

General

Peace River theatre groups compete at spring festival

Theatre B.C.'s Peace River Zone Drama Festival was held April 21-24/88 at the Unchagah Hall in Dawson Creek. It was hosted by Mile "O" Stage from Dawson Creek and zone chairperson Anne Exner.

The drama festival provides an opportunity for Peace River clubs to get together and share their work with each other and the audience. We also receive the benefit of a professional adjudicators comments, knowledge, and experience. This year there were five plays entered in the festival adjudicated by Mr. John Krich.

We were very pleased to have Mr. Krich. He is a Professor of Theatre at the University of Victoria, and is an acknowledged expert in all facets of the theatre, and is well known across Canada and the U.S.A. Mr. Krich, in discussing the plays at public and private adjudications, used words like intense, cohesive, vision, sincere and honest to praise the plays and the festival. He also was impressed at how all of the groups had chosen such tough plays to do, and praised them on their presentation.

Directed by Anne Matheson, Mile "O" Stage, Dawson Creek, presented "Waiting For the Parade". A play that explores the lives of five women thrown together during World War II, in Calgary. Through them we saw the fabric of with we are all made and how we handle ourselves in times of stress. We saw fright, anger, prejudice, confusion and friendship pushed to the limit and then brought back to a common ground and overcome. Maggie Richardson won best Supporting Actress as Margaret. And the play won Best Set. Also in the play were Anna Stuber, Kathy Hogens, Gitty Hollman and Jeannie Mathews.

Stage North entered three plays in the Festival this year. First was "Conversation at Night With a Despised Character." Directed by

Daniel Vecchio, was an intellectual debate between a writer and her executioner. This was an intense and gripping play about the meaning of life and death. Mr. Krich was impressed by the plays cohesiveness and vision. Beverly Barradell was chosen Best Actress as the women, and the play also received Best Technical. Esther Oosterban played the executioner.

"Voices," directed by Linda Scarfo, was praised for its sincerity and honesty of acting and presentation. This play seems at first, a simple ghost story until the final surprising ending, when the audience discovers who the real ghosts are. This was Linda's debut as director, and congratulations to her and her cast Joan Gouge, Frank Kennedy, Mary Priebe, Teena Danshin, and Mike Bloxham.

"The Actors Nightmare" with another first time director, June Ainsworth, was very well received by the audience. It is a bewildering and hilarious set of scenes that an innocent accountant is thrust upon and expected to act, but can never quite keep up with his lines or even what play he is in. A fast paced satire of theatre, with a darker undertone of lifes anxieties common to all of us. Again congratulations. Dennis Szalai was chosen as Best Actor, Shawn Jones won as Best Supporting Actor. This play was also recommend, by Mr. Krich, to go to the finals festival as scene development play, which would be worked through by professional theatre people and then reformed. Others in the cast

were Marion Truscott, Joanne Kirschner and Lily Pagdilao.

Portage Players from Hudson's Hope presented "Voices" directed by Patricia Markin. No connection to or resemblance of "Voices" done by Stage North. This is a play which five women explore the experience of womanhood thorough the lives finally intertwine into a common tapestry of what it is to be a woman today.

This play won Best Costume, Patricia Markin won Best Director and they also won Best Production. This gives them the opportunity of performing with nine other zone winners at the 1988 Theatre Finals Festival being held in Victoria, May 29 to June 04. The winner of the Finals Festival will then have the chance to perform in Halifax with other invited performers from Canada, the U.S.A and Mexico. Others in the play included Shelagh Germyn, Anita McWilliams, Bonnie Townsend, and Marion Williamson.

Also performed at the festival was "Cowboys 2." An excellent production by South Peace Senior Secondary School. It has already won the High School Drama Festival and will travel to Kimberly in May for their finals. Frank Hollman and Ward Washington were wonderful as two cowboys switching time zones at the wink of an eye portraying different points of view on progress.

Submitted by
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