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Ridgeway Street, Stranmillis, Belfast, 9

present

A SWAN SONG

by

Anton Tchehov

&

A DREAM PLAY

by **August Strindberg**

Adapted by Ingmar Bergman

Translated by Michael Meyer

MARCH 1973

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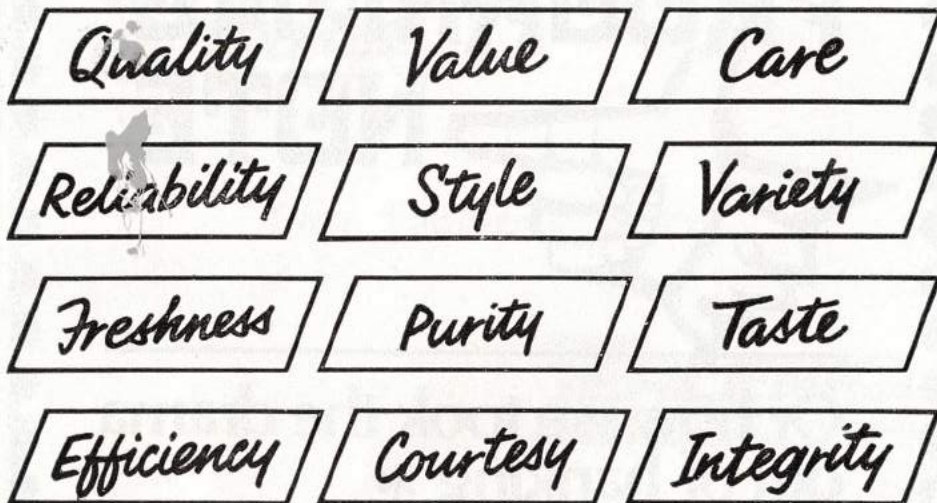
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A STAGE WITHIN.

During the 1870's and 1880's the new wave of dramatic realism made the theatre once more a (fairly) honest institution. This new tradition was a valuable one, but it had serious limitations; it depicted life only as it was reflected on the surfaces of man, not as man himself experienced it and responded to it in the recesses of his personality. The most imaginative and progressive of the new dramatists soon became vaguely dissatisfied with new style and attempted to improve upon it. Thus Ibsen — the master-realist of *A Doll's House* and *An Enemy of the People* — came to combine richly evocative psychological symbols with the "real" people and situations he depicted; in such plays as *The Wild Duck* and *The Masterbuilder*, these symbols are knives that strip away the veneer of life and expose man's hidden grain. In his last play, *When We Dead Waken*, he approached the borders of a new form, but illness, then death, put an end to his work. The result of his noble experiment was the refinement of dramatic realism, not the creation of a counter-tradition.

It was August Strindberg, Ibsen's younger contemporary, who made the breakthrough that Ibsen himself had approached. In plays like *Miss Julie* and *The Father* Strindberg had proved himself to be one of the most brilliant of realists, but he too found the conventional form inadequate to his needs. In the 1890's he passed into a period of great spiritual crisis; he looked inward and saw there the materials for a new drama. — But how could he depict the interior life on the hard planks of a stage? Where was the form that could enable an audience to confront the hidden humanity that he had glimpsed within himself? To answer these questions Strindberg did not turn to Ibsen's symbolic realism: from hints provided by dramatic tradition, from the lights and shadows of his own personality, and from his deepening spiritual perceptions he fashioned a new form. The basic rule of this form was a daringly elementary one: as the most significant human drama, the drama of response and vision, is enacted within the human personality — beneath the skin of realism — the dramatist must work *directly* with the images, distortions and impulses of the interior man. That is, he must draw up the curtain upon the stage of the soul, not upon the neat livingroom and harmonious landscapes of the realistic stage.

