

Kanata Theatre Group

A season for all men and women

Kanata Theatre's forthcoming season of plays has been designed to offer something to everyone. The four productions include two double-bills, thus there is a total of six plays. Three of the productions will be comedies, including one of the double-bills; the fourth will combine comedy and tragedy in one evening.

The opening production, directed by Jim Hughes, will be the first performance in the Ottawa area of two plays by the contemporary British playwright Tom Stoppard. *The Real Inspector Hound* and *After Magritte* are brilliantly clever one-act comedies somewhat in the tradition of the Theatre of the Absurd. "Hound" is, among other things, a send-up of Agatha Christie's *The Mousetrap*, a play recently produced in Ottawa by three different groups. Appropriately the cast for "Hound" includes Kanata Theatre members who acted in each of these productions.

"Magritte" demonstrates the thinness of the division between reason and insanity. A man in hip-waders blowing on a light bulb, a basket of fruit hanging from a ceiling, a woman reclining on an ironing board, a blind, one-legged football player carrying a tortoise — these are some of the ingredients in this crazy, yet strangely logical little exercise.

As did Stoppard's best known work, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, both *Hound* and *Magritte* treat with comely the problem of human identity. The message is that life consists of participants and spectators, but the distinction between the two is not often obvious. And human beings, in their struggle with that distinction, are more often funny than tragic.

Brooke Keneford is directing the second play of the season — *The Love of Four Colonels* — by Peter Dinkov. This play is a rousing comedy and an intellectual charade spiced with the brand of gentle satire of which Dinkov is a Master.

The play is set in post-war Germany; four Colonels of the occupying forces — French, Russian, American and English — meet daily to hicker and trade insults. Events bring them to a fairy tale sleeping

beauty, and each of the Colonels sees her as his own particular ideal. The Frenchman sees her as an eighteenth century lass of the boulevards; the Russian as a flax-haired figure out of Chekov; the Englishman as someone virginally Elizabethan; and the American as a Moll in an all-night dive. Each has a chance to wake her and to claim her, and their attempts to do so provide some of the comic highlights of the play.

Antigone by Anouilh, and *Love's the Best Doctor* by Moliere, are the third presentation of the season; both are directed by Ron Maslin. *Antigone* is Jean Anouilh's version of Sophocles' tragedy of the 5th century B.C. The play was first produced in Paris in 1942 when the terrorism of dictatorship was a fact of daily life. *Antigone's* resistance to the King, her uncle, had an emotional significance to the people of Paris which is only slightly diminished today. Anouilh may be best known for his comedies, but in *Antigone* he claims a real place among masters of the modern French theatre.

By contrast, Moliere described *Love's the Best Doctor* as "only a sketch, a mere impromptu . . . commissioned, written, rehearsed and performed all within five days." In Moliere's day, comedians of the King were not taken lightly. His production on the same bill as *Antigone* retains a pattern of the classical theatre when tragedy and comedy were combined within a single presentation.

Move Over Mrs. Markham, the last play of the season, was written by Ray Cooney and John Chapman, and is directed by Maurice Dubras. This is an unabashed bedroom farce, rplete with errand wives, returning husbands, mistaken identities, frantic reconcocting of plans gone awry, and, of course, girls. This play received excellent reviews in London; for example, *The People* "A riot — the laughter hit of the year." *The Times* "Teaches splendid heights of lunacy." *Punch* "So funny that it hurts." *Daily Express* "Naughty nonsense at its greatest."

Season tickets for these plays will be on sale soon, they will be available from any member of Kanata Theatre. Four evenings of entertainment for only \$4.00 — truly it will be one of the bargains of the year.

Kanata Theatre seeks new members

Kanata Theatre is about to embark on its eighth season. As many people already know, they have built up a reputation in the Ottawa area for very high quality productions. The start of a new season is a good time to join, so if you are new to the area or even if you are not why not go along to the General Meeting on September 7 for the kick-off to the 75/76 season?

You may be asking yourself "what's in amateur theatre for me?" Members of Kanata Theatre can name three things: the first is the satisfaction and enjoyment of acting. Many of the people who appear on stage in Kanata had never acted before they joined Kanata Theatre.

Second, everybody enjoys being involved on the backstage side of a live production, whether it be in

sound, lights, costumes, props, set design, tickets, front of house, publicity etc. Again lack of experience is no drawback, almost all the members learnt these jobs by working with people who do know. A number of workshops are planned for this year dealing with many aspects of the theatre — all are free to members of Kanata Theatre.

The third benefit is simple — you will make lots of new friends, all living in this area.

Why not come along to the Community Centre at 8:00 pm on Sunday 7 September, meet Kanata Theatre members, ask questions, and who knows — you may find yourself involved in the first play of the season. If you have any questions before the meeting you can call Barrie Kirk on 592-2705, any evening between 5:00 and 7:00.

KANATA REVIEW 21-8-75 Kanata's Theatre Sets

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