

BROADSIDE

NEWSLETTER OF THE THEATRE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

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New Series

PLAYBILL CELEBRATES A CENTURY OF SERVICE TO THE THEATRE

Playbill, Inc., the company that produces the theatre programs for every Broadway performance, is celebrating its one-hundredth birthday this year. Among the festivities marking the anniversary is the exhibition **Playbill: The Longest Run on Broadway**, which opens on April 12, 1984, at the Museum of the City of New York. In addition to programs from the last one hundred years, the exhibition will feature earlier programs. Included will be a facsimile of the first New York program dated March 26, 1750, for a production of *The Orphan* performed at the Nassau Street Theatre by the first professional company to play in colonial America.

The program which was officially designated *The Playbill* in 1934 was founded in 1884 by Frank V. Strauss, who secured the rights to sell advertising for the Madison Square Theatre and eventually took over the printing of programs and placement of ads for all New York theatres. Headed today by Arthur Birch, the company goes into its second century of serving the theatrical community and playgoing audiences.

From its collection of several hundreds of thousands of *Playbills*, the Museum's Theatre Collection will display a representative and historic sampling of programs from the first hundred years. The exhibition will also include a costume worn by Ethel Barrymore in *The Corn is Green*, one worn by Maurice Evans in *Richard II*, and a portrait of Judy Garland by Roberto Gari. These items all appeared on *Playbill* covers.

A November 20, 1785, program for *The Merchant of Venice* at the John Street Theatre will be the oldest program in the exhibition. In those days programs were generally heavily-inked, long and narrow pieces of inexpensive paper, and there were many complaints about the ink soiling the kid gloves of the ladies. Probably the most famous of that type of program is the original playbill for the performance of *Our American Cousin* at Ford's Theatre in Washington, D.C., the night President Lincoln was assassinated. Unscrupulous printers published thousands of fake editions to sell to the public. The exhibition will include the original as well as several fakes.

As printing developed during the nineteenth century the playbill became more distinctive, featuring decorative typefaces, bold letters, woodcuts of scenes



Playbill from *Life With Father*, the longest-running non-musical on Broadway, 1939-1947



Playbill from the longest-running musical on Broadway, 1975 through present

from the plays, colored type and better quality paper. In the 1870's the long thin program was supplanted by the pamphlet-type, and better theatres began printing their own playbills in which they sold advertising. Unlike most European countries, playbills were always distributed free of charge in the United States.

In the early part of the twentieth century the playbills became even more decorative and colorful. Silk and satin programs were produced to commemorate special occasions. Many of these will be included in the exhibition, which will be on view through June 10, 1984.

THE THIRD DECADE COMETH

The Eugene O'Neill Theater Center's **Twentieth Anniversary Summer** begins with the National Opera/Music Theater Conference which opens on June 3 and runs through June 17. The works for this anniversary year's conference were chosen from more than 100 submissions. *Cafe Vienna, 1907* (music and libretto by Richard Pearson Thomas) and *Such Good Friends* (music, book and lyrics by Gil Perloth) will be developed in collaboration with Ms. Haupt-Nolen, Artistic Director, and a panel of distinguished dramaturges. A third conference work, *Lisa and David* (music by Roger Nelson, book and lyrics by John Driver) will be given a two-week workshop and three staged readings on June 14, 15 and 16. The public is invited to attend.

The National Playwrights' Conference, under the artistic direction of Lloyd Richards, opens on July 1 and runs through August 12. Fourteen new plays, which have been chosen from 1,400 submissions, will be given staged readings. These will be open to the public. Titles and playwrights are to be announced. Three television projects have also been chosen.

This anniversary year will be international in scope with playwrights and representatives from Europe and Asia bringing their works and joining in the creative process of the Playwrights' Conference. Plan to join us for the 1984 summer season at the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center in Waterford, Connecticut. For information and schedules please telephone 203-443-5378.

—Lois E. McDonald
Associate Curator

PEOPLE

Richard C. Lynch, Assistant Curator of the Billy Rose Theatre Collection at The New York Public Library, has compiled *Musicals! A Directory of Musical Properties Available for Production*. The book, which will be published by the American Library Association in June, will provide comprehensive information for those selecting shows for production.

