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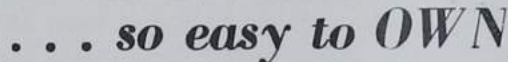
COMMISSIONER FOR RAILWAYS



TWELFTH NIGHT

by

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE



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BOARD OF THE AUSTRALIAN DRAMA COMPANY:

At the conclusion of the Sydney season, the three plays, *Twelfth Night*, *The Rivals* and *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll*, will leave Sydney on a Commonwealth tour. The Elizabethan Theatre is most happy to be associated with the birth of this important venture.



The Globe Theatre, on the river Thames, London in the year 1599.

In the steps of Shakespeare

Here is a bird's eye view of the Globe Theatre — early English home of Elizabethan drama.

Built on the Bankside, Southwark, London, in 1599 during the reign of the first Queen Elizabeth, the Globe saw the production of many of Shakespeare's plays. He appeared in some of them.

The Globe was almost circular in design, and for ventilation was partly open to the sky. It could accommodate 1,200 spectators.

NEW ELIZABETHAN THEATRE

Today, in the reign of the second Queen Elizabeth, Australia has a link with the cherished past in this new Elizabethan Theatre. Known formerly as the Majestic, it can seat more than 1,500 patrons. Unlike the Globe, the sky does not provide its ventilation—in modern words, air conditioning.

Oil from SHELL refineries is being used in theatres throughout Australia, not only for the maintenance of air conditioning plants, fans, and filters, but in many other aspects of theatre production and management.



Hugh Hunt

Since his present appointment as executive director of the Australian-Elizabethan Theatre Trust in February of last year, his herculean efforts have stirred the imagination of all interested in the development of the Australian Theatre. The choice of *Twelfth Night* is a happy



one, as his direction of this play with Roger Livesay, Ursula Jeans and Peggy Ashcroft, scored a personal triumph when it re-opened the Old Vic Theatre, London, in 1949. To his work with the Trust and the Elizabethan Theatre he brings a wealth of background experience. He was educated at Marlborough College; Magdalene College, Oxford (B.A. Oxon); Sorbonne, Paris; and Heidelberg University, Germany. From 1935-1938 directed the Abbey Theatre, Dublin. During the war served in the King's Royal Rifle Corps with the rank of

Major. He was the first director and producer of the Bristol Old Vic Company from 1946-1948, when he left to take over direction of the Old Vic Theatre, London. In the next four years his productions included *Twelfth Night*, *Love's Labour Lost*, *Julius Caesar*, to mention but a few. The year 1954 found him adjudicating the Canadian Drama Festival finals; lecturing at American Universities, and directing *The Living Room* at the Henry Miller Theatre, New York. He has two publications to his credit, "Old Vic Prefaces" (1953) and "The Director in the Theatre." Last year he directed Judith Anderson and the Australian Drama Company in *Medea*.



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..... Clement McCallin

has starred on stage, screen and television. Australian theatre audiences will remember his Don John in "Much Ado About Nothing" and Banquo in "Macbeth" with the first Shakespeare Memorial Theatre Company. In England he played with John Gielgud, at the Old Vic under Lilian Baylis, and the title role in Henry V at Stratford-on-Avon. His film performances include "The Lady With the Lamp" and "Robin Hood." In television he starred again as Henry V and also as Cassius in "Julius Caesar".

After a tour of Australia and New Zealand in "Dear Charles" opposite Sophie Stewart, he joined the Medea Company in the role of Jason. His hobby is fencing, and he has arranged many famous stage duels, including the fights for Laurence Olivier in his double bill, "Caesar and Cleopatra" and "Anthony and Cleopatra".



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(View looking South from Jonahs.)

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CAST

Don Giovanni: GEORGE LONDON

Donna Anna: HILDE ZADEK

Donna Elvira: SENA JURINAC

Zerlina: GRAZIELLA SCIUTTI

Leporello: WALTER BERRY

Don Ottavio: LEOPOLD SIMONEAU

Commendatore: LUDWIG WEBER

Masetto: EBERHARD WÄCHTER

The Vienna Chamber Choir

'The Wiener Symphoniker'

