

# Discovers Play Backers Are Hunting Playwrights to Back

## Announcement of Five Golden Awards Is Due

By Burns Mantle.

NEW YORK. — [Special.] — John Golden, whose five awards of \$1,000 each to be announced, has made an interesting discovery. There are at least twenty men of his acquaintance, business men, bankers, retired showmen and such, who are willing to augment his \$5,000 fund with another fund to which they are willing to subscribe \$1,000 each to carry the purposes of the Golden fund just that much further.

In other words, the glamor and investment promise of the theater is still strong enough with these gentlemen to prompt them to risk a modest thousand on the possibility of uncovering another Anderson, or O'Neill, or Kaufman, Cohan, or Coward. But, and here's the rub, promising playwrights are hard to find. Golden himself admits that.

"I can find backers for plays in every block, and backers for playwrights in every corner," excitedly insisted the producer at a committee meeting last week. "But this committee is having a heck of a time finding five prospects of sufficient promise to take over my five thousand."

Following the meeting of the American Theater council a year ago Mr. Golden, being emotionally moved by Sidney Howard's plea for encouragement for the younger playwrights, the boys and girls who were just starting and meeting with nothing but caustic rebuffs, stood up in meeting and declared that he would start an encouragement fund by donating \$5,000 to be awarded in sums of \$1,000 each to the first five young playwrights who would prove to a committee that they really had a talent for their chosen jobs.

Shortly thereafter Mr. Howard selected his committee and word was sent forth to the young and talented that they should submit their evidence, and if it appeared that \$1,000 might help them finish a play, or write a play, they would be put on the Golden pay roll until the \$1,000 was paid and it was to be hoped, a play was produced.

There were, as I recall it, about a hundred applicants. The more promising had had one or more plays produced, or at least accepted by an experienced producer. Several had written plays for their school or college dramatic classes. Some were admitted tyros, but with scripts of discernible promise. Selecting the best of these reduced the list of applicants to around twenty. The winnowing of these got the most promising down to six or eight. The last I heard the chosen five were to be selected from this list and sent home to work.

In the background there were just as many struggling novices as before. They had shown nothing that impressed either the committee or Mr. Golden with the belief that they had anything in the way of a talent that it might pay to encourage.

In addition to the Golden fund there is a Rockefeller Foundation fund that has sent out scouts in search of promising playwrights. The Rockefeller executives are ready, I'm told, to take on as many as eight youngsters and give them a chance to show what they can do for the theater—if they can also convince a committee that they and their talents are worth the gamble.

There is also the Theresa Helburn Bureau of New Plays fund, which is subsidized by five major motion picture companies. This fund also offers cash prizes and fellowship assistance to any number of college graduates and senior students with playwrighting gifts. So far it has been able to turn up only a few really promising student dramatists.

All of which goes to prove something or other, but I don't know just what it is. Naturally the writing of plays calls for a specialized conditioning, and from my experience most of those who attempt it are poorly equipped for the task. Also the standards of the judges are difficult to attain.

If you will draw a little closer, I'll whisper something to you about this play contest business. I have sat in with many number of committees and read many number of manuscripts, and I have discovered that there is really only one thing that sells a play either to a committee or to a producer, and that is the idea, the story, the salable asset of a produced play.

The form, the writing, the knowledge of stage technique, all these count. But they may all be perfect and still mean nothing to the judges searching for a play, unless the idea they are used to project is appealingly human, arrestingly original, or smartly presented in terms of dialog and character.

Most novices think they know a lot more about the theater than they do. Many of them have good ideas but are unable to project them in play form. Many have made a careful study of play scripts and can produce excellent copies of what they have studied, but are lacking in ideas. I think every manuscript should

AMUSEMENTS.

GT. NORTHERN 8:30—See, see, see.

FEDERAL 8:30—See, see, see.

BALLET 8:30—See, see, see.

ANTHONY AND ANNA 8:30—See, see, see.

BLACKSTONE 8:30—See, see, see.

ANTHONY AND ANNA 8:30—See, see, see.

BLACKSTONE 8:30—See, see, see.

ANTHONY AND ANNA 8:30—See, see, see.

BLACKSTONE 8:30—See, see, see.

