

the ARTS

The state of Canadian Theatre

Part One of a report on the state of Canadian Theatre

Approximately two hundred people gathered in the student union theatre Thursday night to discuss the topic of Theatre in Canada: Its Development and Future. The Forum panel was chaired by Tom Peacocke, Chairman of the Drama Department.

On hand for the deliberations was a large gathering of influential personages which represented the broad spectrum of the Canadian theatre scene. Zelda Heller, Director of Performing Arts from the Department of State was the Government's representative on the federal level and Jack McCreath, who is the provincial government's Supervisor of the Drama Division of the Department of Culture, Youth and Recreation was on hand to keep Alberta's finger in the pie.

Louis Desrochers represented the Canada Council and rounded off the contingents of the halves as far as financial support went. In the have-not section there was: Jean-Marcel Duclame of the Theatre Francais d'Edmonton, Mark Schoenberg of Theatre 3, John Neville, Artistic Director of the Citadel Theatre, and George Ryga, playwright and author of *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe*.

Powys Thomas was also on hand for the proceedings. While he confessed he didn't know what he was doing there since he has no influence on the Canadian theatre scene it is worth remembering that in addition to

his achievements as an actor and as a director he was also once the head of the National Theatre School which has had a profound effect on Canadian theatre.

In the panel's attempt to take the pulse of the theatre in this country one thing above all became clear: it seems quite impossible for the theatre to develop a product of high quality without sufficient funding.

Where is this funding to come from? For some years now most cultural organizations in this country have relied on the Canada Council to deliver the much needed funding to keep these same organizations alive, if not solvent at least out of bankruptcy proceedings.

Louis Desrochers filled the audience in on some salient facts concerning the Canada Council and its operations. During the mid-fifties the government created the Massey Commission to inquire into the state of the Arts, the Social Sciences, and the Humanities in Canada. This Commission recommended the creation of the Canada Council. When Sir James Dunn and Mr. Killiam of Calgary Power fame passed away their combined estate taxes yielded a windfall of approximately 100 million dollars. The St. Laurent government used this money to fund the Canada Council. Half of the money went to universities and the other fifty million dollars was used to set up an endowment fund to assist the development of the Arts, the

Social Sciences and the Humanities. The income from this fifty million dollars yielded approximately three million dollars which had to be shared amongst the Arts, Social Science and the Humanities. There was a further division to be dealt with in the arts when the funds had to be divided amongst the Visual Arts, Music, Opera, Dance, and Writing.

Still, meagre as this slice of the pie was, the arts flourished in Canada and the demands for greater support increased to the point where the government has seen fit to grant additional funding to the council. The Canada Council now has an expenditure of approximately forty million dollars a year. Of that sum approximately twenty million dollars is spent on the arts, about four million dollars going directly to theatre groups in addition to the individual grants and bursaries that are awarded to playwrights, directors, and other professionals in the field.

In spite of the increased volume of grants forthcoming from the Canada Council they are still unable to keep up with the demands made on them by some sixty theatre organizations in the country. In 1973-1974 requests, legitimate and realistic as they were, asked for seven million dollars. Obviously this is far short of the four million dollars the council has to distribute. These figures do not even begin to accommodate the requests made by organizations that were not at all successful in getting financial help from the council.

Financing the arts in Canada is an ever increasing problem. The Director of the Council has recently predicted that in order for the country to satisfy its performing arts appetite on an exponential basis, their supporters will have to increase their financial assistance some 400 per cent in the next six to eight years.

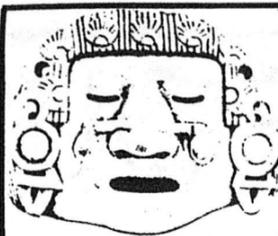
Because of the magnitude of this problem, the Council is co-operating with the secretary of State, provincial governments and many other agencies in studies to obtain reliable data which will serve as background for the presentation of new and increased requests for help from the Federal Government, the Provinces, the municipalities and the private sector.

In the meantime it is imperative that the people lobby politicians in a relentless manner so that support for the arts may be substantially increased to meet the growing needs of the cultural field in the near future.

PART TWO OF THIS REPORT WILL APPEAR IN NEXT TUESDAY'S GATEWAY

Auditions for Studio Theatre

Studio Theatre, producing organization of the University's Department of Drama, will hold open auditions for actors and actresses interested in performing in its third production of the 1973-74 season: *The Country Wife*, by William Wycherley. Auditions will be held in the Thrust Theatre (Room 1-51) of the Fine Arts Centre, 112 St. & 89



ORACLES

theatre lives

The Caretaker by Harold Pinter and directed by Richard Ouzounian. At the Citadel. Now running until November 24.

