

Disc Notes

Hamlet

by PAUL CONTESTABLE

(Guest reviewer for this week's Disc Notes is Robert Smalls, news editor of the Courier-Journal, former president of Blackfriars, former editor of Drama Critique and Catholic Theatre magazine, both national publications.)
HAMILLET, Columbia records original Broadway cast produced by John Gielgud, starring Richard Burton.
For the teacher and student of drama and the English language or, simply, the theatre buff, Columbia Records new recording of the much-talked-of Hamlet starring Richard Burton is a "must"—a library necessity and a collector's item.
There have been many Hamlets through the years and each has been rooted or routed by the critics to one degree or another. Perhaps most lauded was the performance some years ago of Sir John Gielgud, who directs the current production.
Nothing can compare with seeing live theatre, but the stage is an ephemeral thing and we would have nothing but memories if it were not for the magic recall provided by recordings.
When the current Hamlet closes, it will have been the longest production of the Shakespeare work on the American stage. Yet only a comparative handful of theatre-lovers will have been able to see it.
The Gielgud production has been criticized for its dull, bare setting and lackluster staging, which has diminished the royal pomp and pomposity associated with traditional presentations.
There is an advantage of imagination to the recording. We can close our eyes, put head to pillow, fill a bare stage with marble and velvet and drap the actors in brocades and silks. We have nothing but the sound.
And, what a pot-pourri of sound it is—the clipped Welsh shrillness of Richard Burton as an un-melancholy Dane—the

mid-West American dulciness of Hume Cronyn's Polonius—the trumpet-like, expressionless, inept tones of a Claudius by Alfred Drake—the trumpet-like courtesies of Linda Marsh's quivering, high school Ophelia—the comfortable, Old-Vic certainty of Eileen Herlie's Queen Gertrude—the lovable cocksure cockney of George Rose as the first gravedigger—and the full-throated richness and wizardry of John Gielgud's impeccable Hamlet.
Because Hamlet is perhaps the world's greatest and best-known single piece of theatre, every line might easily be a cliché. This Hamlet as directed by John Gielgud has no gimmicks. There is no embarrassment in Mr. Burton's voice, as one has found so often in Hamlets of the past when he is faced with "Oh, what a rogue and peasant slave am I," or "To be or not to be." Mr. Burton plays it straight—true to the text.
In opposition to Sir Laurence Olivier, Mr. Burton's Hamlet has made up his mind. There is no meandering, no holding back. Mr. Burton races to the final curtain. There may be many faults in his interpretation and in that of the other members of the cast. We found a certain unevenness in conception.
But this above all, in Shakespeare's Hamlet, was true when he gave us an opportunity in this recording to hear the English language with all its beauty of diction and tone quality. We are reminded again that ours is a tongue of poetry and, thanks to Columbia's flawless reproduction, we have a new and lasting addition to that heritage.
For those who would like to hear the four-record set before making their purchase, WHAM, 1180 on the dial, will feature the entire recording on Sunday, June 14 from 7 to 10 p.m. Included in the deluxe album is an original souvenir program of the Hamlet.



Nun's Story

"The Nun in the Modern World," a discussion of the challenges and opportunities which confront the nun in contemporary life, will be presented on Directions 84... A Catholic Perspective, over the ABC-TV network, Sunday, June 14 from 2-2:30 p.m. Pictured above (left to right) are Mrs. Louis Liscialzo, Sister St. John, S.S.M.N., Sister Charles Borromeo, O.S.C., and Michael Novak. The program is co-produced by the National Council of Catholic Men and the Public Affairs Department of the American Broadcasting Company.

Band Pageant In Gorham Stratford Festival To Open

Little Gorham, New York (population 400) will once again host the famous all-day Gorham "Pageant of Bands" Saturday, June 13. Last year this popular event drew 8000 onlookers from all over the state. Voting for the prized trophies will be 21 high school bands ranging from Rochester's Aquinas Institute state champions to last year's junior-high winners, from Williamsville. A total of more than 1000 individual students will participate.
This is the fourth successive year that Gorham—"The Bandstand of the Finger Lakes"—has sponsored the annual competition. Growing attendance figures, up from 2000 the first year, attest the popularity of one of New York State's favorite free pastimes.
A full day of tuncful festivities is planned according to Gorham Central School's Band Director, Jack Bullock. Beginning with concert judging at 9 a.m. at the school athletic field, the day's activities will be capped with a grand parade through town at 2 p.m.
Gorham is located southwest of Geneva, on Route 245. From Canandaigua, New York, directions are: turn right off Routes 5 and 20 on Route 247, left at Reeds Corners and directly into Gorham.

