

KANATA THEATRE

PRESENTS

HEDDA GABLER

by Henrik Ibsen

EARL OF MARCH SCHOOL

THURS. FRI. & SATURDAY
JANUARY 16, 17 & 18.

8.00 pm

TICKETS $2
Students, senior citizens $1

INFORMATION ··· CALL ~~836-5201~~
STEPHEN JONES 4-9151

KANATA THEATRE

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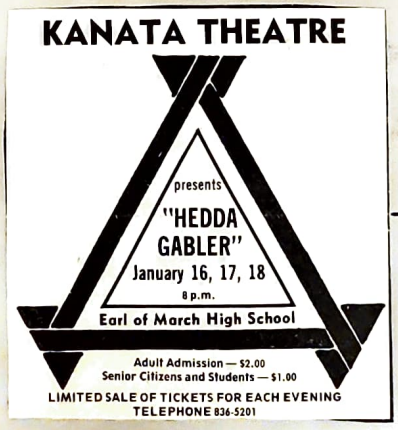
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Director



Laurence Thornton

KANATA REVIEW 16 JAN 1975



In rehearsal for Kanata Theatre's presentation of "Hedda Gabler", by Henrik Ibsen, are Ron Maslin as Judge Brack and Mary Mauger as Mrs. Hedda Tesman (born Gabler). The play will be performed Jan. 16, 17 & 17, Earl of March High School, 8 pm (Photo by Giselle).



In rehearsal for Kanata Theatre's presentation of "Hedda Gabler" to be seen Jan 16, 17, 18 at the Earl of March High School. Joan McLaughlin is seen as Miss Juliana Tesman and Stephen Jones as her nephew, George Tesman.

(Photo by Giselle)

KANATA REVIEW 9 JAN 1975

Kanata Theatre

"Heddar Gabler", a drama by Henrik Ibsen, is Kanata Theatre's second major presentation of the season.

Directed by Laurence Thornton, "Hedda Gabler" can be seen Jan. 16, 17 and 18 at the Earl of March High School. Curtain time is 8 pm. Members of the cast are as follows; Stepehen Jones as George Tesman (a young man of letters), Mary Mauger as Mrs. Hedda Tesman (born Galer....his wife), Joan McLaughlin as Miss Juliana Tesman (his aunt), Mary Holmes as Mrs. Elvsted, Ron Maslin as Judge Brack, Jim Holmes as Ejlert Lovborg and Eufron Williams as Bertha (servant to the Tesmans).

Adult admission is $2.00.....Sr. Citizens and student admission is $1.00. There will be a limited number of tickets sold for each evening. Avoid disappointment and buy your tickets early. Call 836-5201, or 836-3803.

KANATA STANDARD

Kanata Theatre

"Hedda Gabler", a drama by Henrik Ibsen, is Kanata Theatre's second major presentation of the season.

Directed by Laurence Thornton, "Hedda Gabler" can be seen Jan 16, 17 and 18 at the Earl of March High School. Curtain time is 8 pm.

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OTTAWA CITIZEN 11-1-75

Kanata Theatre

Kanata Theatre Group presents Henrik Ibsen's Hedda Gabler as its second production of the season, from Jan. 16 to 18 at 8 p.m. at the Earl of March High School.

Directed by Laurence Thornton, Hedda Gabler stars Mary Mauger in the title role, Stephen Jones, Joan McLaughlin, Mary Holmes, Ron Maslin, Jim Holmes and Eufron Williams.



HEDDA GABLER

Mary Mauger is seen as Heda Gabler Tesman and Stephen Jones as her husband George in the Kanata Theatre production of Ibsen's drama Hedda Gabler. (Photo by Giselle)

OTTAWA JOURNAL 11-1-75

IBSEN PLAY AT KANATA

A production by Kanata Theatre of Henrik Ibsen's drama Hedda Gabler opens for three nights in Earl of March High School, Kanata, at 8 p.m. Laurence Thornton is directing the production. Mary Mauger will play the title role of Hedda Gabler Tesman and Stephen Jones will appear as her husband, George Tesman. Joan McLaughlin is cast as Miss Juliana Tesman (George's aunt), Mary Holmes as Mrs. Elvsted, Ron Maslin as Judge Brack, Jim Holmes as Ejlert Lovborg and Eufron Williams as Bertha, a servant to the Tesmans.



In rehearsal for Kanata Theatre's presentation of "Hedda Gabler" are (left to right) Ron Maslin as Judge Brack, Mary Mauger as Mrs Hedda Tesman (born Gabler), Stephen Jones as George Tesman, and Jim Holmes as Ejlert Lovborg. "Hedda Gabler" can be seen Jan 16, 17 and 18 at the Earl of March High School. Curtain time is 8 pm. For information telephone 592-5201.

(Photo by Giselle)



EUFRON WILLIAMS STEPHEN JONES JOAN MCLAUGHLIN



MARY MAUGER MARY HOLMES







MARY MAUGER AS HEDDA GABLER



RON MASLIN STEPHEN JONES







JIM HOLMES MARY MAUGER











HENRIK IBSEN

Henrik Ibsen was born in 1828, at Skien in Norway of middle-class parents; many of his forbears were seamen. As a boy he was meditative and lonely, but he enjoyed making toy theatres, puppets and comic drawings; afterwards he developed an interest in painting and became a poet of facility and power.

As a youth he worked for some years at a chemist's shop in Grimstad. He was later appointed stage-manager at a theatre in Bergen and then director of another in Oslo. Ibsen knew periods of dire poverty, suffered from lack of recognition, hostility and thwarted aims. During his early years he became a near-alcoholic and is believed to have attempted suicide.

