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COMMUNICATIONS

from the

INTERNATIONAL BRECHT SOCIETY

March, 1976

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UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

FROM THE EDITOR

A short-term project and a long-term project are worthy of our attention and support: the short-term project is the Fourth Brecht Congress to be held at the University of Texas in Austin on November 17 to 20, 1976 (see p. 4ff). The long-term project is the establishment of an American Brecht Center called EPIC WEST in Berkeley, California (see p. 7f).

Business pending from the previous year will have to remain pending because the membership that was to take place during the MLA convention in San Francisco, failed for lack of attendance. As always, members are encouraged to make use of this publication if they want to bring a matter before the membership.

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The coalition WOMEN IN GERMAN is organizing a

R E T R E A T

at Miami University, Oxford, Ohio

on September 24 to 26, 1976

The retreat program will be co-organized by Charlotte Gebhardt (German, Dartmouth College, Hanover, N.H. 03755) and Sarah Lennox (Comp. Lit., U of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA 02134). They are asking for suggestions for workshops and/or seminars, and for volunteers to lead them. Please write to them directly.

To register for the retreat, send \$10. to Gisela Bahr (GREAL, Miami U, Oxford, OH 45056) who, in turn, will send you all pertinent information.

Along with the retreat, a SYMPOSIUM is planned for Saturday, September 25, entitled

Feminism and German Studies:

An Interdisciplinary Perspective

co-chaired by Gisela Bahr and Evelyn Beck.

Ideas for the treatment of topics which are either comparative (German and another literature) or include another discipline (history, sociology, etc.) are being invited from individuals or groups, including graduate students. The topics should be of interest to an audience outside of German, too. It is planned to have presentations in the form of summaries or a set of theses, and to have a discussant for each.

Please submit ideas by March 15 in duplicate, one copy to Evelyn Beck (German, U of Wisconsin, Madison, WI 53706) and the other one to Gisela Bahr.

COMMUNICATIONS - THE BRECHT NEWSLETTER - Vol. V No. 2 (1976)

Published by The International Brecht Society

Editor : Gisela E. Bahr

Consultant : John B. Fuegi

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Correspondence regarding dues, yearbook, to BRECHT-JAHRBUCH
Dept of Comp Lit, U of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53201

From the New York Times of January 11, 1976:

BRECHT WOULD NOT APPLAUD HIS THEATER TODAY

by Kenneth Tynan

London

There is something of a crisis at the Berliner Ensemble, and a crisis at that august address concerns anyone who cares about theater. The Ensemble, after all, is the most widely acclaimed acting company in the history of postwar Europe, and since it was founded in 1949 by Bertolt Brecht its work has been more influential than that of any other troupe since the long-vanished heyday of Stanislavsky at the Moscow Art Theater. If a question mark hangs over the health of the Ensemble, it has implications for the European theater at large, of which it has for more than two decades been the powerhouse and microcosm.

If European theater today is a haunted house, the ghost that haunts it is Brecht: no one of comparable genius has come along to lead the art of drama into new paths. Installed at the Theater am Schiffbauerdamm, which had housed the premiere of "The Threepenny Opera" in the 20's, the Berliner Ensemble operated as a kind of Marxist laboratory where Brecht constructed exquisite models of human behavior to show how society had worked, or failed to work, and how it could be modified.

Brecht died in 1956, at the age of 58, but the company's conquering progress continued under the leadership of his formidable widow, the actress Helene Weigel. He had trained a brilliant group of young directors in his methods, and they turned out a series of memorable productions of Brecht's works --among them, "The Resistable Rise of Arturo Ui" (directed by Manfred Wekwerth and Peter Palitzsch), a "gangster-spectacle" in which Hitler's rise to power was riotously transposed to Capone's Chicago in the 20's, and "Coriolanus" (directed by Wekwerth and Joachim Tenschert). Ekkehard Schall, a fiery young actor with close-cropped hair, militant mien and fantastic physical flexibility, played the lead in both of these productions. He was married to another member of the company, Brecht's daughter Barbara, whose protective worship of her father bordered on the fanatical. This alliance of star and heiress had implications for the future. So did the fact that the superbly stylized battle scenes in "Coriolanus"--the best stage fights I have ever seen--were arranged by a choreographer named Ruth Bergnaus, making her first appearance on the Ensemble's playbills.

