

University of British Columbia

## Frederic Wood Theatre Presents

# Look Back In Anger By John Osborne

Directed by Stanley Weese

# September 19-29 1984

University of British Columbia FREDERIC WOOD THEATRE 1984/85 Season

> Look Back in Anger by John Osborne Directed by Stanley Weese (September 19-29)

Twelfth Night By William Shakespeare Directed by Pamela Hawthorne (November 7-17)

The Imaginary Invalid By Moliere Directed by Mavor Moore (January 16-26)

Happy End Music by Kurt Weill Lyrics by Bertolt Brecht Directed by Arne Zazlove (March 6-16) For information and reservations phone 228-2678

> FWT Program Magazine

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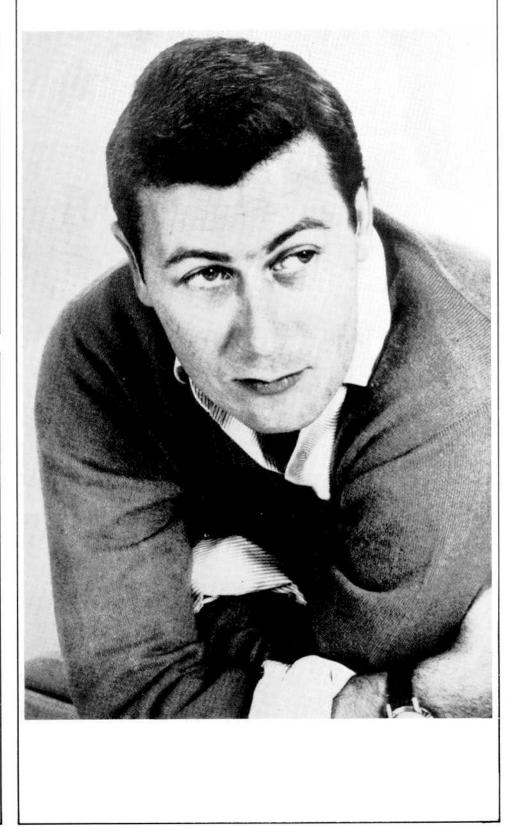
Richard Marchak

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Any comments or enquiries regarding the contents of this publication may be forwarded to the publisher at the above address.



# John Osborne



# A Brief Chronology

- 1929 12th December. Born in a suburb of London, of "impoverished middle-class" parents. His father was Thomas Godfrey Osborne, a commercial artist and copy-writer, and his mother was Nellie Beatrice, born Grove, a barmaid.
- 1941 Death of his father. Spent much of the war with his mother in London, but was eventually sent to Belmont College, Devon–a "rather cheap boarding school in the west of England", where he was "unhappy for most of the time".
- 1946 Left school, and had his first play produced: he now describes it as "terrible". Worked as a journalist for a few months on trade magazines—*Gas World* and *The Miller*—as "a sort of dogsbody and sub-editor".
- 1948 "Drifted" on to the stage, as tutor to juvenile actors in a touring group. He himself acted for the first time at the Empire Theatre, Sheffield, in March, as Mr. Burrells in Joan Temple's *No Room at the Inn*. Later became an actormanager, running repertory seasons at Sidmouth, Ilfracombe, and various seaside resorts.
- 1955 Personal Enemy, written in collaboration with Anthony Creighton, staged at Harrogate. Apart from Epitaph for George Dillon, on which he also collaborated with Anthony Creighton, Osborne wrote two other plays, so far unperformed, before Look Back in Anger. He worked on this during a spell of unemployment, submitted it to the newly-formed English Stage Company, and had his script accepted within two weeks.
- 1956 April. Joined the English Stage Company as an actor. 8th May. First performance of Look Back in Anger. 15th May. Made his first appearance as an actor on the London Stage, as Antonio in Don Juan and Lionel in The Death of Satan, at the Royal Court. Appeared in the same theatre in Cards of Identity in June, and as Lin To in The Good Woman of Setzuan in October. Evening Standard Award as Most Promising Playwright of the Year.
- 1957 10th April. First performance of The Entertainer.
- 1961 London production of *Luther*, which also visited theatre festivals in Paris, Holland and Edinburgh.
- 1964 London production of Inadmissable Evidence opened in September.
- 1966 London production of A Bond Honoured at the National Theatre.
- 1968 First London productions of Time Present and The Hotel in Amsterdam.
- 1973 A Sense of Detachment
- 1981 An Autobiography