In 1864 he moved to Italy and for many years lived there and in Germany, returning permanently to Norway as an old man in 1891. He has long held the unofficial title of "father of the modern drama". Ibsen was fated to be misunderstood in two centuries; he was too radical for the nineteenth and too conservative for the twentieth. Whether or not he is still somewhat misunderstood, his importance to the modern theatre has long been accepted. As long as he was able to write, he remained a formidable figure in literature and the theatre; a man for whom the creative life was a passionate inquiry into truth and falsehood, right and wrong.

Henrik Ibsen was married in 1858 to Susannah Thoresen and had one child, a son, Sigurd. Ibsen died in 1906.

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In the summer of 1889, while holidaying at Gossensass in the Tyrol, Ibsen, then aged 61, had become violently infatuated with an 18-year-old Viennese girl named Emilie Bardach. After his return to Munich in September, they wrote to each other continuously for four months; then Ibsen broke off the correspondence, and apart from two brief letters towards the end of the year and a third, seven years later in acknowledgment of a telegram of congratulations, he did not contact her again.

"Hedda Gabler" has been glibly assumed by some critics to be a portrait of Emilie, on the grounds that both were beautiful and aristocratic and did not know what to do with their lives, and that Ibsen's description of "Hedda" corresponds to early photographs of Emilie. It is possible that "Hedda" was a portrait, conscious or unconscious, of what Emilie might become in ten years if she did not marry the right man or find a fixed purpose in life. If so, it was a prophecy that came uncomfortably near the truth, for Emilie, though she lived to be eighty-three - she died as late as Nov 1, 1955 - accomplished nothing and never married.

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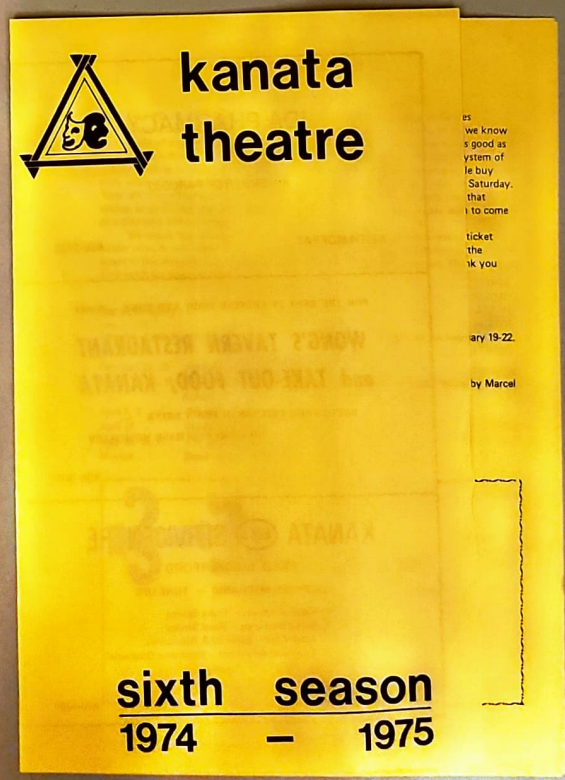
Dr Arne Duve in his stimulating book "Symbolikken i Henrik Ibsens Skuespill" suggests that "Hedda" represents Ibsen's repressed and crippled emotional life. If in fact "Hedda Gabler" is a self-portrait, it is certainly an unconscious one - not that that makes it any the less truthful or valuable. Ibsen intended the play as a comment on the purposelessness of life - particularly as imposed on women of his time, both by their upbringing and by social conventions.

Despite its early failures on the stages of Europe, "Hedda Gabler" has come to be accepted as one of the most popular of Ibsen's plays.

(Excerpts taken from "The Plays of Ibsen" - newly translated from the Norwegian by Michael Meyer)

The Plays Of Ibsen - with their dates of composition

Catiline - 1849	Emperor and Galilean - 1864-73
The Warrior's Barrow - 1849-50	The Pillars of Society - 1875-77
Norma - 1851	A Doll's House - 1879
St John's Eve - 1852	Ghosts - 1881
Lady Inger of Oestraat - 1854	An Enemy of the People - 1882
The Feast at Solhaug - 1855	The Wild Duck - 1884
Olaf Liljekrans - 1856	Rosmersholm - 1886
The Vikings at Helgeland - 1857	The Lady From The Sea - 1888
Love's Comedy - 1862	Hedda Gabler - 1890
The Pretenders - 1863	The Master Builder - 1892
Brand - 1865	Little Eyolf - 1894
Peer Gynt - 1867	John Gabriel Borkman - 1896
The League of Youth - 1868-69	When We Dead Awaken - 1899



No. 78

HENRIK IBSEN
and the Modern Norwegian Theatre

By Carl Fredrik Engelstad



The moral inspiration derived from Ibsen's works may vary from age to age. For one generation he was first and foremost the poet of Brand and Peer Gynt, who in the ethical sphere made exacting demands, castigating every lax inclination to "go round" the issue. For a later generation—and here we face perhaps the strongest Ibsen tradition in Norway—he was above all the scourger of society who presented crucial problems for debate, the anarchist who "put a torpedo under the ark", a view of him favoured by the radical tradition up to our own day. A generation to come will certainly see his work in a setting freed from the intellectual grooves hollowed out by time; many pointers indicate that he will be conceived and interpreted as the poet of *personality*, wrestling eternally with the sense of mission that is the criterion of the true man. In an age that shows a steady trend towards levelling out and towards pressure on individual personality to conform to an agreed pattern of behaviour in the community, the writings of Ibsen will perhaps turn out to be more provocative and inspiring than ever before. One thing at least is certain, that Ibsen's writings have not, for any generation since he wrote "The Warriors in Helgeland" (the first of his plays to arouse controversy), been met merely with indifference, or borne the stamp of the museum.