As the prototype of the internalized play Strindberg devised a dream format in which, he tells us, "The characters split, double, multiply, evaporate, condense, disperse, assemble. But one consciousness rules them all, that of the dreamer; for him there are no secrets, no illogicalities, no scruples, no laws." Strindberg pioneered this form in the first part of his great religious trilogy *To Damascus* in 1898, but his best known work of this kind is *A Dream Play*, 1901, one of the key plays of the modern repertory. The framework of this dream is basically simple: the daughter of the god Indra descends to earth to learn about human experience; when she has

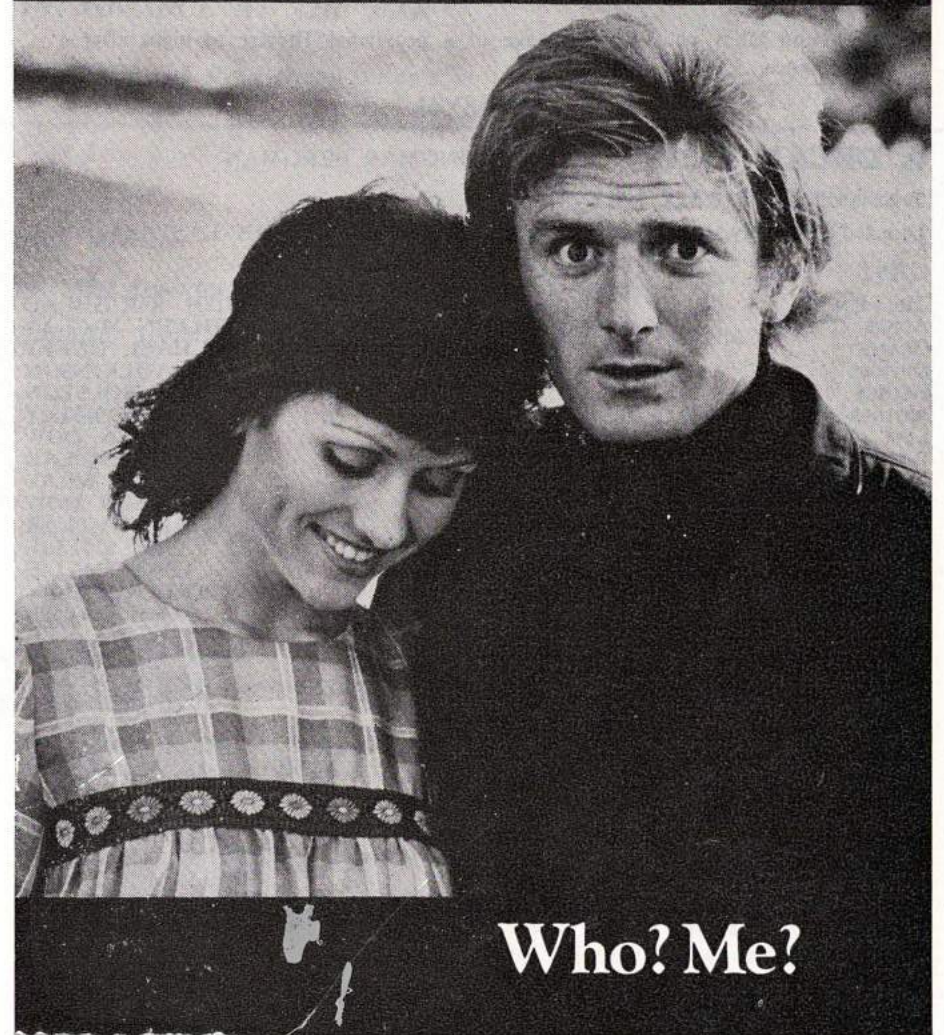
done so, she departs. The theme is also simple: man is harassed — “bugged” we might say today — by countless distractions, disappointments and petty afflictions; he deserves our pity. As developing dramatic structure, however, this dream is far from simple; composed of bits and pieces of Strindberg’s experience, it is as sad and as comic — and as cockeyed as existence itself. Most of the dream fragments can be identified by scholars and placed in the context of the dramatist’s life; the Rising Castle, for instance, was a domed cavalry barracks that Strindberg could see from his window in Stockholm, and the stage door scenes recall times when he himself stood waiting at the theatre. It is unnecessary, however, to know its sources to enjoy Strindberg’s play — to join the dreamer in his dream. With its vivid imagery, its appealing characters and situations, its poetry and its humour, it opened up a new and universal kind of theatre. It is the definitive masterpiece of expressionist drama and the direct ancestor of the Theatre of the Absurd. Onto the stage it used have stepped the characters of Eugene Ionesco, Samuel Beckett and other dramatists of inner space; from the wings of that stage, under its lights, and through its settings have walked man’s most fantastic and preposterous truths — truths that are real beyond the wildest dreams of realism.

