

18 PLAYS IN 26 DAYS

# Show-Goer Tours London Theatres

By JULIE CANDLER  
Special Writer

You have to love theatre to seek it up in Europe after doing night and day to it for months. Richard Bagg saw 18 plays in a 26-day visit to London in August. He turned his well-educated eye on musicals, comedies, serious dramas and an avant garde play with the longest title in theatre history.

He returned with a high regard for the thriving theatre world of London.

Before he left, the energetic Mr. Bagg, holder of a master's degree in speech and drama from Wayne State University, spent days that went like this:

TEACH DRAMATIC and speech at Soholm High School, 8 a.m. to 3:10 p.m. Direct rehearsals for Soholm's school play, 3:30 to 5 p.m. Direct Birmingham Village Players' rehearsal for "Belts Are Ringing," 8 to 11 p.m.

On June 18, it was off for a



RICHARD BAGG

drumatic tour of Europe with Birmingham resident Bruce Borrie, history teacher in Clawson.

The pair did a portion of their European sightseeing with two teachers of English at Soholm High School, Dorothy Allen and Alice Price.

But that was before London, where the pair hatched four found plays so avant garde as to have titles like "The Persecution and Murder of Marat as Performed by the inmates of the Asylum of Charenton under the Direction of the Marquis de Sade."

THE ZANY play with the long title involves inmates of an asylum dramatizing a bit of French Revolutionary history. The true-life assassin was portrayed by a female inmate who had sleeping sickness and had to be awakened frequently. The historic role of her male assistant was played by a sex maniac.

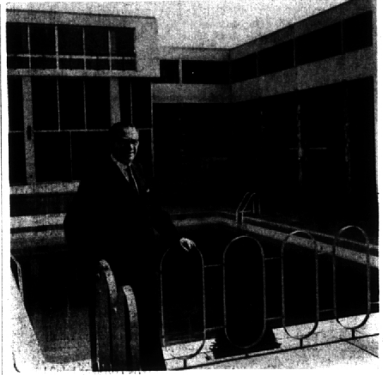
Characters dropped through trap doors, the floor was tilted, and continuous organ music accompanied the action which was uniquely described by a commentary trio.

The play ended with the actors complimenting one another for excellent performances. Then they began removing make-up and parts costumes and sauntered off the stage.

THE BAGG reaction: fascinating. His recommendation for the most outstanding play: "The Right Honorable Gentleman," starring Anthony Quail and Raymond Massey's daughter, Anna, in a Profano-type plot.

On the Broadway-bound show the young instructor saw, he thinks theatre-goers will enjoy: "Half a Sixpence," a delightful, homey-type musical.

(See TOURS, 1D)



AT POOL OF NEW 102-ROOM KINGSLEY HOTEL. Owner-host F. N. "Nick" Takis

# Skilled Painters Reveal New England's Beauty

Reviewed by KATHARINE SMITH

A two-man show at The Little Gallery, 915 E. Maple, Birmingham, is an especially happy event for October since the show is titled "Eyes on New England," and New England may very well be the most beautiful place in the world this time of year.

The two men, Joseph Barber and Jack Vallee, are skilled painters of a rather romantic persuasion. Both are well-known in and around New York.

Their work hangs well together since both artists generally try to distill the essence of a scene into the fewest possible number of elements.

MANY OF VALLEE'S paintings are almost eerily understated water colors; silent misty seaside vistas, with an Oriental feeling in their restraint and use of space. This same Oriental influence is apparent in his paintings of foliage or of a bare tree branch against the sky.

Then again, with only sand and witch grass for subjects, he produces a warm voluptuous effect. With oil paint, he is more straightforward. "Barn Window" is pure realism, its effect heightened by strong light and heavy forms. In another oil, "Lost Trap," he carries this realistic technique to the edge of surrealism.

"FOREST" is painted in oil but with the light touch of his water colors—no overpowering here, but the sky is a lot about his subject, from the lush to the barren.

BARBER USES the rough surface of masonite to great effect where he wants to soften an edge or an area, overcoming this texture with more paint when this will serve his purpose better.

In "Trees and Stars" he uses his texture to get a diaphanous, rather theatrical effect of lighted green trees against a dark blue starry sky.

(See PAINTERS, 7D)

## New Deadline Set for Arts

News for the Arts of Living section now is due at noon Friday for publication the following Thursday.

