

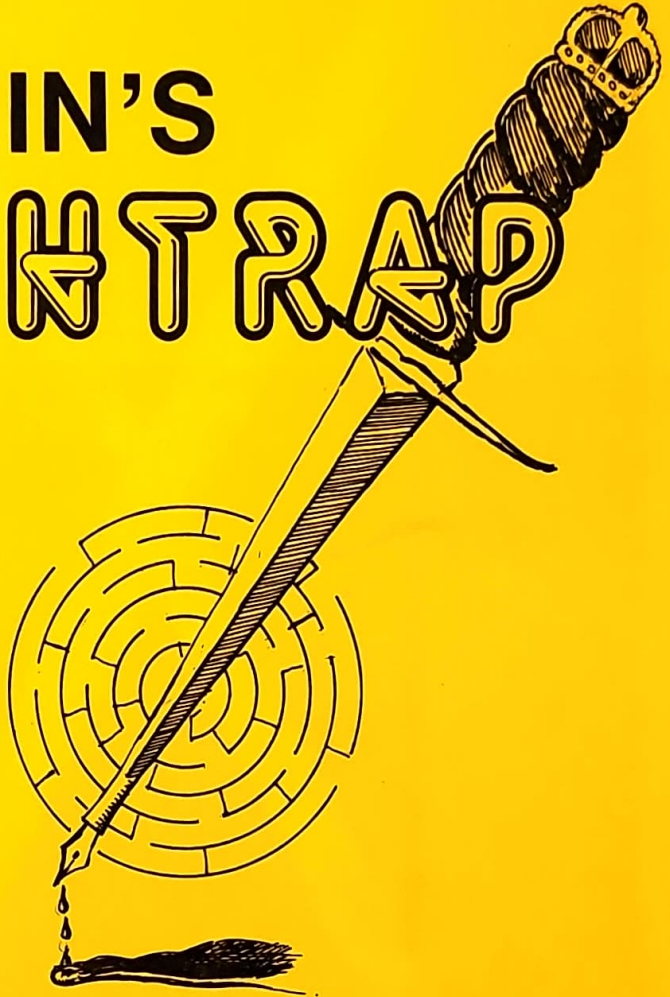


kanata theatre

Presents

IRA LEVIN'S

DEATHTRAP



EARL OF MARCH SCHOOL

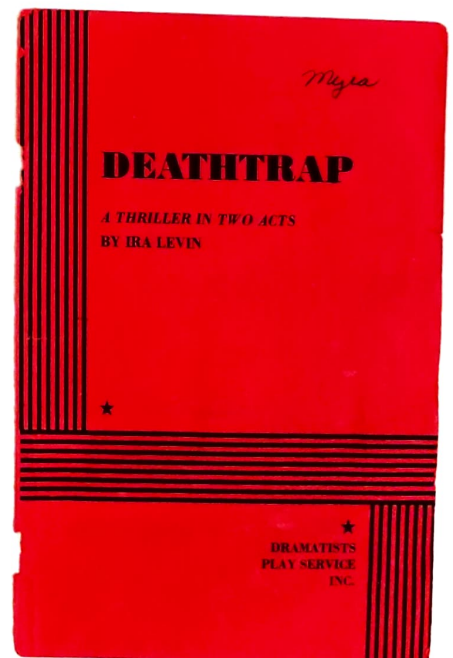
Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday,
March 9th-12th, 1983 at 8pm sharp

All seats reserved \$4.00, \$3.00
Weds. Thurs. only students seniors \$2.00
for all tickets, call box office 592-1715

PHOTO

BROOKE KENEFORD

SET DESIGNER: PHIL LAWLESS



IRA LEVIN'S DEATHTRAP

Produced by Special Arrangement with
DRAMATISTS PLAY SERVICE, INC.



Directed by
JIM HOLMES

CAST

(in order of appearance)

Sidney Bruhl	— STEPHEN JONES
Myra Bruhl	— ROSEMARY KENEFORD
Clifford Anderson	— CHRIS DEEBLE
Helga Ten Dorp	— LIANE FREEDMAN
Porter Milgrim	— PAT CARROLL

The action takes place in Sidney Bruhl's study, in the Bruhl home in Westport, Connecticut.

