

Entertainment Outlook

Director wants Port Dover as musical-theatre hub



By BOB SPENCE
Thomson News

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Simon Johnston, a theatre director/writer, feels there are only two important music-theatres in Canada - Charlottetown and Muskoka.

He wants to add another. Johnston, recently appointed as artistic director of the Lighthouse Theatre in Port Dover, Ont., wants to see Lighthouse become a theatre that develops new musical works.

Musical productions staged by Charlottetown and Muskoka are too large to transport elsewhere, he said.

"We could exert an influence on most of the province, or even the country, if we could develop smaller musicals," at Lighthouse.

He wants to emphasize "music-theatre", not necessarily musicals, but plays with music in them.

Johnston, who has directed productions at half a dozen theatres in Ontario, is preparing the playbill for Lighthouse's 1988 season. The tentative playbill includes three musicals or plays featuring music.

If you are going to be anywhere near Calgary early next year, or in Ottawa during the summer or fall, pop into a museum.

Make sure you pick the right museum.

The Spirit Sings, an impressive exhibition of Indian and Inuit art objects, opens at the Glenbow Museum in Calgary on Jan. 15.

There are more than 600 exhibits, many on loan from museums and

private collectors in more than 20 nations.

Some of the artifacts were produced by Inuits and Indians around the time of their first encounters with Europeans.

The exhibition is at the Glenbow Museum until May 1. Then it moves to the Museum of Civilization in Ottawa, from July 1 to Nov. 6.

McClelland and Stewart and the Glenbow Museum just published a book to commemorate the exhibit: The Spirit Sings: Artistic Traditions of Canada's First People. It includes more than 250 photographs, as well as historical and aesthetic commentary on the artifacts by all seven of the show's curators.

Karen Kain, the Merry Widow, will be dancing on the lips of her toes Sunday (Dec. 27).

CBC-TV airs the National Ballet of Canada's sumptuous production of The Merry Widow at 8 p.m.

A trio of elephant lovers who have been charming Canadian children for years are now collecting hordes of tiny fans in the U.S.

Sharon, Lois and Bram, whose weekly program - The Elephant Show - is the CBC's top-rated children's afternoon program, are stirring up a lot of interest south of the border.

Nickelodeon, the children's cable network with 35 million U.S. subscribers, picked up The Elephant Show in the fall and is using it as the headliner on its pre-school schedule.

Children are not the only people who like Sharon (Hampson), Lois (Lillenstein) and Bram (Morrison).

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