Address your news to Arts Editor, Birmingham Eccentric, Birmingham 48008.

Included in the arts section are amusements, antiques, art, architecture, books, bridge, classes, cooking, crafts, dance, decorating, gardening, hobbies, homemaking, lectures, music, theatre and travel.

# Restaurateur's Dream Grows Into the New Kingsley Hotel

A \$2.5 million hotel will be able to feed approximately 1,650 persons at three meals a day and provide sleeping for 300 persons, the proprietor pointed out.

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F. N. Takis, owner-host of the new Kingsley Inn who is greeted by patrons as "Nick," will burst upon the scene as a hotel man when the 102-room establishment opens Thursday, Oct. 15.

The combined hotel and dining facilities will host its rank to the historic location in Bloomfield Hills in a few days, and for its owner it is almost like starting a new business career.

Takis has been dreaming dreams of a hotel of his own ever since he left his native Greece and went to work in an Egyptian hotel at the age of 14.

A restaurateur in Bloomfield Hills for the last 26 years, he has pulled together with his aides, the myriad pieces of furniture, tile, paneling, carpeting, glass and plumbing with the particular satisfaction that comes in building a dream just the way you've always wanted it.

AND THERE WAS a lot of pulling to do, Takis recalls. The work started Sept. 3 last year and was scheduled to wind up July 29 of this year, the sixth anniversary of the opening of the Kingsley at its present location.

Trade union strikes and labor shortages during the summer months put the original target date out of reach, said Takis, but it also gave him some time to think about minor architectural changes.

"Everything that went into the new Kingsley received my personal touch or examination," said the proprietor. "I tried to incorporate the idea of services, not just a lot of rooms."

SOME OF THE services more obvious to his guests will be coffee and sandwich shop that never closes, the Union of Soviet Swimmers pool in the court between the north and south wings, barber and beauty salons, a ballroom, conference rooms, a travel agency and five-cocktail lounges.

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THE CARPETING for the corridors had to come from New York City. The other type was sent from Chicago. In all, \$40,000 worth of carpeting has been laid.

A lifelong art enthusiast and an admirer of Cranbrook, Takis suggested statues for the large spray pond in front of the building that are expected to become a trade mark of the new Kingsley. The statuary will consist of seven bronze figures designed by Marshall Fredericks.

The figures are to be eight feet in height and about six feet apart. (See KINGSLEY, 7D)



PARTIAL VIEW OF A DOUBLE ROOM Furnished in one of five motifs

# Symphony Offers Violinist

The South Oakland Symphony Society will present Marilyn Dubow as guest violin soloist for its opening concert, Tuesday, announces Mrs. W. H. Koenke, 1008 Ridgedale, Birmingham, president.

The 22-year-old Miss Dubow played her first violin at the age of four and by the time she was 11 was appearing with such organizations as the New York Philharmonic and the Telephone Hour Orchestra.

Through scholarships she has studied at the New York College of Music, the Manhattan School of Music and Sarah Lawrence College.

Her teachers have included Arvid Kertz, Ivan Galamian and Raphael Brant.

AT THE Second International Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow, the Union of Soviet Composers gave Miss Dubow a special award for her performance of Russian works. As a result she conferred many awards while in the Soviet Union.

Miss Dubow continually receives reviews from recitals and orchestral appearances in the United States, Canada and Mexico. "Everything is ahead for Miss Dubow, but there is a great deal to be said for her past, also."

"We are very fortunate in having Miss Dubow, an artist of her stature, for our opening concert," says Mrs. Koenke. "It is an indication of our own growth as an orchestra, and it also creates a more cultural atmosphere for the community."



MARILYN DUBOW

# A Housewife's Tale!

By ETHEL SIMMONS

A Birmingham housewife who thinks up stories for her children as she does the dishes has just published her first book, a fairy tale, "The Story of the Flame" (Mrs. Frank Martin, 6030 Lahser, said, "I'm so thrilled, it's just like having a new baby").

Mrs. Martin is the mother of five children, the oldest, Don, 17, who has just joined the Marines. The others are Rex, 13, Michael, 11; and twins Kevin and Susan, 7.

"The story has to do with self-pity, greed and ego," said the author. "Mother Nature has five daughters including Flame who want to be beautiful and become a forest fire.

"So you see, it has a moral."

THE BOOK is published by Harlo

Press, Detroit, and illustrated by photographers. Detroit. It will be available in Birmingham. "I've never met the illustrator," said Mrs. Martin, "but he has brought out the story so well with his drawings."