—oO—

As a curtain-raiser, the Lyric Players Theatre presents a short and little known play by another major dramatist of Strindberg’s era. Tchekov wrote *A Swan Song* in 1886. Appealing in its own right, this sad — funny portrait of an old actor contains some curious hints of the Russian playwright’s later and more famous works for the stage.

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Directed by DONALD BODLEY

Designed by JOHN L. STARK

VASSILY VASSILYITCH SVETLOVIDA, an Actor LOUIS ROLSTON

NIKITA IVANITCH, a Prompter PETER TEMPLAR

The action takes place on the stage of a provincial Theatre at night after a performance.

INTERVAL

A DIAM PLAY

Adapted by INGMAR BERGMAN

Translated by MICHAEL MEYER

Directed by DONALD BODLEY

Designed by JOHN L. STARK

CAST

THE POET	...	...	...	...	...	HAMISH ROUGHEAD
AGNES	...	...	...	...	...	KATHLEEN McCLAY
GLAZIER	...	...	...	...	...	MICHAEL DUFFY
OFFICER	...	...	...	...	...	PITT WILKINSON
FATHER	...	...	...	...	...	LOUIS ROLSTON
MOTHER	...	...	...	...	...	TRUDY KELLY
LINA	...	...	...	...	...	MAUREEN DOW
INDRA	...	...	...	...	...	PETER TEMPLAR
INDRA'S DAUGHTER	...	...	...	...	...	LINDA WRAY
STAGE DOOR KEEPER	...	...	...	...	...	MAUREEN DOW
BILLPOSTER	...	...	...	...	...	PETER TEMPLAR
VICTORIA	...	...	...	...	...	PAT SMYLIÉ
DANCER	...	...	...	...	...	PAT SMYLIÉ
SINGER	...	...	...	...	...	TRUDY KELLY
PROMPTER	...	...	...	...	...	CLEM DAVIES
POLICEMAN	...	...	...	...	...	WILLIAM WALKER
ADVOCATE	...	...	...	...	...	JOHN FRANKLYN
KRISTIN	...	...	...	...	...	TRUDY KELLY
QUARANTINE MASTER	...	...	...	...	...	JOHN KEENAN
1st SICK MAN	...	...	...	...	...	ALAN BRYCE
2nd SICK MAN	...	...	...	...	...	PETER TEMPLAR
DON JUAN	...	...	...	...	...	MAURICE O'CALLAGHAN
COQUETTE	...	...	...	...	...	MAUREEN DOW
HE	...	...	...	...	...	CLEM DAVIES
PENSIONER	...	...	...	...	...	MICHAEL DUFFY
1st COAL CARRIER	...	...	...	...	...	WILLIAM HAMILTON
2nd COAL CARRIER	...	...	...	...	...	WILLIAM WALKER
GENTLEMAN	...	...	...	...	...	ALAN BRYCE
HIS WIFE	...	...	...	...	...	MAUREEN DOW
EDITH	...	...	...	...	...	PAT SMYLIÉ
HER MOTHER	...	...	...	...	...	TRUDY KELLY
NAVAL OFFICER	...	...	...	...	...	JOHN PINE
ALICE	...	...	...	...	...	ALISON KELLY
BLIND MAN	...	...	...	...	...	LOUIS ROLSTON
SCHOOL MASTER	...	...	...	...	...	MAURICE O'CALLAGHAN
BOY	...	...	...	...	...	Andrew Kennedy, John O'Reilly, John O'Rourke
CHANCELLOR	...	...	...	...	...	ALEX McCLAY
DEAN OF THEOLOGY	...	...	...	...	...	PAT BRANNIGAN
DEAN OF PHILOSOPHY	...	...	...	...	...	WILLIAM HAMILTON
DEAN OF MEDICINE	...	...	...	...	...	MAURICE O'CALLAGHAN
DEAN OF LAW	...	...	...	...	...	JOHN PINE

Time and Place.