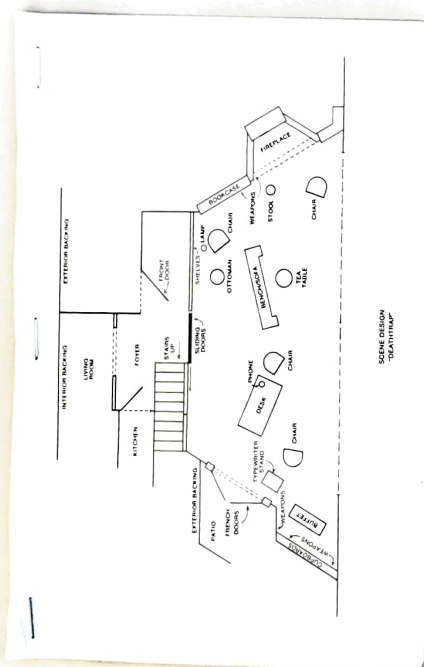
ACT I

Scene 1 An afternoon in October.
Scene 2 That evening.
Scene 3 Two hours later.

ACT II

Scene 1 Two weeks later, morning.
Scene 2 A week later, night.
Scene 3 A week later, afternoon.

There will be one intermission during which the bar will be open.



Entertainment

Kanata's approach too serious for 'Otherwise Engaged'

By Audrey M. Ashley

Simon Gray's *Otherwise Engaged* isn't the kind of late you usually find at suburban community theatres.

The Kanata Theatre can take credit for a certain amount of courage in choosing to stage it, because it represents a departure from the standard British comedy in that it reflects some unattractive trends in present society.

It's a comedy with a dark side to it, for its hero, a man who moves in literary circles, is heartless and utterly self-centred. He is exceedingly broad-minded about his wife's extra-marital affairs, which parallel his own, but since he appears to feel nothing

Theatre review

Otherwise Engaged
Kanata Theatre
Earl of March 10
Jan. 19-22, 8 p.m.

very deeply, there's no virtue in such broad-mindedness.

The play is a series of encounters, between Simon Hench and his brother, a rather unsuccessful public-school teacher, with the young lout who is his tenant; with a hard-drinking, hard-swearing friend, the friend's mistress, the fiancée of Simon's own mistress, and finally, with Simon's wife.

If I think there is what is euphemistically called an "open marriage," the trouble is, all of the Kanata cast are obviously far too nice

to be mixed up in this sort of thing. Chris Robinson as Simon quite obviously isn't the cad he ought to be. Although he delivers his lines — and some of them are marvellous — with a nice sense of humor, they're not nearly as sharp as they ought to be.

He's far too easy-

going, leaving the impression of a nice man who simply hasn't the energy or the desire to be a Lohano.

Brian Welch, as a man who "hates women, despises men and loathes queers", isn't nearly as offensive enough, despite the fact that his every sentence contains the

word "bloody" at least several times over. Brenda Robinson brings a touch of reality to the proceedings in the second act when she berates Simon for his dismal behaviour towards her, and Gwendolyn Tolley negotiates the uneasy role of Davina, whose breasts Simon admires

while being repelled by her conversation. In the London production Davina spent a good part of her time on stage distracting the audience with her bare bosom. Kanata is a little more circumspect, and settles for a skin-colored lace bra.)

Brooke Keneford's direction depends heav-

ily on the civilized veneer through which these characters conduct their lives, shying away from any digging beneath the surface. Everybody is very serious. Nobody seems to have fun with the witty lines, but maybe that will come later, after the first-night traumas are over.

Nor do the performers react to each other very much beyond waiting politely for their turn to speak to one another, despite the outrageous things that are being said.

The play itself seems to run out of steam rather than coming to a tidy end, as though the playwright had

exhausted all the possibilities inherent in the various permutations of people. Ron Maslin has designed a comfortable-looking set representing the living-room of a house in London's Islington district, and Pat Keneford has provided appropriate costumes.

Play proves too much to handle

by Steve Chadwick

Lacking a play like Simon Gray's *Otherwise Engaged* is a difficult undertaking, generally beyond the scope of an amateur theatre group. The Kanata Theatre must be lauded for its ambition, but unfortunately, despite best intentions, it just could not carry off this black and sometimes raucous comedy.

The fault lay largely with Chris Robinson's failure to get a proper grip on the lead character, Simon Hench. Simon is a heartless worm who wraps himself in a cocoon of creature comforts to insulate himself from the outside world.

Robinson did manage to capture some of Simon's callous disregard for the affairs of his fellow man. After a slow start, he warmed to the part but he never fully embraced it.

Robinson failed to arouse the contempt the audience should feel for a dispassionate, self-absorbed cad like Simon even though he did manage some wonderful expressions and demonstrated a fine sense of comedic timing.

Perhaps director Brooke Keneford should share some of the blame for not providing Robinson with the proper focus for his interpretation.