We are sorry to report the death of **Raymond Mander**, who died in London on December 20. Mr. Mander was co-founder of the Mander and Mitchenson Theatre Collection, and co-author, with Joe Mitchenson, of *The Theatres of London* and many other books on the theatre.

THEATERWINKEL

The first theatre shop in Belgium opened in Antwerp on March 5, 1984. It sells books, records and other items related to theatre, film and music, and also offers a theatre ticket service and information center. For more information write or visit TheaterWinkel, St. Jacobsmarkt 74, 2000 Antwerpen, Belgium.



BOOKS RECEIVED

- Brownlow, Kevin. *Napoleon: Abel Gance's Classic Film*. NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1983. 310 pp. \$25.00.
- Bunuel, Luis. *My Last Sigh: The Autobiography of Luis Bunuel*. NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984. 256 pp. \$15.95.
- Kolin, Philip C., editor. *Shakespeare and the South*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1983. 320 pp. \$20.00.
- Komparu, Kunio. *The Noh Theatre: Principles and Perspectives*. NY: John Weatherhill, 1983. 376 pp. \$32.50.
- Paul, William. *Ernst Lubitsch's American Comedy*. NY: Columbia University Press, 1983. 367 pp. \$24.95.
- Vasudev, Aruna, and Philippe Lenglet, editors. *Indian Cinema Superbazaar*. Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 1983. (Dist. by Advent Books, NY). 384 pp. \$40.00.

BOOK REVIEWS

Behold the Mighty Wurlitzer: The History of the Theatre Pipe Organ. By John W. Landon. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1983. 231 pp. \$29.95.

The story of the theatre pipe organ, from its beginnings (no one is quite sure when or where the first one was installed) through today is a fascinating one. This volume traces its history carefully.

After a preface by former BBC staff organist Reginald Foort, Landon begins at the beginning, when the use of the organ to "enliven" silent pictures evolved into accompanying the "bouncing ball" cartoons. As movie theatres became more lavish, the versatile, economical, organ made a spectacular rise. The manufacturers owe a debt to Robert Hope-Jones, who invented the first successful and practical electric action for pipe organs.

The histories of both the better-known and lesser-known companies are discussed. Illustrations punctuate consideration of the decline of the instrument's use in the 1930's (with several exceptions, such as the organ at Paramount Theatre in New York and, of course, the Wurlitzer of Radio City Music Hall) and rebirth of interest in later years via the American Theatre Organ Society, theatre organ records, installation of organs in pizza restaurants, and concerts by young organists. The organ on radio is also discussed.

Biographical notes on many theatre organists comprise one 40-page appendix. There is also a geographic listing of theatre organs, giving manufacturer, location, notations on use, and organists' names. Also included are notes on books, articles, and interviews consulted, a select bibliography, and an index. Clearly a labor of love, Landon's book is a fine addition to the literature.

—Adele Bellinger

Broadway Bound: A Guide to Shows that Died Aborning. By William Torbert Leonard. Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1983. 628 pp. \$39.50.

This is a book about flops! Here are hundreds of shows that played and closed "out of town" before reaching Broadway. Arranged alphabetically by show title, each entry contains cities and dates played, full cast and production credits, and a brief summary of the plot. Choice excerpts from local reviews are frequently included, as well as any previous or subsequent information of interest.

At the Grand will serve as an interesting example. This musical version of Vicki Baum's *Grand Hotel* played for two months in 1958 on the West Coast with Paul Muni as star. In its review, *Variety* found it to be "many more than 3,000 miles from Broadway... it is, theatrically speaking, light years away..." Mr. Muni received good notices, however, but refused to continue despite a million dollar

advance sale in New York. Originally a novel, *Grand Hotel* was presented successfully on Broadway as a play in 1930 starring Sam Jaffe. It was filmed in 1932.

In addition to the title listings, *Broadway Bound* contains excellent indexes by actor, choreographer, composer and lyricist, costume designer, set designer, director, playwright and producer. There is also a chronological index, beginning with the 1932-33 season. The first few pages of the book concern the few shows that never toured, but died in New York during preview performances.