Conductor and Continuo: RUDOLF MORALT



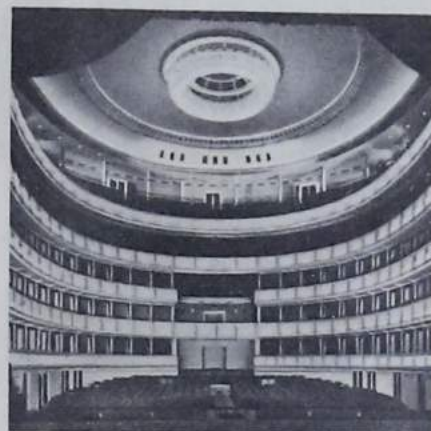
PHILIPS



33 1/3

LONG PLAYING RECORDS

Vienna Opera Star for Australian Opera Company



From the dust and rubble of war devastation a new Vienna State Opera House has arisen as a monument to the devotion and unshakeable belief of a country in its culture and heritage.

Now, at a cost of nearly £4,000,000, Vienna has once again taken a leading place in the world of music. The re-opening of the Opera House late last year provided Vienna with one of the happiest and most glittering nights in its history. An international audience of music lovers, diplomats and statesmen crowded the foyers. Outside, in the grounds and the streets, many thousands of Viennese watched with pride as 100 search-lights brilliantly lit the colourful scene.

The "iron curtain" is a dazzling creation in gold and colour. The black and white studies of the interior give no real idea of the colour and brilliance of the decoration. The auditorium is decorated simply in white and gold, and the effect is dignified and effective. The white crystal shaded lights and the immense "donut" of crystal in the ceiling makes a brilliant scene when lighting is full on.



One of the most exciting stars in the opening opera festival was Madame Sena Jurinac. After the festival she left for London, and the Edinburgh and Glyndebourne Festivals. Her recent performance in London with the Vienna State Opera in *Don Giovanni* was hailed unanimously by the critics as being a "performance of a lifetime".

Melbourne Olympic visitors will have the opportunity of hearing this magnificent international soprano as the Trust is proud to announce that Madame Jurinac and baritone Sesto Bruscantini will join the Australian Opera Company for the Melbourne Season.

During the season of four Mozart operas Madame Jurinac will be heard in the *Don Giovanni* role that the London critics hailed with such glowing tributes.

She's beautiful, and
therefore to be wooed;
She is a woman,
therefore to be won.

HENRY VI . Act 5,3



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Dinah Shearing



Studied art for three years with every intention of taking up stage design as a career. However, she also studied singing at the Conservatorium, and while appearing in a musical comedy the drama coach spotted her, trained her in voice-projection and gave her a part in a one-act play in the British Drama League Competition. She won the actresses' award. Curiously enough, her first major role on the stage was Viola in "Twelfth Night" for May Hollingworth at the Independent. Since then she has become firmly established both in Radio and on stage. Played Regan in a six months' season of "King Lear" with the John Alden Company and will also be remembered for her moving performance in Fry's "A Phoenix Too Frequent". In 1952 won the Macquarie Radio Award for her performance in "One Way Street".

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LIONEL HARRIS writes to the Elizabethan Call Board from London. He made many friends in his whirlwind four months in Australia last year, during which time he directed four productions. They were, The Ralph Richardson Season of two plays, "The Sleeping Prince" and "Separate Tables," followed by "The Little Hut," and at the Phillip Street Theatre, "The Duenna."

... I am actually doing this during a momentary break in rehearsals, so I hope it makes sense.

When my plane touched down, I went literally straight to the office and started casting a film for television, "Frolic Wind", and I was lucky to get a very fine cast: Helen Haye, Mary Kerridge, Irene Brown, Roger Livesey, David Peel, Llewellyn Rees and Gladys Boot. This was followed almost at once by a second film, "No Escape", from the novel "Under the Rose", by Rhys Davies, with Valerie Taylor and Miriam Karlin as the two women. Both the films have been shown now, and, thank goodness, had good notices.

Hot foot upon this came "Misalliance", which opened for a limited season at the beginning of February, with Roger Livesey, Ursula Jeans and Alan Webb. This has been very well received, and, unfortunately, the run cannot be extended, as Roger and Ursula are on their way out to Australia at the end of March. The production, however, is to be televised on March 26th immediately before their departure.

I am at the moment rehearsing Julian Slade's and my comic operetta version of "The Comedy of Errors", which opens at the Arts Theatre on 28th March, to be followed at once by rehearsals for a live television production of "The Living Room", which I am doing with Dorothy Tutin, George Relph, Helen Haye and Patrick Barr. Immediately after this I am doing a live television of "The Comedy of Errors", which will be the third performance on television. It is first cousin to "The Duenna".