As for Ibsen's influence on later dramatic writing in Norway, one may say that its character has been rather one-sided—indeed strangely one-sided in view of the versatility of form that marks his dramatic works. He wrote in close approximation both the classical tragedy of Greece and to Danish tragedy with its national romantic tradition; he represented, too, the technique of intrigue as exploited by Scribe, and he wrote the most important verse dramas there have ever been composed in Norwegian; he achieved a victory for realistic dramatic writing that still has contemporary significance and anticipated the modern drama of psychological dissection; he paved the way for a profound symbolism in poetic art, in a manner differing, no doubt, from that of Strindberg and the later expressionism, yet of such effect that it burst the narrow bonds of realism and shifted dramatic writing to the abstract plane. Clearly, indeed, it was a body of drama which even in respect of its form is a comprehensive as could ever be desired. What then is the explanation for the astonishingly one-sided influence his dramatic works exerted on his successors, and above all on our leading and most prolific dramatists: Gunnar Heiberg and Helge Krog?

The explanation lies not so much in Ibsen himself as in the prevailing spiritual climate of Norway. We must look for it in the re-assessment of political and spiritual values that came about in our country in the 1870's and 1880's, a re-assessment to which Ibsen at a certain period made a vigorous contribution, particularly with the plays Pillars of Society (1877) A Doll's House (1879) and Ghosts (1881). A scourger and a rebel Ibsen had always been, and so he remained even after the time of those plays. Here, however, his scourgings and his defiance thrust straight at Norwegian society—the nature of his attitude towards it perhaps may best be gathered from a passage in one of his letters to Bjørnson in 1879: "People say that Norway is a free and independent realm; but I don't set much store by this freedom and independence so long as I know that the individual is neither free nor independent. In all the land of Norway there are not 25 free and independent personalities. There *cannot* be any ..." It was in this inner, human freedom that his interest lay—it lay there throughout all the phases of his creative work—and this cry for freedom was thoroughly in keeping with the demands of the forward-pressing young intelligentsia for greater freedom in relation to the politics, religion and morality of the day. It was precisely in these years that the attacks on the established order fell with a force and to an extent unparalleled before—no wonder that Ibsen was pressed into service, although for him the worst fate he could imagine was to be pressed into the service of any party at all, however hard it fought for freedom. "I hold myself responsible for what I write, I and I alone. I cannot possibly embarrass any party, for I belong to none. I shall stand as a solitary francireur at the outpost and operate single-handed," he wrote to Olaf Skavlan when the controversy over "Ghosts" was at its height, and indeed even the party of the Left was beginning to have cold feet and to feel compromised when a possible alliance with the dangerous Mr. Ibsen was in view. The radical intelligentsia, however, left prudent tactical considerations to the politicians and their editors, and under Brandes' banner the intelligentsia fought above all for freedom of the mind. For them "Pillars of Society" became the final word on the prevailing social order, "A Doll's House" was the final word on the hollowness of the marriage morality of the time, and "Ghosts" was itself the banner that proclaimed the right to handle in artistic freedom any theme whatsoever—not only sexual morality but even veneral disease. The fact that "Ghosts" was categorically rejected for performance on the principal stage in the land, the "Christiania Theatre", really contributed just as much as the actual content of the play towards the canonisation of Ibsen as the foremost figure in the radical assault on society. But in and with these plays, which for the young radical generation took the place of both Bible and catechism, what may be called the Ibsen myth was once and for all established, and the later works were interpreted—where at all possible—in this spirit. In 1884 the Ibsen adept, Gunnar Heiberg, came out with his triumphantly successful social drama, "Aunt Ulrikke", and at this point the course of Norwegian dramatic writing was mapped out for several generations to come. Certainly other dramatists soon emerged, above all Hamsun and Hans E. Kinck, who took quite different paths from those marked out by the Ibsen dramas of society—but not one of them concentrated on dramatic writing as his main province, remaining primarily novelists. The only writers since Ibsen who have rallied to the drama as their own particular field of activity, and that with notable talent, are Heiberg and Krog. Hence the one-sidness both in the Ibsen myth and in the later drama of Norway.

It may be said that this drama in its essence has been focussed on two themes, criticism of society and the cult of

No. 86

IBSEN — THE MAN AND THE DRAMATIST

By Francis Bull

(The Taylorian Lecture, Oxford 1954)



In 1849 Henrik Ibsen commenced his first tragedy, *Catilina*, and fifty years later, in 1899, he completed his twenty-fifth and last dramatic work, *When We Dead Awaken*. Many playwrights have produced a larger body of work, but few have taken greater pains with the planning and rewriting of their dramas or obtained more perfect results.

The energetic Mrs. Ibsen often thought her husband rather lazy: he loved to indulge in vague and idle dreams of grand poetry, far richer and more beautiful than anything ever put on paper, and could feel both irritated and ashamed when she forced him to his writing-table. She never—possibly with one exception, *A Doll's House*—meddled in the actual creation and shaping of his plays; but without her strong will Ibsen would perhaps never have hammered out more than a fraction of that series of dramas which is Norway's chief contribution to world literature.

But outside Ibsen's own country the fact that he was not only a dramatist is often half overlooked. Besides the plays, he has given to his readers a volume of poems, in careful selection, covering the first twenty-five years of his literary life; the augmented and final edition being published during the four-year interval between two essentially different dramatic works, *Emperor and Galilean*, of 1873, and *Pillars of Society*, of 1877.

Only a few of Ibsen's poems have tempted a composer—their chief qualities are not musical, and they mostly lack the celestial flight of great lyricism—but through visual symbols and a most particular choice of words he may give a poetic elucidation of his thoughts, concentrate an idea with epigrammatical precision, or with an effective paradox, and even at times deliver an intimate and impressive personal confession. In many ways these poems thus fill out and give life to that portrait of Ibsen which a reader of his plays may conceive.

