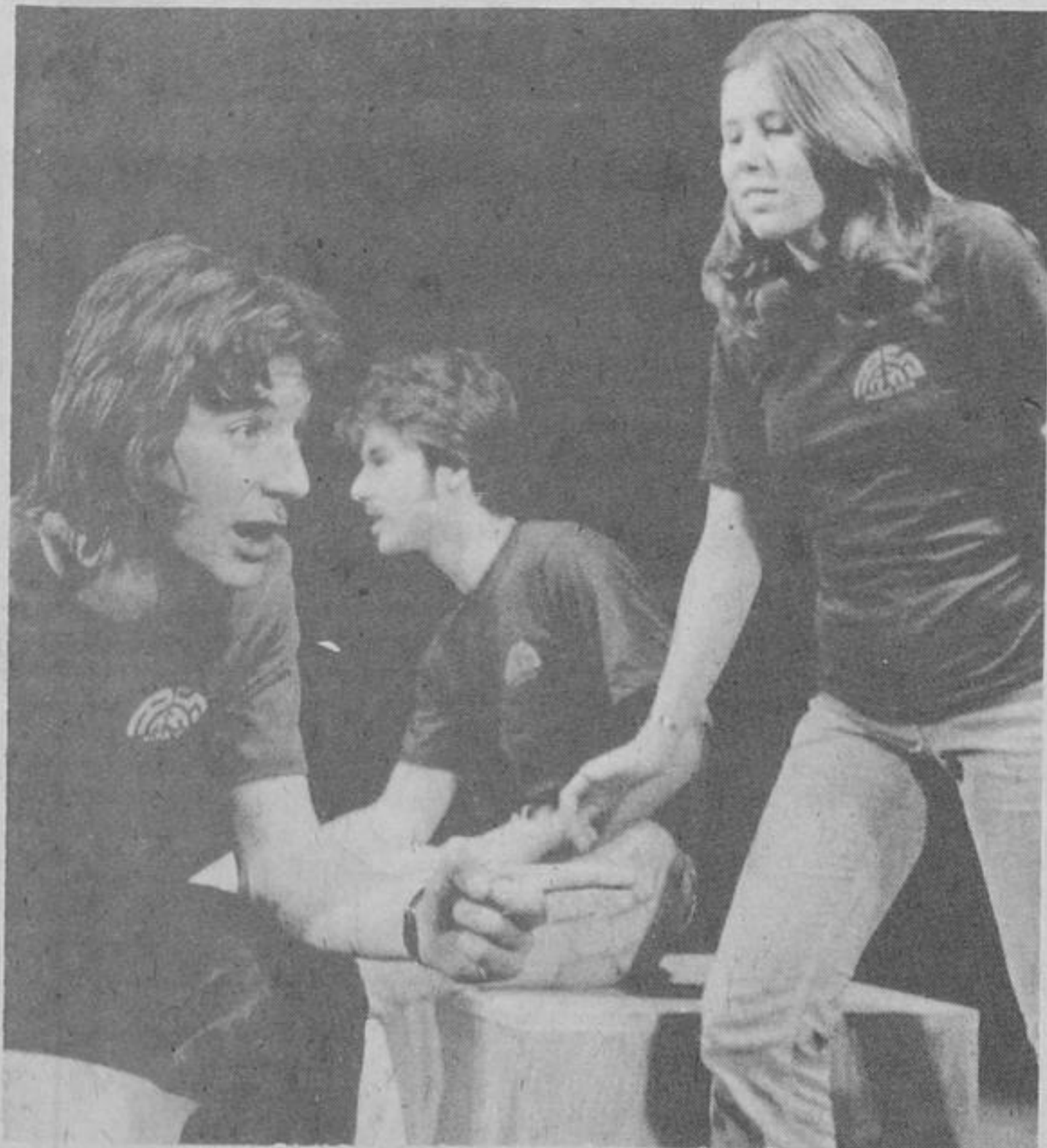


# Entertainment



(Photo by Hogg)

## Down on the "Animal Farm"

George Orwell's great satire, *Animal Farm*, is Richmond Hill High School Drama Club's 19th annual production, and will be staged at the collegiate April 21 to 24. Shown getting it into shape are three of the principals, left to right: Dom Caruso, Craig McCartney and Sandra Markham. Other cast members include Martha Buell, Laurie Hutchinson, Peter Kite and David Veitch. Directing is David Phillips, seen in the recent Curtain Club production of *Lion in Winter*. Assisting him is Debbie Smith.

## York Symphony saves very best for last

By Anne Wright

Was it just coincidence that York Symphony's director and conductor Clifford Poole chose for his concert last Friday two 18th century masterpieces which share the common distinction of having been composed with incredible speed? The concert was presented at MaryLake Shrine in King City. Most Messiah lovers know that Handel wrote his oratorio in 1742 in only 24 days — a remarkable feat of concentrated inspiration and genius. But Mozart's "Haffner" Symphony, No. 35 in D Major, while perhaps not quite so famous, is also a masterpiece, and was also written in only three weeks, and at a time when the composer was under severe emotional pressure.

The resulting six-movement *Serenade* presented to the Haffners was later revised to omit two movements and add flutes and clarinets to the first and final movements; whence it became known as the "Haffner" Symphony, which we heard on Friday night.