As you see, we live in interesting times. I haven't seen my cat properly to talk to since I came back, and only hope there is no estrangement between us.

Everybody is very well. John McKellar and Gerry Donovan (Phillip Street Theatre personalities) are getting established here. Shirley Swiners and Lyle O'Hara (also Phillip Street) are rehearsing with me in "The Comedy of Errors". Betty Best ("Women's Weekly" writer) arrived a ball of fire on the "Strathnaver"; also on the same ship, Bill Salter ("The Little Hut" cast), who told me all about "The Little Hut" season. They seem to be liking everything here.

Rehearsal break is well over, so I must get cracking. Best wishes to all!

Yours,

Lionel Harris

Current Season

THE AUSTRALIAN ELIZABETHAN THEATRE TRUST

presents

THE AUSTRALIAN DRAMA COMPANY

in

Next Production

MAY 19 to JUNE 9

Sheridan's

THE RIVALS

Production by Robin Lovejoy

THE AUSTRALIAN DRAMA COMPANY CAST

Clement McCallin
Ray Lawler
Leonard Teale
Ivor Bromley
Peter Kenna
Gordon Petrie

Dinah Shearing
Madge Ryan
Diana Davidson
Zoe Caldwell
Maree Tomasetti
Jacklyn Kelleher

James Bailey
Alistair Roberts
James Mills
Malcolm Robertson
Lewis Luton
Norman Coburn
George Ogilvie

Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust Membership

If you wish to join those who are already supporting the Trust venture throughout the Commonwealth, you may do so by paying an initial subscription of £10. Subsequent annual subscriptions are £5 and are due on the 1st July, and are payable before the 31st December. Membership entitles you to priority booking for two seats at any given performance. Information regarding the work of the Trust and coming productions will be regularly sent out to members.

You may also assist the work of the Trust by giving a donation, and the Trust welcomes all donations, whether they be large or small.

Many of the Theatre seats have been given by friends of the Trust, both in Australia and overseas. A donation of £10 will provide one seat, and a plaque bearing the name of the donor will be fixed to the arm of the chair.

TWELFTH NIGHT
OR
WHAT YOU WILL

As the last comedy this Great Elizabethan wrote before he gave himself over to the Tragic Muse, *Twelfth Night*, has been very aptly called "Shakespeare's Farewell to Mirth"—and a more delightful salute to laughter has yet to be written.

When this brilliant comedy was presented to London at the dawn of the 17th century, Queen Elizabeth the First was on the throne, and in her name the seamen of England were making their presence felt in the New World and the uncharted East. Yet Illyria, Shakespeare's imaginary setting for *Twelfth Night*, was as real to those first Elizabethan audiences as the mysterious "Indies" or the "Two Americas".

To-day this story of a criss-cross pattern of love still appeals to the romantic imagination. We cannot but admire the art with which the playwright brings order out of the chaos of such conflicting emotional attachments; the Duke's steadfast love for the beautiful Olivia, who in turn is hopelessly infatuated with Viola, a young girl masquerading as a pageboy at the Duke's court, which situation is further complicated by Viola falling in love with the Duke.

Although the action of the plot revolves around a romantic story of thwarted loves, the comic interest of the play is centred on the embarrassment of Malvolio by Sir Toby Belch and his band of incomparable roisterers. Indeed, the wit and buffoonery of Sir Toby, the sharpness of Maria, the simplicity of Sir Andrew and the sprightliness of Feste, the Clown, make up comedy in the best traditions of the theatre.

A finely constructed play, *Twelfth Night* bears all the marks of Shakespeare's later genius, particularly in the use of ridiculous and fanciful situations. But the ridiculous is always tempered with a certain tenderness and the fanciful moderated with words of wit. It is this remarkable subtlety of approach that ensures *Twelfth Night* a permanent place in great Romantic Comedy.