Ibsen had started writing poetry years before his first attempt at dramatic production, and through several periods of his youth poetry seems to have given him more inward satisfaction and outward success than the plays. He attained a full command of rhyme and metre long before he had served his hard but necessary time of apprenticeship as a dramatist and acquired the technical mastery of his art. Three of his plays of the 1860's are 'dramatic poems', written in verse and primarily intended for reading, although Ibsen may have cherished a secret hope of having them produced on the stage some day, in spite of their deviations from the accepted rules of the theatre of the time.

But in the middle of the 1870's Ibsen entirely changed his dramatic principles and the form of his art: leaving the world of history, of imagination and capricious irregularity, he followed the new and so-called 'realistic' trend of those years, and soon came to be considered one of its leaders. His modern dramas, with their classically perfect construction and powerful scenic effect, created an illusion of presenting everyday life and persons, and stimulated moral debates all over the Western world. It was at this turning-point of his literary career that Ibsen stopped writing poetry. From now on he was to concentrate on drama alone. But just before finishing his first 'realistic' play, *Pillars of Society*, he gave to his lyric production a concluding verse of weight and importance—four lines only, but fit to serve as a motto for all his writings.

It is extremely difficult to translate these four lines. The English language, which is generally much richer than ours, lacks one verb signifying the process of poetic, dramatic, literary creation—you cannot say as do we in Scandinavia (and as the Germans say also) 'to poet'; and when dictionaries propose the rendering 'to make poetry', the expression sounds, to my ear at least, not very poetical. 'To be a poet', on the other hand, does not seem so filled with activity as the Scandinavian word. But the meaning of Ibsen's verse is clear, and in plain prose may be rendered thus:

To live is to fight with trolls in heart and brain.
To be a poet is to pronounce a final judgement upon oneself.

'To live is to fight with trolls in heart and brain.' Trolls—what are they? The word cannot be translated at all! The trolls are supernatural beings, akin to the enemies of the gods in the heathen world, and very well known in Norwegian fairy-tales and folk-lore. They are supposed to live in the woods and mountains, and should not be imagined in the shape of little goblins: they look more like Polyphemus and the Cyclops in the *Odyssey*—huge, clumsy, and ugly. Some of them, for instance, may have three heads, or even more; while on the other hand it can happen that three trolls posess only a single eye between them. The trolls are dangerous and brutal, seeking to devour men and to ravish women. But they are mostly stupid, and by skill and cunning a man may often get the better of them and kill them.

The trolls may be said to represent the evil forces in Nature, at first only as incarnations of frightening external phenomena, but in more recent literature gradually coming to be taken in a wider sense, embodying or symbolizing those power of evil, hidden in the soul of Man, which may at times suddenly suppress his conscious will and dominate his actions. A great Norwegian novelist and friend of Ibsen has written two

ASBJØRN SKARSTEIN
Ambassador of Norway

MISS MARG ALLEN
KANATA THEATRE GROUP
BOX 13004,
KANATA, ONTARIO K2K 1X3

BT
0028 JANUARY 17 THE PRIME MINISTER HAS ASKED ME TH THANK YOU FOR YOUR LETTER OF JANUARY 10 AND YOUR THOUGHTFUL INVITATION TO ATTEND A PERFORMANCE OF QUOTE HEDDA BAGLER UNQUOTE AT THE EARL OF MARCH HIGH SCHOOL EITHER ON 16, 17 OR 18 OF JANUARY.

MR TRUDEAU APPRECIATES YOUR COURTESY IN PROVIDING THIS OPPORTUNITY BUT, MUCH TO HIS REGRET, OTHER COMMITMENTS AT THIS TIME PRECLUDE THE ACCEPTANCE OF YOUR GENEROUS OFFER.

WOULD YOU PLEASE CONVEY TO THE MEMBERS OF THE KANATA THEATRE GROUP THE PRIME MINISTER'S REGRETS AT BEING UNABLE TO ACCEPT, ALONG WITH HIS RENEWED THANKS FOR HAVING SO KINDLY INVITED HIM.

MADELEINE LAFLEUR(MRS)
APPOINTMENTS SECRETARY

ONTARIO PROVINCIAL POLICE

PERMIT HOLDER (FULL NAME – SURNAME FIRST) / *Titulaire du permis (nom de famille et prénoms au long)*: MASLIN, Ronald William
BIRTH DATE / *Date de naissance*: 3 Apr 33
PERMIT ISSUED / *Délivré le*: Jan 14/75

IS AUTHORIZED TO TRANSPORT A RESTRICTED WEAPON(S) / EST AUTORISÉ À TRANSPORTER UNE ARME À AUTORISATION RESTREINTE: 44cb Colt,1860 Army R,6 Shts,8" Brl(116-945) 36cb,R,1851 Navy, 6Shts,Colt(9939)

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VALID PERIOD / PÉRIODE VALABLE
FROM / DU: DATE — Jan 14/75; TIME – Heure: 1200 Noon
TO / À: 27 Lismar Crescent,Kanata,Ontario (THENCE TO PLACE OF RESIDENCE OR BUSINESS / *De là à l'lieu de résidence ou d'affaires*); DATE — Jan20/75; TIME – Heure: 1200 Noon

PURPOSE (SPECIFY – APPLICATION TO REGISTER OTHER BONA FIDE REASON) / *But (préciser – demande d'enregistrement, de changement à d'autre raison valable)*: Eral of March High School Kanata and to 27 Lismar Crescent Kanata & to 2630 Sheffield Rd Ottawa, Ontario

Transportation of 2 Weapons(Relics)to be used in a Kanata Theatre Group in Custody of the above Mentioned Mr Maslin...

SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON REVERSE / VOIR NOTE AU VERSO

PERMIT HOLDER (SIGNATURE) – *Titulaire du permis (signature)*: R Maslin

LOCAL REGISTRAR (SIGNATURE) / *Registraire local (signature)*: (A.L. HAUGHTON)

POLICE DEPARTMENT – *Service de police*: Ontario Provincial Police
Box 11-160 Stn A Ottawa
Ontario K2A 7T9 P.C.C.I.O. KIRELL 2624

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FORM CR 391

The Citizen, Ottawa, Friday, Jan. 17, 1975, Page 51

Interesting Ibsen drama by Kanata Theatre Group

By Betty Swimmings

Amateur actors and drama editor Kanata Theatre Group has put together a concise, tightly-paced production of Henrik Ibsen's play Hedda Gabler.

The presentation, which opened Thursday night at the Earl of March High School, reveals all the murky machinations of Hedda Gabler yet never decends to melodrama.

chosen his central character well. Mary Mauger's Hedda Gabler is beautifully controlled, exuding a sense of barely supressed frustration with chilling clarity.

It is easy to imagine her manipulating her husband, George Tesman, Judge Brack and Eilert Loveberg, twisting them to suit her whims and rejecting them when she is bored. Her cruelty is shown in the opening moments of the play when she deliberately wounds the vulnerable Aunt Julie.

Miss Mauger develops the character of the haughty, strong-willed Hedda with finesse and her control is particularly admirable at the end of the third act when, in a voice distilled with hate, she says, "I'm burning your child, Thea." At the same time she burns Eilert's manuscript.

Scheming lecher

She is matched in her ruthlessness by Judge Brack, who is a scheming lecher using any means to further his devious plot to establish a menage a trois in the Tesman household.

Ron Maslin breathes strength and life into the role. He is impressive as he suggests plans, cajoles and threatens the luckless Hedda. And there is an elegant air about his Brack as he flourishes his monocle to underline a remark. Later he is quite repellent as he sits like a fat cat, almost smirking when he thinks his plans have worked. But his look of shocked incredulity as he realizes his schemes are shattered during the last minutes of the play are completely believable. It is a fine performance.

Stephen Jones's portrayal of Tesman is a good foil for the unpleasant Brack. He is a gentle, good-natured, unworldly man more interested in scholarly pursuits than the social life Hedda craves, and Mr. Jones's presentation is warmly sympathetic. But his show of shock at Hedda's death is completely unconvincing. There is no feeling of disbelief in his words or expression and one is left untouched by his words. Brack's reaction, on the other hand, has more truth and feeling about it.

Eilert and Thea are pale wraiths in the hands of Jim and Mary Holmes. They are roles rather than people and have little warmth or vitality about them so that we are not touched by their suffering.

But overall, Hedda Gabler is an interesting presentation. Laurence Thornton has developed and directed his main characters with skill and imagination. And the well-designed set by Brenda Robinson and Ron Maslin, with an interesting addition of a porcelain stove, and some stylish costumes added a nice period touch to the production.

Hedda Gabler continues tonight and Saturday with curtain at 8 p.m.

OTTAWA JOURNAL FRI. 17-1-75

Ibsen is too difficult for Kanata theatre

Journal Review
By ROBIN DORRELL

Kanata Theatre's production of Ibsen's Hedda Gabler falls flat because the play is simply too difficult for this group. Most professional companies would think twice about staging it today, and only the most precocious amateurs would have a bash at it.

Hedda Gabler, like serveral other Ibsen plays, calls for acting that is both sensitive and utterly realistic. Hedda's yearning for a higher purpose in life, the dimness of her husband George, the slimy scheming of the armoral and bored Judge Brack, all can become ridiculous with the first hint of clumsy and unrealistic acting.

And although Kanata Theatre's cast, under the direction of Laurence Thornton, work damned hard and with admirable earnestness, they don't get beyond displaying their inexperience.

Inexperience is not a crime. But is is a shame that a play of some importance becomes ridiculous because of it.

I hasten to point out that the acting in this production is not bad, merely inexperienced and made to look worse because of the difficulty of the material.

Mary Mauger's Hedda is obviously bored, but Ibsen's Hedda is bored due to an obsession which drives her eventually to suicide.. Miss Mauger's Hedda is no more than a kitten bored with trifles. The performance is without tension. Hedda is not suffocating with her empty existence. She is neither dynamic nor dramatic. There is therefore no point to the play.

Stephen Jones is insufferably dumb as Hedda's husband, but who would believe that she'd marry such a twit in the first place. Ron Maslin looks like a judge and sounds like one, too, but for some reason or another doesn't seem the type to have wild parties and big plans for Hedda's body. Maslin's Judge Brack is, in effect, as feeble as Hedda's husband is dim.

As Lovberg, a bright chap once wicked but now reformed, Jim Holmes shows up quite well. But, cleaned up, he too is as dreary as the other men and one can only regret that Hedda hadn't shot him (she's a gun nut) when she and he were having a "relationship" earlier in their lives. Mary Holmes is effective as Thea Elvsted.

It must be said that Kanata Theatre have done well with the costumes and set.

KANATA REVIEW 23-1-75

Theatre group presents Hedda Gabler

By SHEILA DAVIS

On January 16, 17 and 18 the Kanata Theatre Group took on the formidable task of presenting Henrik Ibsen's HEDDA GABLER. The Group had obviously worked long and hard on this production, the foyer was laid out with Norwegian flags, a map of Norway and quotations from Ibsen to provide a point of reference for the play. The costumes were well done and the setting quite good, apart from a few discordant notes such as the bouquets in the first scene being too modern and containing varieties of flowers that had not been developed in the 19th century.

The opening scene started well with convincing performances by Joan McLaughlin as Aunt Julia and Eufron Williams as Berte - though the character of Berte rather faded away as the play progressed.

Stephen Jones as George Tesman mad a valiant effort, but never quite achieved the alternating boyishness and foolishness required to illustrate the underveloped personality intended by Ibsen.

