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Jimmie Rushing



Odetta



Jose Ferrer



Tessie O'Shea



Helen Hayes



Robert Young



Melina Mercouri



Ralph Richardson



Joni Mitchell

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By BRUCE LAWSON

It is impossible to see all the action in Toronto. The city's live entertainment scene has now reached the point where even the most omnivorous spectators have to specialize.

The season just beginning — the Centennial season at that — will be busy: the music world is jumping; ballet and opera, if not abundant, are at least represented.

The one sad note is local theatre. Although there will be a stream of stage celebrities, rubbing shoulders with distinguished musicians and other performers, Toronto is unlikely to see many of its best actors and actresses. They will be in Halifax, or Winnipeg, or Vancouver, cities which have community theatres; or they will be in New York, Hollywood or London. Anywhere but Toronto.

The cause is the demise of both the Crest and Canadian Players, and the decision of the theatre foundation, formed by the merger of both companies, to take the season off. The melancholy verdict of other theatre managements around Toronto is that about 100,000 tickets sold by the two companies last season will not automatically be added to the box offices of the other professional and amateur theatres.

Among visiting notables this season will be Rosemary Harris, Tessie O'Shea, Helen Hayes, Jose Ferrer, Van Johnson, Ralph Richardson, the Red Army Chorus, the Old Vic, the New York City Ballet, Thelonus Monk, Odetta, Nelson Eddy, the Vienna Choir Boys, and Melina Mercouri.

Miss Mercouri, star of the movie *Never on Sunday*, is in the musical stage version, which will try out here on its way to Broadway.

For anyone merely interested in good entertainment, no matter where it is from, the Royal Alexandra and O'Keefe Centre seem to have stronger lineups than last season.

Edwin Mirvish, in his third year as owner of the Royal Alexandra, hopes to be in the black for the first time. The *Odd Couple*, now playing, has given the Alex a good start. Later, the APA Repertory Company, with Miss Hayes and Miss Harris, will play the *Wild Duck*, *School For Scandal*, *We Comrades Three*. Other highlights: *Barefoot in the Park*, *Generation* (with Robert Young), the *Old Vic*, *Jose Greco*, *An Evening With Mark Twain* (with Hal Holbrook).

Mr. Mirvish does not think the loss of the Canadian Players and the Crest will help his houses, the Alex and the Poor Alex. He still cannot understand, he says, why no company has taken up his repeated offers to let them use the Alex, and he is considering starting his own professional repertory company next season.

David Mann, the owner of the Playhouse on Bayview Avenue, this week refused to comment on the future of the theatre which has been dark since its first show ended last December. It is rumored that Mr. Mann is trying to sell it. Many local groups have had their eye on it, but have been unable to arrange suitable terms.

O'Keefe Centre, which has a season's capacity of about 1,000,000 seats, is quietly confident it will do better than last year's 75 per cent of total capacity.

Most of the Centre's season is set, and this week arrangements were being made for the National Ballet of Canada to begin a three-week run on March 27.

O'Keefe highlights are: *Show Boat*; the New York City Ballet; *Fiddler on the Roof*; *Royal Hunt of the Sun*; *At the Drop of Another Hat*; Metropolitan Opera (*Boheme*, *Traviata*, *Rape of Lucretia*, *Marriage of Figaro*); *The Nutcracker* (Christmas matinees by the National Ballet); *Carte de La Mancha*; *Never on Sunday*; *D'Ojly*; *Mari Opera Company*; *On a Clear Day You Can See Forever*; National Ballet; *Red Army Chorus*; Sir Ralph Richardson's company in *You Never Can Tell* and/or *The Rivals*.

The National Ballet will present 10 ballets. The first week will be Eric Bruhn's new version of *Swan Lake*; the next two weeks will be shared by two ballets new to the company (*Bayaderka* and *La Prima Ballerina*) and seven from its repertoire (*La Sylphide*, *Romeo and Juliette*, *Solitaire*, *Serenade*, *Triptych*, *The Rake's Progress*, *Lilac Garden*).

Workshop Productions will begin late in October at its tiny theatre at 47 Fraser Avenue with *The Mechanic*, *Before Compeigne*, *Hey Rube*, and at least one new play. The company's exclusively original repertoire will be presented on Friday, Saturday and Sunday through the winter.

