

The death of Thomas Becket

Nornic play recreates 800-year old murder

By CHRIS AAGAARD
Herald Staff Writer
T.S. Eliot's venture into drama never had the impact on modern literature his poetry did, but his "Murder in the Cathedral", written in 1935, nevertheless keeps its viewers entranced in some weighty drama.

And Georgetown's Nornic Studio is bringing its own production of the play documenting the assassination of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury in 1170, to Knox Presbyterian church for a three-night run starting this Friday. Nornic enjoyed full-house performances of the play at Brampton's Emmanuel United Church last weekend, and despite the public's general preference for lighter material, they hope to get an equally enthusiastic response from Georgetown patrons.

The play was highly acclaimed in England when Eliot first introduced it at the Canterbury Festival in 1935. Critics were pleased with the way it brought back some of the dramatic fundamentals of modern western theatre-ritual use of the church as a stage and the re-introduction of poetry as medium for drama.

On his return to England after seven years of exile from the court of friend and master Henry II, Becket (played by Glen Tarlin) wrestles with the ongoing problem of asserting himself as head of the church over Henry's own claim.

EVERYMAN
Mr. Tarlin convincingly plays the role of the "Everyman" figure facing the temptation to solve his problems by overthrowing the king, fighting off his doubts about his own

Knox Church presents
Nornic Studio's
'MURDER IN THE CATHEDRAL'
this Fri., Sat., Sun.

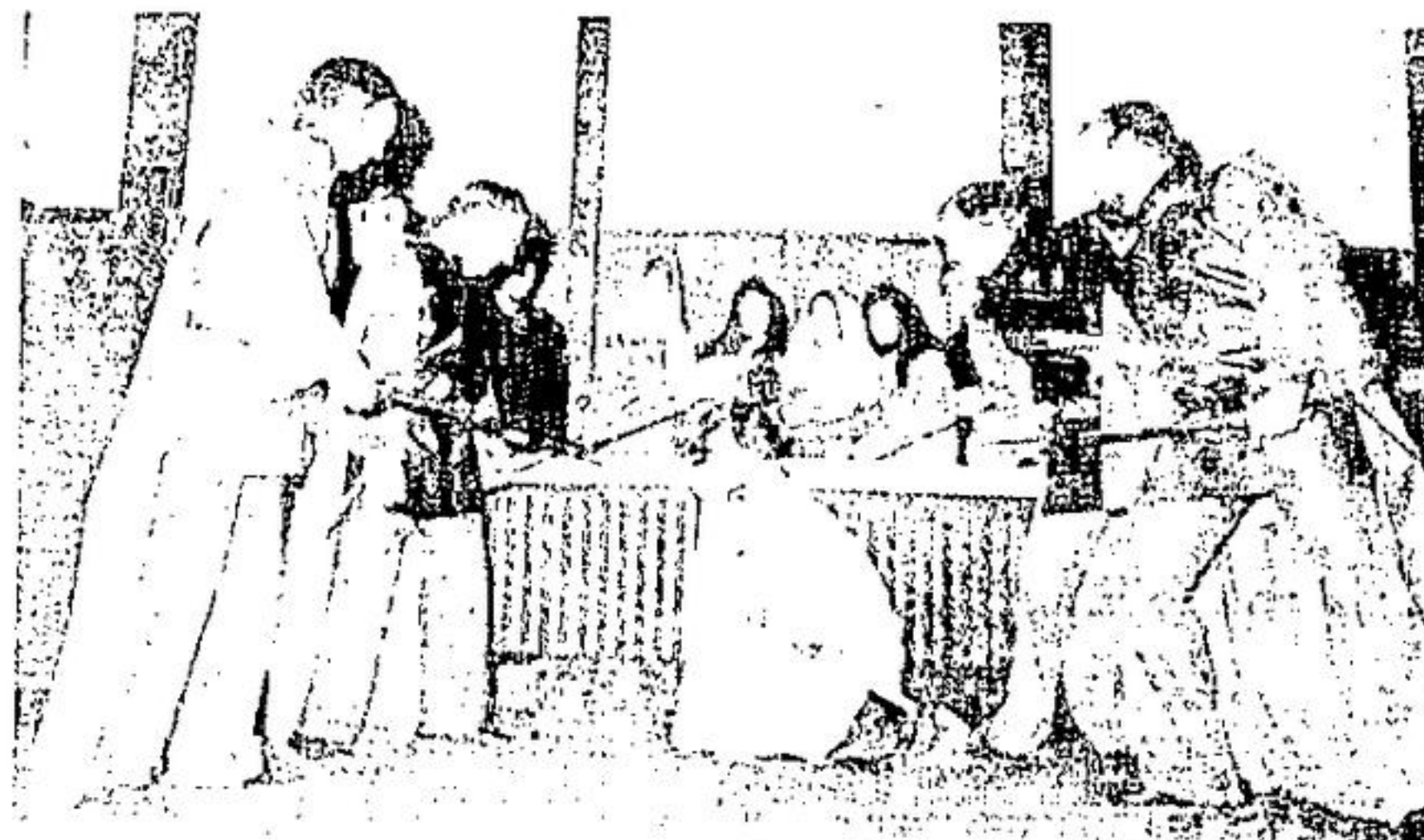
ability to handle the Archbishop's job, and weighing the pros and cons of dying a martyr in order to draw attention to his cause and set the church as the true head of ecclesiastical affairs in England.