Time and place do not exist; in an insignificant basis of reality the imagination spins, weaving new patterns; a mixture of memories, experiences, free fancies, incongruities and improvisations.

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TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

JOHN L. STARK

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGEMENT

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EDWARD CLARKE

WARDROBE

ELIZABETH McCAFFERTY

RITA FOSTER

HEATHER HUTCHINGS

LIGHTING DESIGNED BY

RANDALL W. SMITH

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"The Lyric Theatre gratefully acknowledges financial assistance from the Arts Council of Northern Ireland."



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4th March, 3.30 pm St Anne's Cathedral

BACH Suite No 4
KABALEVSKY Violin Concerto
SCHUBERT Symphony No 4

Conductor: EDGAR COSMA
Soloist: RONALD THOMAS

9th March, 7.30 pm Whitla Hall

DVORAK Slavonic Dances
KHATCHATURIAN Violin Concerto
BEETHOVEN Symphony No 8

Conductor: EDGAR COSMA
Soloist: ERNO SEBESTYEN

15th March, 8.00 pm Balmoral Members' Rooms

19th March, 8.00 pm St Peter's Church, Antrim Road

HANDEL Water Music
SALIERI Concerto for Flute and Oboe
HAYDN Symphony No 93

Conductor: EDGAR COSMA
Soloists: ANNE BRYANT, BRIAN OVERTON

18th March, 3.00 pm Harty Room, Queen's University

NORTHERN BANK SUNDAY SEMINAR

MAW Sinfonia for small orchestra
HAYDN Symphony No 104 'London'

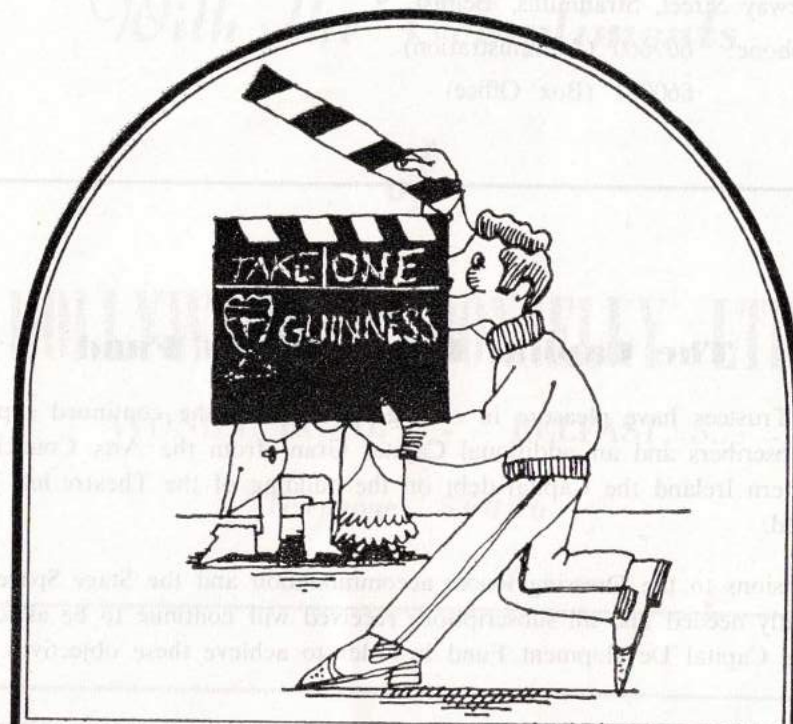
Guest Composer: NICHOLAS MAW
Conductor: LEONARD STEHN

23rd March, 7.30 pm Whitla Hall

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BEETHOVEN Symphony No 5
PARRY Blest Pair of Sirens
VERDI Four Sacred Pieces

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LYRIC PLAYERS THEATRE

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The Capital Development Fund

The Trustees have pleasure in stating that due to the continued support of subscribers and an additional Capital Grant from the Arts Council of Northern Ireland the Capital debt on the building of the Theatre has been cleared.