Mr. Leonard has compiled the material in a witty and amusing fashion, and anyone interested in the theatre will be fascinated by this guide to flops. They're all included, from the monumental failures of *Gone With the Wind* and *Breakfast at Tiffany's* to such questionable offerings as *Bedtime for Ali Baba* and *Don't Do It Dodo*.

—Richard C. Lynch

The Inquisition in Hollywood: Politics in the Film Community, 1930-1960. By Larry Ceplair and Steven Englund. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983 (c1979). 546 pp. \$9.95 (pbk.).

This history differs from other studies of the blacklist in its examination of the roots of the anti-radical purge. Ceplair and Englund trace the emergence of Hollywood radicalism to the struggle between the screenwriters and the studios over the formation of the Screen Writers Guild in the 1930's. It was a bitter fight which politicized the Hollywood community and around which coalesced a left and a right wing. A number of Hollywood progressives were attracted to the Communist Party, which they perceived as an activist, reformist party that got things done. The period 1936-1939, known as the Popular Front, marked the most mainstream era of the CPUSA. The theme was cooperation with bourgeois democratic parties and opposition to fascism. The influx of Jewish refugees into Los Angeles had made the Hollywood community acutely aware of what was happening in Europe. During the Popular Front, Party members and liberals worked together in organizations such as the Hollywood Anti-Nazi League, to further progressive causes and support the New Deal. At the same time, the Hollywood studios carefully monitored the contents of the films being produced, so as not to alienate the German and Italian markets. Even screenwriter John Howard Lawson, head of the Hollywood CP ended up writing a film about the Spanish Civil War, *Blockade* (1939), which was ambiguous.

In 1939 the Nazi-Soviet Pact was announced, and the Hollywood CP dutifully changed its line. The war in Europe was now viewed as an imperialist one, and pacifism was the order of the day. The

Hollywood liberals felt betrayed, and even when the Soviet Union was invaded by the Nazis in 1941 and the CP changed its line again, their suspicion remained. The new Popular Front of the war years was not the same. By 1944 the Hollywood Right began to prepare itself for a postwar struggle and formed the Motion Picture Alliance for the Preservation of American Ideals, which invited HUAC to investigate Hollywood. The 1947 HUAC hearings resulted in the contempt citations of the Hollywood Ten. Efforts were made to support the Ten by what was left of the Hollywood progressives. But the liberal-radical alliance was no more. The liberals now had their own organizations such as the Committee for Cultural Freedom and the Americans for Democratic Action, and sought to save themselves. The studio heads, after first trying to protect their employees, for their own economic interests, were persuaded that it was in their economic interests to withdraw support, and issued the Waldorf Statement. By 1951 the second round of hearings resulted in a system of censure and redemption or blacklist and graylist.

Ceplair and Englund make no attempt to hide whose side they are on. They have admiration for those Hollywood radicals and progressives who resisted, refusing to name names, contempt for the anti-Communist crusaders, and disappointment in the performance of the liberals. They do not ignore the fact, however, that by being a slave to the foreign policy of the Soviet Union, the CPUSA assisted in its own destruction.

— Ruth Carr

Revolution in the Theatre: French Romantic Theories of Drama. By Barry V. Daniels. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1983. 249 pp. \$29.95.

During the first three decades of the nineteenth century, the vanguard of the French theatre was striving either to expand or demolish traditions dating back from the middle of the seventeenth century. The selection and presentation of dramatic works was based on a set of standards drawn from the classic playwrights—Corneille, Racine, and Moliere—and honed by literary critics such as Nicolas Boileau-Despreaux and by over a century of theatrical practice. Western thought, however, had been undergoing radical transformations since the second half of the eighteenth century, most notably in Germany and England. Barred from implementing any major changes in the theatre of France, writers such as Madame de Stael and Stendhal and playwrights such as Victor Hugo prepared essays, articles, books and prefaces to their plays to plead for reform in the French theatre.