Elizabethan
THEATRE
NEWTOWN

THE AUSTRALIAN ELIZABETHAN THEATRE TRUST in association with J. C. WILLIAMSON THEATRES LTD.

presents

THE AUSTRALIAN DRAMA COMPANY

in

TWELFTH NIGHT

by

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Cast in order of appearance:

Orsino, Duke of Illyria	LEONARD TEALE
Curio } Gentlemen attending on	{ LEWIS LUTON
Valentine } the Duke	{ GEORGE OGILVIE
Feste, a Clown	RAY LAWLER
Viola, Sister to Sebastian	DINAH SHEARING
A Sea Captain	MALCOLM ROBERTSON
Sir Toby Belch	JAMES BAILEY
Maria, Olivia's Gentlewoman	ZOE CALDWELL
Sir Andrew Aguecheek	ALISTAIR ROBERTS
Olivia	DIANA DAVIDSON
Page to Olivia	REGGIE WIGGINS or DOUGLAS ARDLER
Malvolio, Steward to Olivia	CLEMENT McCALLIN
Antonio, a Sea Captain	IVOR BROMLEY
Sebastian, Brother to Viola	NORMAN COBURN
Fabian	PETER KENNA
Ladies Attendant on Olivia	{ MAREE TOMASETTI
	{ JACKLYN KELLEHER
	{ NORMAN COBURN
Sailors, Revellers, etc.	{ PETER KENNA
	{ GAY BENJAMIN
Officers	{ JOHN HARMER
	{ TONY GOULD

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The Play Directed by HUGH HUNT

Settings and Costumes designed by ELAINE HAXTON

SCENE — is laid in Illyria.

The Play will be in two parts, with an interval of 15 minutes.

Music arranged and composed by Frank Hunter
 Dance arranged by Ruth Galene
 Fights arranged by Clement McCallin
 Musical Director George Humphrey
 Wardrobe executed by Gladys Jennings, Joan Holcombe
 Hats executed by Alistair Roberts
 Footwear executed by Bloch, Alistair Roberts
 Scenery built by John L. Clugston
 Scenery painted by Clem Kennedy
 Properties built in the Workshop of
 The Elizabethan Theatre under the direction of Ron Field
 Wigs by Mona Workman (Sydney), Louis Barnett (Melbourne)
 White Lastige Hose by Prestige

General Manager	} EXECUTIVE FOR AUSTRALIAN DRAMA CO.	ELSIE BEYER
Stage Director		ROBIN LOVEJOY
Stage Manager		GORDON PETRIE
Wardrobe Mistress		JOAN HALCOMBE
Publicity		RON PATTEN PUBLICITY

General Manager	} EXECUTIVE FOR ELIZABETHAN THEATRE	JOHN SUMNER
Assistant Manager		LOUIS VAN EYSEN
Publicity		RON PATTEN PUBLICITY
Treasurer		MARY VAN EYSEN
Head Mechanist		RON FIELD
Chief Electrician		ROBERT CUNNINGHAM
Chief Property Master		JOHN YEATES

The Management reserves the right to make any alteration in the cast which may be rendered necessary by illness or any other unavoidable cause.

The Management reserves the right of refusing admission to the Theatre.

Taking photographs during the performance of this production is prohibited.

Smoking is not permitted in the Auditorium.

