

Canada's Maureen Forrester performs here April 8

World's top conductors are her fans

Herald Special
No doubt about it, Maureen Forrester - the radiant Canadian contralto - is the runaway favorite of symphony orchestra conductors throughout the world today. She has been engaged by practically every major conductor on six continents and has become one of the singers most in demand for solo orchestral appearances.

From the very beginning of her public career, conductors have recognized in Miss Forrester not only the beautiful voice with the volume to soar above the strongest orchestral tutti, but also the innate musicianship and interpretive understanding to bring to life the great works written for vocal soloist and symphony orchestra. Even before she had these masterworks in her repertoire, she was being engaged to perform them. This was the case with her first orchestral engagement. The late Otto Klemperer was preparing to present Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with the Montreal Symphony. Word had reached him of the stir created by a young contralto in a church perform-



MAUREEN FORRESTER

ance of Mendelssohn's "Elijah" in Montreal, so he summoned Miss Forrester to New York to audition for him. "Have you ever sung the Ninth Symphony?" the eminent conductor demanded when she appeared in his studio.

"No," replied the young singer, reaching for her hat and turning toward the door. "Well, it goes this way," said the Maestro, and in what can most kindly be described as a conductor's voice, he sang the contralto part for her.

"Now you sing it," Miss Forrester did, and she got the job. It was her first, big prestige engagement and it started her off on her rapid rise to fame.

Every singer would give a year of her life for the privilege of singing with the great Bruno Walter. Miss Forrester even offered to drop dead, but

it was singing a few bars of Schubert lied that won her the signal honor of making her United States orchestral debut with the New York Philharmonic twenty years ago, under this almost legendary conductor.

Word of the young contralto's extraordinary talents had reached Dr. Walter from Canada, so he called her to invite her to come to New York to sing for him. Because of Miss Forrester's crowded schedule, there was difficulty in arranging a meeting. "You are obviously much busier than I am," commented Dr. Walter over the long distance telephone, "You set the date."

When the audition finally did take place, the Maestro admitted that he made his decision after hearing her sing only a few phrases, but he was enjoying their music-making so much that he continued to play the piano while she sang through a number of works, including the whole of Brahms' "Alto Rhapsody". Finally Dr. Walter enquired in an offhand manner, "What are your plans for next February?"

"I'll be in Morocco," replied Miss Forrester, an extensive tour of Europe and North Africa having been set up for her. "Das tut mir leid," said the conductor. "Too bad. I'd like to have you for my farewell

appearance with the Philharmonic."

"Oh, Dr. Walter," burst out Miss Forrester, "for you I'd not only drop Morocco, I'd drop dead!"

"Well, then, that's settled," replied the conductor. "Now let's make some more music. Ich habe noch Durst - I'm still thirsty."

Morocco has had to continue to wait to hear Maureen Forrester, but all of North America, Europe, Russia, Australia, New Zealand, Japan and Israel has since

heard and applauded this brilliant and lovely artist from Canada. And the conductors continue to vie for her services. In addition to Walter and Klemperer, the list of the distinguished conductors who have engaged her now includes such eminent names as Herbert von Karajan, Eugene Ormandy, Bernard Haitink, Charles Munch, George Szell, Leopold Stokowski, Sir Thomas Beecham, Hermann Scherchen, Sir Ernest MacMillan, Edouard van Beinum, Sir John Barbirolli,

Igor Markevitch, Fritz Reiner, William Steinberg, Paul Paray, Josef Krips, Zubin Mehta, Seiji Ozawa, and a host of others.

Maureen Forrester will present the full range of her talent in an intimate recital of songs when she appears at Holy Cross Church, Maple Avenue, Georgetown Wednesday, April 8, at 8 p.m. Tickets are available at the door for \$10-adult and \$8-senior citizen or student. You will not want to miss this final concert in the 1980-81 Trillight Series.

HALTON HILLS ELKS LODGE BINGO EVERY MONDAY 61 Numbers

Town has love affair with Alan Ayckbourn

Herald Special
Dictionary definitions of "comedy" and "laughter" tend to be somewhat stringent - reducing the activity and the desired reaction to drab descriptions. But ask anyone in Halton Hills what kind of play Georgetown Little Theatre should perform and the answer is invariably: "A comedy - something to give us a good laugh."

Over the years, GLT has done just that, usually opening its season with a rib-tickler designed to whet its patrons' appetite. Similarly, as if to underline there's always a new season in the offing, the group has closed with a side-splitter which has more than once "left 'em rolling in the aisles".

This season's final show is no exception. "Bedroom Farce" will be the third Alan Ayckbourn comedy to be performed by GLT in the last five years. A Herald review of "How the Other Half Loves" in October, 1976, suggested that "Georgetown Little Theatre will have to go some to top their first production of the season..."

Gales of laughter all through the performance... testified to the wit of author Alan Ayckbourn, the timing of director Ron Hunt, and the polished performance by the cast. Adding to the audience's entertainment is the author's skilful staging - the three bedrooms being presented simultaneously with the action flowing from one to the other to its hilarious conclusion.

"Bedroom Farce" opens at Sacre Coeur Hall April 24 with other performances April 25, 30 and May 1 and 2. Based on the runaway success of the group's most recent production of "Count Dracula", those looking for "a good laugh" should obtain their tickets now to avoid disappointment. Tickets are now available from all the outlets and from Greta Lee at the GLT Box Office (877-5407).

bedrooms when the lives of the occupants of each are invaded by a bithely inconsiderate young couple in the midst of a marital spat. Adding to the audience's entertainment is the author's skilful staging - the three bedrooms being presented simultaneously with the action flowing from one to the other to its hilarious conclusion.

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(Herald photo)

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