In *Revolution in the Theatre* Barry Daniels has compiled a well-selected

primer of such writings. In addition to the three authors already cited, he includes excerpts from the works of Benjamin Constant, Charles-Augustin Sainte-Beuve, Emile Deschamps, Alfred de Vigny, and Alexandre Dumas the Elder. All of these individuals were major literary provocateurs in their own lifetimes. Mr. Daniels has done well to provide a glimpse into their theories for anyone studying the history of drama or the history of French thought. His introduction is a lucid overview of the European phenomenon known as romanticism and the history of the French stage from Corneille to the premiere of Hugo's *Hernani* in 1830. Acknowledging but not getting lost in the complexities of romanticism, Mr. Daniels furnishes a well-written and truly basic context for the French romantic theories of drama that follow. In addition, his footnotes alert the reader to possible misunderstandings in terminology and give further background and references for specific passages. *Revolution in the Theatre* is a scholarly sourcebook which has been carefully executed.

— Nancy M. Shawcross

Royal Shakespeare Company 80/81. Stratford-upon-Avon: RSC Publications, 1981. (Distributed by Advent Books, New York). 112 pp. \$11.00.

This profusely illustrated soft-covered volume is truly "a complete record of the year's work." It includes a calendar of the year, which gives the number of performances and the dates plays appeared in the repertory of the Royal Shakespeare Theatre and The Other Place in Stratford as well as at the Aldwych and Warehouse in London. Following an article on the season written by Melvyn Bragg is the meat of the book: a theatre-by-theatre, play-by-play review, containing quotations from various critics on the production, cast and credits lists, and black-and-white photos (actors are identified). The highlight of the year in review was clearly *The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby*—Nicholas and Smike appear on the color cover of the book, and there is an article by Roger Rees on how the production was devised—but also of interest is *The Swan Down Gloves*, a pantomime which was performed only three times. A journal kept during rehearsals of *June and the Paycock* (which starred Judi Dench) is here, as is a tribute to David Mercer, who died during the year. The RSC in the West End is also documented, as is the regional tour of *Henry IV* and a season in Newcastle. A feature on the Barbican is illustrated with photos of the building at various stages of construction. There is also a who's who, an organizational tree, economic facts, and a section called "curtain raisers and noises off" which lists lunchtime theatre productions, play readings, visiting companies,

Saturday sessions, Sunday concerts and summer school activities. A number of pages of advertisements are contained in the book. This informative, entertaining work is part of an ongoing series which is readily available in the United States.

— Adele Bellinger



Women & Performance: A Journal of Feminist Theory. Volume 1, Number 1, Spring/Summer 1983. Edited by Women & Performance Project, New York University/Tisch School of the Arts, Department of Performance Studies (Room 300, 51 West 4th Street, New York, N.Y. 10012). Semi-Annual: \$9 (individuals), \$15 (institutions), single issues \$5.

The perceptive articles, reviews, and reprints in the first issue of this new journal reflect a firm commitment by the editors to provide a dialogue among performance scholars and artists (actors, dancers, video/filmmakers, musicians, playwrights) dedicated to preserving the "legacy of female creativity." A whole new world history of women and creativity is pried open, ranging from the development of the contemporary *Women's Experimental Theatre* to the photo essay of Angna Enters, dance-mime artist of the 1920's and 1930's. Here are individual and collective voices praising, recommending, challenging, disagreeing, and describing a continually evolving feminist vision. Marion Goldberg's brilliant essay on Meredith Monk's *Education of a Girlchild* interweaves theory with a lively front row experience of the production. E.A. Kaplan's article is an incisive analysis of male and female roles in film melodramas, a genre, she suggests, that has yet to be explored from the viewpoint of spectatorship and gender.

Other works reviewed include Marsha Norman's controversial *'night, Mother*; Barbara Carson's *The Department*, written and acted by professionals and union of-fice workers; the poetic and provocative *Sappho and Aphrodite* by Karen Malpede; dance concerts by Johanna Boyce, Barbara Mahler, and Pilar Rioja; music concerts by Holly Near, Ronnie Gilbert, and Meg Christian; and numerous book reviews. Those interested in researching feminist performance history and theory will find this journal a valuable, inspiring resource.

— Carol M. Anshien

TORONTO UPDATE

In *Broadside* 11:1 we reported on holdings of the **Theatre Department of the Metropolitan Toronto Library Board**. Here is some further information on the collections.