## MAESTRO'S MUSIC PLEASURES

Eddy Duchin and his band are current attractions in Chicago ballrooms. They'll play at the north side Aragon this afternoon, tonight, and Tuesday and Wednesday nights, and at the south side Trianon Thursday night.



## Cabarets Use 'Names Make News' System

Going on the theory that names make news, it can be set down that such headlines as Ethel Shutta, Sheila Barrett, Eddy Duchin, Zasu Pitts, Tommy Riggs, Abe Lyman, and Paul Draper are now performing in and around Chicago. And, curiously enough, all of them went to work at the same time—day before yesterday.

Except for the two WPA projects, the legitimate theater in these parts this summer is as barren as Sahara. But the night clubs, the movie theaters, the hotels, and the ballrooms are providing the oases.

On Friday night the Chez Paree introduced its second summer revue. Like the preceding show, it has three stars of headlining importance: Abe Lyman and his band of nineteen musicians and entertainers; Ethel Shutta, singing comedienne of many Ziegfeld shows, and Paul Draper, classical tap dancer. Supporting stars are the Cuban ballroom dancers, Paul and Eva Reyes; the singing Rose Blane, and Iris Wayne, an acrobatic tap dancer.

Lyman, a Chicagoan now celebrating his twentieth year as a band leader, is making his first appearance at the Chez Paree, as is Ethel Shutta. New ensemble numbers, produced by Fred Evans, include the Cuban dance, a polka, a Franz Lehár operetta scene, and a fantasy with a melody of Irving Berlin's songs from the motion picture "Alexander's Ragtime Band."

In the new show that opened Friday night the Bon Air Country club, on Milwaukee avenue a mile north of Wheeling, are Sheila Barrett, mimic and character impressionist fresh from London engagements, and Jimmie Grier and his band of fifteen. Grier's musicians have recently been featured on sponsored radio shows, and for the last four years have played at the Biltmore bowl in Hollywood.

Holdovers from the previous show are Rosalean and Seville, a ballroom dance team, and Julie Gibson, singer. New are Billy and Joy Severn, acrobatic dancers. A feature of these ensemble numbers is a potpourri of Irving Berlin's twenty-five years of song hits.

Eddy Duchin and his orchestra have come back for a week's stand at the Aragon and Trianon. They'll be at the north side ballroom until Thursday night, when they are to show off on the south side. Shep Fields and his rippling rhythms will succeed them at the Aragon.

Zasu Pitts of the movies and Tommy Riggs of radio are appearing in person at the Chicago theater. Tommy, in case you don't know, is the ventriloquist who is heard as "Betty Lou" on Rudy Vallee's programs.

Fall fashions are to go on parade this week. Starting Tuesday, feminine foibles in the new modes will be introduced by style creators of Chicago in the course of the ice show at the Sherman hotel's College Inn. At the same time the Swiss skating stars, Helga and Inge Brandt, will put on a new routine, with Franki Masters continuing at the baton.

Michael Loring, baritone, has left the Velox and Yolanda supporting cast at the Empire room of the Palmers. He was notified early last week that he was to begin rehearsals for the new Max Gordon musical in New York, and he started eastward after the Wednesday night performance. Attracting almost as much attention as Velox and Yolanda are C. Ray Smith's puppets. Most of the dinner patrons at the Empire room wait for the 10 o'clock or "little show," where they become absorbed in the gyrations and goings-on of the life-like marionettes.

New at the Villa Moderne, north suburban café on the Skokie highway at County Line road, are the Caninos, a dance team billed as the king and queen of the rumba. They are dancing three times nightly. Dance music is by Carlos Molina and

## GIRL OF MANY VOICES

Sheila Barrett, caricaturist and character impressionist, heads the new show at the Bon Air Country club, a mile north of Wheeling on Milwaukee avenue. She arrived Friday night, after a series of engagements in England.



## Mummers Plan Production of Original Plays

Director Sherman Marks of the Chicago Mummers theater lets it be known that he will produce one or more original plays next season. He advises writers of scripts that so far haven't seen the footlights to submit them to him in the Auditorium building at 431 South Wabash avenue. Mr. Marks relates that the Mummers are considering a Shakespearean play, and to that end are operating a Shakespearean laboratory this summer, with the students undergoing intensive training in "Hamlet," "Romeo and Juliet," "Macbeth," and the like.