In the early 60's, the Ensemble was at the height of its powers. What happened thereafter was a decline into stagnation. Weigel ruled the company by fiat rather than consensus, and

(cont'd on page 13)

THE FOURTH BRECHT CONGRESS

The University of Texas at Austin is inviting the International Brecht Society to meet in Austin from November 17 to 20, 1976. The theme for the congress is:

BERTOLT BRECHT AND THE CREATIVE LINK BETWEEN
KNOWLEDGE AND SOCIETY

Suggested topics:

+Theater for a Scientific Age; The Brecht Industry;
Me-ti/Buch der Wendungen; +Problems in Gestic Acting;
+Gesamtkunstwerk; +Performance of a Brecht Piece;
Contemporary Poets in the Shadow of Brecht;
+Brecht and American Theater; Diaries and Journals;
Literary Criticis: Chronology of Brecht Reception;
+Brecht's Scenography; Films from the Twenties;
Documentary Films; Brecht and Marxism;
+Brecht's directorial technique.

(+ A special effort is being made to interest colleagues in theater and drama in these topics)

General Information and Time Table

1. Special invitations will be extended shortly to colleagues throughout the world. Names of these participants will be announced in March. During the second half of the fall semester Dr. Siegfried Unseld will be in residence in Austin as guest lecturer in the department of Germanic Languages.
2. Other participants are invited to submit a) a one page description of his/her talk, seminar, or workshop and b) a one page bibliography of works by Brecht to be discussed and most important secondary literature. Deadline: April 15, 1976
3. Final notification of all participants: May 15, 1976
4. Program available: June 30, 1976

Congress organizers:

Hubert Heinen, Janet King, Betty Nance Weber

Congress address:

Brecht Congress
%Germanic Languages, Box 7939
University of Texas at Austin
Austin, Texas 78712

Phone:

512-471-4123

IBS MEMBERS ARE REQUESTED TO DISSEMINATE THE ABOVE INFORMATION
AS WIDELY AS POSSIBLE

R E G I S T R A T I O N F O R M

Fourth Brecht Congress - Austin, Texas, November 17-20, 1976

Name _____ Address _____

Telephone _____

Fee _____ (\$20 Standard; \$10 for limited budgets;
\$5 Students)Information on hotels, transportation, etc. will be sent
after registration fee is received

I wish to participate as _____ speaker
 _____ discussant of a speaker's paper
 _____ seminar or workshop organizer

Check topic: _____

- _____ +Theater for a Scientific Age
- _____ The Brecht Industry
- _____ Me-Ti/Buch der Wendungen
- _____ +Problems in Gestic Acting
- _____ +Gesamtkunstwerk
- _____ +Performance of a Brecht Piece
- _____ Contemporary Poets in the Shadow of Brecht
- _____ +Brecht and American Theater
- _____ Diaries and Journals
- _____ Literary Criticism: Chronology of Brecht Reception
- _____ +Brecht's Scenography
- _____ Films from the Twenties
- _____ Documentary Films
- _____ Brecht and Marxism
- _____ +Brecht's Directorial Technique

Additional topics (write-in) _____

+ A special invitation to people with theater experience is
 extended for these topics. Please discuss these with colleagues
 and friends who may not see the notice.

(over)

Fourth Brecht Congress

Registration Form
p. 2Additional Information Requested:Financial Arrangements

Can you defray expenses incurred for participation
in the congress

_____ from personal resources?

_____ through your university?

_____ through support from the congress?

Funds for assisting participants are limited. Please indicate
how much you need from each source. Arrangements have been
made to provide inexpensive accommodations.

