

## No Orgasmo for Adulter

**Orgasmo Adulter Escapes From The Zoo**  
Nexus Theatre  
September 6-16

review by **Dragos Rui**

It doesn't matter if I liked *Orgasmo Adulter Escapes From The Zoo*, which is currently playing at Nexus Theatre, because I am just a guy — you see, this play is about feminism. If I hated it, it must be because I am possessed of male genitalia. Well I didn't hate it — not really.

**The feminism  
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The title of this play is somewhat misleading — it seems to entreat that this play is about sex. But considering this play is a hold-over from The Fringe, and few if any Fringe plays that have suggestive titles actually deal with carnal knowledge, it is not very surprising that any sex in this play is merely peripheral. At the Fringe, a catchy title is mandatory for economic survival.

*Orgasmo Adulter* is a North American version of an Italian play penned by two playwrights, Franca Rame and Dario Fo, in support of the Italian Women's Movement, and put on by an actor's co-operative named 'actors alive!'. The play remains quite true to its origins. It's err... staggeringly Italian — hot-headed, emotional, and not very well

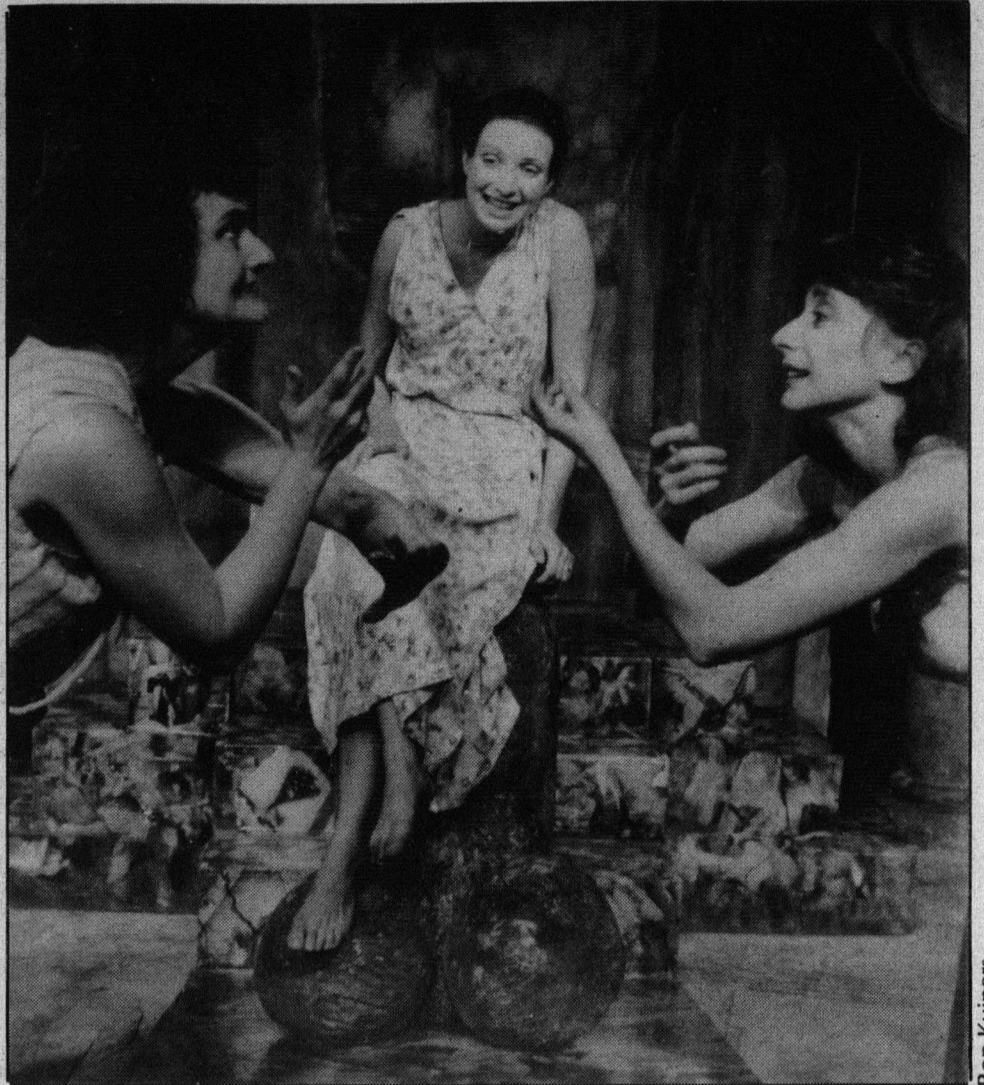
thought out.