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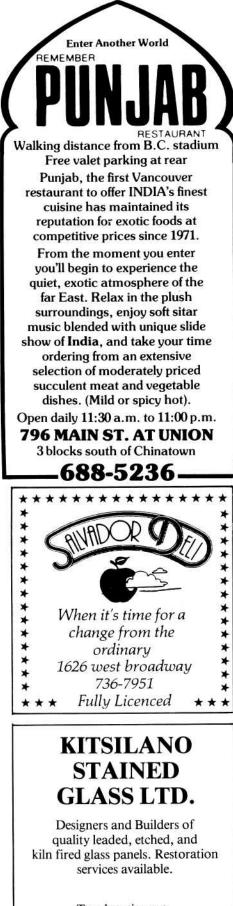
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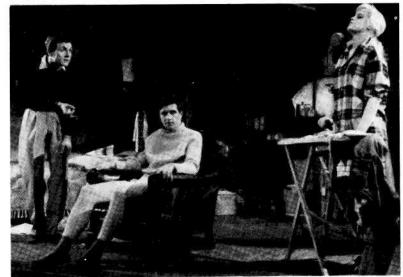


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# John Osborne "Angry Young Man"? By George E. Wellwarth

THE "NEW MOVEMENT" in the British drama actually began officially on the night of May 8, 1956, when John Osborne's Look Back in Anger opened at the Royal Court Theatre in London. The reviews in the daily newspapers the next day were in general cautiously favorable. But it was not until Kenneth Tynan's review came out the following Sunday that the "movement" was properly launched. This review will strike most people as prententious, self-publicizing gush rather than criticism, but it had its effect. Overnight, Osborne, previously an obscure provincial actor, became famous; and sundry despairing young playwrights who had been furtively scribbling away in seedy rooming houses on the Earl's Court Road, in Hampstead, Hackney, Poplar, Whitechapel, and Newington Butts suddenly took heart and set to with renewed industry. They were fortunate. John Osborne's timing was precisely right. A few years earlier or a few years later Look Back in Anger might well have been passed off by the critics as callow breast-beating, but in 1956 the critics and the public were ready for something new. The sincerity of the Osborne play must have come as a tremendous relief after the seemingly endless stream of elephantiasisafflicted plots trying to be fey that characterized the efforts of the fashionable West End dramatists. There was also the factor of the international success of Arthur Miller and Tennessee Williams. At last someone had appeared who could challenge the Americans' position as representatives of the English-speaking drama. Chauvinism stirred in the critics as they watched Look Back in Anger: and the angry-young-man movement was born.

John Osborne must have been the most surprised man in England when he suddenly found himself placed at the head of the angry-young-man movement. He had written a carefully and intelligently worked out dramatic study of a psychotic marriage relationship and was hailed instead as the creator of a revolutionary literary movement. Certainly Jimmy Porter makes a good many cutting remarks about contemporary society, but he only makes them as a result of his own peculiar personality problems. There is absolutely no indication in the play that Osborne ever intended Jimmy's remarks to be taken as a general condemnation of society. Jimmy is an extremely unusual young man and anything but representative of the young men of our time. Osborne has not put his diatribes against society in his mouth in order to orate in the manner of a Hyde Park soap-box messiah. Instead, Jimmy's rantings are always the natural outgrowth of his psychotic state: they are a defense



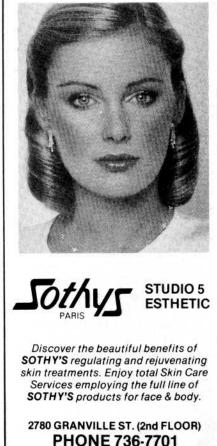
Two photographs from the London world premiere (May 1956) with Kenneth Haigh as Jimmy Porter, Alan Bates as Cliff Lewis and Mary Ure as Alison Porter.

