

# 'Aspects of Love' production a memorable experience

By JOHN SOMMER  
Ideas and the Arts

In 1955, "Aspects of Love", a novel by David Garnett, was published and became one of the minor masterworks of 20th Century literature.

Unfortunately, very few read it today.

From this serio-comic novel Andrew Lloyd Webber has fashioned his latest musical. The result is not quite a musical, but rather a chamber opera, and it differs from the creations we associate with the Webber trademark, namely "Evita", "Cats" and "The Phantom of the Opera", to mention a few.

As a composer, Webber is rarely subtle. His offerings have a raw and pounding energy, but the music behind these production numbers is often trite and emotionally obvious.

For "Aspects of Love", however, he has composed a score of great charm and musical finesse. At times, during the performance of "Aspects of Love", I was reminded of Stephen Sondheim, which is praise, since Sondheim is the most accomplished American composer for the musical stage.

Robin Phillips' direction of "Aspects of Love" is magical. The musical begins and ends with the funeral of George Dillingham, a wealthy and cultured

English aristocrat. In between, Alex Dillingham, his nephew, recalls the 17 years during which his life was intimately interwoven with that of his uncle. First, because of a tempestuous actress they both loved, and later because of Jenny, the young daughter of their former mistress for whom Alex develops a romantic longing.

David Garnett's novel is an autobiography in disguise.

He wrote it in old age, after many years had mellowed the memory of his youth. As a young man he encountered the men and women of the now famous "Bloomsbury Group" (Vanessa Bell, Duncan Grant, Roger Fry, Leonard and Virginia Woolf, Maynard Keynes and others) and married Angelica Bell, the daughter of Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant, and the "Jenny" of "Aspects of Love".

The men and women of the "Bloomsbury Group" tried to pioneer a new way of living that has become trivialized now, but was revolutionary in the years just before and after World War I.

At the centre of their philosophy was love in all its many manifestations, tempered by reason. They hoped to banish jealousy and intolerance, but found out instead, as all do who experiment with love, that love's



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companions are pain and regret.

Robin Phillips' masterly Toronto production moves in a seamless stream of nostalgic recollection.

I have seen many other theatrical events directed by this great director, but this one seems to me to be the one that conveys his vision most perfectly. The production has a mesmerizing cinematic fluidity, and the acting and singing and dancing has been polished to a high sheen.

I don't think that "Aspects of Love" will gain the vast popularity of Andrew Lloyd Webber's other works, but it might be the one that will last and be remembered when the others are forgotten.

The Elgin Theatre, in which "Aspects of Love" is performed, has been restored to its former Edwardian splendour and is by itself worth a visit.

The Kitchener artist Edward Schleimer came to my attention back in 1975, when he had an exhibition at Rebecca Sisler's gallery in Toronto. I have followed his artistic development ever since.

Robert Freeman, the director of the City of Stratford's community museum "The Gallery/Stratford", has put together an exhibition of Edward Schleimer's latest large woodcuts, called "The Genus Cuts", for Stratford, where it has been on view from November 1 to December 15, 1991.

This exhibition was offered to Georgetown for further exhibition and "The Friends of the Halton Hills Libraries" decided to sponsor it. The exhibition will

open at the Gallery of the Halton Hills Cultural Centre in Georgetown, on Wednesday, January 8, 1992, between 7 and 9 p.m.

Mayor Russ Miller will open the exhibition at 7:30 p.m. on January 8, and Mr. Freeman, who grew up in Georgetown, will follow with a talk about the artist Edward Schleimer.

Mr. Schleimer will be present for the opening.

Edward Schleimer studied at the University of Guelph and later at the Ontario College of Art, from where he graduated in 1973. He is a painter and graphic artist of expressionistic force and spiritual fervor, and all the people who like art to be serious and challenging should not miss this opening.



## A bunch of loonies

Hallmark cards and gifts in Georgetown have had a tree in their store for the community to decorate with loonies and thanks to the community's generosity, Hallmark's soon-to-be manager Mary Bond (right) was able to donate \$150 to Linda Veltman (left) for the Love in Christ food bank and \$150 to Lioness Billie Idzi (centre) for Good Neighbors. The community also dropped off many toys which were also given to the organizations. (Herald Photo)

# Credit Valley Artisans have new slate of courses

The Credit Valley Artisans have a slate of 10 courses for the Winter 1992 period with the first starting on January 29, 1992. In addition to the perennial favorites...pottery for beginners, childrens pottery, childrens drawing and stained glass for beginners, there are some exciting new courses. The new offerings include a 10 week course in woodcarving for beginners, a one day workshop where the participants will make a pair of moccasins, and a workshop to get you started producing jewellery out of "friendly plastic".

For those who have long admired the beautiful illuminations seen in old family bibles and medieval manuscripts there is a

course being offered to show you how its done. There is an afternoon set aside to give you a new approach to drawing, if you are someone who struggles with drawing, and for those persons who can spin, have their own spinning wheel and want to advance their knowledge in this craft there is a course for you.

All of these courses will be run from the Cedarvale Cottage, Main Street and Maple Avenue, Georgetown. The courses have only a small number of participants to ensure close, individual attention. Registration to fill courses will be in the order that fees are paid (received). Since many of these courses fill quickly, it is suggested that you

register early and not wait until close to the time the course is scheduled to run.

The registrar will be at the Cedarvale Cottage for in-person registration on Saturday January 11, 1992 from 10:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon. Registration can also be made by mail to Credit Valley Artisans Box 162, Georgetown, Ontario L7G 4T1. Application forms and further details on the courses are available from the Libraries at Georgetown and Acton as well as the Halton Hills Parks and Recreation Department. The registrar-Frank J. Anthony may be contacted (after 6:00 p.m.) for inquiries only at (416) 877-5856.



## POWER presentation

Barbara Halsall, president of local environmental group Protect Our Water Environmental Resources (POWER), presented these Robert Bateman prints at the Halton Hills Cultural Centre in Georgetown to the winners of a recently held POWER-sponsored draw. (Pictured above left to right), Ms. Halsall, Ken Boyes of Rockwood, winner

of the print entitled "Edge of the Ice Ermine," and Eileen Mills, Georgetown, winner of the print entitled Peregrine Falcon on the Cliff. Acton resident Phillip Taaffe also won a Robert Bateman print, but he was unable to attend the presentation ceremony. (Herald Photo)

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