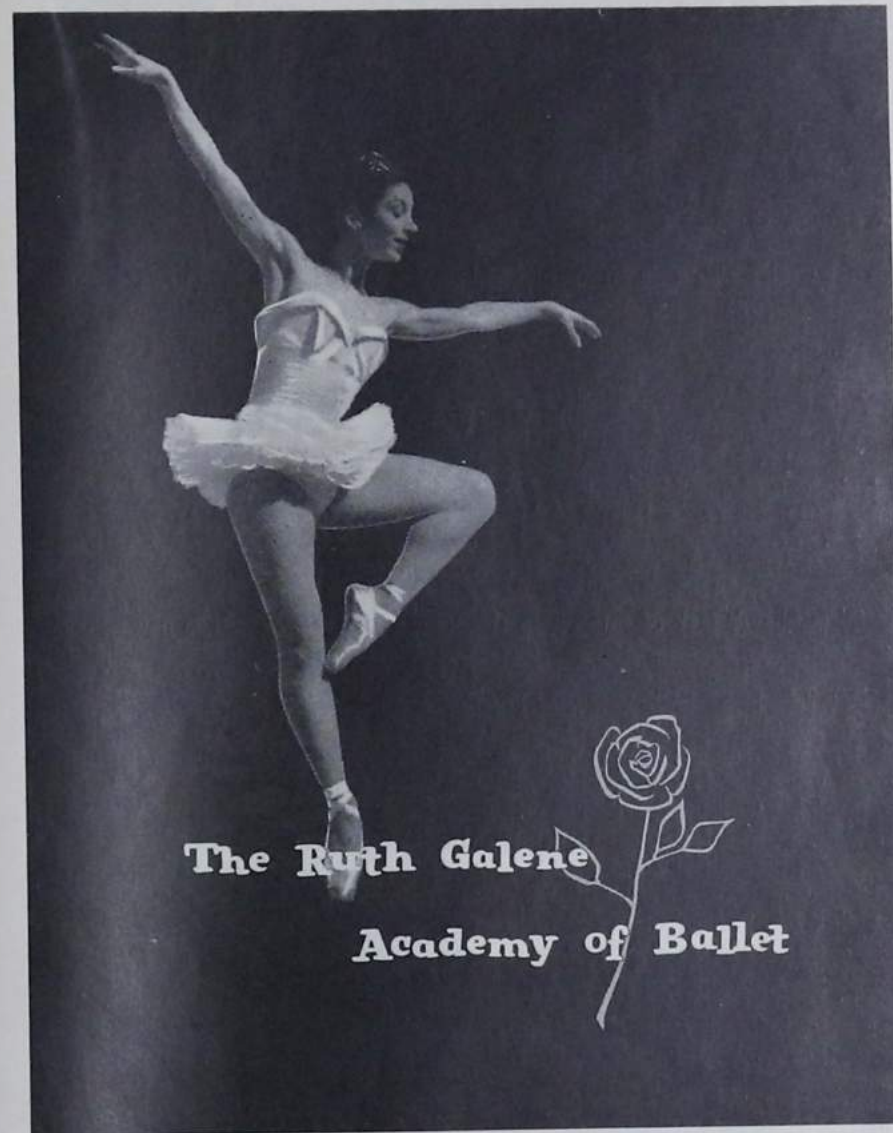
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Members of the ST. JOHN AMBULANCE BRIGADE are in attendance at this theatre on a voluntary basis.

Electrical Equipment installed in the Elizabethan Theatre is by STRAND ELECTRIC & ENGINEERING CO. LTD., and is under the supervision of their Sydney representative, Mr. Reg. Bartram.

This programme is designed for the ELIZABETHAN THEATRE by RON PATTEN PUBLICITY, 793 George Street, Sydney, phone BA 2098, to whom all advertising enquiries should be made, and printed by PEERLESS PRESS PTY. LTD., 558a George Street, Sydney.



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QUOTE and UNQUOTE

Under this title, it is planned to bring Elizabethan Theatre patrons news, views and comments on and about theatre throughout the world.



"MY FAIR LADY"

A sensational new musical has hit Broadway. Titled *My Fair Lady*, it is a musical adaption of Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion*. The New York Times Drama critic, Brooks Atkinson, wrote this:

On the day after *My Fair Lady* opened a colleague offered a pertinent observation—In the new musical comedy the hero and heroine never kiss.

For Alan Jay Lerner's *My Fair Lady*, which is derived from *Pygmalion*, reflects Shaw's lack of interest in the stage ritual of sex. It is never gooeey. In fact, it departs so far from the conventions of the musical stage that the moment of greatest tension concerns the proper pronunciation of "rain," "plain" and "Spain." Professor Higgins, the celebrated phonetician, is trying to teach Eliza Doolittle, a Covent Garden flower girl, how to speak like a lady. The moment in which she succeeds with her first word exercise is the most victorious in the comedy, and Frederick Loewe, the composer, has set one of his most joyous songs for the occasion.

Romance in Speech.

But the radical revision of musical stage values in *My Fair Lady* does not deceive anyone. Shaw labelled *Pygmalion* a "romance," although he was not confining his use of the word to love. Despite its immediate pre-occupation with matters of speech, *My Fair Lady* is so much a romance that most theatregoers will probably be astonished to learn that Shaw never intended Eliza Doolittle and Professor Higgins for each other. In an epilogue, which chronicles the play, Shaw says, in the Penguin edition, that Eliza has sense enough to marry Freddy, who really loves her, and that they become a swanky couple with a prosperous flower shop in a railway terminal. Shaw dissociates himself from "the ragshop in which Romance keeps its stock of 'happy endings' to misfit all stories."

Best Theatre Creation.

But these are matters on the periphery of the main event. Since *My Fair Lady* takes rank with the best musical comedies of the century, Eliza's life in an imagined future is beside the point. As a musical play, *My Fair Lady* is one of Broadway's celestial works. Although it includes the familiar elements of book, songs, dance and spectacles, it dispenses with the bromides of showmanship, and stands on its own feet as a theatre creation.