Please mail with your registration fee to

Brecht Congress
% Germanic Languages
Box 7939
University of Texas
Austin, Texas 78712

Organizers: Hubert Heinen, Janet King, Betty Nance Weber

Phone: 512-471-4123

ONCE AGAIN: EPIC WEST

(Ed. Note: This is a continuation of the editor's effort to inform the IBS membership about this growing, exciting Brecht Center. Those members who find the IBS too one-sidedly academic, might well see in Epic West the extension they have been hoping for.)

Epic West, the Center for the Study of Bertolt Brecht and Epic Theatre, has been conceived as a multiple cultural center that will encompass a resident theatre company, a cultural training center, a film, record, and tape archive, and a research library. Once established, it will offer innumerable possibilities for anyone doing Brecht work.

The center's search for a space large enough to house the entire program has been successful, and just before Christmas, 1975, the staff of Epic West moved to its new quarters on College Avenue in Berkeley. What they found, is an extraordinary building: the Old St. John's Presbyterian Church, built entirely of redwood and douglas fir, and erected in 1908-1910 by Julia Morgan, the first woman engineering graduate of the University of California. The building has landmark status and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. I've seen the building, it is lovely and quite unusual, and in size and lay-out just perfect for the purpose. The church itself will be converted to the performing area, with a seating capacity of 550 and excellent acoustics. Adjoining is another huge hall suitable for lectures, exhibits and a great variety of events. There are enormous rooms for dance and other performances, a number of classrooms, offices, and even living space. I agree with Epic West that this landmark building is the ideal home for the first Brecht Center in the United States.

Epic West was able to raise enough money from individual donors to make the down payment on the building. Grant applications are being made to state, federal, and private foundations. In addition, a fund-raising campaign has begun to raise \$250,000 for the restoration and renovation work; this sum is urgently needed to ensure both the immediate and the maximum usage of the space.

IBS members can help in several ways. They can enroll as lifetime charter members, which is offered to IBS members at a special price (see p.). They can donate materials for the library or the archive. All donations of money or materials are tax-deductible because Epic West has been certified as a non-profit organization. And they can help finding additional donors.

A LETTER FROM EPIC WEST

TO OUR FRIENDS IN THE INTERNATIONAL BRECHT SOCIETY

EPIC WEST appreciates the past support which members of the Society have so generously offered. We look forward to increasing interaction and exchange of information and assistance as both of our organizations continue to grow.

We would like to extend to you an invitation to a special Charter Membership category. Available only to current members of the International Brecht Society, this lifetime Charter Membership in EPIC WEST will entitle you to the following benefits:

- Lifetime discount of 50% to any event presented by EPIC WEST at its Berkeley location
- Lifetime discount of 25% to any EPIC WEST event presented in other parts of the country
- Lifetime discount of 30% on any publication offered for sale by EPIC WEST
- Lifetime discount of 25% on any film rental offered by EPIC W
- Invitations to all special "Members only" events
- Announcement of all original publications, film and theatre productions of EPIC WEST
- A listing of all books available in our library, and periodic acquisitions updates. Plus a similar listing for our film archive

For enrolling as a special Charter Member use form on p.

Funds received by EPIC WEST from this special category will be used only for the development of our library, which we consider our most urgent need. In addition to donations of money, we would be grateful for donations of books, recordings, tapes, posters, and memorabilia; any such donation will be identified with your name and/or the name of the International Brecht Society, as you prefer. Donations of money or materials are tax-deductible. Thank you for your support.

EPIC WEST
2640 College Avenue
Berkeley, Cal 94704
Phone: 415-549-1844

PS. Donation of materials: Please send materials, carefully packed, to our address shown above. Please include a list of the materials being sent, with your estimate of their value, and we will provide you with a letter of receipt of your donation stated, for your tax records.