Extensions to the Dressing Room accommodation and the Stage Space are urgently needed and all subscriptions received will continue to be allocated to the Capital Development Fund in order to achieve these objectives.

The Secretary,
Lyric Players Theatre Trust,
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Please forward information concerning the Theatre Development Fund.

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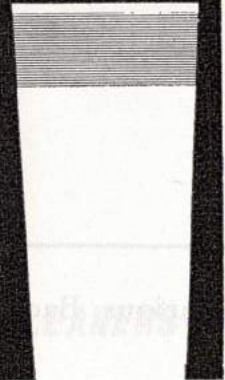
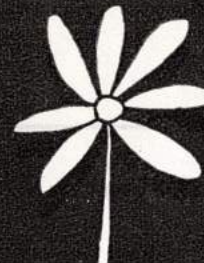
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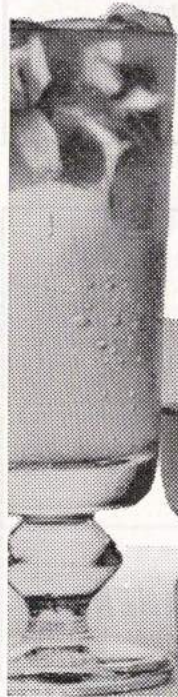


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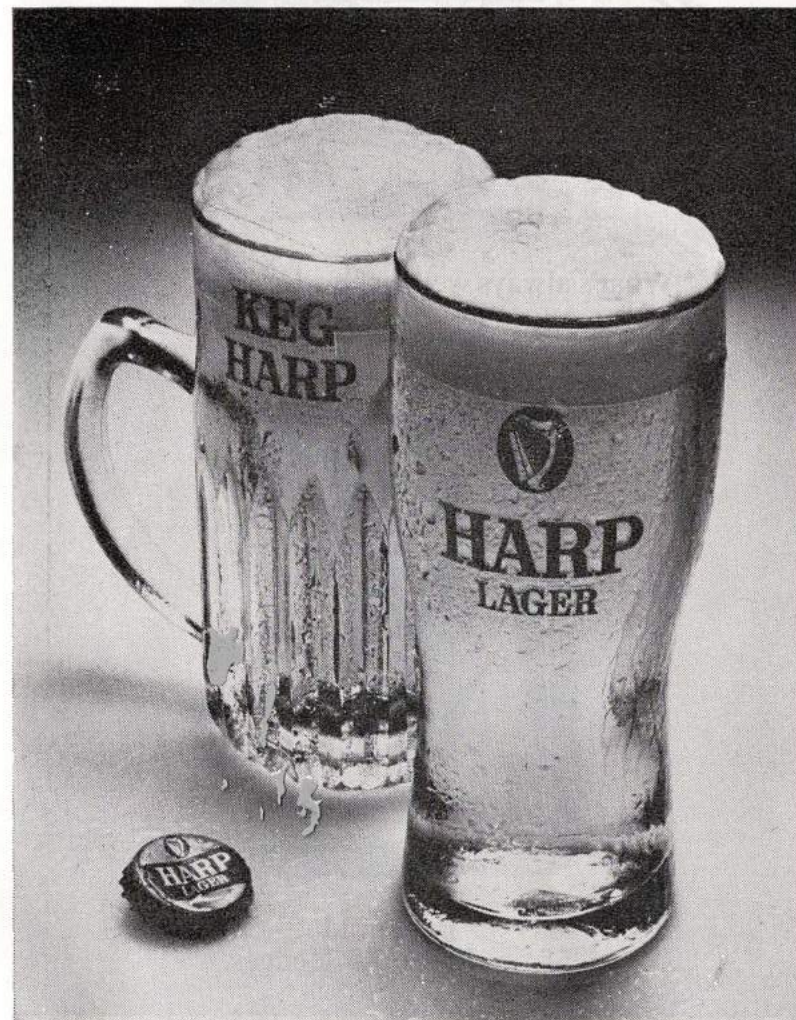
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