Painfully "off" Unfortunately, it was not comfortable to listen to. The orchestra was not in good form: timing and co-ordination were painfully "off", and the violins were positively out of tune. Perhaps the players were distressed by the huge, high-vaulted, intimidating church — a somewhat inappropriate setting for music intended for secular, social gatherings.

But they didn't fare much better in the *Messiah*, either. Furthermore, the choir of St. Anne's was so good that the players compared most unfavourably — that

is, apart from three notable exceptions. "All We Like Sheep", "He Trusted in God", and "Why Do the Nations So Furiously Rage Together?" were good, very good, and superb, respectively.

And it is precisely because the orchestra is capable of performing so much better that criticism seems justified. To return to the choir for a moment: the five soloists were Corinne Taylor, soprano; Joyce Clark, alto; Olwyn Chipman, mezzo; Robert Heard, tenor; and Douglas McEachen, bass. They were all good, but Joyce Clark particularly so. Her voice was mellow and smooth without being over rich. The words of "He Was Despised" came across with dignity and grace, thus complementing the music with soothing, integrated balance.

Impressive Another soloist who impressed me at the last concert was Kevin Gamble on the trumpet. Again, in "The Trumpet Shall Sound", apart from one slight catch, it was clear and mellifluous; a pleasure to hear.

The opening work has been left until the end for comment, for it deserves a special place; and it is hoped the last word will have the strongest impact.

Clifford Poole's own composition, an air for

solo violin and strings is gorgeous; played by Janice Bing-Wo, it took my breath away at last month's concert. So it was good to see it on the program again this time.

However, latecomers did the music and the artist a grave injustice by their noisy scuffling search for seats. Those who arrive after a concert has started should be required to stand quietly at the back until the piece has finished before taking their places. After all, this piece only lasted a very few minutes; it was a shame to spoil it.

If Janice Bing-Wo plays with the York Symphony again next season, there's a treat in store for us. She is an artist well worth watching.

## "Live, live"

"The experience of a lifetime" is what the CBC calls it. And "it" is the taping of a pilot quiz show, which will be done live before an audience at Richmond Hill Curtain Club, April 15 at 8 p.m.

So if you'd like to see such notables as Rod Coneybeare, Murray Soupeoff, Dubarry Campeau, David Scott-Atkinson, Carol Comisso, Ted Roberts and Kidare Dobbs, then just call Margot Crack at the CBC, 925-3311, local 2003.

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## Successful debut for concert unit

WILLOWDALE — The debut of York Philharmonic Orchestra and York Philharmonic Choir as a concert unit, was well received when they appeared recently at St. Gabriel's Church here, directed by Edward F. Luka.

The choir is well known throughout the district for its many fine performances over the years, while the orchestra

was formed last September.

It accompanied the choir in their performance of Handel's *Messiah* in December and played the major part at the Willowdale concert.

Included in the program were the Overture to the comic opera, *The Italian Woman in Algiers*, by Rossini; Schumann's *Third Symphony in E flat*; and the Choral *Fantasia* by Beethoven, which brought orchestra, choir and piano solist together.

The latter was Derrick Lewis, 19, who was reported as giving a masterful performance. Equally notable was flautist, Sandra Bowkun, in the *Third Symphony*, who performed with "maturity of style and sensitive interpretation".

The trombones, french horns and trumpets produced "some of the lushest sounds" of the evening in this one.

The six soloists also gave excellent performances. They were, John Allin, Brenda Luka, Monica Vermeulen, Jeannette Mowat, Douglas Lamb and Erwin Powrie.



Monica Vermeulen  
...very oriental

## Katisha

If this member of The Mikado, performed recently in Brampton by the Abbey Players, has a somewhat familiar look, it's not surprising. Underneath that makeup and Japanese hard is York Philharmonic Choir president, Monica Vermeulen of Richmond Hill, stepping in front of the footlights this time.

## Markham Theatre, too

# Curtain Club scores

TORONTO — Richmond Hill Curtain Club received official endorsement of the high

best director award. Their play, "No Sex, Please, We're British," was nominated for the best play.

The winner in that category was Oshawa Little Theatre, with "Streetcar Named Desire."

In the Richmond Hill production, best actress Gibbs, was a last-minute replacement for Audrey Rowlands, who was to



Vivienne Gibbs  
...best actress

calibre of its productions over the years when it was presented with two major awards and received five honorable mentions at the Central Ontario Drama Festival dinner Saturday night at the Royal York Hotel.

The two chief awards, which were presented for the club's entry, "The Lion in Winter," were for best actress, Vivienne Gibbs, and best visual presentation.

The honorable mentions were for production, lighting, best actor, Clive Rylands; best director, Ron Scott; and best play,

23 entrants. The *Lion in Winter* was presented by the Curtain Club in February, when it was also adjudicated by Edward Proconier of the University of Western Ontario, one of 23 plays from 18 groups across the province so adjudicated.

Close to home, too, was the best actor award, which went to John Kozak of Markham Little Theatre, whose director, John Storey, also took the



Gerry Crack  
...construction



Clive Rylands  
...best actor

have originally played the part. However, an illness in her family necessitated her return to England.

It was the second time in five years that Mrs. Gibbs, who is with the Scarborough Theatre Guild, won the award, and for the same role.

The set for the Hill entry was designed by Michael Matyas and director Scott, and put together by a construction crew headed by Gerry Crack.



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