



Dorothy Beak, Mike Farrell, Leo Lacey and Doreen Boss as Abby Brewster, Mortimer Brewster, Mr Witherspoon and Martha Brewster, respectively, in rehearsal for Kanata Theatre's "Arsenic and Old Lace", to be presented at the Earl of March High School, May 3 to 6. Curtain time 8 pm. Photo by Steve Sweet, April 78.

Kanata Theatre presents

ARSENIC AND OLD LACE, the famous comedy written by Joseph Kesselring, directed by Laurence Thornton

May 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th at the Earl of March High School, Kanata.

Curtain Time: 8 pm.

Tickets: Adults \$3.00 and \$2.00 Senior Citizens and Students — half price.

This is a delightful comedy about two sweet old maiden sisters in a New York mansion, known for their good works, but whose principal charity is helping lonely old men find success in arsenic-

spiked wine. This good work is frustrated by a Boris Karloff-like nephew with a cadaver to dispose of, another nephew who thinks he is

Teddy Roosevelt, and a third who frantically seeks solutions that don't jeopardize his aunts or their amicable relations with the police.



— Citizen photo

Arsenic and Old Lace

Kanata Theatre ends current season with the comedy *Arsenic and Old Lace*, the story of two maiden ladies who are noted for their charitable works, but whose "help" includes giving arsenic-spiked wine to unsuspecting lonely old men. Laurence Thornton is directing the play, which runs from May 3 to 6 at 8

p.m. nightly at the Earl of March High School, and Michael Farrell, left, plays Mortimer Brewster and Tony Beak appears as Mr. Gibbs. Others in the cast include Dorothy Beak and Doreen Boss as the helpful Misses Brewster, Pat Carroll and Jim Holmes as their brothers, and Annmarie Copple.

Arsenic and Old Lace

by R Dingley

Kanata Theatre's final production of their 1977-78 season is a credit to the theatrical skills of director Laurence Thornton and the cast of *Arsenic and Old Lace*.

While the "plot" of this Joseph Kesselring play is somewhat thin, it is a fine vehicle for displaying the talents with which the theatre group is generously endowed.

Dorothy Beak and Doreen Boss, as the spinster Brewster sisters set the tone for the evening's entertainment with their uncanny portrayal of two old ladies who anticipate, through long intimacy, the thoughts and reactions of each other.

Mike Farrell as the "normal" brother Mortimer appeared a little lense at the outset, but became more relaxed and believable as the evening progressed.

The two other members of the Brewster family, Teddy, played by Pat Carroll and Jonathan played by Jim Holmes set the standards by which the borderline sanity of the remaining characters could be measured. Pat Carroll tended to be a little too overpowering as the pseudo Teddy Roosevelt (overcharged may be a better expression), Jim Holmes was a fine fumbling killer ably supported by his sidekick Dr Einstein portrayed by Art Solomonian.

The remainder of the cast provided excellent support with the benefit of a first class set designed by Ted Watson.

Kanata Theatre is anticipating another full season next year and if they maintain the standards they have set themselves with this production they will surely enjoy further success.



kanata theatre

by Bob Knight

Congratulations to Laurence Thornton and his cast of *ARSENIC AND OLD LACE* for a successful ending to the 1977-78 season of major productions. The play was enjoyed by a total attendance of 1310. We thank our patrons for their support, which will undoubtedly allow us to hold the line on ticket prices for next year.

The schedule of major productions for the 1978-79 season has been selected as follows:

Oct 78 — ENTER A FREE MAN by Tom Stoppard

Jan 79 — EVERYTHING IN THE GARDEN by Edward Albee

Mar 79 — DIARY OF A SCOUNDREL by Alex Ostrovsky

May 79 — HOW THE OTHER HALF LOVES by Alan Ayckbourn

As usual, our final venture for the season will be the presentation of a play for children at Mayfair, on May 27, at the Earl of March Auditorium. This year's production is in *PIED PIPER OF HAMELIN* by Lucy Kennedy, directed by Ann Dubras, assisted by Jane Mawby. Curtain times will be 1:30, 2:30 and 3:30. The cast is as follows:

The Piper — Marg Anthony

Martha — Cheryl Knight

Alderman Stumpnickel — Martin Haynes

Alderman Bumperkopf — Carl Mawby

The Mayor — Murray Hayes

Katrina — Marianne Wilkinson

Others — Elsie Bryant, Heather Drobot, Betty Francis, Jenny Haynes, Marg Tucker, Joan McLaughlin



Rerun of play still satisfying

Journal Review
By Peter Robb

That old chestnut, *Arsenic and Old Lace* is back in town with the Kanata Theatre group blowing the dust off its well worn pages to provide a workman-like production.