PUBLICATIONS

- Bertolt Brecht, Poems 1913-1956. Eds. John Willett and Ralph Manheim, with the cooperation of Erich Fried. London: Eyre Methuen, 1976 (May). (Paperback edition in three parts due September 2nd. No US edition in sight, due to legalities.)
In preparation: 4th volume, with songs and pomes from plays. Ed. John Willett.
- Dyck, J., H.Gossler, H.Herrmann, J.Knopf, H.Müller, C.Pietzcker, R.Steinlein, J.Stosch. Brechtdiskussion. Scriptor Taschenbücher S 37. Kronberg/Taunus: Scriptor, 1974
- Hoover, Marjorie L. "Ihr geht gemeinsam den Weg nach unten." Aufstieg und Fall Amerikas im Werk Bertolt Brechts? Amerika in der deutschen Literatur. Neue Welt--Nordamerika--USA. Hrg. S. Bauschinger, H.Denkler, W. Malsch. Stuttgart: Reclam jun., o.D.
- Keller, Otto. Brecht und der moderne Roman. Auseinandersetzung Brechts mit den Strukturen der Romane Döblins und Kafkas. Bern u. München: Francke, 1975
- Lyon, James K. Bertolt Brecht and Rudyard Kipling. A Marxist's Imperialist Mentor. The Hague, Paris: Mouton, 1975
- Mews, Siegfried. Bertolt Brecht. Herr Puntila und sein Knecht Matti. Grundlagen und Gedanken zum Verständnis des Dramas. Frankfurt, Berlin, München: Diesterweg, 1975
- Schoeps, Karl H. Zwei moderne Lenz-Bearbeitungen. Monatshefte 67, 4 (Winter 1975), 437-451.
- Tracy, Gordon L. Bert Brecht und die chinesische Philosophie. Universitas 30, 7 (July 1975), 745-756.

PRODUCTIONS

THE MOTHER - Australian Performance Group, Pram Factory, Melbourne, September 1975. Director: Lindsay Smith. (Pelagea was played by four actresses)

MOTHER COURAGE - La Mama Theater, Adelaide, September 1975.
MC: Marilyn Allen

EDWARD II - University of Western Ontario, December 3, 1975, 5 perf. Director: Scott Laurence. Stage Design: Vera Hrdlicka. Student Cast

DAS KLEINE MAHAGONNY - S.U.N.Y. at Albany, December 4, 1975, 5 perf. Music: Kurt Weill. Transl.: Michael Feingold. Director: Edward Golden. Conductor: Stephen Osmond. Sets: Thomas Clark. Costumes: Kevin Faherty

THE THREEPENNY OPERA - Adelaide Festival Playhouse, with New Opera South Australia, December 1-12, 1975. Transl.: Willett/Manheim. Director: Wal Cherry. Production conception by Cherry and Willett. Conductor: Myer Fredman.

OTHER PERFORMANCE NEWS contributed by John Willett

Program by Robyn Archer at Art Gallery of South Australia on November 2, 1975 included Brecht songs to settings by Weill, Dessau and Eisler (notably the Hollywood Elegies). She subsequently toured items from the show to schools and factories in the Adelaide area. Wal Cherry and J. Willett helped her with it.

Stanley Correy of ABC radio Special Projects is preparing three Brecht programs for the 20th anniversary of his death.

The National Theatre is preparing one or more programs from the new edition of BB poems (see p. 9) under the direction of Michael Kustow and J. Willett, for performance in its new theatre (the Cottesloe, or experimental space part of it) when it opens in June.

Joe Papp is using the Willett/Manheim translation for his New York production of The Threepenny Opera, directed by Richard Foreman.

Another product of the Pram Factory: Jack Hibberd's "Dimboola", a very funny play about an Australian wedding, which takes off from Die Hochzeit though using none of BB's material. Seems a good example of how a playwright can learn from BB without copying him.

