



kanata theatre

Presents

NÖEL COWARD'S

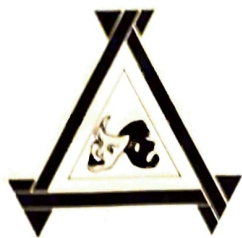
HAY FEVER



EARL OF MARCH SCHOOL

Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday,
October 26 to 29, 1983, at 8.00 pm

All seats reserved \$5.00, \$4.00
Season subscription, 4 plays for \$15 or \$12
Students, seniors (Weds, Thurs only) \$2
Box office tel. 592-1715



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Catch "Hay Fever"

Kanata Theatre presents *Hay Fever* by Noel Coward, October 26-29 at the Earl of March High School.

Directed by Laurence Thornton, *Hay Fever* is a comedy about a talented but highly individualistic family and their house guests. None of them are quite sure who is their host and who is in love with whom.

Doreen Boss plays the role of Judith Bliss and, because of an illness, Laurence Thornton will be filling in as David Bliss. Jane Chapman and John LeClere portray Norel and Simon Bliss. Mary Mauger will be seen as Myra Arundel and Ted Mauger plays the role of Richard Greatham. In the role of Nandy Lyrell is George Lagasse. Brenda Godin plays the part of Jackie Corydon and Betty Francis is Clara.

Set design and construction is by Philip Coppel. Lighting will be done by Bob Williams and sound

by Brooke Keneford.

Hay Fever is being produced by Jenny Haynes and there are still some good tickets available for all four performances.

Curtain time is 8 p.m. For tickets, call 592-1715.



In rehearsal for Kanata Theatre's presentation of *Hay Fever*, are Ted Mauger, who plays the role of Richard Greatham; and Doreen Boss, who portrays Judith Bliss. *Hay Fever*, by Noel Coward, will be performed Oct. 26 - 29 at the Earl of March High School.

photo Steve Sweet



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HAY FEVER by Noel Coward

October 26 - 29, 1983
EARL OF MARCH SCHOOL
8 p.m.

GOOD SEASON TICKETS STILL AVAILABLE

FOR TICKETS CALL 592-1715

Entertainment

Kanata Theatre proves in Hay Fever that style is everything

by Audrey M. Ashley
from staff notes

If your reaction to yet another production of that Noel Coward classic *Hay Fever* is "he has done it again," there is good news from Kanata.

The production, which opened Wednesday night under the direction of Laurie Thornton, is one of the best things Kanata Theatre has done in a long time.

Thornton and his actors have a fine sense of style and in this kind of frothy

Theatre review

Hay Fever
Kanata Theatre
Oct. 26-28, 8 p.m.

novelist, her son and daughter, Simon and Sorel, a couple of spoiled brats.

At the play opens, it turns out that each member of the family, unknown to the others, has invited a guest for that famous ritual, the English country weekend.

Everybody is furious, and the family more or less ignore each other's guests. As the weekend progresses, allegiances shift, there are tiny intrigues, or at least the appearance of

them, and Judith has a full day dramatizing everything.

Although it was written in the middle of the roaring twenties, the play can still be very funny in the right hands. And Thornton has, for the most part, found the right hands.

Doreen Blau's Judith was a bit tentative to start with, but once she really hit her stride she was positively riveting in her unassuming self-centredness.

The rest of the cast

are called upon to play up to Judith, and they do it magnificently.

Jane Chapman is totally charming as Sorel, perhaps the only member of the family who suspects they might be less than adorable. "We're so awfully bad-mannered," she muses.

John Lederer as her ill-mannered brother has some really fine moments, and a very firm grasp on his character. Only occasionally does his instinct desert him, and then he favors about like an undisciplined puppy.

But perhaps closest to the Coward ideal is Mary Mauger as Myra, as brittle and poised as one could wish. In the scene where Judith has found her husband kissing Myra and immediately seizes about sacrificing their marriage nobly and nonily, Mauger's face is more eloquent than all the dialogue.

I especially liked

Brenda Godin's portrayal of Jackie, paralyzed with shyness and clearly terrified by her hosts.

Elsewhere there's sterling work from Betty Francis, Georges Lapasse, Ted Mauger, and the director himself who plays the long-suffering husband and father of the Bliss family.

