# The Dalhousie Gazette

## Views
## Reviews
## and Interviews

# books:
## sheila walton

Well, Mary McCarthy's The Group, has finally appeared in paperback and those of us who didn't want to gamble on the hard-cover edition have finally found out what all the fuss was about. Despite the rave notices the book gives itself, I do not think that this is "clearly one of the best novels of the decade."

Of course it is always difficult to have a sense of perspective about a novel that is so close to us in time; but I suspect that although the book is an intensely interesting social document, it fails as fiction. It may be that my definition of the novel is old-fashioned; nevertheless, the book depends for its momentum, less on plot than on what can best be described as its element of gossip.

FOR WOMEN ONLY

Lionel Trilling says somewhere or other that art satisfies by doing what we dare not, and at a certain crude and obvious level, this statement describes what Mary McCarthy is doing in The Group. Because it is a book primarily about women, and about a certain class of woman, The Group tends to appeal to a limited audience. As far as I can tell, Miss McCarthy finds her most vocal admirers among that same group of young college-educated women about whom she writes, and perhaps their admiration stems from the fact that her characters do what the average Dalhousie female undergraduate does not dare to do (see recent sex poll). The Group satisfies her curiosity about a variety of interesting subjects, from losing one's virginity (Chapter 2) to the merits of breast-feeding versus bottle-feeding one's baby (Chapter 10). These "topics" are discussed in such a clinical manner, that at times it is more like reading a manual for brides-to-be than a novel, particularly in the episode in which Dottie goes to a birth-control clinic. It all sounds the diagrams. Yet as social criticism, this coldly pragmatic section is brilliantly clever, since it documents a certain point of view in American society.

POINT OF VIEW

The mention of point of view suggests one of the more intriguing aspects of technique in this novel. Very often the narrative is in the third person, but from the point of view of a particular character. This technique eliminates the personality of the narrator but permits unlimited opportunity for irony, since the reader's impression is of eavesdropping on the stream of consciousness of someone other than Mary McCarthy. At its best, this is highly effective:

> But if she could not match dear Gus, like a paint sample or snippet of material, with any of the charted neuroses the opposite, she found to her dismay, was true of herself. She seemed to be suffering from all of them. She was compulsive, obsessional, oral, anal, hysterical, and anxious . . . A sense of guilt transpired from her Sunday-night washing ritual, and she allayed her anxiety by the propitiatory magic of ironing and darning. The plants on her window sills were the children she could not have..

This character is Polly Andrews, the member of the group who comes closest to being a heroine, in the sense that she is the only one who might be termed a successful human being.

Unfortunately, Polly becomes less and less believable as the novel progresses. Polly has something for which one suspects the novelist has a sneaking admiration; Polly has class. She manages to live genteely without the curse of materialism, but when she is described as making pomander balls and home-made jellies for Christmas presents, the wryly ironic portrayal in the paragraph quoted above becomes disappointingly saccharine.

BEHAVIORISM

It is perhaps the loss of her characteristic irony which makes Miss McCarthy's presentation of Polly fall short. This irony provides the prevailing tone in the novel and is one of the strongest elements of unity in the work. This is in keeping with the fact that The Group is a social novel. It might even be termed a novel of manners, since the behaviour of the characters is so important to themselves and, presumably, to the author. The women in the novel commit errors in taste, not sins: Norine and Kay are cases in point. It is ironical that Kay is given a tasteful funeral, in contrast with her own tasteless wedding. It is ironical, too, that Lakey, the pivotal figure in the group turns out to be a Lesbian, but apparently makes no breach of etiquette thereby.

The Group presents a rather despairing picture of life among the upper middle classes. These supposedly well-educated females are adrift in a world controlled by men, but the men except for Harold, are powers, not distinct personalities. It is in its exposure of the reality behind the illusion of the Vassar '33 Class Notes that the strength of this novel lies, and it is Mary McCarthy's acuteness in recording social situations rather than her ability to conceive and execute a plot which makes the book worth reading.

# theater
## mike walton
# Leon Major

After a conversation which took up most of his valuable afternoon, the thing that impressed me most about Leon Major, besides his patience with bumbling student reporters, was the complete absence of pretentious clap-trap in anything he said. This is surprising in view of his position as Artistic Director - in itself a pretentious title - in a repertory theatre unique in English Canada, which has actually, miraculously, made box-office headway in this wretched city, of all places.

Yet the pretentiousness of his title is not at all reflected in the man. Major has no delusions about being a cultural messiah to the Maritimes. He seems too busy getting things done to spend much time pondering abstractions. He has ideals, but they must answer to such practical criteria as ' is it good theatre? and ' is it/ good box-office?'

