Howard Players Score in Isben's 'Wild Duck'

WASHINGTON

THE WILD DUCK, a drama in five acts, by the Howard Players, directed by Anne E. Cook, with settings by James E. Gardner, was given Sunday at Spaulding Hall on the Howard University Campus.

CAST

Petterson ..... Keith Perryman
Jensen ..... Alonzo Smith
Ekdal ..... Hilmar L. Jensen Jr.
Mrs. Sorby ..... Jeannette Coulter
Gina Gentle.
Hedvig Ekdal
Thin-haired Gentleman ..... Herbert Fitzgerald
Short-sighted Gentleman ..... Robert White
Gregers Werle ..... Ernest Johnson
Mr. Werle ..... James W. Butcher Jr.
Hjalmar Ekdal ..... Charles White
Gina Ekdal ..... Geraldine Berwood
Hedvig Ekdal ..... Maylia Berry
Mr. Relling ..... Edwin Black
Mr. Molvik ..... Eddie Hopper

Henrik Ibsen is a difficult playwright to interpret and even the most skilled thespians run the risk of lulling their audience to sleep when they tackle one of the Norwegian's masterpieces.

Yet in the opening night presentation of the five-act tragedy, "The Wild Duck," the Howard Players met a difficult Ibsen and countered his pitfalls successfully enough to turn in a highly commendable performance.

The play, which opened Tuesday for a five-night run, traveled a snail's pace for the first two acts. This slow beginning could have seriously threatened the success of the drama had it not been for the sustaining characterization and careful directing.

The playwright rather than the players is the culprit here, for Ibsen, without Shaw's sparkling wit, unravels his drama principally through ponderous exposition in a manner similar to the Britisher's.

Good Directing

Fortunately, Anne Cook, the director, broke up the long passages and the characters, through skillful voice inflection and innuendo, converted drab dialogue into humorous subtleties.

Even after the first two acts, "The Wild Duck" never pranced but jogged along steadily and beautifully in a style fitting the careful foreshadowing Ibsen uses to develop his dramatic climaxes.

The drama evolves around Gregers Werle's revolt against the injustices he believes his father is guilty of. He learns that his father has been the benefactor of Ekdal, his former partner in a fraudulent business deal, for which the latter was sentenced to jail while the former won an acquittal.

He also learns that his father gratuitously set his former partner's son, Hialmar Ekdal, up in the photographic business, and has conveniently engineered him into a marriage with Gina, former housekeeper in the Werle household. Convinced that his father has had a naffair with Gina and was guilty of the fraud of which Ekdal was accused, Gregers leaves his father's household and becomes a tenant in the home of Hialmar.

Chases Life's Illusions

Mentally sick himself, chasing life's illusions, Gregers disrupts the Ekdal household while he sanguinely attempts to effect a true marriage for Hilmar and Gina. He tells Hialmar that Gina was intimate with his father and when Hialmar learns of this from Gina, he is a broken man.

Hedvig, his young daughter, becomes a target of his wrath, though she was his affection until this time. When he learns that Mr. Werle threatened with blindness as is Hedvig, he suspects that she is not his daughter. Egged on by Gregers, Hedvig makes a supreme sacrifice to win her father's affection and this brings the play to its smashing end.

The characterization is on the whole far above average, with several of the youthful players looking very much like professionals. Maylia Berry as Hedvig is superb as is Robert Brown as the role of Gregers.

Miss Berry is Ibsen's Hedvig, a sensitive, joyous, radiant, and mysterious creature. Geraldine Haywood as Gina is occasionally somewhat vague, but on the whole good.

James W. Butcher Jr., who played Mr. Werle, has been seen in better roles, but his dramtic power is expressed in a modulated fashion as the father.

"The Wild Duck" as presented by the Howard Players, was Henrik Ibsen's "The Wild Duck" and that alone is a great achievement. — RC.

Child Pianist Thrills Audience

WASHINGTON

Natalie Hinderas, famed child piano prodigy of Oberlin, Ohio, appeared before a large music-loving audience Monday night in Asbury Methodist Church, in a well-balanced program.

Her second concert here was under the auspices of the Washington Conservatory of Music.

Opening her program with three sonatas by Scarlatti: "E Major," "D Minor" and "B Major" the artist held her audience spellbound with her masterly performance. Her technique in playing is the best displayed in concerts here in a long time. The artist has acquired a dexterity of finger action which is marvelous. Her music sounded in many instances as though human voices were singing.

Lasting Impression

Very few young pianists of any race have achieved what this artist has. Each number she plays stamps an indelible impression of beauty, charm, and interpretation upon one's mind.

The artist presented a full program of 32 selections from memory and two encores. The audience gave prolonged applause.

Her entire repertoire included: "Sonata in F Major" by Mozart; "Carnaval-Opus 9" by Robert Schumann, including 21 scenes; "Rhapsodie, B Minor" by Brahms; "Valse Oublie" by Liszt, and also Gnomenreigen; "Sonata No. 3" by Prokoffeff.

The encores were:

"I Cry to the Lord" by Bach, and "Alboroladel Gracioso" by Ravel. — I.C.B.

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Provident Guild Purchases Sterilizers

Mrs. Isabell Clark, president of the Ladies Guild of Provident Hospital, presents a check for $650 to John L. Proctor, superintendent, completing payment of four sterilizers purchased by the group and installed at a total cost of $1,300. This group has a membership of over 600 members. Its annual gifts to the hospital have included equipment, linens, and appliances. Next year they will supply four ice-making units. Others shown in the picture are O. Hucles, Bessie L. Green, Sara Johnson, Luter, Anna Goodman, secretary; Geneva Brown, Mesdames Columbia L. Jenkins, Alice H. Parkie Cardozo, Edith Lynch, Rosa L. Butler, Janet Gertrude Robinson, George B. Murphy, Fanncy Thompson, Mary Washington and Grace Hoffman.

Dick Huey Dies

The remains of Richard (Dick) Huey, 46, star of radio and stage, were scheduled to be cremated Monday in New York City where he died of a heart attack last Thursday while listening to his favorite morning broadcast. Death came in the midst of his plans for a nation-wide radio program in the interest of race relations. Born in Gretna, La. Huey was educated at Hampton Institute and for years was a prominent figure in New York theatrical circles. He starred in the Broadway hit, "Bloomer Girl." Surviving are his widow, a daughter, and his grandmother.

LAFAYETTE—met at the home of the pesident, Mrs. Eleanor Willoughby. Plans are being made for a supper. The next meeting will be at the home of Miss Elizabeth Rice on Nov. 23.

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