Mary Mauger's Hedda, though beautiful to look at, was just not strong enough to dominate the play as she should have done, and Ibsen's illustration of a mind trapped in a hopeless circle of self-made torment refusing to progress, did not become evident.

Mary Holmes as Thea Elvsted was the only completely convincing characterization and her performance relieved the monotony of the evening. Her movements were graceful and natural and matched to her speech, which was not always so with the other characters. Mary Holmes is a valuable addition to the Group.

Ron Maslin was good as Judge Brach, but could have emphasized the cynical and worldly aspects of the character more clearly.

Jim Holmes looked a little too healthy and robust to be entirely convincing as Eilert Lovberg, the dissipated and played-out man described by Ibsen, but after a shaky start did get into the character quite well. In the third act when Eilert tells Mrs. Elvsted that he has destroyed the manuscript they had both worked so hard to produce, there are a few magic moments when these two people are Ibsen's characters and the agony and pain become real. Unfortunately this quality is not maintained with the re-entry of the other characters, and the play bumbles to an end with the apparently pointless and unconvincing suicide of Hedda.

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MISS MARG ALLEN

KANATA THEATRE GROUP

BOX 13004,

KANATA, ONTARIO K2K 1X3

BT

0028 JANUARY 17 THE PRIME MINISTER HAS ASKED ME TH THANK YOU FOR YOUR LETTER OF JANUARY 10 AND YOUR THOUGHTFUL INVITATION TO ATTEND A PERFORMANCE OF QUOTE HEDDA BAGLER UNQUOTE AT THE EARL OF MARCH HIGH SCHOOL EITHER ON 16, 17 OR 18 OF JANUARY.

MR TRUDEAU APPRECIATES YOUR COURTESY IN PROVIDING THIS OPPORTUNITY BUT, MUCH TO HIS REGRET,OTHER COMMITMENTS AT THIS TIME PRECLUDE THE ACCEPTANCE OF YOUR GENEROUS OFFER.

WOULD YOU PLEASE CONVEY TO THE MEMBERS OF THE KANATA THEATRE GROUP THE PRIME MINISTER'S REGRETS AT BEING UNABLE TO ACCEPT, ALONG WITH HIS RENEWED THANKS FOR HAVING SO KINDLY INVITED HIM.

MADELEINE LAFLEUR(MRS)

APPOINTMENTS SECRETARY

From Mart Crowley's The Boys in the Band, to Albee and Neil Simon

Community theatre spreads its wings

An examination by assistant music and drama editor Betty Swimmings, of an interesting trend in amateur theatre, in which three local companies reveal how they are thriving in the face of professional competition in Ottawa



Camelot Little Theatre (above): Richard Marchand, Michel Tremblay and Phil O'Brien in The Boys in the Band



Bytown Players (right): Pat Leggo and Bob Lutes in Prisoner of Second Avenue



Kanata Theatre Group (below): director Ron Marlin rehearses scene with AnnMarie Copple and Rosemary Scott

Theatre is thriving in Ottawa. With subscriptions in the National Arts Centre theatre series at 96.4 per cent and subscriptions in the Ottawa Little Theatre series at 86 per cent, there's still room for three community theatres to operate in the black.

For Camelot Little Theatre, Kanata Theatre Group and the ByTown Players it's a matter of pride that they are not financial drains on the communities to which they cater.

And since all of the companies have been drawing larger audiences as the years go by, they feel justified in saying they are serving a theatrical need and fulfilling their aims as theatre groups.

As the level of professional acting improves in Ottawa, says Pat Hunt of Camelot, the demands made on community theatre become more stringent.

"Audiences have changed and developed over the past five years and we find they're usually ready to go to a play and participate in an experience," says Mrs. Hunt.

More adventurous

Because of this development, Camelot is more adventurous in its programming than the other two companies. They include Canadian and experimental drama along with the more usual hit comedies and musicals.

Their next presentation, Mart Crowley's play The Boys in the Band, is a case in point.

Pat Hunt claims partial responsibility for the choice of the successful 1968 off-Broadway hit, which was quite daring at the time of its production since it brought the subject of homosexuality out of the theatrical closet.

"I started reading the play and found it so absorbing I couldn't put it down, so I suggested it to the play reading committee and, since they didn't have anything yet, they looked into it," she explained.

The play found favor with the committee and Camelot's executive, and will be produced from Feb. 19 to 22 at Woodroffe High School with curtain at 8:30 p.m.

ByTown Players, too, have departed somewhat from their usual formula programming of comedies and musicals this season. When they changed their name from Gloucester Players to ByTown Players at the beginning of the current season, they also had a slight change of policy.

"We deliberately tried something different with Edward Albee's drama Everything in the Garden," said Pat Current of ByTown. "We'd done comedy, musical comedy and melodrama and felt we needed to do something serious if we wanted to expand as a company."

ByTown: *'We'd done comedy, musical comedy and melodrama and felt we needed to do something serious'*

But audience reaction showed that comedies and musicals were favored by the people of Gloucester township, so next week, Feb. 21 and 22, and again on Feb. 28 and March 1, the company presents Neil Simon's comedy Prisoner of Second Avenue. Curtain is at 8:30 p.m. in Gloucester High School.

A taste for comedy

Kanata audiences also have a taste for light comedy, says Marg Allen, who looks after publicity for the group.

"We do four adult productions a year and try to do at least one serious play," she said, noting that a recent presentation of Hedda Gabler had been very well received. But comedy returns to the Kanata stage with the March 13 presentation of A Shot in the Dark.

Organizing a community theatre company is basically a matter of gathering together creative people interested in working in every facet of theatre. And the operative word is work.

"We're not a social club," said Mrs. Current, and the others echoed her words. "Putting together a production is hard work and time-consuming. It takes six to eight weeks to rehearse, and often a musical takes longer."