On all opening nights the performances will begin at 7:30 p.m. Thereafter, evening performances will start at the customary hour, 8:30 p.m. Matinees will be at 2:30 p.m. on Wednesdays and Saturdays. On Civic Holiday, Monday, Aug. 3 and Labor Day, Monday, Sept. 7, there will be matinee performances at 2:30 p.m. but no evening performances.
The first presentation on June 15 will be Shakespeare's "Richard II" with William Hunt, one of Canada's outstanding actors, in the title role.
The following evening, June 16, at 7:30, Jean Gascon's production of "Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme" will have its Canadian premiere. This production, first presented by the Festival Company in Chichester, England, in April, teams once again Director Jean Gascon with Designer Robert Frost and Composer Gabriel Charpentier.
One of Shakespeare's greatest tragedies, "King Lear," will open on Wednesday, June 17, also at 7:30 p.m., with John Colicos in the title role.
Joining the repertoire on Monday, July 27, is William Wycherley's gusty Restoration comedy "The Country Wife," directed by Michael Langham, designed by Desmond Hecley and with music by Toronto Composer Godfrey Ridout. Helen Burns, as Margery Pinchwife, heads a cast of some of the most outspoken Rabelaisian characters on the English-speaking stage.

Piano Festival Set At War Memorial

The third annual Piano Festival will be held Sunday, June 14 at 2:30 p.m. at the War Memorial. More than 500 children will participate along with 14 teachers.
Sister Anthony of St. Ambrose and Christ the King Schools, Rosary; Sister Jean Marie, Nazareth Academy; Sister Lauretta, Nazareth Hall and Sacred Heart; and Sister Thomas Marie, Sacred Heart.
Also participating will be their pupils as well as pupils of the following: Sister Anna Louise, Holy Rosary; Sister Ellen Louise, St. John's; Grace; Sister Cecelia, St. August; Sister Helen, Anby; St. Ann; Sister Inezita, Holyvis Music Store.
Tickets for the event sponsored by the Festival Teachers Union, are available free at Le-Monica's; Sister Inezita, Holyvis Music Store.

Eight Hands at Two Pianos Belong to Cathy DeConnick, Gary Snyder, Nancy Koplowski and Patrick Shaughnessy

The quartet will perform at the Cardinal Mooney concert on Sunday.

Invitation To Melody

The music department of Cardinal Mooney High School will present invitation to Melody, this year's annual spring concert, in the school auditorium on Sunday, June 15, at 2 p.m. The public is invited.
The program will open with a combined speech choir and band of I Am Music by Lloyd Conley and will close with the whole ensemble in Climb Every Mountain.
Brother Edward Boyer, C.S.C., director of the concert band, has announced a varied program including South American rhythms in Tango Tiste and Bossa Nova, a trumpet trio in Smooth Flight featuring Gary Snyder, Tom Gramlich and Bernice Laramie and the overture to the musical comedy, Tajana Game.
The girls of the glee club, directed by Sister M. Edwina, R.S.M., will sing Clair De Lune while the boys will perform the Theme From Exodus with Michael Strasser doing the solo. Tania Bedrij will be the soprano soloist for the Lullaby.

Lost-and-Found Log Jam

Put 1000 kids together for a day-of-band-tooting-and-parading and there's bound to be a lost-and-found problem.
This is the perplexing picture faced annually for the last three years by Gorham Central School administrator Jack Bullock. And this year is no exception, with some 2000 spectators expected for the Gorham "Pageant of Bands" Saturday, June 13.
A sample of last year's lost-and-found pot-pourri: olive tie with red-and-white knot; Farduba double cup trumpet mouthpiece; black plastic belt; white sneaker (left) size 5 1/2; pair of 18 inch cymbals.
So if you see a small-footed girl hopping along towards Gorham with only one white sneaker, you will know where she is going and why.

Wanda Circle Plans Supper

Wanda Circle of St. Casimir Church, Elmira will have a pot-luck supper, Thursday, June 18 at 6 p.m. in the school.
Mrs. Albert Przygodski and Mrs. Frank Warkowski are co-chairmen assisted by the Mesdames Anna Orvek, Josephine Gawrowski, Helen Gekokki, Helen Garaschynski, Helen Shultz, Veronica Marchinock, Joseph Gawlas, John, Christalite, Bertha Wrzesniewski, John Wieszolowski and Misses Helen and Rose Oswowski.

Legion Of Decency

The following are the titles of the films reviewed this week to be used in their respective classification of the Legion of Decency. The last complete listing appeared in the June 4 issue. Clip both and save.
Class A, Section I
Magic Fountain, The
This film is recommended as superior family entertainment.
Class A, Section II
Good Neighbor Sam
Man From Rio
Ring Of Treason
Walk Into Hell
Class A, Section III
Nightmare In the Sun
Class A, Section IV
Night Of The Iguana, The
This film version of Tennessee Williams' stage play of the same title is a complex parable about human nature. Basically it develops the theme of the liberating influence of love in the anguished life of man.
Although the author's cogent indictment of uncharitableness in its many forms provides a prologue for hopeful living, the viewer with religious commitment must nevertheless observe that the romantic idealism which appears so largely to color the playwright's vision is ultimately illusory in its promise and must finally disappoint those who would hail it as the universal panacea.
Concerning treatment it is necessary to note that some of the dialogue and a few situations appear to be needlessly coarse and crude.
Class B
Black Sabbath
Objection: The second episode of this three-part horror film dangerously concentrates on the erotic and violent details of sadism.

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