The supporting cast was generally adequate. However, Brenda Robinson who played Simon's long-suffering wife Beth was the exception. Although her standout appearance in the second act was all too brief, she did manage to breathe some genuine emotion into the play.

Dewi Williams as Simon's brother Steven, gave a solid, unspectacular portrayal of a man played by self-doubt, a familiar contrast to Simon's arrogant self-assurance.

Gwendolyn Tolley never failed to be quite comfortable as Davina, a thoroughly pleasant woman who thinks nothing of using her physical attributes, or the men they attract, to advance her burgeoning winking career. In fairness to Tolley, next to the lead role, hers was the most difficult. She did succeed in making an intense dislike for her character.

Greg Ramsey, as Simon's student boarder Dave, while certainly possessing a strong physical presence, performed with too much swagger and bravado to fit the part.

Again, more guidance from director Keneford appears to have been necessary to contain his young charge's well-intended exuberance.

Ron Maslin's set was well-designed and thoughtfully constructed. The book cases, stereo and amply-stocked bar are all important elements in Simon's comfortable domain.

The costumes by Pat Keneford should have been done with more care given to the nature of the individual character. Simon's bright red golf sweater was not appropriate for a man of his sensibilities. Dave, sporting a sleeveless black T-shirt, grimy jeans and sneakers looked more like a Canadian high school rocker than an English university student versed in composer

Wagner's religious preferences. Finally, when Davina removed her top to reveal a lacy camisole, Simon may act shocked, but the audience could hardly be asked to consider the undergarment as risqué.

Playwright Gray had intended

Davina's "topless" scene to be played with bare bosom but the Kanata Theatre Group decided to cover up for modesty's sake. There were also great liberties taken with much of the play's dialogue. Although still considered raucy by some patrons jud-

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ging from the furious scribbling on cards provided for comment, much of the coarse language was toned down.

One wonders if such adulteration is required to make a play "presentable," then perhaps it should never have been selected in the first place.

Questions of morality and artistic integrity aside, *Otherwise Engaged* which ran from Jan. 19 to 22 at the Earl of March auditorium proved to be too much to handle.

Give from the Heart.
Canadian Heart Fund

"Deathtrap" set



Kanata Theatre in rehearsal for Ira Levin's *Deathtrap* to be performed March 9 to 12. Shown (l to r): Chris Deebie as Clifford Anderson, Liane Freedman as Helga Ten Dorp. photo Steve Sweet

If you haven't already seen *Deathtrap*, and if you haven't already booked your tickets—pick up the phone right now. It's Kanata Theatre at its very best. It's the ultimate thriller.

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In rehearsal for Ira Levin's *Deathtrap*, to be performed by Kanata Theatre March 9-12, at Earl of March. From l to r: Liane Freedman as Helga Ten Dorp, Rosemary Keneford as Myra Bruhl, Stephen Jones as Sidney Bruhl. photo Steve Sweet

'Deathtrap' opening is next week

The first English production of Ira Levin's masterpiece, *Deathtrap*, will be performed by Kanata Theatre March 9-12, at the Earl of March High School. If you like "thrillers" done well, then this is one production you musn't miss. It's Kanata Theatre at its best...with an excellent cast, directed by Jim Holmes, and a set designed by Phil Lawless that will be the envy of any theatre company.

The lead role of Sidney Bruhl is played by Stephen Jones and Sidney's wife, Myra, is played by Rosemary Keneford. Liane Freedman portrays Helga Ten Dorp; Chris Deebie is Clifford Anderson and Pat Carroll is the lawyer, Porter Milgrim.

The production crew for *Deathtrap* has been working hard the past few weeks and

Kanata Theatre would like to thank some local teachers who turned out last week to help with set painting.

All seats for *Deathtrap* are reserved, at \$4 and \$3. On Wed-

nesday and Thursday nights there's a special \$2 price for seniors and students. Curtain time is 8 p.m. For tickets or information, call the box office at 592-1715.



Kanata boy in NAC play

Justin Haynes, son of Kanata residents Martin and Jenny, was selected for a part in the current National Arts Centre production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

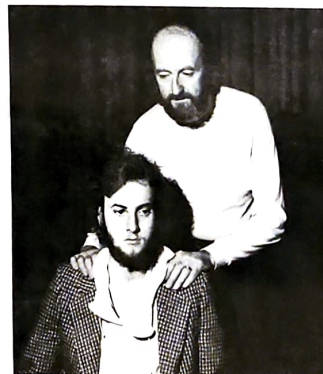
A grade 4 A pupil from Roland Michener School, Justin was recommended by a grade 4 classroom teacher, Carol Hay, to audition for the NAC Shakes-

peare special children's workshop. From his performance there, he won a part as an earth fairy, Peaseblossom, in the Shakespeare play.