First of all, plans have to be ironed out about financial support, finding a place to rehearse and a place to store properties. Policies must be set out regarding membership, rules made to govern the executive and policies outlined on choosing the plays for production.

Since 1968, both Camelot and Kanata have been reading and producing plays. ByTown, known then as the Gloucester Players, was organized in 1972.

"During our first winter," said Mrs. Allen, "we had 12 people meeting in Kanata in Mary Mauger's home for play reading. Then in 1969 we produced our first one-act play."

To finance the first production, each member of the group chipped in $10 to cover the costs and at the end of the run, they ended up with $285.71.

"We're a non-profit community theatre and receive moral but not financial support from the township," explained Mrs. Allen. Funds are realized from admission receipts, bar profits and advertising income.

Enough for next play

"We try to make just enough to meet expenses and have enough over to start the next production."

Some restrictions are placed on membership in Kanata Theatre Mrs. Allen explained. "We take people with varying amounts of skill and this year's company is made up of 86 paid-up members counting adults and students. But since the company is a recreational activity of March township, members must be residents of the township. Also, they must be 15 years old or in Grade 10 and have paid their membership dues before they can take part in any production."

To develop future casts, Kanata holds teenage play reading sessions every week and has a student representative on the nine-member executive.

"Executive members are only allowed to serve for two years to ensure that cliques won't take over the group or that just a few people will control the company," said Mrs. Allen.

Rehearsal space and storage is provided by the township in the old March town hall and at Kanata community centre with actual performances taking place in the Earl of March High School.

Although membership in the theatre is restricted, audiences are not and over the past two years audiences have included people from Ottawa and surrounding towns.

Members of Camelot and ByTown come from many different areas and companies. "If people are willing to participate, they're welcomed with open arms," says Pat Hunt. Since it began with 12 members in 1968, Camelot has grown to 60 members this season.

"Usually the nucleus working force is 20 members, but as the production takes shape the number of people we need increases," she said.

Camelot: *'Audiences have changed. We find they're ready to go to a play and participate in an experience'*

Outsiders welcomed

One of the reasons behind ByTown Player's change of name was its desire to encourage members from other companies and areas to take part in its productions.

"Because we held our plays in Gloucester High School there was some confusion about our status as a theatre," explained Mrs. Current. "Many people thought we were a high school student group instead of a community theatre. So we changed our name to one suggesting a broader scope hoping to encourage new members from other parts of the city to come and work both on and off stage."

The plan has worked, and two former players with the Ottawa Little Theatre, Bob Lutes and Pat Leggo, have leads in The Prisoner of Second Avenue.

Money to run Camelot and ByTown comes from admission receipts, patron's donations and membership fees. ByTown also receives a $500 grant from the Gloucester Community Council for each production, but it is repaid in full after each presentation.

"This way we feel we're not a drain on the community and sometimes there's even a little left over," said Mrs. Current.

ByTown Players came into being as an off-shoot of a community sponsored variety show held in the Beacon Hills area. "Council was so pleased with it that they suggested a theatre group should be formed. Members of the show agreed and Gloucester Players came into being."

A strong feeling of commitment pervades all the groups. Each is interested in having viable theatre and in improving its standards through workshops and internal training programs for actors, directors, technicians and production crews.

"Everyone takes turns at everything," said Marg Allen. "And if someone doesn't get a role he's set his heart on he doesn't go off in a huff. He just takes part in another area of the play and works as part of the team."

Camelot has taken advantage of Theatre Ontario grants to sponsor workshops conducted by professionals to aid its amateur company.

Destroyed in fire

"We used some of the funds to provide the services of an 'animateur', Rick Minichiello, of the University of Ottawa, for Boys in the Band. He's worked with the company helping the cast extend the characters, helped with blocking problems and by offering his professional opinion on the show," said Mrs. Hunt.

Camelot is still recovering from the loss of its home, Camelot House, which was destroyed in a fire last October. The company lost many of its costumes and sets in the blaze. Since the fire, the company's energy has been going into projects such as play reading, workshops and developing new program ideas, including their first venture into children's theatre, and a search for a large building where the company could combine rehearsal and storage facilities.

In the meantime, rehearsals, performances and meetings take place at Woodroffe High School.

"Because Camelot is classed under the adult education program through the board of education we give them our $10 each membership fee — we are allowed to use the school facilities. Space is limited and so is time, but the board has never interfered or tried to censor our plays. We have complete freedom to follow our own artistic bent," she said.

Each company feels it is serving a need in Ottawa, but Camelot thinks its contribution is a little different.

"We're offering scripts that we think perhaps the National Arts Centre and the other companies can't touch because of their internal policies and there's a wonderful sense of freedom about it. It gives us a chance to grow in new directions," said Mrs. Hunt.

Kanata: *'We do four adult productions a year and try to do at least one serious play'*

Theatre group presents Hedda Gabler

By SHEILA DAVIS

On January 16, 17 and 18 the Kanata Theatre Group took on the formidable task of presenting Henrik Ibsen's HEDDA GABLER. The Group had obviously worked long and hard on this production, the foyer was laid out with Norwegian flags, a map of Norway and quotations from Ibsen to provide a point of reference for the play. The costumes were well done and the setting quite good, apart from a few discordant notes such as the bouquets in the first scene being too modern and containing varieties of flowers that had not been developed in the 19th century.

The opening scene started well with convincing performances by Joan McLaughlin as Aunt Julia and Eufron Williams as Berte - though the character of Berte rather faded away as the play progressed.

Stephen Jones as George Tesman mad a valiant effort, but never quite achieved the alternating boyishness and foolishness required to illustrate the underveloped personality intended by Ibsen.