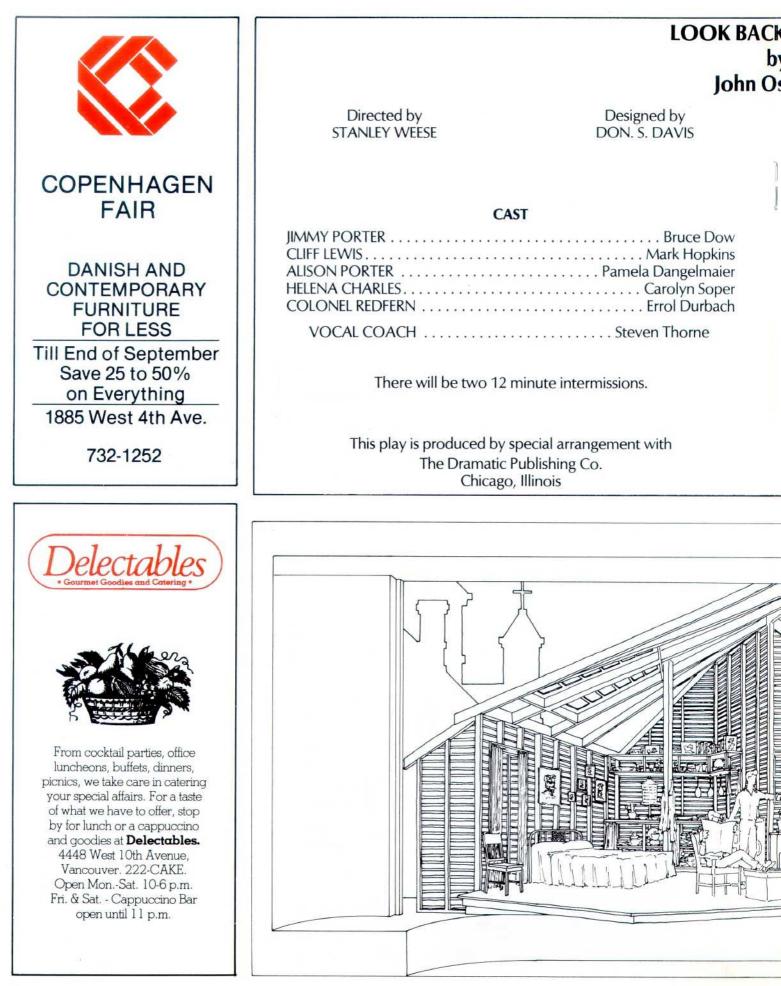
mechanism he uses to hurt his wife, whom he suspects of being imperfectly devoted to him, and to avoid facing up to the problem of his own helpless character. Granted that a representative of the generation which reached adulthood in the early fifties would execrate his elders (what generation this side of early Victorianism has not?), his anger could hardly be embodied in Jimmy's rantings if any justice is to be done to him. He has a right to rant and he has a right to be heard; he has a right even to throw up his hands in disgust and retire, whether it be into a Zen or a beatnick euphoria or simply into a flabby, unthinking, irresponsible lassitude. But Jimmy's tirades are not representative of any attitude. Osborne has given Jimmy a certain facility in composing biting remarks, but there is no real sense, no mature criticism in those remarks. Examined closely, Jimmy Porter's self-conscious orations are the veritablest sophomoric piffle.

Yet, Osborne was created an excellent, minutely accurate dissection of a perverse marriage in the style of Strindberg. Look Back in Anger irresistably recalls the Swedish author's Dance of Death. Jimmy Porter's problem is not the viscious injustice and hypocrisy of the social order: it is his suppressed awareness of the insoluble psychological paradox caused by his desperate, overriding need to possess a woman's complete, unquestioning love and his simultaneous constitutional inability to get along with anyone. His outbursts are the overflow of his bitterness whenever his wife fails to measure up to the standards of devotion that he expects of her at the same time that he knows them to be impossible. Jimmy's biting sarcasms are in a sense really directed inwardly against himself in the manner of the guilt-ridden Dostovevskian hero who tortures himself by torturing others. His real purpose, as he deliberately tries to destroy his wife's love for him because it is not the love he had envisioned, is self laceration. Jimmy is the sort of man who needs, but is too proud to demand, absolute devotion. He needs it all the more from Alison because she comes from the sort of upper-class family which he, as a good socialist, despises as useless and effete and which at the same time he envies and resents because he knows that it looks down on him. In order to possess her he has had to marry her and submit to the conventionality that he hates. His dilemma is perfectly presented in Alison's description of his reaction to her virginity: "afterwards, he actually taunted me with my virginity. He was guite angry about it, as if I had deceived him in some strange way. He seemed to think that an untouched woman would defile him." By being a virgin she is pulling him into the vortex of social convention. She is what she is expected to be in her circle. But Jimmy cannot show pleasure because that would the be conventional reaction, though if his wife were not virginal he would have to resent it as evidence of her fickleness. What he really wants, as Alison explains to her friend, Helena (who becomes limmy's mistress when Alison leaves him), is "something guite different from us. What it is exactly I don't know-a kind of cross between a mother and a Greek courtesan, a henchwoman, a mixture of Cleopatra and Boswell." Jimmy's tragedy is simply that he will never find this ideal, and he knows it. He will spend the rest of his life bathed in self-pity, yammering impotently at the misfortunes he himself has created.