Chicago isn't the only city suffering from near-starvation for lack of legitimate fare. Arrival of mid-summer on Broadway found the menu pared down to seven dramatic shows and two musicals. "Room Service" closed a week ago, after 486 performances, and "The Two Bouquets" followed suit. But "Tobacco Road" and "You Can't Take It With You" are still going after the long distance records.

It is announced that the Southwestern Indiana Civic association, 242 East Twelfth street, Indianapolis, will pay \$1,000 for a play, of three or more acts, written around Abraham Lincoln's life in the Hoosier state from 1816 to 1830.

Verne Buck and the State-Lake theater yesterday celebrated their fifth anniversary under the Jones, Linick and Schaefer management. Five years in one spot is looked upon as a new record in Chicago, even eclipsing the marks made by Paul Ash and Leopold Spitalny. Ash had a total run of four years here, but that included two theaters; Spitalny was in the loop a long time, but he also moved around. Since the start of his reign on both the stage and in the orchestra pit at the State-Lake, Maestro Buck has played to more than 12,000,000 patrons.

"Power," heralded as a living newspaper, will follow "Anthony and Anna," the Federal theater comedy at the Blackstone, and Gilbert and Sullivan's "The Mikado" will supplant the "Federal Ballet" at the Great Northern. This was made known last week, at the same time the final weeks of Chicago's sole surviving summer attractions were announced.

"Power" is new to Chicago. It is being brought here from New York, where it created something of a stir. "The Mikado" has been familiar to theatergoers for generations, but this production of it will have at least two novelties: it will be performed by the Negro unit of the Federal Theater, and it is to be a "screamed" version.

Players of the Lakes, a company composed of De Paul university drama school students, together with a few graduates who have appeared in New York productions, started a short season on Echo lake, near Mercer, Wis., Thursday evening. "Night Must Fall" was the opening bill; "Fresh Fish" and "The Late Christopher Bean" are scheduled for successive weeks. The plays are sponsored by the Mercer Women's Civic club and are given in a new \$80,000 log cabin theater. The group will move to Eagle River in August.

A summer program of talks, cakes, and coffee was begun last Sunday at Tallahassee, estate of Architect Frank Lloyd Wright. Each Sunday afternoon pictures will be shown at the playhouse, and afterward the visitors will be taken on a tour of the estate. Today's program is a screening of Gogol's "The Inspector General." Tallahassee is situated just south of the Wisconsin river on highway 43. It is near the village of Spring Green, Wis., about 40 miles west of Madison.

A plan for serving the entire midwest was announced last week by Hallie Flanagan, national director of the Federal theater. She spent the week in Chicago, going over plans with the local directors. John McGee, associate director, will head the western program, with offices in Chicago. Harry Minton will become director of production, and Herbert Ashton Jr. will become director of operations. E. Kendall Davis is to be administrative officer. Centralized

## Vaudeville Bills

The Three Stooges, with Eddie Loughon, and the Peters sisters, sepiu singers and dancers, are headliners in the stage show at the Palace theater this week. Other acts are Jean Carroll and Buddy Howe, comedians; Frank Paris and his marionettes, and the Fredsons, acrobats. Phil Harris and his orchestra will open at the Palace next Friday.

Jolly Gillette, diminutive and youthful singer who has been heard on the radio with Milton Berle, heads the current bill at the State-Lake theater. With her are Don Zelaya, South American philosophical pianist; Vernon Rathbun's Revels, a miniature revue; the Three Freshmen, comedians; the Banfields, novelty act; and Verne Buck's State-Lake Sweethearts.

Zasu Pitts, movie comedienne, and Tommy Riggs, the voice of "Betty Lou" on the radio, are appearing in person at the Chicago theater. Miss Pitts' straight man is Charlie Hall, a stage veteran who in recent years was the stooge for the Baron Munchausen radio series. The bill also offers Wayne Van Dyne, singer; the Three Chocolates, swing dancers, and the Crane Twins. Beginning next Friday the stage attraction at the Chicago will be Rudy Vallee and his Connecticut Yankees.

production here and extensive touring figure in the new plan, although theater units of various types will be left in present production centers.