Mary Mauger's Hedda, though beautiful to look at, was just not strong enough to dominate the play as she should have done, and Ibsen's illustration of a mind trapped in a hopeless circle of self-made torment refusing to progress, did not become evident.

Mary Holmes as Thea Elvsted was the only completely convincing characterization and her performance relieved the monotony of the evening. Her movements were graceful and natural and matched to her speech, which was not always so with the other characters. Mary Holmes is a valuable addition to the Group.

Ron Maslin was good as Judge Brach, but could have emphasized the cynical and worldly aspects of the charcater more clearly.

Jim Holmes looked a little too healthy and robust to be entirely convincing as Eilert Lovberg, the dissipated and played-out man described by Ibsen, but after a shaky start did get into the character quite well. In the third act when Eilert tells Mrs. Elvsted that he has destroyed the manuscript they had both worked so hard to produce, there are a few magic moments when these two people are Ibsen's characters and the agony and pain become real. Unfortunately this quality is not maintained with the re-entry of the other characters, and the play bumbles to an end with the apparently pointless and unconvincing suicide of Hedda.

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Credit must be given to the cast for their hard work on the script. The vast amount of uninspiring dialogue to be memorized coupled with little action, made it a very difficult task. There was barely a "fluffed" word throughout the play.

Interesting Ibsen drama by Kana

By Betty Swimmings
Assistant music and drama editor

Kanata Theatre Group has put together a concise, tightly-paced production of Henrik Ibsen's play Hedda Gabler.

The presentation, which opened Thursday night at the Earl of March High School, reveals all the murky machinations of Hedda Gabler yet never decends to melodrama.

Laurence Thornton has

ata The

chosen his central character well. Mary Mauger's Hedda Gabler is beautifully controlled, exuding a sense of barely supressed frustration with chilling clarity.

It is easy to imagine her manipulating her husband, George Tesman, Judge Brack and Eilert Loveberg, twisting them to suit her whims and rejecting them when she is bored. Her cruelty is shown in the opening moments of the play when she deliberately wounds the vulnerable Aunt Julie.

Miss Mauger develops the character of the haughty, strong-willed Hedda with finesse and her control is particularly admirable at the end of the third act when, in a voice distilled with hate, she says, "I'm burning your child, Thea." At the same time she burns Eilert's manuscript.

Scheming lecher

She is matched in her ruthlessness by Judge Brack, who is a scheming lecher using any means to further his devious plot to establish a menage a trois in the Tesman household.

Ron Maslin breathes strength and life into the role. He is impressive as he suggests plans, cajoles and threatens the luckless Hedda. And there is an elegant air about his Brack as he flourishes his monocle to underline a remark. Later he is quite repellent as he sits like a fat cat, almost smirking when he thinks his plans have worked. But his look of shocked incredulity as he realizes his schemes are shattered during the last minutes of the play are completely believable. It is a fine performance.

Stephen Jones's portrayal of Tesman is a good foil for the unpleasant Brack. He is a gentle, good-natured, unworldly man more interested in scholarly pursuits than the social life Hedda craves, and Mr. Jones's presentation is warmly sympathetic. But his show of shock at Hedda's death is completely unconvincing. There is no feeling of disbelief in his words or expression and one is left untouched by his words. Brack's reaction, on the other hand, has more truth and feeling about it.

Eilert and Thea are pale wraiths in the hands of Jim and Mary Holmes. They are roles rather than people and have little warmth or vitality about

eatre Group

them so that we are not touched by their suffering.

But overall, Hedda Gabler is an interesting presentation. Laurence Thornton has developed and directed his main characters with skill and imagination. And the well-designed set by Brenda Robinson and Ron Maslin, with an interesting addition of a porcelain stove, and some stylish costumes added a nice period touch to the production.

Hedda Gabler continues tonight and Saturday with curtain at 8 p.m.

FESTIVAL
FRIDAY 7:30/9:30 P.M.
R

Ibsen is too difficult for Kanata theatre

Journal Review
By ROBIN DORRELL

Kanata Theatre's production of Ibsen's Hedda Gabler falls flat because the play is simply too difficult for this group. Most professional companies would think twice about staging it today, and only the most precocious amateurs would have a bash at it.

Hedda Gabler, like serveral other Ibsen plays, calls for acting that is both sensitive and utterly realistic. Hedda's yearning for a higher purpose to life, the dimness of her husband George, the slimy scheming of the armoral and bored Judge Brack, all can become ridiculous with the first hint of clumsy and unrealistic acting.

And although Kanata Theatre's cast, under the direction of Laurence Thornton, work damned hard and with admirable earnestness, they don't get beyond displaying their inexperience.

Inexperience is not a crime. But is is a shame that a play of some importance becomes ridiculous because of it.

I hasten to point out that the acting in this production is not bad, merely inexperienced and made to look worse because of the difficulty of the material.

Mary Mauger's Hedda is obviously bored, but Ibsen's Hedda is bored due to an obsession which drives her eventually to suicide. Miss Mauger's Hedda is no more than a kitten bored with trifles. The performance is without tension. Hedda is not suffocating with her empty existence. She is neither dynamic nor dramatic. There is therefore no point to the play.

Stephen Jones is insufferably dumb as Hedda's husband, but who would believe that she'd marry such a twit in the first place. Ron Maslin looks like a judge and sounds like one, too, but for some reason or another doesn't seem the type to have wild parties and big plans for Hedda's body. Maslin's Judge Brack is, in effect, as feeble as Hedda's husband is dim.

As Lovberg, a bright chap once wicked but now reformed, Jim Holmes shows up quite well. But, cleaned up, he too is as dreary as the other men and one can only regret that Hedda hadn't shot him (she's a gun nut) when she and he were having a "relationship" earlier in their lives. Mary Holmes is effective as Thea Elvsted.

It must be said that Kanata Theatre have done well with the costumes and set.