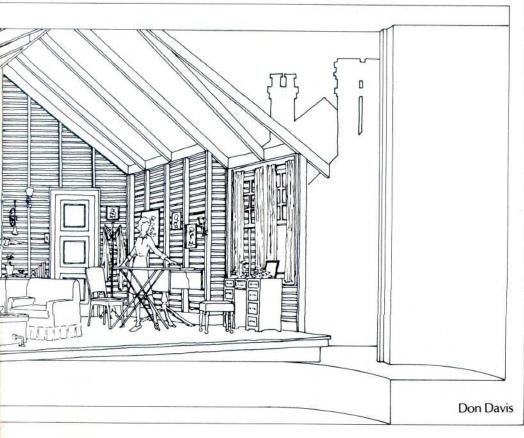


### K IN ANGER by Osborne

#### PRODUCTION

Technical Director IAN PRATT
Properties SHERRY DARCUS
Costume Supervisor
Set Construction ROBERT EBERLE, DON GRIFFITHS
ighting Execution JOHN HENRICKSON
ighting Operator DAVID A.C. HAY
Stage Manager
Assistant to the Director DAVID U. GARFINKLE
Wardrobe OWEN LOCK
Stage Crew THE STUDENTS OF THEATRE 350
House Manager R. CRAIG DUFFY
Box Office CAROL FISHER, MARK HOPKINS and
LINDA HUMPHRIES
Business Manager
Production NORMAN YOUNG

The Frederic Wood Theatre is pleased to announce the appointment of Mr. Mavor Moore as the director of Moliere's *The Imaginary Invalid*. Mr. Moore, the past Chairman of the Canada Council, is one of the most distinguished members of the theatre community in Canada today.







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# Look Back In Anger The First Review By Kenneth Tynan, May 1956

'They are scum' was Mr. Maugham's famous verdict on the class of State-aided university students to which Kingsley Amis's Lucky Jim belongs; and since Mr. Maugham seldom says anything controversial or uncertain of wide acceptance, his opinion must clearly be that of many. Those who share it had better stay well away from John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger*, which is all scum and a mile wide.

Its hero, a provincial graduate who runs a sweet-stall, has already been summed up in print as 'a young pup', and it is not hard to see why. What with his flair for introspection, his gift for ribald parody, his excoriating candour, his contempt for 'phoneyness", his weakness for soliloquy, and his desperate conviction that the time is out of joint, Jimmy Porter is the completest young pup in our literature since Hamlet, Prince of Denmark. His wife, whose Anglo-Indian parents resent him, is persuaded by an actress friend to leave him; Jimmy's prompt response is to go to bed with the actress. Mr. Osborne's picture of a certain kind of modern marriage is hilariously accurate: he shows us two attractive young animals engaged in competitive martyrdom, each with its teeth sunk deep in the other's neck, and each reluctant to break the clinch for fear of bleeding to death.

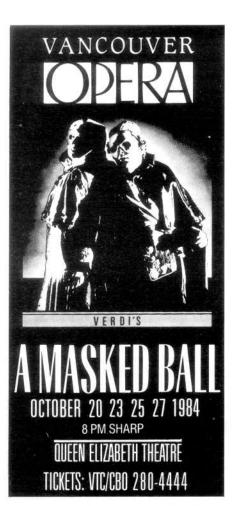
The fact that he writes with charity has led many critics into the trap of supposing that Mr. Osborne's sympathies are wholly with Jimmy. Nothing could be more false. Jimmy is simply and abundantly alive; that rarest of dramatic phenomena, the act of original creation, has taken place; and those who carp were better silent. Is Jimmy's anger justified? Why doesn't he *do* something? Is the sun justified in scorching us? There will be time enough to debate Mr. Osborne's moral position when he has written a few more plays. In the present one he certainly goes off the deep end, but I cannot regard this as a vice in a theatre that seldom ventures more than a toe into the water.

Look Back in Anger presents post-war youth as it really is, with special emphasis on the non-U intelligentsia who live in bed-sitters and divide the Sunday papers into two groups, 'posh' and 'wet'. to have done this at all would be a signal achievement; to have done it in a first play is a minor miracle. All the qualities are there, qualities one had despaired of ever seeing on the stage - the drift towards anarchy, the instinctive leftishness, the automatic rejection of 'official' attitudes, the surrealist sense of humour (Jimmy describes a pansy friend as 'a female Emily Bronte'), the casual promiscuity, the sense of lacking a crusade worth fighting for, and, underlying all these, the determination that no one who dies shall go unmourned.