The second play in the Coach House theater's summer series at Oconomowoc, Wis., is "Love on the Equator." It will open Tuesday night and continue through the week. This drama of British South Africa was written by Thomas Uzzell, former magazine editor. Helen Ticken of Chicago, who was responsible for "Wings of a Century" at the World's Fair, is directing "Love on the Equator."

An opportunity to "get into the movies" will be offered this afternoon at Riverview park, when the camera crew of Chicago's New Century committee will shoot scenes for "Your Chicago," motion picture now in production. Beginning at 2 o'clock, the camera men will tour the Midway. The picture is designed to show in news reel fashion a complete story of life in this city.

At the opening performance of the Berkshire Symphony festival at Tanglewood, near Stockbridge, Mass., on Aug. 4, the Cecilia society chorus of Boston will join with Dr. Serge Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony orchestra in Bach's cantata "Ein Feste Burg Ist Unser Gott" and in Beethoven's Ninth symphony. Two soloists have been announced, Jeanette Vreeland, soprano, and Anna Kaskas, Metropolitan opera contralto.

## Symphonic Festival.

Fritz Scheff, operetta star of a generation ago, will return to the stage soon in "I Am Different." Tallulah Bankhead's new vehicle. Her last important activity was in a revival of Victor Herbert's "Mile Modiste" in 1929.

## Fritz's Return.

BOUCHE'S VILLA VENICE  
America's Smartest Theater Restaurant  
MILWAUKEE AVE., ROUTE 21  
AT DES PLAINES RIVER

NOW AT POPULAR PRICES  
to All Chicagoans & Visitors  
Never a Cover Charge  
SUPERB DINNER \$2.50  
(Except Saturdays)  
Dinner Served 11:45, 7:11 Closing  
Including ALBERT BOUCHE'S  
Own Creation With  
40 ARTISTS Presented  
3 Times Nightly  
Frankie Quartelle's  
Orchestra

FINEST OF DRINKS FROM 50c  
The only GARDEN BAR in the world  
surrounded by acres of beautiful  
landscaping, beautifully landscaped. Come  
and be convinced that the VILLA VENICE  
offers the finest dining in the Midwest at the  
LOWEST POSSIBLE PRICE.  
VENETIAN GONDOLAS floating  
on the Des Plaines River  
at 5:15 p.m. & 6:30 p.m.  
10 MINUTES FROM ARLINGTON TRACK  
45 MINUTES FROM LOOP  
20 MINUTES FROM SHERIDAN ROAD  
Phone NEWCASTLE 3034  
or Wheeling 8

Dance  
TODAY  
(Matinee and Evening)  
Eddy  
DUCHIN  
and his  
ORCHESTRA  
at The Air-Conditioned  
ARAGON  
Lawrence out near Broadway  
and at the  
TRIANON  
Cottage Grove at 62nd  
Bill CARLSEN  
and his popular band  
6:30 till 12:30

## Music Calendar

TODAY.  
Choral concert in five forest preserves, 4. For details see Metropolitan section.  
Chicago Symphony orchestra, Eugene Goossens conducting; Ravinia park, 4.  
Jazz Bojowski orchestra, Jerry Bojowski, conductor; Valerie Krenz-Glowacka, soprano; Grant park, 8.  
Oscar W. Anderson and his band; Lilian Cole, soprano; Freda Draper, contralto; Jackson park, 8.  
Bainum's band; Glenn Cline Bainum, conductor; Olive Arthur, soprano; Roy Schuler, baritone; Homer Phillips, trombonist; Lincoln park, 8.

MONDAY.  
Col. Armin F. Hand and his American Legion band; Gerdine Ackley, soprano; Grant park, 8.  
Rudolph Ganz and Mollie Margolies, duopianist; Chicago Musical college, 8.

TUESDAY.  
Ralph Niekhus, tenor; Rose Goldberger, pianist; De Paul university little theater, 8:15.  
Isler Solomon orchestra, Isler Solomon, conductor; Sonia Sharnova, contralto; Grant park, 8.  
Wanda Paul, pianist, in lecture-recital on Karol Szymanowski; Chicago Musical college, 8.

