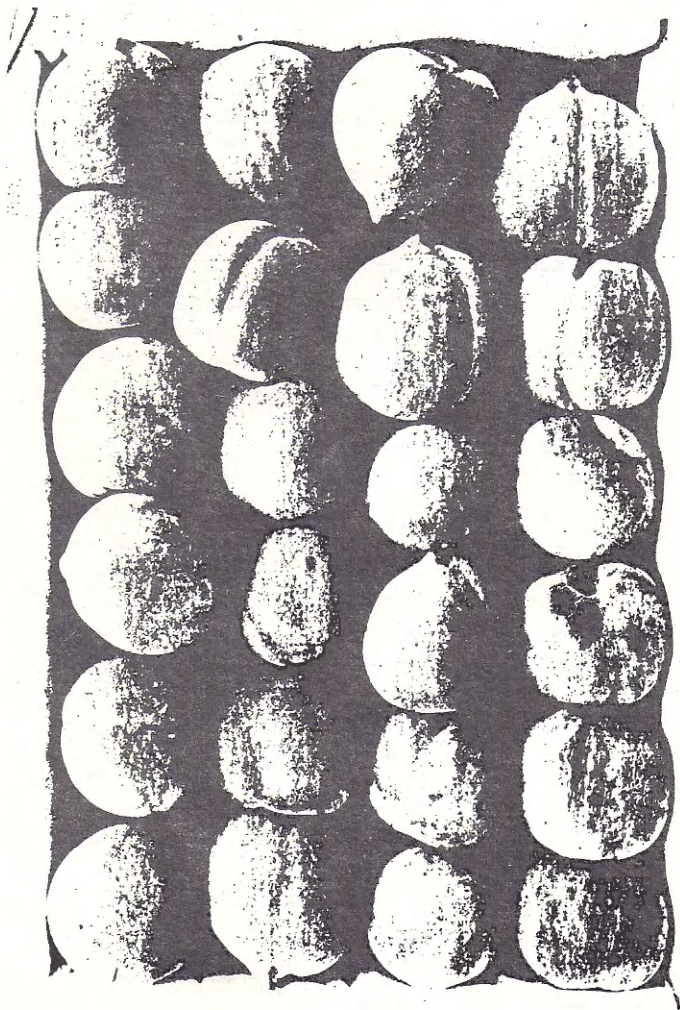


The British Première of

SISTERS

by MICHEL TREMBLAY



THE QUESTORS THEATRE COMPANY



THE QUESTORS THEATRE COMPANY

First performance February 16th 1982

In the history of Quebec theatre, four dates stand out as most significant: 1862, 1948, 1957 and 1968.

1862, Louis Fréchette, a young playwright 23 years of age, presented *Félix Poutré*, an adventure that starts out as drama, but becomes a farce. It is the story of a young patriot during the rebellion of 1837-38. To escape hanging, Félix Poutré feigns madness and eventually regains his freedom. It is the story of one little French-Canadian who tries to break the English domination but who, in the end, decides to play the fool rather than risk his neck.

1948, *Tit-Coq* by Gratien Gélinas was presented for the first time. An illegitimate son, poor and uneducated, falls in love with a young girl and dreams of setting up a home with her. Called up for service overseas in a war into which the English Canadians have drawn him, he returns to find that his fiancée has married someone else. Shocked, he wants to convince her to leave her husband and follow him, but in the end he gives up the idea under the padre's influence and under social pressures.

1957, *Un simple soldat* by Marcel Dubé was presented on the French television network of the CBC. Joseph Latour, a volunteer in a world war wherein he will not even be called upon to fight, finds himself completely at loose ends when armistice is declared. After various fruitless attempts to find work and fit in with an unwelcoming society, this unloved and unloving person goes to seek adventure in another war. He dies somewhere in Korea.

The similarity between the themes of these three plays is striking. There is the soldier, the army, the dominating English presence; there is the difficulty in living in a situation that is imposed and not chosen. There is also the fruitless revolt against oppressive forces, whether these be war, religion or family. As well, there is, to varying degrees, the destruction of the 'hero', either by his own death or by the death of his dreams.

Lastly, these plays are set in a world strongly dominated by men; women are absent or are relegated to the traditional roles imposed on them by society.

1968, *Les Belles-Soeurs* (Sisters).