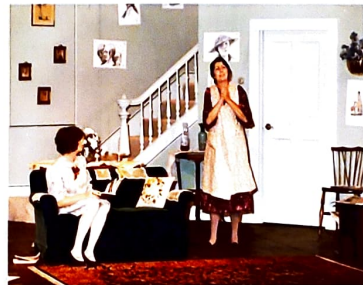
Another plus is that everybody is so well and appropriately dressed. Margaret Tucker, Pat Keneford and Margaret Jardine are responsible for the costumes, which range all the way from beautiful to Bohemian, taking in such diverse garments as white tennis sweaters, a splendid black fringed party dress and a couple of very exotic dressing gowns.

Philip Copple's set is excellent. It really does suggest Cuckham with a glimpse of a midsummer garden through the French windows.

Hay Fever really

does take you back to a world that, for all its surface sophistication, seems curiously innocent seen at this distance in time.

It's pure escapism and it's a good time of year for that.



CBC RADIO OTTAWA
CBD Morning with Harry Elton
Thursday, October 20, 1983

[Review of Kanata Theatre's production of Noel Coward's HAY FEVER
by Alvina Ruprecht]

HARRY ELTON: Alvina Ruprecht who's been out to the theat - theatre -
teatre, teatre-going in the West End Ottawa

ALVINA: No this time it's [english accent] Theatsh, Harry -

HARRY ELTON: [imitating] Oh, "theatsh"

ALVINA: Because I've made a discovery... the Kanata Players. They've
been around for about fifteen years, but this is the first
time I've seen them, and I'm - I apologise to them, and I'm
sorry I didn't go sooner, because they're a very talented
group.

They're doing Noel Coward's "Hay Fever", and they do it very
well. This is an ultra-sophisticated comedy laced with madness
and set in the roaring twenties, and director Lawrence Thornton
has caught the style and the rhythm of the play beautifully.
It's brittle, elegant, slick, very English, perfectly
ridiculous, and it clips along at a good brisk pace.

The play is about the Bliss family, and what happens when
they invite their friends down to spend a weekend with them
in the country. The thing is, though, that the Blisses are
a terribly eccentric bunch, and the poor guests don't realize
what they're getting themselves into. You see, Mama Bliss
used to be an actress, and she still loves dabbling in well
built young men. Papa Bliss is a writer, and a terrible one
and he dabbles in feeble-minded flappers. And there's their
son, who gets, er, passionately involved with older women,
and daughter Sorel is attracted to tall, mature men with
moustaches. The four guests are courted, harassed, assaulted
in various ways by different members of the family, and at
the end, we see all four of them tiptoeing across the living

room clutching their suitcases, trying to get out of that
awful house as fast as they can, while, uh, downstage the
Blisses are sitting around the breakfast table screaming and
fighting over mistakes in Papa's latest manuscript.

It's a good play, and a funny play, and they do it fairly well
- in fact very well. There are a few fluffed lines and they
have a few awkward pauses, and they make the prompter work
quite hard, but those of course were opening night jitters.
The essential things are there though: the right style, and
they have good performers.

John Leclerc as Simon, the son, has a natural instinct for
this kind of elegant comedy, and the role fits him like a
glove. He's slim, he has slightly aristocratic features,
a naughty twinkle in his eye, and he acts as if the whole
affair were a joke on everyone, including himself, and I, uh,
love the way he pounced on Myra, the older woman, played
by Mary Mauger, as in he covered her with passionate kisses.
Leclerc has a clear, strong voice, I think this fellow should
be on the professional stage.

Doreen Boss, as Judith - er - Bliss - the mother, the
theatrical mother, has a good voice, but she was a bit too
subdued. Mama is supposed to be living in the past, she is
always lamenting and wailing and acting as though she were
playing one of her hysterical roles on the stage, and you
never know whether she means what she says or whether she's
putting on theatrical effects. And I think Boss could have
made more use of her eyes and her face, and she might have
let herself go a bit more - she was just a bit too stiff and
drawn back.

Jane Chapman as Sorel Bliss, the daughter, is enthusiastic,
charming and bubbling, but you couldn't always hear her, and
the acoustics, I must say, in that theatre are not very good.

Brenda Godin was very funny as the wistful, twangy-voiced,
soggy little flapper in the sad, grey dress, she just sat
there, twisting her pearls, tugging on her skirts, and dying
to get out of that awful house.