A Midsummer Night's Dream is now in performance at the Studio at NAC. It is running in repertory with Anton Chekhov's comedy *The Wood Demon* in

the Studio until April 30 at 8 p.m. and Saturday matinees. Wanda Cannon is cast as Titania, Queen of the Fairies, in the foreground; top centre Justin Haynes, Peaseblossom, and other fairies from Ottawa schools — Cobweb, Bevan Hughes, Moth, Bryn Morgan, and Mustardseed, Timothy Adams.

New play a "thriller"



Kanata Theatre in rehearsal for Ira Levin's *Deathtrap*, Stephen Jones (standing) as Sidney Bruhl and Chris Deebie (sitting) as Clifford Anderson. photo Steve Sweet

If you like "thrillers", then Kanata Theatre's production of Ira Levin's *Deathtrap* is one night out you can't miss. Call your friends, book your babysitter and phone the box office now for tickets.

It's the first English performance of this play in the Ottawa area and one that's guaranteed to keep you in suspense.

Stephen Jones plays the lead role of Sidney Bruhl and Rose Keneford is Myra, Sidney's wife. Liane Freedman is Helga Ten Dorp; Chris Deebie is Clifford Anderson and Pat Carroll portrays the lawyer, Porter Milgrim.

Deathtrap is directed by Jim Holmes and the unusual set has been designed by Phil Lawless.

Performance dates for *Deathtrap* are March 9-12 at the Earl of March High School. Curtain time is 8 p.m. and all seats are reserved. For tickets call 592-1715.

The Past President will be Jim Holmes and Chris Robinson will once again be looking after the

Entertainment

Leisurely pace of Kanata production cripples impact in thriller

By Betty Swinnings
Citizen staff writer

Kanata Theatre is presenting Ira Levin's thriller *Deathtrap*, but Wednesday night's opening performance lacked the skill needed to make it a blockbuster.

Levin has written a slick, sharp mystery that is so full of twists and turns that even a cough in the audience should have everyone on edge.

The production is about a playwright going through a dry period and trying hard to write a hit, then a young man comes along with an idea for a play and, before you know it, the plot wiggles and turns and you almost need a program to know who's been murdered and who hasn't.

But to make the whole implausible plot work the timing must be absolutely immaculate.

Unfortunately, Wednesday night it wasn't. Kanata's director Jim Holmes let

Theatre review

Deathtrap
Kanata Theatre
Earl of March High School
March 8-12

his cast move at such a leisurely pace and do their bits of stage business so clumsily that there was little tension.

And to make matters worse, some of the best dramatic parts lost their impact needlessly.

It's a pity too, because the show had some good things going for it — a handsome set, designed by Philip Lawless, some of the smaller roles.

Liane Freedman as the eccentric psychic Helga Ten Dorp and Pat Carroll as Porter Milgrim were carefully crafted; lighting by Chris Robinson and Steve Sweet effectively underlined the squalidness that was going on; and sound effects by Ron Martin that were

wholly realistic.

But opening night nerves or not, the principals fluffed too many lines and interrupted the mood being so carefully created.

And this is a sin because Levin's lines are bright and witty and his use of language is really quite delightful. It deserves to be appreciated, but

that's not possible when you're worrying about whether the character will remember the words or not. But perhaps with opening night over, the cast will settle down.

Holmes will guide them with a firmer hand and *Deathtrap* will recover all its much needed dramatic tension. For Kanata's sake, I hope so.

'Deathtrap' entertaining

by Steve Chadwick

Ira Levin's *Deathtrap*, a murder drama with more twists than Hampton Court maze, was given a solid, if at times shaky, treatment by the Kanata Theatre Group at the Earl of March auditorium last week.

Levin crafts his own maze of intrigue so masterfully throughout the play, that the audience can never be certain which turn the plot will take next — it only knows to expect the unexpected.

The Kanata Theatre Group did a commendable job on the playwright's blueprint for murder, creating the suspense so necessary to *Deathtrap*'s success.

By and large, the cast handled its roles capably, but missed cues and tangled tongues generally put a damper on an otherwise fine performance.

Stephen Jones, as the scheming Sidney Bruhl, was wonderfully despicable in the lead role of a renowned writer of stage thrillers whose career has soured. Mr. Jones tossed off Bruhl's witty lines with great clan.