She previously has published articles and poetry about her children. They are on my inspiration," she said.

Her articles on child care, poetry about children and material about animals have appeared in My Baby, Baby Talk, Modern Baby and Your Family, etc.

Right now the Martin youngsters are being fascinated by another story their mother is telling, about an alligator, who just might turn out to be the subject of her next book.

# Designers Create 'Famous Chairs'

BIRMINGHAM SHOWROOM HAS WORK BY INTERNATIONAL STAFF

By ETHEL SIMMONS  
Arts Editor

"The most famous single piece of modern furniture in production today" is the Barcelona chair, designed by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, reports Gary Beals, regional manager of Knoll Associates.

The Birmingham corporation, which opened a newly enlarged showroom last week at 1080 N. Woodward, specializes in furniture and textiles and has a staff of international designers.

"We are most famous for our chairs," says Beals. "The Barcelona chair was designed in 1927 for the German Pavilion of the Barcelona (Spain) World's Fair.

"Our company was founded in 1939, and we put the Barcelona chair into production in the 1940's."

THE CHAIR is a classic of stainless steel, welded and polished, and of foam rubber and leather. Springs are in the frame itself. It has a top-of-the-line price, at \$360.

Elorence Knoll studied for a while with Mies, as he is known for short. Her designs for Knoll Associates are "simple sofas, cabinets and tables to enhance these (his and other chair creators) smashing successes," Beals says.

"Mies is practicing architecture in Chicago. He was the fountainhead of the international movement in architecture that centered at the Bauhaus in Dessau, Germany, about 1900-1934. The Bauhaus was a highly experimental design school."

The Brno chair, designed by Mies in 1928, for a residence in Czechoslovakia also is manufactured by Knoll.

SAYS BEALS, "The late Eero Saarinen is another of our great most successful we have. His father designed Cranbrook, and Eero Saarinen went to school, taught there and worked in Birmingham."

The "71" chair is the number by which the Saarinen swivel chair is known; all the chairs have numbers. This swivel is the basis for most of Saarinen's chairs.

About 5,000 of these chairs were selected by General Motors for its Tech Center. Styles come with different arms and legs and in various heights.

"ALSO A Saarinen classic is the womb chair," Beals states. This was designed to provide comfort for the average person who is said to change seating positions every three minutes.

Beals says, "Saarinen's seating is a result, too, of a competition with Charles Eames—they were both at Cranbrook. They entered a Museum of Modern Art furniture design competition for a modern chair in 1941. This somewhat resembles a composite of their thinking."

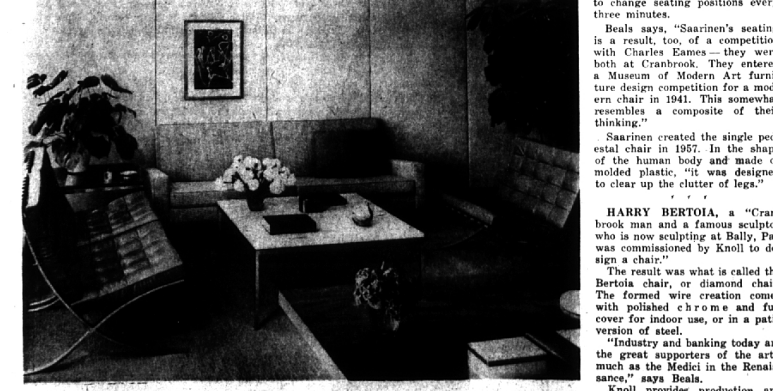
Saarinen created the single pedestal chair in 1957. In the shape of the human body and made of molded plastic, it was designed to clear up the clutter of legs."

HARRY BERTOIA, a "Cranbrook man and a famous sculptor who is now sculpting at Bally, Pa., was commissioned by Knoll to design a chair."

The result was what is called the Bertolotti chair, or diamond chair. The formed wire creation comes with polished chrome and full cover for indoor use, or in a patio version of steel.

"Industry and banking today are the great supporters of the arts, much as the Medici in the Renaissance," says Beals.

Knoll provides production and custom pieces both for industry and private homes.



BARCELONA CHAIR BY MIES VAN DER ROHE SELLS FOR NEARLY \$1,000. Florence Knoll tables and sofa offer a quiet complement.

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