The large collection of theatrical designs includes many designs by Astrid Janson. Included here is one design for *Les Canadiens*, Centaur Theatre, Montreal, Quebec (1977). There are also two costume designs for *Captain Brassbound's Conversion*, Shaw Festival, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario (1979); two costume designs for *H.M.S. Pinafore*, Stratford Festival, Stratford, Ontario (1981); four costume designs for *The Firebird*, Royal Winnipeg Ballet Company, Winnipeg, Manitoba (1982); and three costume designs and three prop sketches for *Cabaret*, CentreStage Company, St. Lawrence Centre, Toronto, Ontario (1983).

The work of Robert Prevost is represented by three set designs for *La Mouette (The Seagull)*, Theatre du Nouveau Monde, Montreal, Quebec (1955); two costume designs for the opera *Don Giovanni*, Stratford Festival, Stratford, Ontario (1966); four set designs and eight costume designs for *Rose Latulippe*, Royal Winnipeg Ballet (1966); two set designs for *Carmina Burana*, Les Grands Ballet Canadiens (1969); one set design for *Catulli Carmina*, Les Grands Ballet Canadiens (1969); twelve costume designs for *Tambours et Trompettes (Trumpets and Drums)*, Theatre du Nouveau Monde (1971); seven costume designs and one set design for *The Threepenny Opera*, Stratford Festival (1972); fourteen costume designs for *Floralia ou es-tu?*, an

unrealized film (1972); nine costume designs for *Long Voyage Vers la Nuit (Long Day's Journey into Night)*, Theatre du Nouveau Monde (1975); five set designs for *Life in Paris (La Vie Parisienne)*, Stratford Festival (1974); and five costume designs for *La Cruche Casse (The Broken Jug)*, Theatre du Nouveau Monde (1978).

There is also a collection of engravings and prints. Found here are six etchings of circus subjects by Auguste Brouet (c. 1923-1927); a wood block print by Ashiyuki of the actor Ichikawa Danzo V as Kajiwara Genra (1827); wood block prints, diptych, by Hokusho, of two actors in the play *Meiboku Sendai Hagi* (c. 1821); a wood block print by Kunichika of the actor Kawarazaki Sansho in the play *Sukeroku* (1864); wood block prints, diptych, by Kunisada, of two wrestlers from the play *Futatsu Chocho Nikki* (1852); a wood block print by Kunisada from the series *Famous Plays of Kyoto* (1860); a wood block print by Kuniyasu of the actors Nakamura Utaemon III and Segawa Roko wearing bird costumes (1810); two wood block prints by Kuniyoshi, of wrestlers in *Futatsu Chocho Kurawa Nikki* (1852); a wood block print by Toyokuni I of the actor Bando Mitsugoro III as the courtesan Yugiri in the play *Kuruwa Bunsho* (1800); a wood block print by Toyokuni I of the actor Matsumoto Koshiro IV (obituary portrait, 1802); a wood block print by Toyokuni I of an actor as Goro Tokimune in the Kabuki play *Revenge of the Soga Brothers* (c. 1810); and a wood block print, triptych, by Yoshi-Iku, of a scene from the Kabuki play *Yasa Heike Shirabe No* (1863).

EXHIBITIONS

Black Images in Film: A Photographic Exhibition will be on view from April 26-July 9, 1984, at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture. The Center is located at 515 Lenox Avenue at 135th Street in New York.

The de Mille Dynasty, an exhibition featuring the careers of Henry, William, Cecil B. and Agnes de Mille, will be on view in the Main Gallery of The New York Public Library at Lincoln Center from March 20 through the summer.



Playbill photos courtesy Museum of the City of New York

Officers of the **Theatre Library Association** (founded 1937): President, Dorothy L. Swerdlove, Curator, the Billy Rose Theatre Collection, The New York Public Library at Lincoln Center, New York City; Vice-President, Mary Ann Jensen, Curator, the William Seymour Collection, Princeton University Library, Princeton, New Jersey; Secretary-Treasurer, Richard M. Buck, Assistant to the Chief, Performing Arts Research Center, The New York Public Library at Lincoln Center, New York City; Recording Secretary, Brigitte Kueppers, Archivist, Shubert Archive, Lyceum Theatre, New York City.

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