Play it Again, Sam by Woody Allen and directed by Bud D'Amur. A presentation of Prestige Productions will be playing at the Centennial Library Theatre November 7 to November 17. Cast includes Joe Vassos, Sandy Price and Peter Feldman. Show time is 8:30 p.m. Tickets are \$3.00 and are available from Mike's ticket office.

Joe Egg by Peter Nichols and directed by Keith Digby will be Walterdale Playhouse's second production of the year. It will run from November 13 to November 24 inclusive. Tickets are available at \$2.50 each, except Fridays and Saturdays when they cost \$3.00, from the Bay Box Office. Patrons are advised to get their tickets in advance since Walterdale enjoys a steady clientele. Address of the Walterdale Playhouse is 11407-107 Street. Reservations - 424-0121.

film fare

The National Film Theatre will be showing Satyajit Ray's *Pather Panchali*, a 1954 Indian film, Thursday, November 15 at 7 p.m. Please note that this is not Jalsaghar as was originally indicated. *Pather Panchali* will also be shown on Tuesday, November 20 at 7 p.m. in the theatre of the Centennial Library. Admission is free at both locations but must be restricted to adults 18 years of age. There will be no program on Friday, November 16.

poetry reading

Sharon Stevenson will read from her works November 14. She is a widely-published poet whose poems have appeared in many poetry magazines and in *Forty Women Poets of Canada*. Her published books include *Air Nine* and *Stone*. 8 p.m. in Room 117 of Grant MacEwan Community College Cromdale Campus, 8020-118 Avenue. There is no admission charge.

easy on the ears

A new concept in chamber music: instead of listening to it in a bourgeois auditorium or concert hall, you can listen to it in a bourgeois but informal setting of Garneau Church-Ramsey Hall. (84th Ave. 112 St.) The Edmonton Folk Club is sponsoring a workshop-concert tonite (Tues.) on Medieval Music. Organized by Sheila MacDonald, it will include a Madrigal choir, a trombone choir, a brass chamber group, a mandolin duo (courtesy of Don McVeigh and Robin Cottle), possibly a harp, and maybe some other musical surprises. It all starts around 8:00 p.m. and there is no admission charge, although donations are appreciated. Its going to be great.

the eyes have it

The Edmonton Art Gallery is running an exhibit entitled *Just Before the War*. This is Urban America from 1935 to 1941 as seen by the photographers of the Farm Security Administration. These works by Ben Shahn, Dorothea Lange, John Vachon, Russell Lee, and more, add a new dimension to the outpouring of federally supported art during the New Deal. While they were primarily meant to document the work of the Farm Security Administration, the photographs are often works of art - unforgettable images showing how people looked at each other during this period of economic disaster and unemployment.

The Students' Union Art Gallery is currently featuring an art exhibit entitled, *French Canadians From Sea to Sea*, an exhibition graphically portraying contributions by French Canadians past and present.

The Latitude 53, Edmonton's newest gallery has a new exhibition coming up. Their Group Show opens Thursday, November 8, at 8 p.m. The show features works by: Gallie, Bres, Poole, Voyer, W. Yates, N. Yates, Jones, May, Broderick, Wohlfarth, Guilett, McKay, Vickers, Don, McVeigh, Fiertal. Hours are noon to 5 p.m. Tues, to Sat, and 7-9 p.m. Thursday evening. Upstairs at 10048-101 A Avenue.

Help!!! Gateway desperately needs an art reviewer. Help!!!

greatest

variety

of

something different

BAKER
CENTRE

student discounts

10025 - 106 street

429 - 2181



Optical

PACESETTER
SPORTS 10%
OFF

All Regular Merchandise to all members of
the Student's Union.

(Must Present Card For Discount)

10009-101 A. Ave.
(1 Block East of Black Sheep)

429-0229

Ernie's STEAK PIT LTD.

Licensed Lounge

Banquets to 200

Open 10:30 a.m. to 1 a.m. Daily

Free Parking

reservations: 469-7149

40 Bonnie Doon Shopping Centre

Ave., on the University campus, Saturday, November 17th, commencing at 1:30, and Sunday, November 18th, commencing at 8:00 p.m. Actors and actresses are required as follows:-

Three young men (age range: 17-25), three older men (age range: 40-50), a Maidservant's role.

Some theatre background is required, and interested persons are requested to phone the director, John Terfloth, at 399-5101, for further information. There are no walk-on roles. *The Country Wife*

will run from February 6th - 20th, as part of Studio Theatre's 25th Anniversary Season. Dr. Terfloth's production of *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, by Bertolt Brecht, will be remembered as one of the highlights of recent Studio Theatre seasons.

The Country Wife is famous both for its biting attack on social hypocrisy, and its witty, racy elegance. William Wycherley's comedy of manners captures the brilliance, the sophistication and vivacity with which Restoration society played the game of life.