One cannot imagine Jimmy Porter listening with a straight face to speeches about our inalienable right to flog Cypriot schoolboys. You could never mobilize him and his kind into a lynching mob, since the art he lives for, jazz, was invented by Negroes; and if you gave him a razor, he would do nothing with it but shave. The Porters of our time deplore the tyranny of 'good taste' and refuse to accept 'emotional' as a term of abuse; they are classless, and they are also leaderless. Mr. Osborne is their first spokesman in the London theatre. He has been lucky in his sponsors (the English Stage Company), his director (Tony Richardson), and his interpreters: Mary Ure, Helena Hughes, and Alan Bates give fresh and unforced performances, and in the taxing central role Kenneth Haigh never puts a foot wrong.

That the play needs changes I do not deny: it is twenty minutes too long, and not even Mr. Haigh's bravura could blind me to the painful whimsey of the final reconciliation scene. I agree that *Look Back in Anger* is likely to remain a minority taste. What matters, however, is the size of the minority. I estimate it at roughly 6,733,000, which is the number of people in this country between the ages of twenty and thirty. And this figure will doubtless be swelled by refugees from other age-groups who are curious to know precisely what the contemporary young pup is thinking and feeling. I doubt if I could love anyone who did not wish to see *Look Back in Anger*. It is the best young play of its decade.









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## The Cast

#### Pamela Dangelmaier

During her first year at U.B.C. Pamela appeared in Mussoc's South Pacific and discovered that her interest in acting took precedence over her pursuit of a musical career. This discovery prompted her to switch from the Bachelor of Music Program to the Bachelor of Fine Arts Acting Program. Since entering the B.F.A. program, she has been able to combine her musical and theatrical talents in such roles as: Sgt. Sarah Brown in Mussoc's *Guys and Dolls* and May Edwards in the Frederic Wood production of *The Ticket of Leave Man*. Last season, Pamela appeared in the title role of the World Premier production of Leonard Angel's new play, *Eleanor Marx*, receiving complimentary reviews. Also for the Freddy Wood she has appeared in *Love's Labor's Lost* and as Maria opposite Simon Webb in *The Suicide*. She was a company member of Stage Campus '83 as well as the touring company of *The Sports Show* Pamela will complete her fourth and final year of the B.F.A. Acting Program this spring.

#### **Bruce Dow**

Bruce will be familiar to any of you returning the the Frederic Wood Theatre after last year's successful season. In addition to principle roles in *Waiting for Godot*, *Love's Labor's Lost, The Importance of Being Earnest,* and *The Suicide*, Bruce has been seen on the mainstage in *King Lear* and *The Ticket-of-Leave Man*. Always fascinated by the use of music in theatre, he served two years as President and Producer of UBC's own musical theatre society, MUSSOC, and has pursued his interest in writing and composition. He has composed original scores for *The Exception and the Rule, The Sports Show, Dreaming and Duelling,* and the script and score for a new musical, which has yet to be produced. This summer he was afforded the opportunity to Musical Direct and Choreograph *Oh What a Lovely War* for Stage Campus '84. Bruce will graduate with a BFA in Acting in April.

#### **Errol Durbach**

Errol Durbach is a Professor in the English and Theatre Departments at UBC, teaching courses in Shakespeare and Theatre History. He has published widely on modern drama, especially on the plays of Ibsen. His previous roles for the Frederic Wood Theatre include Kent in *King Lear*, Menelaus in *The Trojan Women*, and Karl Marx in *Eleanor Marx*. He has also appeared in Touchstone Theatre's production of Ivan Klima's *Games*.

