks, is "supposed to be charming, flighty and loveable. He advises Pip on how to behave like a

London gentleman when he first arrives. He brings out the best side of Pip." Pip soon learns to be a snob, but he secretly helps Herbert to get a job, "the one good thing he ever did in life."

Hare sees Pip as being "either the antagonist or the one who is being victimized, depending on how you look at it. The story revolves around him, and therefore me, so I have a responsibility to drive the play forward." Pip wants to be an upper-class gentleman so he can win the heart of an upper-class girl he admires. Hare says, "the story really is about how he finds out who he is, how he becomes an outside shell of a gentleman, with a common person inside. He turns into the people he hated before."

And does Pip realize this? "Yes, in a way, when his situation changes," says Hare, "and that's all we can tell you without giving too much away."



### Great Expectations

Stephen Sparks, left, and Kevin Hare taste early success in their acting careers with the Citadel production, which runs until October 27.

## Baumann stars in ESO Master Series concert at Jube

Edmonton Symphony Orchestra  
Jubilee Auditorium  
Friday, November 11

review by Pat Hughes

Soloist Hermann Baumann took the stage Friday night with the ESO for a refreshingly different performance. Baumann, a well-travelled West German horn soloist, was the featured performer in the fifth installment of the Magnificent Master Series, which overall was another typically strong ESO effort.

Opening the program was Mozart's Horn Concerto No. 1 in D major, a light, energetic piece with a few digs at the soloist thrown in by the composer. Baumann handled the piece well, playing with the exuberance and high spirits found in so much of Mozart's music.

Next up was a world premiere, Jean Coulthard's "Music to Saint Cecilia", this performance of the full orchestral version dedicated to Music Director Uri Mayer. Coulthard, a Vancouver native, has created in this work a subtle and elegant offering, with the feeling of the music not at all compromised by its intricacy. The piece was well received, as was its composer, who made an appearance to the appreciation of the large audience.

Baumann then returned to the stage for the Concerto for Horn No. 2 in E flat major by Richard Strauss. This is quite a demanding piece from the soloist's standpoint, as its periodic flurries of notes require a great deal of agility and control. Baumann was not lacking in either; thus the more difficult parts did not escape him. His tone control was superb, especially during the second movement where a slip could destroy the delicate beauty of the music. The audience enjoyed the Concerto as well, Baumann returning to the stage three times to receive his well-deserved applause.

The concert was ended in grand and somber fashion with Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 6 in B minor "Pathétique".

## Studio Theatre celebrates 40th anniversary season

by Patricia Badir and Jill Cross

The 1988-89 Season marks the 40th Anniversary of the University of Alberta's Studio Theatre. Since its inaugural production of Luigi Pirendello's *Henry IV* in 1949, Studio Theatre has played an important role in the development of theatrical activity and appreciation in Edmonton.

In the years immediately following World War II, amateur theatrical production in Alberta was virtually nonexistent. Furthermore, touring professional companies had ceased to perform on the Prairies. The need for theatre was recognized by Robert Orchard who responded by founding Studio Theatre in two converted student veteran Quonset Huts. These remained the theatre's home until 1957 when the huts were demolished for the construction of the Cameron Library.

Orchard recruited the services of a group of dedicated and talented theatre enthusiasts to produce and perform at Studio. Among them were the actor and director Elizabeth Sterling Haynes and the playwright Gwen Pharis Ringwood. These women were also instrumental in the founding of the Banff School of Fine Arts in the previous decade. Other performers were recruited from the University Faculty and from the professional community. Students such as Walter Kaassa and Tom Peacocke, who were later to become influential theatre fig-

ures, began their careers at Studio Theatre during its first decade.

The first two seasons were so successful that Orchard and his successors decided to expand their mandate to include the production of at least one new play each year. This commitment to the development of new works illustrated the forward thinking nature of those formative years, which (unfortunately) has not been consistently upheld.

The 1960's was an era of further innovation. Studio Theatre, now operating out of the auditorium in the Education Building, included plays produced by the French Department. In addition to the regular season, outdoor theatre was done during July and August. In 1972 Studio Theatre no longer saw this summer extension as a priority and closed it but a group of students reorganized it as Barter Theatre, where produce (lettuce, potatoes and chickens?) was accepted in lieu of ticket money. This continued on for another six summers.

In the 1970's Studio Theatre moved to its present location in Corbett Hall. With the expansion of the Department of Drama professional training programs it became primarily a showcase for student actors, designers and directors in the B.F.A. and M.F.A. programs. Today, this is still the primary function of the venue. These activities complement

the more experimental work done in the Department in the areas of playwrighting, research, directing and collective/community theatre.

Since its inception, Studio Theatre has been chronically impoverished. As part of its 40th Anniversary Celebration, it is launching an endowment campaign. Through this appeal to the community, Studio Theatre will continue to afford young actors, designers, directors the opportunity to develop and display their talent.

This 40th Anniversary Season invites the Edmonton theatre-going public "to catch our rising stars." The first production, Moliere's *The Imaginary Invalid* completed a critically successful run last week, and the season continues with Anton Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard*, directed by Professor Michael Murdock (February 2-11). Theatre Network's Artistic Director Stephen Heatley will be the guest director of Jim Leonard Jr.'s *The Diviners* (March 30- April 8). M.F.A. candidates Brian Taylor and Shirley Tooke will direct C.P. Taylor's *Good* (May 4-13) and Michael Frayne's *The Benefactors* (June 8-17) respectively.

For further information regarding either the endowment campaign or Studio Theatre's Season, contact James Simon, Studio Theatre house manager and publicist, at 432-2271.

Colin Northcott

Edmonton  
Symphony  
Orchestra



Tchaikovsky died just two weeks after its premiere, and if the tone of the work is any indication, his last days were not happy ones. The composer seems to wrestle with despair throughout the symphony, his triumphs and failures conveyed beautifully in his music. The third movement, a powerful march, seems to suggest victory, but it is followed by a mournful adagio which tells of final defeat, the last note fading slowly into silence. This is an astonishing work of art, one which must be handled properly if it is to succeed. Such was the case; the ESO met the challenge well, conveying the shifts of emotion very well.

The overall effect of the program was a good one, refreshing and different. Baumann is a performer from whom one could learn a great deal; he is a master of his craft. And the ESO, as always, showed their mastery in grand style. It's nice to know that some things never change.