Thank Shaw for the central idea. But everyone concerned with *My Fair Lady* is entitled to equivalent gratitude for the taste with which the

Continued on page 27

Ray Lawler

Playwright, actor and producer, who has rocketed to fame with the outstanding success of his play, "Summer of the Seventeenth Doll". Born in the Melbourne industrial suburb of Footscray in 1921 and was educated at a State school. At 13 he went to work as a factory hand in an engineering foundry. During the 11 years he spent at the factory he learnt much about human nature and the earthy side of everyday life. His interest in the stage found an outlet at the age of 17 in the amateur theatre, leading eventually to playwriting. He has written ten full-length works for the theatre, including "The Doll" and "Cradle of Thunder". He joined the Union Theatre Repertory Company, Melbourne, in 1954 and succeeded to the post of Director of Productions. With the success of "The Doll" he resigned from this post and joined the Australian Drama Company. When not playing "Barney" or "Feste", he will be writing his next Australian play.



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Diana Davidson



Has proved her versatility with successful performances in Shakespeare, modern drama and comedy, revue and pantomime. Gained her early experience with numerous plays at the Independent and Metropolitan Theatres. Appeared as one of the Witches in the Australian tour of "Dark of the Moon". Made a hit in the Phillip Street revues, "Hat Trick" and "Happy Returns", and is frequently heard in full-length plays on National and commercial radio.

. Leonard Teale

One of Australia's most versatile artists. In the theatre he has played in revue, "Metropolitan Merry-Go-Round"; in musical comedy, "Maid in Egypt", and in Shakespeare, the original Alden Company. In modern drama he has appeared in "Home of the Brave", "The Philadelphia Story", and "French Without Tears". His radio work takes him from Variety and "Superman" to poetry reading and his own programme on Australian Ballads. Children will recognise him as "Chris" from the A.B.C. Children's Session.

He has just completed a full-length feature film, "The Load of Wood".





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James Bailey



Born of theatrical parents in Manchester, England, he followed in their footsteps and gained his experience of classic and modern theatre with extensive tours. Gained success in the London productions of "The Applecart" and "Antony and Cleopatra" prior to joining the Old Vic Australian tour with Sir Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh. Played "Tyrrel" in Richard III, and "Moses" in "School for Scandal". At conclusion of tour settled in Perth, where he has principally engaged in broadcasting.



Alistair Roberts



Combines an outstanding flare for costume designing with his acting career, both of which will be remembered as features of the John Alden Shakesperian Company. Played OT in the original production of "Rusty Bugles". Extensive radio work was followed by his vivid portrayal of Urban in "The Caine Mutiny Court Martial". He played the Tutor in the Australian Drama Company's production of "Medea".

central idea has been transformed into a polished show. Mr. Lerner has not only adapted the Shaw play without cheapening it; he has also written new scenes and lyrics that carry the story into a new and larger dimension.

Lerner and Loewe Combination.

In the Tottenham Court Road scenes the roistering is Mr. Lerner's. It captures the authentic spirit of that epochal dustman—Alfred P. Doolittle, the philosophical scoundrel. Although Mr. Lerner's book and lyrics are idiomatic, they are never common. He has taste as well as imagination. Mr. Loewe is one of the most enjoyable composers in the business. As his scores for *Brigadoon* and *Paint Your Wagon* suggested, he is not self-conscious about style, but plunges into every situation with melody and enthusiasm. The music is fresh. It, too, is idiomatic without being common. Some of it, like the "Ascot Gavotte," is ironically funny; or both funny and sentimental, like "Wouldn't It Be Lovely," and some of it romantic, like "On the Street Where You Live." But Mr. Loewe can also make evocative music out of a dramatic situation, as he does in "The Rain in Spain," which releases pent-up emotion with exultation at a climatic place in the show.

Top Grade Staging.

Although Moss Hart has been one of the brightest particles on Broadway for years, he has staged *My Fair Lady* without Broadway's usual devices. This is his most impeccable job. In production and performance, the accent is on elegance of style. Oliver Smith's settings are both decorative and hospitable; Cecil Beaton's costumes are gorgeous. Hanya Holm has blended the dance numbers into the story so unobtrusively that they seem like extensions of the general theme in terms of motion.

Acting Superb.