FOR MEMBERS

Reminder

Volume V of the Jahrbuch will be sent out to members upon payment of dues for 1975:

Student Member	§7/DM20	Sustaining Member	§25/DM75
Regular Member	§10/DM30	Institutional Mem-	§18/DM55
Senior Member	§18/DM55	ber	

to be sent to

Brecht-Jahrbuch, Department of Comparative Literature
University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, Wis 53201 / USA

with a clear notation on the check itself that your payment is for vol. V. Those members who have not yet paid for, or received either vol. III or IV, should immediately contact Ms. Ursula Gropp at the above Milwaukee address.

TO : EPIC WEST, 2640 College Avenue, Berkeley, Cal 94704

Friends at EPIC WEST:

Please enroll me as a lifetime charter member. My check for § _____ is enclosed. (Please check category).

_____ §50. No further fees required for lifetime charter membership

_____ §25. §5 annual maintenance fee due each December.

(Charter memberships for the general public begin at §250.
Regular memberships begin at §25/year)

I certify that I am a member of the International Brecht Society
_____ (initial here).

Please send membership card and receipt to:

Name _____ Address _____

Institution _____ City, State _____

Phone () _____ Zip Code _____

Please make checks payable to Epic West Brecht Library Fund.

All donations of money and materials are tax-deductible. Epic West's non-profit status is certified by the State of California and the Internal Revenue Service (501-C-3 Status).

FOR MEMBERS, CONT'D

Renata Berg-Pan writes the following:

Participants in Seminar 67, "Brecht and Film" at the recent MLA convention wishing to obtain Prof. Rainer Friedrich's paper

"Montage and Estrangement Effect: Notes on Eisenstein and Brecht"

should write to

Professor Rainer Friedrich
Department of Classics
Dalhousie University
Halifax, N.S. Canada

(Berliner Ensemble - cont'd from page 3)

refused to delegate authority to the young directors who were its lifeblood. Manfred Wekwerth, the most gifted of the group, left in 1969, and his departure led to a hemorrhage of talent: actors and directors alike sought employment elsewhere. When Weigel died in 1971, Ruth Berghaus (then second in command) took over as artistic director. Division and dissension soon followed, not only within the company but among the critics and the public.

Last month, alarmed by rumors of malaise, I went to Berlin to examine the current condition of the company I had admired for so many years. What follow are extracts from the diary I kept of my week-long investigation:

Sunday: I talk to an East German playwright, now employed by the Ensemble, and soon realize that I have stumbled into traffic jam of conflicting ideas about right road for the company to take. He is not optimistic. There's still (he concedes) a sense of joint endeavor, of backstage unity among players, technicians, directors and designers, and the actors retain the crisp, dry style of old; but this can (and sometimes does) degenerate into sterile drabness. Having been trained by "the Wekwerth mafia", the company cannot easily adapt itself to other methods. Ekkehard Schall and his wife Barbara ("the Holy Family") have absolute artistic control over staging of Brecht's plays in Germany, which makes them effectively censors; and it's conceivable that they will make common cause with Manfred Wekwerth against the Ruth Berghaus regime. "In Germany," says the playwright, "it's very difficult to be a classic. And it's even more difficult to stop being a classic. Perhaps the best thing for the Ensemble would be a moratorium on Brecht productions for five years." Under Berghaus, there's been a flood of activity: five or six new productions per year, as opposed to two or three in the Weigel period. Recent surveys have shown that the foundations of the company's home, on the banks of the river Spree, are architecturally insecure. "If we're patient enough," the playwright wryly observes, "our problems will solve themselves. The whole place will just sink quietly into the mud."

Sunday evening: "Mrs. Warren's Profession" at the Ensemble. Suavely acted and picturesquely staged--but a startling experience for me, because it was wholly unstartling. Always in the past there was a sharp contrast between the auditorium, all cupids and gilt, and the epic events on stage; this time the show matches the house décor in anodyne prettiness. You can see Shaw productions like this at dozens of German theaters.