Whether waiting at his own dilemma or braying at his four drunken assassins, Mr. Tarlin handles his lines remarkably well, unhindered by Eliot's heavy alliteration and jagged verse at some points. Becket's two priestly advisors, played by John Day and Knox Presbyterian minister Peter Barrow, rarely offer Becket concrete advice to soothe his aching conscience. Neither role is meant to carry much personality, but they are playing priests and their acting is intentionally ritualistic. Neil Williams, playing a messenger, has a similar, functional role.

Like the witches in Shakespeare's Macbeth, Eliot's four hags covering about the church, quaking with cold, set the tragic and ghostly mood of the play and function as a chorus to the audience's own dismal predictions about the outcome of Becket's fate.

BARREN SOULS
Vera MacDonald, Sue Dunning, Florence O'Connor and Paul Joyner, effectively portray the hags as barren, destitute souls who fear, spiritually and mortally the abuse the church has faced and will face in the near future as Becket is rapidly drawn to his martyrdom.

The four knights who set forth from France to dispatch Becket after hearing Henry complain of a "nuisance" are rowdily and villainously played by Bev Nicholas, Wally Baerg, Derek Joyner and Ashley Windsor. They have



Nornic Studios Productions will be bringing T.S. Eliot's "Murder in the Cathedral" to Knox Presbyterian Church in Georgetown this weekend for a three day run. Documenting the soul searching Thomas Becket goes through prior to his martyrdom in England's Canterbury cathedral after in 1170, the play's performance inside a church adds a powerful touch of realism not often achieved on normal theatrical stages. Here members of the cast gather around the mortally wounded Beckett as he is berated by his four knightly assassins. (Herald photo)

enough character - faintly comedic - to enrage the audience in a discussion (while Becket lies bleeding) arguing the merits and rationale behind his murder on the Canterbury altar.

The play is, especially effective acted in the confines of church. Western European drama can trace its roots to ancient Christian liturgy and "Murder in the Cathedral" draws heavily on its setting for impact.

USENAVE
Nornic makes complete use of the nave, at one point sandwiching the audience in drama as Becket, standing on the altar, orders the doors

unbarred to his assassins beating away at the other end of the congregation. The stark lighting and simple ornaments around the altar (except for costuming, there were no props) help create an impression of Canterbury's bleak confines, where the murder took place on Christmas day 800 years ago.

The one and a half hour production keeps the audience locked into the course of events unfolding on stage. Becket, the hags and the knights frequently refer to the audience, warning us or explaining their reasoning, and it's impossible to withdraw and watch the play from any isolated distance.

The play will open Friday night at Knox Presbyterian Church and runs until Sunday night. Tickets will be on sale at the door for \$3 with all proceeds going back into the church. Children will be cared for in the basement and coffee will be served during intermission.

This Week:
MURDER IN THE CATHEDRAL

Knox Church Georgetown

November 14-15-16
7:30 p.m.

TICKETS:
Konnors, Downtown
Dolrex Smoke Shop

Admission: \$3.00 at door

Cable TV listings

5:30	Wed. Nov. 12	Commerce
6:00	The Bible's View	8:35 Sign-Off
6:30	Barry Coe - United	Thurs. Nov. 13
Appeal in Halton		OT Foot Race
6:30	Storytime with Erica	7:00 Vera MacDonald "The
6:50	TBA	Avro Arrow" Part 1
7:00	Magazine: Vera	7:30 The Messiah
MacDonald with Cast of Li'l		8:30 Sign-Off
Abner		Fr. Nov. 14
7:30	Church Service	6:00 Operation Action:
CVCA		Jogging After Coronary
8:05	Chamber of	7:00 Chamber

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For Further Information Call:
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the HERALD
Entertainment

GALLERY HOUSE SOL'S
latest show reviewed
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Dogpatch in Brampton

Tonight is opening night for the Brampton Musical Society's production of "Li'l Abner", which will feature two Georgetown residents. Joe Delguidice and Terry Champ are among the people taking part in the show, which is being staged at the Lester B. Pearson Theatre at the Bramalea Civic Centre. Ticket information is available by calling the theatre box office.