For years there has been less and less distinction between musical comedy performing and dramatic acting. The acting in *My Fair Lady* is superb. In the low comedy part of Alfred Doolittle, Stanley Holloway plays his dramatic scenes adroitly, and the Tottenham Court Road scenes with music hall gusto, realising no doubt that there is a time and place for everything.

If *My Fair Lady* has an undercurrent of real emotion and human aspiration, it is largely because Rex Harrison and Julie Andrews play the chief parts without musical comedy flamboyance. They could hardly get to the heart of the story more skilfully if they were playing *Pygmalion*. Since Mr. Harrison is an experienced actor, the easy perfection of his aloof, self-centred Professor Higgins is no surprise. He plays the part brilliantly. But Miss Andrews has not had such wide experience. Despite the humorous charm of her performing in *The Boy Friend* last season, the glory of her acting in *My Fair Lady* comes as a happy surprise. As a singer she has rare purity of tone. As a person she has incandescence that fills the theatre.

In taste, intelligence, skill and delight, *My Fair Lady* is the finest musical play in years.



PETER BROOK—MOSCOW VISIT

Producer Peter Brook, who recently visited Moscow with his production of *Hamlet*, starring Paul Scofield and Diana Wynyard, wrote interestingly of his visit in "The London Sunday Times".

"*Othello* is their favourite play," he says, "though this year the *Winter's Tale* draws great crowds. Shakespeare has been beautifully translated into the Azerbaijan language ('To be or not to be' becomes 'Oloom ya oloom'—the two opposing ideas being indicated with exquisite Oriental subtlety by the mere shadow of a musical stress), and the great event of many seasons is the arrival from Moscow of Okhlopkhov's new and sensational production of *Hamlet*."

Respect for Shakespeare

Peter Brook says he arrived in Russia expecting to find Shakespeare in unorthodox modernised versions, but a few days showed him the naivety of this idea. "The very thought of Shakespeare in modern dress appalled the Russians," he continues. "Shakespeare is a classic; he is a great visiting delegate and must have the full panoply of respect paid to him."

"It is no coincidence that the finest Shakespearian production I saw was not a play but a ballet. The famous *Romeo and Juliet* at the Bolshoi Theatre is superbly staged; its music is thrilling and its dancing beautiful, but its greatest distinction is its understanding of Shakespeare's text."

"I have never before seen this difficult play come so to life. Without a word of Shakespeare to help them, Tybalt, Mercutio, Capulet, the Nurse, all the characters appeared crystal-clear figures cut out of the page with a razor blade."

Hamlet with Orchestra

Peter Brook makes some interesting comments on Okhlopkhov's *Hamlet*: "The play, lasting some 4½ hours, is accompanied throughout by a symphony orchestra. The first view of the court shows a vast throne room, great stained-glass windows, massive statuary. A lady is sitting playing a lute, while around her a chorus of fourteen matrons in Greek tunics moves, singing as it goes. ('Tchaikovsky's Manfred,' Mr. Okhlopkhov murmured in my ear.)"

"Our first introduction to Ophelia is by the seashore; she is playing with a dozen maidens, and once again all are singing gaily. ('Is this Tchaikovsky?' I asked Mr. Okhlopkhov. 'English folk song,' he replied.)"

"Standing in Ophelia's grave, Hamlet has a sort of cadenza with her shawl; all the other actors freeze while he twists it round and crushes it in his hands. The Ghost stands on a beetling cliff, Hamlet on the seashore; the orchestra sweeps *fortissimo* into a tone-poem of wind and waves, while the Ghost, a high El Greco figure, is silhouetted against the racing clouds, crying above the storm."

"Similarly, the play scene is magnificent. The panels in the great iron gates framing the production suddenly open, revealing an opera house sliced in half, three tiers of boxes crammed with excited, screaming, hysterical courtiers looking down on to Hamlet's *Mousetrap* played below. This was electrifying, and I would have given anything to have had it in our production."

Rehearsal Time?

Mr. Brook said that before his production of *Hamlet* opened the Russians had heard that it had been rehearsed for a month. This seemed inconceivable, as they would have rehearsed so great a work for a year or more. They had heard that we played a very complete text in under three and a half hours; they noticed with surprise that only one setting arrived and that the trunks contained no orchestral parts; in fact, they feared the worst.

"When the curtain went up and they found that the *Hamlet* story they know so well seemed to be having its usual effect on their audience, they were deeply impressed. They were fascinated to find that a naked staging made the drama not duller, but more tense; that without underlining, without flourishes, the emotions were still expressive and harrowing. They found Paul Scofield's speaking of the verse gave it the quality of spontaneous thought, and when they asked him, 'What sort of hero are you trying to portray?' they were very taken by his answer: 'I am trying to create a recognisable being.'"