Belmont Productions will open its season late in October at the Hydro Theatre, at University Avenue and College Street. In its plans are *The American Dream*, *Days and Nights of Beebe Fenstermaker*, *Brecht on Brecht*, *Uncle Vanya* and *The Beauty Part*.

Merger Productions has the *Colonnade* until April, is currently reviving *A Taste of Honey*, and opens *The Knack* on Oct. 6. It also plans an original Christmas pantomime.

Aires Productions has taken the Central Library Theatre but so far no program has been announced.

One bright spot on the theatre scene is the return of Tom Kneebone. He headlines a new revue, *The Hollywood Blues*, at Old Angelo's, opening Oct. 19. The show is a musical look at Hollywood in the vein of its Cole Porter revue of last season.

Cabaret theatre continues to survive: The Group, an improvising company, is in its fifth month (with a break) at the Cork Room. The Delf will continue its policy. In the works are *The Drunkard* (old-time melodrama); a revue, *The Lunch Bunch*, now at the Colonnade; a Broadway play; and possibly an opera, performed without chorus or costumes and with narration.

Music lovers have a busy season ahead. As soon as the Canadian Opera Company ends its run at O'Keefe Centre on Oct. 8, the Toronto Symphony will begin its season. The orchestra will give about 100 concerts, 80 in Toronto.

The symphony will have guest conductors, solo

pianists, singers and instrumentalists; and the International Artists series, the University of Toronto music faculty, and the Women's Musical Club of Toronto are bringing in international artists, beginning with the Moscow Chamber Orchestra on Oct. 3.

The folk music and jazz fields seem to be declining, in quantity if not quality.

In jazz, the Colonial, on Yonge Street, still leads the way, with the Town Tavern, the Plaza Room at the Park Plaza, and the Penny Farthing coffee house in Yorkville other main spots.

Some of the names lined up for this season: The Saints and Sinners, Thelonus Monk Quartet, Jimmie Rushing, Junior Mance Trio, Salt City Six, Buck Clayton Quintet, John Lee Hooker, Illinois Jacquet Trio, Sonny Stitt, Art Blakey and Jean Du-Show. Jim McHarg's re-formed Metro Stompers play dixieland at the Penny Farthing after hours at weekends.

Most of the folk action is confined to a few places in Yorkville Village. The biggest names coming up are at the Riverboat: Tom Rush, Odetta, Doc Watson, Judy Roderick, Joni Mitchell, Jim Kweskin's Jug Band, Tom Paxton, Eric Anderson, The Dirty Shames, Gordon Lightfoot, the Stanle Singers.

The Penny Farthing books folk and folk-rock performers. Coming up are The Stormy Clovers, Eduardo Sasson, Josh White, Alexander Zelkin, Guela Gill.

Two other places where folk music can be heard regularly are *The Mouse Hole*, also in Yorkville; The Seven of Clubs, in suburban Scarborough.

The Mouse Hole has regulars Vikky Taylor and Michael Sherman, and is a quiet, relatively cheap place to hear local singers. Lately, the Mouse Hole has been looking for lesser-known foreign names, such as Louis Killen and Rick Norcross.

In the rock and rhythm 'n' blues field, many go-go houses, downtown nightspots and Yorkville clubs employ local groups. Among the top are the Hawk's Nest, Friar's Tavern, the Gogue Inn, Club 888, the Broom and Stone Curling Club in Scarborough (on Sundays). No big events, such as the Beatles or the Rolling Stones, have been announced.

The Imperial Room at the Royal York Hotel, which goes in for big-name acts, will present Tessie O'Shea (starting Monday); Ray Anthony and his Book End Revue; Enzo Stuarti; the Mills Brothers; Myron Cohen; Frankie Lane; Nelson Eddy.

Country-and-western fans gather at the Horseshoe Tavern, at Queen Street and Spadina Avenue, or sometimes the Edison Hotel at Yonge Street and Gould Street. The Horseshoe will have Wilma Lee and Stony Cooper (starting Monday), Doc Williams, the Country Gentlemen, the Osborne Brothers, Jean Shepard, Mac Wiseman, Ferlin Husky, Grampa Jones, Joe Mathis.

It hardly seems the kind of super-spectacular we might have expected for a one-hundredth birthday present, but with a strong Canadian look in ballet, music and pop music.