Director Lawrence Thornton has to be congratulated for stepping
into the role of the father for the last - the last minute.
Someone got sick apparently and he had to replace them. And
he did it well.

Costumes are lovely to look at, well in keeping with the
nineteen-twenties, and Philip Copple's set is pretty. But
I still haven't seen a set designer who knows how to paint
trees, and I think details like that can give a certain -
er - amounts of class, and - er - pizzazz to a set.

It's an excellent play, a delightful production...dash out,
get your tickets right away. "Hay Fever" is at the Earl of
March High School in Kanata, it starts at eight-thirty, and
the number there is 592-1715, and it's only on tonight and
tomorrow night... so you'd better try to see it.

HARRY ELTON: I'll - I'll repeat that number before you go on, Alvina.

ALVINA: Yes.

HARRY ELTON: 592-1715

ALVINA: That's right.

HARRY ELTON: Earl of March, eight-thirty.

ALVINA: Yup.

HARRY ELTON: Presumably anything unsold can be, er, picked up at the
door, but it's probably a good idea, if you say -

ALVINA: That's right, it's -

HARRY ELTON: Because everybody's been raving about it, and it's - it's

ALVINA: Absolutely, and it's packed, and -

HARRY ELTON: And it's been a tremendous success...

ALVINA: Oh, that's - that's good, I'm glad, because -

HARRY ELTON: I've heard a lot of very positive, er, comments -

ALVINA: Oh, that's good, because it's worth it. They're a good
company, they're a very talented group, and they're - they're
amateurs, it's extraordinary.



Doreen Boss and Laurence Thornton on opening night in the Kanata Theatre's production of *Hay Fever*, Wednesday, Oct. 26

photo Leslie Jones



The "charade" scene from *Hay Fever*, performed by the Kanata Theatre Group, Oct. 26. Left - right: Brenda Godin, Georges Lagassé, Jane Chapman, Ted Mauger and John LeClerc.

photo Leslie Jones

Theatre season open

Hay Fever a hot production

by Leslie Jones

The Kanata Theatre opened its fifteenth season with a very successful production of Noel Coward's comedy, *Hay Fever*, on Wednesday, Oct. 26 at the Earl of March auditorium.

The troupe was in fine form. Despite the fact that it was opening night, the cast delivered a flawless performance. The set was amazingly authentic and the costumes simple, yet effective.

The play is set entirely at the home of the eccentric Bliss family in the late 1920s, where several house guests spend a rather confusing weekend with their hosts. Because it takes place in such a limited setting, the play relies on the strength of the characters to provide the action. The theatrical nature of the family, characterized by dramatic speech, split-second timing and rapid mood swings, lends itself well to this purpose and came across brilliantly in Wednesday night's performance.

Doreen Boss portrayed the lead character of Judith Bliss with sensitivity and insight. She has a stage presence that exudes an intangible energy to the audience. Her husband, David Bliss, was played by theatre veteran Laurence Thornton, who, like Mrs. Boss, transformed himself into his character. Both delivered their lines with a sense of spontaneity that almost made it appear as if they were saying "what came naturally".

Jane Chapman and John LeClerc displayed an equally skillful sense of theatrical timing as Sorel and Simon Bliss. They played their parts as sibling rivals with a boundless and almost childlike enthusiasm.

The four guests had the burden of maintaining a degree of sanity amidst the calamity generated by the Bliss family. Ted and Mary Mauger, as Richard Greatham and Myra Arundel, played very well and exhibited keen abilities for comic reaction.

Mr. Mauger's humorous facial expressions added a great deal to his portrayal of the bewildered guest.

Sandy Tyrell and Jackie Coryton, the two young and rather innocent members of the guest list were cleverly portrayed by Georges Lagassé and Brenda Godin. Betty Francis appeared quite at ease on stage as the resident housekeeper.

This array of talent culminated in some extremely funny situations. Certainly the scene in which Judith Bliss discovers her husband in Miss Arundel's arms is not one that will soon be forgotten. Like the family arguments that climax and fade with equal rapidity, everything is staged with precise timing.

It is not often that one sees such a complex production executed with as much finesse as *Hay Fever*. The performance was a sheer delight. If this energy can be tapped for the next three productions, we're in for a good season.