Georgetown District High School's "Anne of Green Gables", portrayed by Brenda Archer, shares a romantic moment with sweetheart Gilbert Blythe (Ken Kuhl) during rehearsals last week for the musical - the school's first theatrical production of the year. Based on the famous novel by Elizabeth Maude Montgomery, who lived at one time in nearby Norval, the musical will be presented in the school's cafeteria Nov. 27 through 29. Tickets are now on sale. (GDHS photo)

Students busy with 'Gables' adaptation

The story of Anne of Green Gables will be brought to life on the Georgetown District High School stage this month.

Adapted by Don Harron from the popular novel by Lucy Maude Montgomery, the musical has been a perennial favorite at the Charlottetown Summer Festival. The novel itself is immensely popular, has been translated into 60 languages, and has three been adapted by Hollywood's movie-makers.

The play centres around Anne Shirley, an imaginative, high-spirited orphan, played at GDHS by Brenda Archer. She is adopted by Marilla Cuthbert (Becky Reid) and her shy, but sensitive brother, Matthew

HALTON HILLS ARTS COUNCIL

Finding volunteers

Need some publicity for an upcoming or ongoing arts-related project? Just call the Halton Hills Arts Council " hotline" at The Herald - 877-2201, and the newspaper's editorial staff will be happy to write about your events and activities in the Arts Council's weekly column.

The Halton Hills Arts Council General Meeting will be held at Centennial Public School next Wednesday (Nov. 19), 7:30 to 8 p.m. At 8, a workshop which is open to the public will feature Maude McLean, who will talk on the subject "Finding Volunteers". Mrs. McLean has had extensive involvement with this subject in her position as Regional Arts Consultant for Halton and from her background in working with the arts in Ontario. Refreshments will be served. Everyone welcome.



Idea Competition: People or organizations with unusual or innovative ideas, who require funding assistance should contact Explorations Program of the Canada Council, 235 Albert St., P.O. Box 1047, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5V7, or phone 1-613-237-3400. The next competition closes Dec. The competition is stiff. Applicants should write now for more details giving a brief description of their project and pertinent biographical information. To obtain funds, you must convince the Committee of the project's potential importance.

Camera is presenting a special "Romantic Christmas" at Casa Loma Dec. 14 at 7:30 p.m. For tickets, write Camera, 175 St. Clair Avenue West, Toronto, Ontario, M4V 1P7 or telephone 690-2965.

The major event of the year for Credit Valley Artisans, the annual Christmas Show and Craft Sale, is set for Nov. 22 this year, to be held again at the Cedarvale Park Cottage from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Along with a varied collection of paintings, weaving, stained glass, pottery and silk-screen, the Artisans' show will feature refreshments, a bake table and raffles - all for free admission.

The Georgetown Choral Society teams up with the Cantata Singers and the Toronto Youth Symphony for a series of concerts early next month. Tickets are now on sale locally for the Dec. 6 evening concert at Knox Presbyterian Church in Georgetown, which begins at 7 p.m. The Society and its company then travel to Milton's Holy Rosary Church for an afternoon and an evening concert the following day. Stay tuned to The Herald for more information.

Terra Colta's Forge Studio Gallery will close its yearly season with an annual Christmas Collection Nov. 16 to Dec. 21. Many of the featured artists will be on hand at the gallery this Sunday for the show's opening, along with Forge co-owners Jo Watterson and Agnes Olive. The Forge is located two doors east of Terra Colta Inn and is open Saturdays, Sundays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays noon to 5 p.m. Special viewings can be arranged by calling 877-5872 or 877-1392.

An exhibition and sale of leather jewelry will be held at the Georgetown Public Library Nov. 20 and 21. Artist Dorothy Bradford will be displaying her work during regular library hours at the library's temporary quarters in Guelphview Square.

The Palette and Pencil Club will be holding an exhibition and sale entitled Art in the library Nov. 24 to 29. The display will be on view during regular hours at Georgetown Public Library.

Pre-registration is required for a workshop for teens called Christmas Candy Gifts. There is a limit of 12 people between the ages of 13 and 15 for the workshop and a fee of \$1 will be charged.

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