(cont'd next page)

(Berliner Ensemble - cont'd)

Monday: Conversation with one of the company's dramaturgs, a literary adviser who picks plays, edits texts, works on new scripts with authors. He explains the collapse, a few weeks ago, of long-mooted plan to take the Ensemble on its first trip to America. Invitation came from Brooklyn Academy of Music and Kennedy Center in Washington. The Ensemble proposed a program of three plays: Brecht's "Pantula," "The Mother" and "Coriolanus." Project fell through (a) because the hosts insisted on "The Threepenny Opera, not currently in the repertory, and (b) because American theaters are too primitively equipped. In addition to elaborate scenery, the company would have had to transport revolving stage and technical equipment at a cost that neither Americans nor East German government were willing to pay. The dramaturg says the company is trying to find new ways of staging Brecht. (What was wrong with old ways?) He tells me that the exiled Wekwerth has been appointed head of a new institute in East Berlin for training directors: the perfect launching-pad, I reflect, for a guerrilla movement aimed at infiltrating the Ensemble. The dramaturg regards Wekwerth as a conservative, wedded to Brechtian dogma of the fifties: "He is one of many little Coriolanusses who left the company. Why can't they all work together?" Finally, he regrets that Ruth Berghaus won't be able to see me: she has broken her ankle and can't receive visitors. I sympathize, but suspect a whiff of diplomacy in her illness.

Monday evening: "The Mother," adapted from a Maxim Gorki novel and one of Brecht's classic productions, radically restaged by Berghaus. The heroine, a stubborn old prole in Czarist Russia, starts out fiercely opposed to her son's revolutionary activities, and ends up a revolutionary herself. Some of the Ensemble's trademarks survive: big actors still play tiny roles, white light still bathes the stage (Brecht abhorred "atmospheric" lighting), certain crowd scenes have the old massive authority, and Ekkehard Schall sings Hanns Eisler's songs with stark, controlled fury. But in general, décor and acting style have regressed to 1920's expressionism. My qualms multiply.

Tuesday: Animated debate in the Ensemble workshop with group of assistant dramaturgs and the great veteran designer Karl von Appen (responsible for décor of such Ensemble masterworks as "Caucasian Chalk Circle," "Arturo Ui," "Days of the Commune" and "Coriolanus"). A shaggy, commanding figure, von Appen advocates a return to Brechtian principles of all good theater. If one has taken wrong road, progress consists in turning back, not forging ahead. Says he has no interest in purely formal experiments or novelty for novelty's sake. A dramaturg says the Ensemble's new plays no longer emerge, as in the past, from long creative consultation among authors,

(cont'd next page)

(Berliner Ensemble - cont'd)

directors and dramaturgs. Berghaus, trained in opera to stick to the composer's notes, demands "total respect for the poet's words." Should she (I shyly inquire) be replaced? There's a communal shrug. "We might get someone worse," says a member of the group, smiling fatalistically.

Tuesday evening: "Spring Awakening," Wedekind's devastating play (written in 1891) about the dire effects of sexual repression on adolescent lives. It's a very elegant production, to be sure, dressed entirely in black and white against a pure white sky-cloth. And one innovation pays off triumphantly: the children are played by real adolescents (aged 14 to 15) from Berlin schools, including--a nice dynastic touch--Brecht's grand-daughter, Johanna Schall. But the prevalent stylization is such that even scenes that cry out for realism are played abstractly. One would happily applaud this production anywhere else in Germany; here, it reinforces one's fear that a company with a hard-won style of its own has surrendered to eclecticism.

Wednesday: There's a festival of Polish culture in East Berlin, and the Ensemble chips in with the German premiere of "The Day of Freedom," a sentimental Polish melodrama about liberated prisoners-of-war rediscovering their ruined country. For me, a melancholy evening. First nights at the Ensemble used to be passionately awaited, jammed to the roof, with critics flying in from all over Europe. Tonight the house is one-third empty. The sense of continuing work has been lost. The place resembles a laboratory where vital experiments have suddenly been halted in mid-stride.