Chris Deeble, as aspiring author Clifford Anderson, has a natural vibrancy that gave the play much of its vigour, but he was often over eager in his role as Bruhl's co-conspirator, protégé and homosexual lover. He created the impression that he was trying to drive the play to a conclusion all on his own rather than let events build naturally to the climax.

The delightfully dotty character of Helga Ten Dorp, an old-world psychic, was played by Liane Freedman. Her brief, but timely appearances as the volatile eccentric gave this play a real lift.

Pat Carroll, in the role of Bruhl's parsimonious attorney, also appeared only briefly but he managed to enliven proceedings with some fine comic moments of his own.

Rosemary Keneford was guilty of over-acting the part of Bruhl's doting wife Myra. She opened the first act too strongly and did not find her proper footing until the play gathered momentum.

With this one exception, director Jim Holmes' handling of the cast was good as he made the most of each member's natural talents. By allowing Miss Freedman to go with her own instincts as the psychic Ten Dorp, Mr. Holmes was rewarded with the best performance in the play.

Plaudits must also go to *Deathtrap*'s production staff. Philip Lawless' intricate set was well conceived and well constructed, featuring a field-stone fireplace, heavy wooden beams and highly appropriate bric-a-brac such as hand guns, swords, knives and garrottes. Lighting by Chris Robinson and Steve Sweet and sound by Brooke Keneford and Peter Smith helped to create the right atmosphere for sinister goings-on.

The Kanata Theatre Group's presentation of *Deathtrap*, while certainly not free of flaws, was highly entertaining and the group should be proud of its efforts.

Changes to be considered at theatre group meeting

There will be a General Meeting of Kanata Theatre on Sunday, May 1, at 7 p.m. in the Beaverbrook Community Centre. The membership is urged to attend to vote on proposed constitutional amendment that would change the nominating procedure for executive positions.

The 1983-4 season will be announced at the General Meeting. Dorothy Beak and her playreading committee have been working very hard and

have come up with a season that is exciting and challenging. It's also a season that will give a lot more members a chance to perform.

Once the season is announced at the General Meeting, it will be made public and season tickets will go on sale.

Anyone who is interested in joining Kanata Theatre, please feel free to come to the General Meeting and make yourself known. New members are always welcome.

Unfortunately, the last piece of information in this newsletter is far from happy. Many of you have known that Sally Rose has been fighting a courageous battle for some time. She passed away on Wednesday and will be greatly missed by all of us who have known her over the years. I remember when Sally first joined Kanata Theatre... and how she cheerfully and willingly gave her time to help with so many theatre activities. In a volunteer organization such as Kanata Theatre... there are always times when there's a temptation to criticize... grumble... and even get discouraged. But, at moments like this, one realizes what a closely-knit group we really are. None of us would be involved if we didn't care about theatre... and most important, if we didn't care about people and each other. Working so closely together on productions, we almost become a family. When good fortune lands on someone's doorstep, we're happy for them. We're also concerned and saddened when misfortune strikes a member of our group. It's almost as if it was happening to someone in our own family. That's what Sally meant to us as a group... and that's why she will be deeply missed.

M/24

MARCH 1983

Margy Allen

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Bob Lackey and Annmarie Copple in rehearsal for Kanata Theatre's final production of the season, *Romantic Comedy*, to be performed May 11-14 at the Earl of March High School. Curtain time is 8 p.m. photo Steve Sweet

Kanata Theatre ends year with 'romantic' production

by Marg Allen

In the spring, most people's thoughts turn to flowers, music and romance. Well, Kanata Theatre offers you a bit of all three on May 11-14. *Romantic Comedy* is the final major production of this season. It's a fine and entrancing play of couples and romance, of love and infatuation and of the durability of romantic love.

Written by Bernard Slade, *Romantic Comedy* is directed by Rosemary Keneford and the cast includes Annmarie Copple, Bob Lackey, Brooke Keneford, Rosemary Lawless, Dorothy Beak and Jenny Haynes.

Curtain time is 8 p.m. and to get you in the mood before the play begins, there will be some romantic music in the foyer by Todd Knill, Debi Halfer and Bert Paquin. Perhaps during the two intermissions you'll even feel like dancing!

All seats for *Romantic Comedy* are reserved at \$4 and \$3. On Wednesday and Thursday nights, there's a special \$2 price for seniors and students.

So, start spring off right. Call your friends, get a group together and spend an evening with Kanata Theatre.

For tickets to *Romantic Comedy*, call the box office at 592-1715.



