

GATEWAY TO THE arts

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 1964

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Jury Drawn From Audience For Courtroom Play By Rand

A change is supposed to be as good as a rest—and Edmonton's drama enthusiasts are in for just that with the forthcoming Edmonton Repertory Company production of *Night of January 16th* by Ayn Rand, starting Feb. 17th.

The Strand Theatre will be converted into a courtroom for this unique drama by the author of *The Fountainhead* and *Atlas Shrugged*. Jurors will be drawn from the audience and their verdict will determine the way the play ends.

The play stars Mickey MacDonald as the defendant. Mrs. MacDonald has vast and enviable experience and has never been known to give a bad performance. Daniel Walsh is the prosecutor and Ernie Whiteley is the defense attorney.

Karen Andre (Mrs. MacDonald) is accused of the murder of Bjorn Faulkner, a financial wizard who jumped or was pushed from the roof of the Faulkner Building on the *Night of January 16th*. She is suspected of the murder because she was dismissed as Faulkner's private secretary when Faulkner married Nancy Lee Whitfield (Nita Cohen), the daughter of multi-millionaire John Graham Whitfield (Wally McSween).

Included as witnesses are a Swedish bookkeeper (Norm

Petersson), a rookie policeman (Bill Stocks), a gangster (Mark Cohen), a burlesque dancer who calls herself a terpsichorean (Laura Lindsey) and a Spillane-type private eye (Jim Worthington).

The play is being produced by David Galbraith. Beverley Babier is director. Phil Switzer is in charge of set design and Norman Nagle is stage manager.

The play will run at The Strand Theatre for three nights, Mon., Tues. and Wed., February 17, 18 and 19.

Unusual Variety

Chorus Concert Best In 20 Years

By Elan Galper

Monday's Mixed Chorus concert will be long-remembered by those fortunate enough to have attended it. It was possibly the most well-performed concert that the Chorus has ever given in its twenty-year history, offering an unusual variety while displaying a rich, satisfying tone, good phrasing, and a reasonably accurate interpretation.

The twentieth year of any continuous enterprise seems to be a year of retrospection, of looking back at the consolidated traditions created in a score of years. Tradition may be a fine thing; but one must not remain enslaved to it. It exists to serve, and not to be served. In this spirit, the Mixed Chorus this year broke tradition by joining forces with an orchestra and organ, to render works of a demanding and serious nature such as "To the Transylvanians" by the modern Hungarian composer Kodály, and the "Ode to the Virginian Voyage" by R. Thompson, a work of cantata dimensions, although somewhat lacking in unity.

The folk-songs, in which the Chorus has always excelled, were especially well-handled. In the five Negro spirituals, the eight soloists contrasted well with the larger body of the chorus proper. "Bold Turpin" was suitably gay and whimsical, Mozart's *Farmer's Wife* has never enjoyed more looking for her Cat, though it be in jail, and Brahms' "Drinking Glee" presented a good contrast of the men and women's voices.

The Chorus showed a tangible improvement over the past years. Most gratifying was the greater proportion of male chorists, providing a sounder bass and baritone sound, although the tenors, due to their still small number, were not quite as substantial.

The works attempted this year were more ambitious and difficult than ever before. But the Chorus has proven its fine mastery and determined, hard work by performing as well as they did. Special credit goes to the conductor, Professor Eaton, for a well-done job. Additional credit is deserved by the orchestra and soloists, with special praise to the soprano Elizabeth Walker, whose

voice displayed an amazing purity and faultless intonation.

There was, perhaps, only one thing, petty as it is, which seemed to disturb, and that was the order of the program. In my opinion, the first two works, two psalms of intense fervour and dignity with orchestra and organ accompaniment, should have been reserved for a later, more climactic moment. It might have helped better the spirit of the evening had the Chorus commenced with a few lighter works, attempting the two serious and solemn above-mentioned pieces by Holst when they and the audience were properly warmed up for them. Another thing which was lamented was the indiscriminate placing of several of the works. In my opinion, a line like "Jesus walked this lonesome valley" should have never been put after a maracas-accompanied song ending with "Say, you're doing the Mango Walk with me!" These may, to some, be merely petty points, but they do detract from the overall mood, and, as a consequence, the performance suffers.

Arts Calendar

Shumka Dancers
Jubilee Auditorium
Feb. 14, 8:30 p.m.
University Symphony Orchestra
Convocation Hall
Feb. 14, 15, 8:30 p.m.
Hamlet
Studio Theatre, Education Building
Feb. 18-22, 8:30 p.m.

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