Most people know the play, either by seeing it performed on stage or on the screen with Bette Davis and Agnes Moorehead as the slightly eccentric old ladies with a dangerous habit.

So only a little fleshing out of the plot should be required.

Two old ladies have a rather bizarre belief that they must provide old derelict gentlemen with their final resting place; whether it desired or not.

The bodies are shipped down to the cellar where they are buried with a full ceremony provided by the Brewster sisters.

The plot is further complicated by the presence of three nephews. One is a drama critic (how fitting), the second, a vicious killer and the third, a benignly insane gentleman who fancies he's Teddy Roosevelt.

The plot is rapidly brought to a boil by the discovery of the bodies in the cellar and the return home of the murderous nephew with a corpse of his own.

The rest of the story is a classic Gothic farce, of a kind rarely seen these days.

For the most part the Kanata rendition of the piece is done competently. They manage to capture all the humorous activity being carried out on stage. The lines are planted in this play with the conscious effort of a craftsman and the cast drew on them without much effort.

However they seem to have caught a bit of over-play-the-part in some situations. The sighs and the gesturing from the actors at times takes away from the spontaneity of some of the humor. All were guilty at one time or another.

But that doesn't take away from what was a good amateur performance.

The better of the two Brewster sisters was Doreen Biss as Martha. She played her role in a flighty, understated way. Abby Brewster as played by Dorothy Beak, was fine. She did stretch her role a little by being too precise in her actions and her speech.

The other major characters, Mortimer Brewster, played by Mike Farrell and Jonathon Brewster played by Jim Holmes were adequate.

Pat Carroll must have had a good time in what must be one of the most enjoyable characters ever created for the stage.

Teddy Brewster, the man who thinks he's Teddy Roosevelt was charging and bullying all over the place. He played his role with vigor.

This rendition of Joseph Kesselring's *Arsenic and Old Lace* will be running until the weekend. If you like this sort of thing you can take it in at the Earl of March auditorium.



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Arsenic and Old Lace

Kanata Theatre finishes

By Betty Swimmings

Assistant music and drama editor

Kanata Theatre wraps up its current season this week with a slam-bang performance of the old chestnut *Arsenic and Old Lace*.

There's nothing subtle or understated about this production of Joseph Kesselring's comedy about the two maiden sisters living in a Brooklyn, N.Y. mansion, who lace their charity with arsenic and dispose of the bodies in their basement.

Director Laurence Thornton has chosen a broad interpretation of the play and has given his cast full rein; they've responded with a will, milking their lines for every inch of humor right up to and including the use of some very zany slapstick.

Well-cast

Choosing Dorothy Beak and Doreen Boss to play the parts of the eccentric Brewster sisters Abby and Martha was one of the best things Thornton could have done.

These two work so well together that it feels as if they are the two elderly ladies who know one another so well they can anticipate the other's thoughts and actions.

Their movements are those of the elderly—short mincing steps, fluttery hands and timid gestures—and their voices take on the slight quaver which makes them seem unusually vulnerable.

THEATRE

Mike Farrell, who plays their nephew Mortimer, the one sane member of the Brewster clan, is not always quite so fortunate in his characterization.

A little more restraint on his part would make him more believable. There were times on Thursday night when it was easy to think he was as unhinged as his aunts and brothers, yet he was supposed to be able to help them.

But Pat Carroll and Jim Holmes as those brothers, Teddy and Jonathan, played their parts to the hilt. They mugged, they strutted and they hammed it up to an almost scandalous degree, but they brought it off.

Carroll could bound up those stairs on his "charge" with incredible energy and the sound of his bugle was ear-shattering indeed.

And Jonathan's greasy little side-kick in crime, Dr. Einstein, was given a very fine interpretation by Art Solomanian. He sli-

thered and scuttled his way about the stage in fine Peter Lorre fashion and was thoroughly disagreeable.

It was interesting to see the life and vitality put into this production of *Arsenic and Old Lace*. So much of Kanata's work this year has been just mising its mark and it was a relief to see them back in their element with old-fashioned comedy.

Not all the acting was first-rate, but at least the cast had rehearsed enough to be comfortable in their roles and were able to give their characters some depth and dimension. And the fine acting of Doreen Boss and Dorothy Beak provided a strong focus on the evening.

Ted Watson's very at-

Charles Champlin,
Los Angeles Times:
A BEAUTIFUL FILM.
Probably the most
thoughtful work of and
on eroticism yet crea-
ted. ENGLISH SUB-TITLES

in the
REALM OF

18 YRS
ADVIS

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A NOW STO

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tractive and workable set offered a solid background for the play and John Gililand's lighting served to underline the moods.

Kanata's *Arsenic and Old Lace* was a delightful-

ly light-hearted ending to a season that has had some very large rough spots, and it continues until Saturday at the Earl of March High School with curtain at 8 p.m.