WEDNESDAY.  
Chicago Conservatory of Music String quartet; Israel Baker, violinist; O. Stuart Barker in lecture on voice training; Kimball hall, 8.  
Chicago Civic Opera orchestra, Rudolph Ganz conducting; Helen Jepson, soprano; Grant park, 8.  
Illinois Symphony orchestra, Isler Solomon, conductor; Sonia Sharnova, contralto; Wilmette amphitheater, 8:15.

THURSDAY.  
Cavalli's Symphonic band, P. A. Cavallo, conductor; Polonia Mottin choir, Zdzislaw Skutkowski, conductor; Polish Literary and Dramatic circle folk dancers; Grant park, 8.  
Rudolph Ganz, pianist; Leon Sametini, violinist; Chicago Musical college, 8.  
Illinois Symphony orchestra, Isler Solomon, conductor; Sonia Sharnova, contralto; University of Chicago, 8:15.  
Chicago Symphony orchestra, Eugene Ormandy conducting; Ravinia park, 8:30.

FRIDAY.  
Woman's Symphony orchestra, Rudolph Ganz, conducting; Dorothy Crost and Berenice Jacobson, duo-pianists; Grant park, 8.  
Band concert; Garfield park, 8.  
Chicago Symphony orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, conductor; Ravinia park, 8:30.

SATURDAY.  
Rico Marcelli Symphony orchestra, Rico Marcelli, conductor; Frederick Schweppe, baritone; Grant park, 8.  
Chicago Symphony orchestra, Eugene Ormandy conducting; Jascha Heifetz, violinist; Ravinia park, 8:30.

SUNDAY.  
July 31.—Chicago Symphony orchestra, Eugene Ormandy conducting; Jascha Heifetz, violinist; Ravinia park.  
July 31.—W-G-N orchestra, Henry Weber, conductor; Kathryn Wiiter, soprano; Grant park.  
July 31 and nightly thereafter until Sept. 6.—Free concert in Grant park.  
July 31 and every Sunday until Sept. 4.—Free band concert in Jackson and Lincoln parks.  
July 31 and every Sunday until Aug. 28.—Free choral concert in five forest preserves.  
Aug. 1.—Chicago Symphony orchestra; Albert Spalding, violinist; Grant park.  
Aug. 2.—Chicago Symphony orchestra; Grant park.  
Aug. 3.—Benny Goodman and swing orchestra (courtesy of Balaban and Katz); Ravinia park.  
Aug. 4 and every Wednesday until Aug. 31.—Chicago Symphony orchestra; Wilmette amphitheater.  
Aug. 4, 5, 6, and 7.—Chicago Symphony orchestra, Eugene Ormandy conducting; Ravinia park.  
Aug. 5 and every Friday until Sept. 2.—Free band concert in Garfield park.  
Aug. 20.—Chicago Music Festival; Soldiers field.

be accompanied by a 300 word synopsis of the idea that the play aims to sell. If this stabs attention, the talent of the writer for putting it in play form can be determined by reading a single act of his script. If he is then discovered to be inventive in idea, gifted in character analysis, and skilled in writing he is worth a backer's chance. Prices and fellowships, in other words, should be awarded on the promise of the writer rather than solely on the merits of what he has already written.

Playwrights who have succeeded are playwrights who have persisted in the face of failure in almost every instance. Persisted until they have sold an idea to a producer, compromised with that producer's own idea

AMUSEMENTS.  
RAVINA FESTIVAL  
Chicago Symphony Orchestra  
Eugene Goossens, Guest Conductor  
Today at 4 p. m.—Mendelssohn, Borowski, et al. (Sym. No. 2).  
Tomorrow at 4 p. m.—Mendelssohn, Borowski, et al. (Sym. No. 2).  
Box office telephone 10-1100 (no toll) or Highland Park 1236.

Eugene Ormandy, Guest Conductor  
Today at 8:30 p. m.—Russian program (Glinka, Tchaikovsky Sym. No. 5, Moussorgsky).  
Friday, July 28 at 8:30 p. m.—Russian program (Glinka, Tchaikovsky Sym. No. 5, Moussorgsky).  
Saturday, July 29 at 8:30 p. m.—Russian program (Glinka, Tchaikovsky Sym. No. 5, Moussorgsky).  
Sunday, July 30 at 8:30 p. m.—Russian program (Glinka, Tchaikovsky Sym. No. 5, Moussorgsky).  
Box office telephone 10-1100 (no toll) or Highland Park 1236.

