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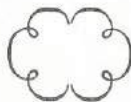
**OVER
THE
BRIDGE**



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THE LYRIC



THE LYRIC PLAYERS THEATRE
RIDGEWAY STREET, STRANMILLIS
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EVIN CROWLEY	SANDRA FUSCO	NORA McCARTHY
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All seats 10/- Friday and Saturday
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O'CASEY may be a bright shining star in the Irish dramatic firmament; but he was a lesser prophet than Sam Thompson. O'Casey wrote about the Rising and the Troubles after they were over; Sam Thompson wrote about our troubles before they began. "The wise man seeth the trouble afar off and hideth himself." Sam Thompson saw our troubles afar off, and, scorning to hide himself, set them down in his trilogy, *Over the Bridge*, *The Evangelist*, *Cemented with Love*—three plays that form a "shooting script" for our times in "Ulster", right down to the explosion in *Over the Bridge*.

Examine the trilogy. Trouble in the shipyards—trouble that, thanks to the wisdom of certain trade unionists, was never allowed to cross the bridge but that surrounded the shipyards like a sea. Now that *Over the Bridge* (gelignite and all) is revealed as prophecy, there must be red faces on the Malone Road and in Massey Avenue—anywhere barriers are built at the drop of a creative hat.

What Sam Thompson was doing was clearing the site in what the *Observer* called "the Alabama of Britain". He went down with a torch to examine the foundations of what some Ulster citizens fondly imagined to be a fortress. Part of his report is *The Evangelist*—the shape of unpleasant things to come. Another part is *Cemented with Love*—imperfect as drama, magnificent as a scenario of our times. It was inevitable that such a man should collide with brass-faced politicians. He was an "unacknowledged legislator", not in the sense of parliamentary bills, but in his unflattering report on the state of our foundations. In the story of his youth in Russia Konstantin Paustovsky says, "The thunder of the collapsing structure of our past was a continuous roar in our ears."

Here in north-east Ulster we don't yet hear the thunder, but prompted by Sam Thompson we are increasingly aware of falling plaster.

DENIS IRELAND.

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OVER THE BRIDGE

By SAM THOMPSON

Directed by CHLOE GIBSON (by courtesy of Radio Telefis Eireann)

Designed by JOHN CHRISTIAN

CHARACTERS:

Rabbie White	...	...	...	LOUIS ROLSTON
Warren Baxter	...	...	...	MARK MULHOLLAND
Mr. Fox	...	...	...	PETER ADAIR
George Mitchell	...	...	...	JACK McQUOID
Ephriam Smart	...	...	...	BRIAN CULLEN
Alfie	...	...	...	MICHAEL CURRAN
Archie Kerr	...	...	...	BILL HUNTER
Davey Mitchell	...	...	...	MICHAEL DUFFY
Peter O'Boyle	...	...	...	PAT BRANNIGAN
Billy Morgan	...	...	...	JOHN McBRIDE
Marian Mitchell	...	...	...	YVONNE ADAMS
Martha White	...	...	...	GERTRUDE RUSSELL
Nellie Mitchell	...	...	...	CATHERINE GIBSON
Mob Leader	...	...	...	JEREMY JONES
Shipyard Workers	...	...	...	JOE CONNELLY
				JOSIE McEWAN
				JOHN McEWAN

ACT I

Scene I—Foreman's Office, the Shipyard.

Scene II—Outside the Workshops.

Scene III—The Kitchen of Davey Mitchell's House.

INTERVAL

ACT II

Scene I—Foreman's Office.

Scene II—The Kitchen of Davey Mitchell's House.

— AT INTERVAL —

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Mr. Alan Hedgley, Public Affairs Manager, Harland & Wolff Ltd., Belfast,
for advice and assistance.

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Lighting—TONY TOMLINSON, HUVIN THOMPSON

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LYRIC PLAYERS THEATRE

Ridgeway Street, Stranmillis, Belfast.

Telephone 669660 (Administration) 660081 (Box Office)

THE CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT DEBT
ON THE NEW THEATRE AT RIDGEWAY STREET IS

TOTAL DEBT £21,100 - 0 - 0

(This figure is partly offset by covenanted subscriptions amounting to £16,000 on 31st March, 1969)

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OVER THE BRIDGE CONTROVERSY

Excerpt from 'Threshold' Vol. 3. No. 2. Summer, 1959.

"Censors never see themselves as enemies of freedom. They appear to themselves as wise fathers removing dangerous toys from the inexperienced hands of eager children. They forget that the road to the concentration camp is paved with good preventions. People involved with power always see the enemy among those who disagree with them.

The other day I discussed the banning of *Over the Bridge* with a man who is intelligent, sincere and tolerant in most things. He cracked under the pressure of argument and asserted that the playwright (known to him only as the author of a suppressed play) was in all probability a communist. In other words, an enemy. The patches of sunlight that we call freedom exist only between great shadows of personal prejudice and vested interest.

I think the censors have confused ideas about drama and art generally. Their chairman has complained that *Over the Bridge* is controversial, but that really doesn't mean anything. The dramatist might equally say that such a statement is controversial. The objection to the play is, I suspect, rooted in the notion that art is not a serious business: it may divert, and in a general way instruct, but it must never impinge directly on our social living. That is a vulgar misconception of the function of literature and drama. It embraces the notion that all good paintings tell a story, that all good poems ring out rhymes like a typewriter bell, that all good novels have plots and that all good plays take you out of yourself. It reflects the ignorant condescension of the philistine.

I believe with Yeats and Joyce that a writer can survive only behind a mask or in self-imposed exile. Society can trip and trap him in so many ways. But as a citizen with my taxes paid, rates paid, vote ready for a worthy candidate, I suggest to the chairman and his friends that they risk becoming figures of fun to future generations (generations more assured of a future if those gentlemen banned bombs instead of plays). As servants of a public who services I help to subsidise, they fail to do me credit. Arrogance can outrun qualification. They are not keepers of the public conscience; they are keepers of the public's money or moneysworth: and one day they will be asked to account."

R. McFADDEN.

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Q. *What do actors require?*

A. *Actors require handsomeness, agents, articulateness, money, memory, readiness, retentiveness, applause, perceptiveness, praise, convincingness, contracts, resourcefulness, ad-libs, inventiveness, attentiveness, direction, limelight, uniqueness, Equity, fairness, entrances, tragedy, seriousness, lightness, comedy, fitness, training, many-sidedness, publicity, memorableness, profiles, and goodness and* **GUINNESS**

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William Shakespeare

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