SISTERS

by

MICHEL TREMBLAY

Characters in order of appearance

LINDA LAUZON CECILY BLYTHER
GERMAINE LAUZON SUZANNE GREGERSON
MARIE-ANGE BROUILLETTE SANDRA HEALY
ROSE OUMET RUTH LISTER
GABRIELLE JODOIN JENNY HICKS
YVETTE LONGPRÉ CATHERINE WALLACE
LISETTE DE COURVAL KAY SCRIVENER
DES-NEIGES VERRETTE SHEILA TIFFANY
OLIVINE DUBUC JEAN CALEB
THÉRÈSE DUBAC JUDITH ROSSER
LISE PAQUETTE MARGARET HALBERSTADT
GINETTE MÉNARD ROSEMARY PARRY-JONES
ANGÉLINE SAUVÉ JO ARUNDEL
RHÉAUNA BIBEAU MAGGIE DAVIDSON
PIERRETTE GUÉRIN CAROL METCALFE

Designed and directed by SPENCER BUTLER

Original music composed and played by MICHEAL CARVER

The play, which is in two acts, is set in the kitchen of Madame Germaine Lauzon, East Montreal, Canada.

It is early on a summer evening, 1968.

THERE WILL BE ONE INTERVAL OF 15 MINUTES

Stage Manager : Doug Arundel
Deputy Stage Manager : Crusty Grierson
Assistant Stage Managers : Angela Taylor
Stephanie Clayton
Anne O'Brien
Jackie Todd
Wardrobe : Diana Lloyd
Properties : Lisa Lawrence-Jones
Construction : Colin Horne
assisted by : Neville Gillett
Gordon Miller
Sound and Lighting : Alan N. Smith
Lighting Assistant : Simon Taylor
Sound Assistant : Sue Crowson
Assistants in all departments : Bob Charles
Keith Taylor
Show printing : Steve Shedlock
Sally Howe



Now you have seen the show, would you not like to talk about it?
Or listen to others talk about it? Or hear the views of the director
and the actors?

Then come along to the

OPEN DISCUSSION

which will be held on **TUESDAY, 23rd FEBRUARY, at 7.45 p.m.**
in the **BERNARD SHAW ROOM.**

It will be led by Canadian-born

JOAN MILLER

who started her long and distinguished career as an actress in
Vancouver. 'Discovered' by J.T. Grein, she quickly made her name
in the British theatre, most notably in the famous production of
Pick-up Girl, directed by her husband, Peter Cotes, in 1946. Since
then she has played the widest range of modern and classical roles,
including a successful season at Stratford. She will bring a wealth
of theatre experience to the task of leading the Discussion.

Come, on

TUESDAY, 23rd FEBRUARY, at 7.45 p.m.
in the BERNARD SHAW ROOM

All are welcome

Admission is free

MICHEL TREMBLAY

Michel Tremblay was born on June 25, 1942, on Fabre Street in a working-class district of East Montreal. Thirteen people, in three families, lived in seven rooms. This was not a very favourable setting for the growth and development of those who had to live there. Michel Tremblay said later: 'One or two managed to break away. The others are handicapped for life, and some are now wasting away in prison or the asylum'.

In 1968, the Théâtre du Rideau Vert presented *Les Belles-Soeurs* for the first time, under André Brassard's direction. The play was a resounding success. Michel Tremblay was twenty-six years old.

In 1971, Tremblay obtained a Canada Council grant. He intended to spend a year in France, but returned to Canada after a few months.

In 1972, the Quebec Minister of Cultural Affairs refused to grant a subsidy for the presentation of *Les Belles-Soeurs* in Paris, feeling that the play did not give a good enough picture of Quebec. But in November 1973, with the assistance of the Department of External Affairs of Canada, and the Compagnie des deux chaises which agreed to produce the play, although it proved to be a financial loss *Les Belles-Soeurs* (Sisters) was presented in Paris with a success which was a vindication for its author. The play was recognised in Paris as the best foreign play of the year.



In the West Foyer there is a display of photographs of other plays directed by Spencer Butler at The Questors.

COMING UP IN THE THEATRE

6–13 March

HEDDA GABLER

by Henrik Ibsen

Ibsen is a master of suspense and strong narrative and in Hedda he has created one of the immortal characters of world drama.

27 March – 3 April

EQUUS

by Peter Shaffer

From the fact that an act was committed by a highly disturbed young man Shaffer has written a play of stunning theatricality. Young children may find this play disturbing.

17–24 April

THE CRIMSON ISLAND

by Mikhail Bulgakov

A classic farce by the author of one of the most popular plays ever staged by the Moscow Arts Theatre. A theatrical company has to stage for the Censor an unrehearsed performance of an adventure story on a South Sea Island.

AND IN THE STUDIO

23 February – 6 March (not 1 March)

Second Year Student Group present an hilarious programme on the theme of weddings and sex, as seen by Aristophanes, Brecht and Chekhov.

6–8 May

Bradford Playhouse

in

THE KNACK

by Ann Jellicoe

Have *you* got 'the knack'?