BLACKSTONE 8:30—See, see, see.  
ANTHONY AND ANNA 8:30—See, see, see.

BLACKSTONE 8:30—See, see, see.

ANTHONY AND ANNA 8:30—See, see, see.

BLACKSTONE 8:30—See, see, see.

ANTHONY AND ANNA 8:30—See, see, see.

BLACKSTONE 8:30—See, see, see.

ANTHONY AND ANNA 8:30—See, see, see.

BLACKSTONE 8:30—See, see, see.

ANTHONY AND ANNA 8:30—See, see, see.

BLACKSTONE 8:30—See, see, see.

ANTHONY AND ANNA 8:30—See, see, see.

BLACKSTONE 8:30—See, see, see.

ANTHONY AND ANNA 8:30—See, see, see.

BLACKSTONE 8:30—See, see, see.

ANTHONY AND ANNA 8:30—See, see, see.

BLACKSTONE 8:30—See, see, see.

ANTHONY AND ANNA 8:30—See, see, see.

BLACKSTONE 8:30—See, see, see.

ANTHONY AND ANNA 8:30—See, see, see.

BLACKSTONE 8:30—See, see, see.

ANTHONY AND ANNA 8:30—See, see, see.

BLACKSTONE 8:30—See, see, see.

ANTHONY AND ANNA 8:30—See, see, see.

BLACKSTONE 8:30—See, see, see.

ANTHONY AND ANNA 8:30—See, see, see.

BLACKSTONE 8:30—See, see, see.

ANTHONY AND ANNA 8:30—See, see, see.

## Co-Stars' Reunion

William Gaxton and Victor Moore, who were co-stars in "Of These I Sing" and "Anything Goes," will get together again in a musical show which Vinton Freedley intends to produce next season. This will be a lyrical version of a play called "Clear All Wires," which was acted in New York in 1932. The central character is said to bear a resemblance to Floyd Gibbons during his war correspondent phase.

## Actors' Union

The actor union's paid up membership was 3,287 on March 31, compared with 2,994 for the previous year. This year's total membership stands at 4,595, compared with 4,863 for 1937. There were 577 new members this season, as against 600 last year. The chorus girl union's paid up membership was 552, a drop of 233 for the year.

## Prize Omitted

The council of the Dramatists guild has decided to withhold this year's Roi Cooper Megrue prize of \$500 for the best comedy of the season. The comic plays of the New York season were not considered up to the standard by which "Having Wonderful Time" won last year's prize.

New at the Villa Moderne, north suburban café on the Skokie highway at County Line road, are the Caninos, a dance team billed as the king and queen of the rumba. They are dancing three times nightly. Dance music is by Carlos Molina and

America's Smartest Entertainment

**Jimmie GRIER** and his Famous Hollywood Orchestra

**Sheila BARRETT** International Star of Mimicry

**JULIE GIBSON**

**ROSALAN & SEVILLE**  
BILLY AND JOY SEVERN  
16 Bon-Air Glamour Girls

3 SHOWS NITELY

\$2.50 minimum per person every night includes food or beverage.

NEVER A COVER CHARGE

**Bon-Air**  
Ultra Theatre Country Club  
ON MILWAUKEE AVE. 1 MILE NORTH OF WHEELING  
CHICAGO, PHONE NEWCASTLE 1081  
WHEELING 93

MIKE FRITZEL & JOE JACOBSON present

**ABE LYMAN** and his Orchestra  
**ETHEL SHUTTA** Comedienne  
**PAUL DRAPER** Dance Stylist

**RAUL & EVA REYES** • **ROSE BLANE** • **IRIS WAYNE**

**CHEZ PAREE**  
610 FAIRBANKS COURT DELAWARE 3434

40 COVER CHARGE  
At Any Time  
Minimum charge, covering entire evening. Week days, \$2.50 per person (Sat. & Sun., \$3.50). May be used for Dinner or Beverage.

Dance  
TODAY  
(Matinee and Evening)  
Eddy  
DUCHIN  
and his  
ORCHESTRA  
at The Air-Conditioned  
ARAGON  
Lawrence out near Broadway  
and at the  
TRIANON  
Cottage Grove at 62nd  
Bill CARLSEN  
and his popular band  
6:30 till 12:30