#### **Mark Hopkins**

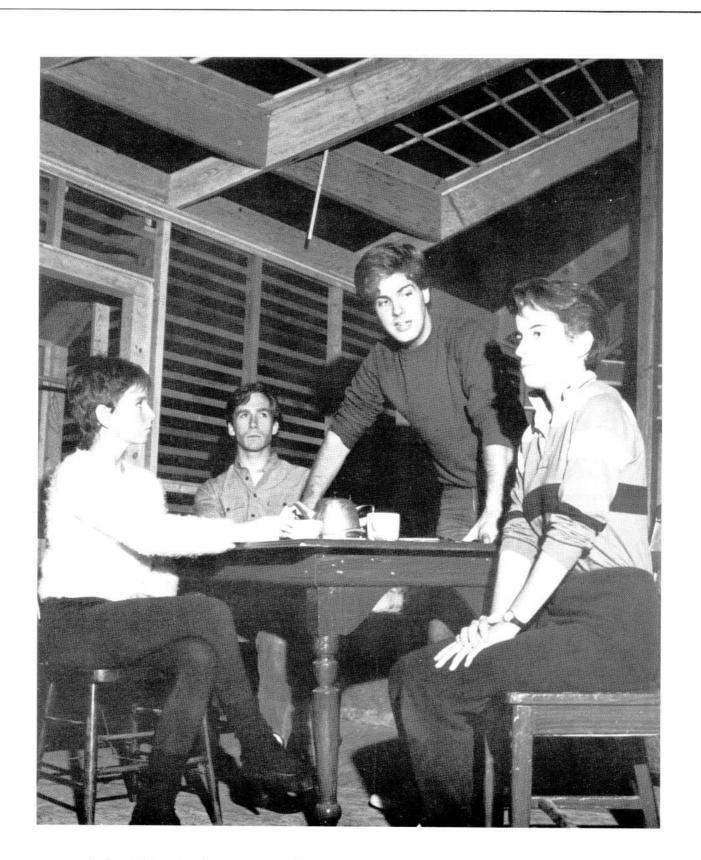
Mark is a 4th year BFA acting student at UBC who has appeared at the Frederic Wood Theatre in *The Suicide, The Importance of Being Earnest, Love's Labor's Lost,* and the title role in *The Ticket-of-Leave Man.* It was UBC MUSSOC's production of *South Pacific* that convinced him to return to UBC to begin his BFA training, and to play Nathan Detroit in MUSSOC's *Guys & Dolls.* 

The summer before returning to UBC, Mark attended the Banff Centre School of Fine Arts as a member of the Musical Theatre Ensemble where he appeared in *The Music Man*, and as Billy Crocker in *Anything Goes*. He has also appeared for Vancouver musical theatre in *Fiddler On The Roof, Jesus Christ Superstar*, and as George Berger in *Hair*. Mark was last seen this summer, as Roger the Mooner in Theatre Under the Stars' 50th anniversary production, *Grease*.

#### **Carolyn Soper**

Carolyn should be well known to Frederic Wood Theatre audiences, having appeared in varied roles ranging from the young boy in *Waiting for Godot*, to Serafima, the 60 year old Russian mother-in-law in *The Suicide*. Other roles at Freddy Wood include the title role in the M.F.A. production of *Antigone*, Samuel Willoughby Esq. in *The Ticket-of-Leave Man* and Cecily in *The Importance of Being Earnest*. A member of Stage Campus '83's summer stock company, Carolyn appeared as Simonne in *Marat/Sade* and as Miss Thumb in *The Memorandum*. After completing a month long tour of local elementary schools last spring, she appeared at the Vancouver International Children's Festival in her B.F.A. acting program.

**Kathleen Measures** stage managed *The Dining Room, Dreaming & Duelling, Bedroom Farce* and *Oh What A Lovely War* for Summer Stock '84. She is entering the third year of her Technical/Design B.F.A. program at U.B.C.



Left to Right: Carolyn Soper, Mark Hopkins, Bruce Dow and Pamela Dangelmaier.

#### PHOTO BY: Marcel Williams

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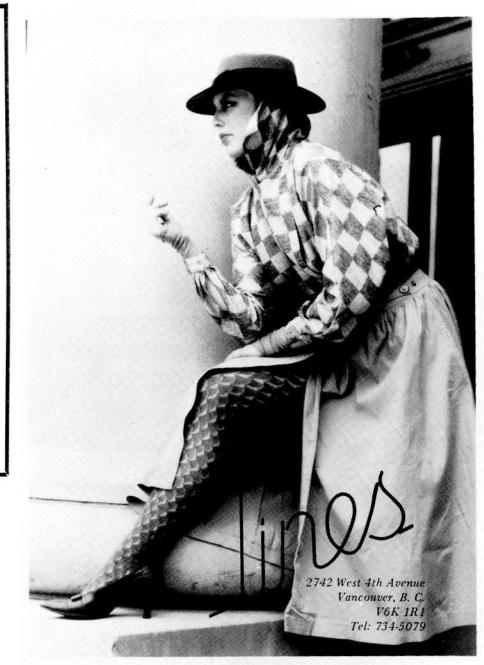
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