Thursday: Crucial lunch with Manfred Wekwerth, the controversial outsider, accompanied by Joachim Tenschert (his collaborator on "Coriolanus" and "Days of the Commune"). Wekwerth is leather-jacketed and eagle-eyed, his hair close-cropped like Brecht's, his mind razor-sharp, his manner a blend of impressive assurance and vulnerable charm. I would place him in the mid-forties. It was he who insisted (against Weigel's objections) that Berghaus should join the company to stage the fights in "Coriolanus." "The Berghaus take over," says Tenschert, "was a coup, pure and simple." At first Barbara and Ekkehard Schall thought they could control her; now they have changed their minds. Each production has a different stamp, as in any other theater. Wekwerth's plan was to develop many groups of directors and actors, all basing their work on Brechtian foundations. Under the new regime this has not happened. The company has become "a political throwback." Wekwerth and Tenschert both deplore artistic censorship, but Tenschert sums

(cont'd next page)

(Berliner Ensemble - cont'd) (Berliner Ensemble - cont'd)

up their feelings when he says, "The political situation has become too free if it permits the destruction of the Berliner Ensemble."

Friday: In a sumptuous, book-lined apartment near the theater, Barbara Schall sits full of irritation. She has no time for Ruth Berghaus and is utterly out of sympathy with current policy at her father's theater. She dismisses most of the Ensemble's recent work as a parade of capricious experiments. Her husband Ekkehard joins us and slumps in a chair, radiating bitter agreement. Barbara is a prickly woman, ill-equipped to make diplomatic advances. But she would like to see husband and Wekwerth back together at the Ensemble, working perhaps on something as ambitious as "Macbeth." "Wekwerth used to be very aggressive. But now I feel sure he has matured. If he were to come back, it would be the only answer." I passionately concur.

Saturday: Before flying back to London, I pass a productive hour with a middle-aged dramaturg who has spent twenty years, on and off, serving the Ensemble. He sees two possibilities: (a) let the Ensemble stop pretending to be a Brechtian shrine. End its monopoly of Brecht and let other Berlin theaters perform his plays without embargo. Start a new tradition. Or (b) restore the Brecht tradition. Recall the departed directors, especially Wekwerth, despite the fact that a year ago he wasn't speaking to Schall. "Ruth Berghaus's main achievement," the dramaturg concludes, "is that she has united people who used to be sworn enemies. And your enemy's enemy is your friend."

As I said at the outset, what happens to the Ensemble matters to the theater everywhere. Ever since Brecht died, people have been warning the company against what seems to be generally accepted as the most horrible fate that could befall any institution: namely, that of becoming a museum. For my part, I fail to understand why "museum" is such a terrible word. We urgently need museums to keep the best of the past alive, especially when--as in this instance--the author involved is so recently dead. The true charge against the Ensemble is that it has become a badly run museum. With the right curator, it could not only preserve the Brechtian past but open new windows on the future.

TO: GISELA E. BAHR, DEPT OF GREAL, MIAMI UNIVERSITY, OXFORD, OHIO 45056

I WANT TO REPORT THE PRODUCTION OF THE PLAY _____

INSTITUTION

DATE OF PREMIERE

NO. OF PERFORMANCES

DIRECTOR

MUSIC

SETS

COSTUMES

TRANSL.

CAST

PLEASE REMEMBER TO SEND AT LEAST ONE COPY OF THE PROGRAM TO:

BERTOLT BRECHT-ARCHIV / 104 BERLIN / CHAUSSEESTRASSE 125 / DDR

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☐ DISSERTATION ☐ M.A.THESIS ☐ ARTICLE ☐ BOOK

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Return to
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Dept of Comparative Lit
University of Wisconsin
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53201

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