OTHELLO EXPERIMENT

Easily the most exciting catch playgoing in 1956 has had to offer us so far (writes London drama critic W. A. Darlington) came when the Old Vic management tried the experiment of putting on a production of *Othello* in which the two leading men, Richard Burton and John Neville, each appeared as *Othello* and *Iago* on alternate nights. For those of our critics who are less than 100 per cent. worshippers of the National Bard, it may have seemed a tough assignment to have to sit through the same long tragedy two consecutive nights, but in practice, the interest of the event outweighed its periods of tedium.

Effect on Cast.

There was especial fascination in watching how the changeover in the leading parts affected the balance of the drama, and the playing of the other characters, particularly that of Wendy Hiller as Emilia.



Burton as Othello.

Burton led off as Othello and made him a rough, authoritative soldier, who was at his best in the more straightforward passage, but had little of the sense of poetic imagination that a great Othello must have, and which Sir Godfrey Tearle—the finest Othello of the last half-century—used to convey to perfection.

The one thing certain about Burton's Othello was that he had a good soldier's understanding of men, and, therefore, it seemed extremely odd that he did not see through the double-crossing trick of Neville's Iago. The point about Iago is that nearly all the other characters in the play think him an honourable man, and only the audience knows for a fact that he is a villain. Neville hardly made an attempt even to look honest.

Neville as Othello.

Next night things went much better. Neville, who is the Old Vic's most recent addition to its discoveries, has not yet had the experience of the weight to give Othello his full grandeur, but he has the ability, which Burton lacks, to allow Shakespeare's verse to suggest unutterable depths of beauty and sadness. As a result, he is a lightweight Othello, but on precisely the lines that may produce a great one, given time.

As an effective contrast to this, Burton gives us a reading that concentrates on Iago's outward show of honesty. A glum fellow with his eyes mostly on the ground, he passes among the other characters as a rough diamond, and the audience is left to take what they can of his villainies.

The Rivals.

On the third night, John Clements put on one of the best productions of Sheridan's *The Rivals* that anybody can remember, with himself outstanding as Sir Anthony Absolute. This is one of those old-fashioned ram-paging actor's theatre parts that is usually played for all its worth, and a good deal more, by an actor who suggests between over-excitement, doubt and blood-pressure, he will be lucky to survive into the second act.

Clements plays it on a much more human level, relying less on volume than intensity of voice to convey the old boy's sudden bursts of passion.

THE RIVALS

Perhaps no playwright of the 18th century enjoyed more success than Richard Brinsley Sheridan, and certainly no other writer of that age remains so constant a favourite with modern theatregoers. Much of his popularity stems from the fact that his plays are strikingly different in spirit to the work of our own dramatists.

Sheridan offers the playgoer no depths to sound, no heights to climb. Rather, he invites him to relax and enjoy a delightful panorama of the ridiculous and the absurd with no obscure message or uplifting moral underlying the comic presentation. Sheridan is purely entertainment and pleasant escapism.

The Rivals is just such a play. Set in the gay city of Bath—the Paris of the 18th century—where life goes by in a flurry of sedan chairs, it is a story of a courtship, or rather of many courtships. Yet *The Rivals* is not a romantic story, nor is it cynical.



Certainly Sheridan would have us laugh at Lydia's "Circulating Library" notions of marriage; at Bob Acres' swaggering, so soon turned to cowardice; and at Mrs. Malaprop's "nice derangement of epitaphs". But it is honest laughter without a sting of bitterness or trace of malice, and this innocent ridicule lends the play an unusual freshness.

The theme of *The Rivals* turns on the mystification resulting from Captain Absolute's masquerade as Ensign Beverley, in which guise he wins the heart of Lydia Languish, a wealthy heiress. The action becomes even more bizarre when the Captain, in both his personages, is challenged to a duel by his rivals, Lucius O'Trigger and Bob Acres. This duel scene provides a hilarious climax to the comedy.



There is much more to recommend *The Rivals*.

This is a play to entertain the gay and overwhelm the grave with unflinching wit and sparkling dialogue.

The Rivals is the third and final play in the current eleven weeks' drama season at the Elizabethan Theatre and will commence on 19th May, with the production by Robin Lovejoy.