This "tragic farce" actually consists of four playlets, put on by a cast of three women. All of the playlets deal with the plight and oppression of women, so much so that you begin to get the impression that this play has a rather big persecution complex.

The first segment is a weird melange of folk fairy tale and deluded hallucinogenic fantasy. It is definitely strange, but also has quite a few funny and entertaining moments. The second segment is the best part of the show, a delightful story of an absent-minded working mother. The third segment is a Marxist/Power to the People/Down with Multinational Corporations/Paranoid/Why Are They Oppressing Us/They're Out to Get Us/Those Shits monologue by a prostitute in an insane asylum. The last segment is a reworking of an old Italian fable derived from Jason and the Argonauts, with all three cast members taking turns playing the lead role. It explains to us why a woman decided to kill her sons when her husband started to fool around.

The acting is first rate, but it's a shame about the playwrights. The play is so concerned about getting its message across that it does away with things like character development — all the roles are merely cardboard stereotypes. The result is that it's difficult to identify with the situations being played for the audience.

The only part of the play that was anything more than well acted pendantic raving, was the second segment, which revolved around the turmoils of a hard working mother struggling to raise her child and work an assembly line job. It stood out because it actually starred a person rather than the pol-



Ron Kuipers

Julie Bond, Jan Wood, and Frances Kushner in *Orgasmo Adulter Escapes From the Zoo*.

arized propaganda good/evil of the other characters.

Despite all this, the play manages to stay interesting and mostly entertaining, in spite of

all the melodrama. The feminism does not get obsessive, only mildly overbearing. Sensitive New Age Guys (SNAGs) could even enjoy it... On a stanine, it gets a five.

## Pressler Impressive

**Edmonton Symphony Orchestra  
with Menahem Pressler, piano**  
Magnificent Master Series  
Jubilee Auditorium  
Friday, September 8

review by **Mike Spindloe**

We knew that something was up as soon as we set foot in the place. There were all these suits walking around, see, while we were impeccably attired as usual, my companion in Hawaiian beach shorts and I in basic black.

Fresh from a largely rock and roll summer, we had a temporary synapse lapse on the way from the blue zone, into the hallowed barnacles of the Jubilee for the first major classical concert of the season, the debut of the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra's main series.

Maestro Uri Mayer marched to the microphone at a few minutes past the appointed hour, looking and sounding slightly nervous, and welcomed us all back from the past few months of God-only-knows what sort of debauchery.

There was palpable tension in the cavernous room as the ESO began just slightly out of sync, but by the middle of the first movement of Mozart's K.595, B-flat major Piano Concerto, soloist Menahem Pressler and the ensemble were clicking beautifully.

We almost held our breath as Mayer led Pressler through the opening piano statement of the second movement. Here was communication between two artists on a level which their shared years of experience could not have guaranteed.

Pressler's performance was of a calibre which seemed to inspire the orchestra; the Concerto just kept getting better as it went along. His break between the second and third movements was brief and rhythmic, even catching Mayer slightly off guard. Pressler earned an encore for his efforts, for which he performed a moving reading of a Nocturne by Chopin.

The ESO stole the show in the second half; no wonder considering the musical work at hand: Mahler's first Symphony, restored to its original five movement length by Mayer. Augmented by several additional players, including U of A students Scott Martin

(percussion) and Chris Gongos (horns), the ESO put on a memorable performance of Mahler's masterpiece.

The first movement, with its isolated, unlikely motives, short fanfares and bursts of imagination, grew steadily in movement and intensity, leading into a bit of drama from Maestro Mayer between movements: he had forgotten to have the score for the "missing" second movement, originally removed at Mahler's behest, placed on his stand. Whether accident or not, it worked well.

The second movement proved to be full of the apparent contradictions one expects from Mahler, with a strangely light texture

yet sombre nature. The addition of this movement was a welcome one; perhaps we will see a recording of it in the future. (Note: The concert was recorded by the CBC for broadcast on CBC FM's *Mostly Music*, October 18, at 9:05 am.)

As for the rest, well, it didn't matter who was wearing the suits and who was wearing the Hawaiian shorts. On the strength of this performance, we'll be back again and again, even though the upcoming intemperate climate may force us into overcoats. No matter — you can still wear the Hawaiian shorts underneath.

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Byron Collins

Rockabilly stylings from the Hard Rock Miners shook the Butterdome Bash on Saturday.