Major's practical nature and infectious energy combined with Shakespeare, himself a thoroughly practical dramatist, to produce this season what must be one of the definitive versions of Twelfth Night. We would certainly endorse the project of 'raising the cultural level of Halifax'. Major who would scoff at such a phrase, is also showing that such a project is not beyond the scope of concrete action. He and the Neptune Theatre deserve the full support of the city and the university.

POST MORTEM

Major described himself as 'happy, but not satisfied' with the past season. As far as the company is concerned, ' on the whole, each actor has improved, and therefore adds a greater contribution to the ensemble,' He was optimistic about public response to the Neptune citing an increase in attendance of about 3,000 for this year's summer season, over the corresponding July to October period last year. He pointed out that the gain is especially significant since although there were the same number of performances this summer, there were actually fewer plays. He felt, then, that there was evidence that 'the theatre is establishing itself as an institution in the community.'

He was emphatic in asserting that the Neptune is working towards its own policy, and not modelling itself on the Stratford or any other theatre, 'Our initial policy', he said, 'was to produce primarily new plays and those classics which have some contribution to make to our society. But we are limited by the amount of money we have to spend' unfortunately there is no guarantee that six new plays will take in money.'

WANTED - NEW PLAYS

New plays are apparently something of a problem. Major indicated a sheaf of manuscripts in his bookcase. 'We have a whole pile of new plays, but we don't have time to work with the playwright; it takes months to work with an author to get a script ready for production, so that it's impossible at present to produce a play by an inexperienced playwright.' We hinted that on the other hand, there was no excuse for producing a Broadway play like Come Blow Your Horn. Major retorted that 'the Broadway type of play can't be ignored. . . . a theatre can't do King Lear every night.'

THE FUNCTION OF THEATRE

Though, not a visionary, Major does have a firm idea of where the theatre belongs in its society, and what it should be doing there. 'Its first function is to entertain, which can mean many things . . . the second involves fulfilling a responsibility to its public. Seminars and workshops will be continued for those who want them. These proejcts involve a two-way contribution between the public and the theatre. The third function involves a responsibility to education.' Here Major produced a brief which he had been preparing for the Halifax Board of Education, stressing the need for students of English to enjoy the dramas of Shakespeare as well as learn about them in class. He suggests closer cooperation between the schools and the Neptune in order to develop discrimination and taste for drama amongst high school students.

Major also believes in close cooperation between his theatre and this university. He expressed a hope that there would be another joint seminar next summer, but 'probably not on Shakespeare'. He noted that attendance at last summer's Shakespeare seminar, held jointly by the Neptune and the University, was disappointing. Leitch is a fine scholar', he said, ' and should have been heard'.

CROSS - FERTILIZATION

He expressed enthusiasm over the Dalhousie Drama Workshop 'Any university has a responsibility to make its students aware of the arts one way or another, to help the student discover, investigate and wonder at great works. Dalhousie is fortunate in having a professional theatre here, and we are fortunate in having the university, as a possible source of talent and a source of informed, constructive criticism. University people have a passionate belief in argument which is good for theatre'. Major said he looks forward 'to a point where the Neptune can engage in a practical exchange with the university'. Walk-on parts, for instance, could be played by student actors.

We asked Major if he intended to continue with the Neptune. He replied, 'Any person who works in a creative medium depending so much on contact with the outside world can contribute more by going out into it occasionally and coming back with fresh ideas... so it depends on whether the Board will ask me back, and on whether I'm feeling 'dry'. But in any case I don't wish to break my connection with this theatre'.

I was impressed, in the conversation, with the fact that Major does a fair amount of scholarly work in preparing his plays. For Twelfth Night, for instance, he consulted both Folio and Quarto versions and investigated the original staging of the play. His illuminating comments on this play showed that he could make a valuable contribution to a university Shakespeare seminar.

HARD WORK

Another impressive fact that emerged from the interview is that theatre is damned hard work. Although Come Blow Your Horn, with an already established script and style, only required three weeks of preparation and four weeks of rehearsal, the other plays this season presented more of a problem. 'I spent two and a half months in the preparation of Twelfth Night alone,' Major told us. Hard labour and long hours are also part of theatre work. 'Anybody who calls theatre 'sissy' should work here a week,' Major suggested, 'if they could last that long. When we are building sets, for instance we have to get up at eight and put in as many as eighteen hours a day'.

There's a challenge, philistines.

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# fiction:

By DAVID GIFFIN

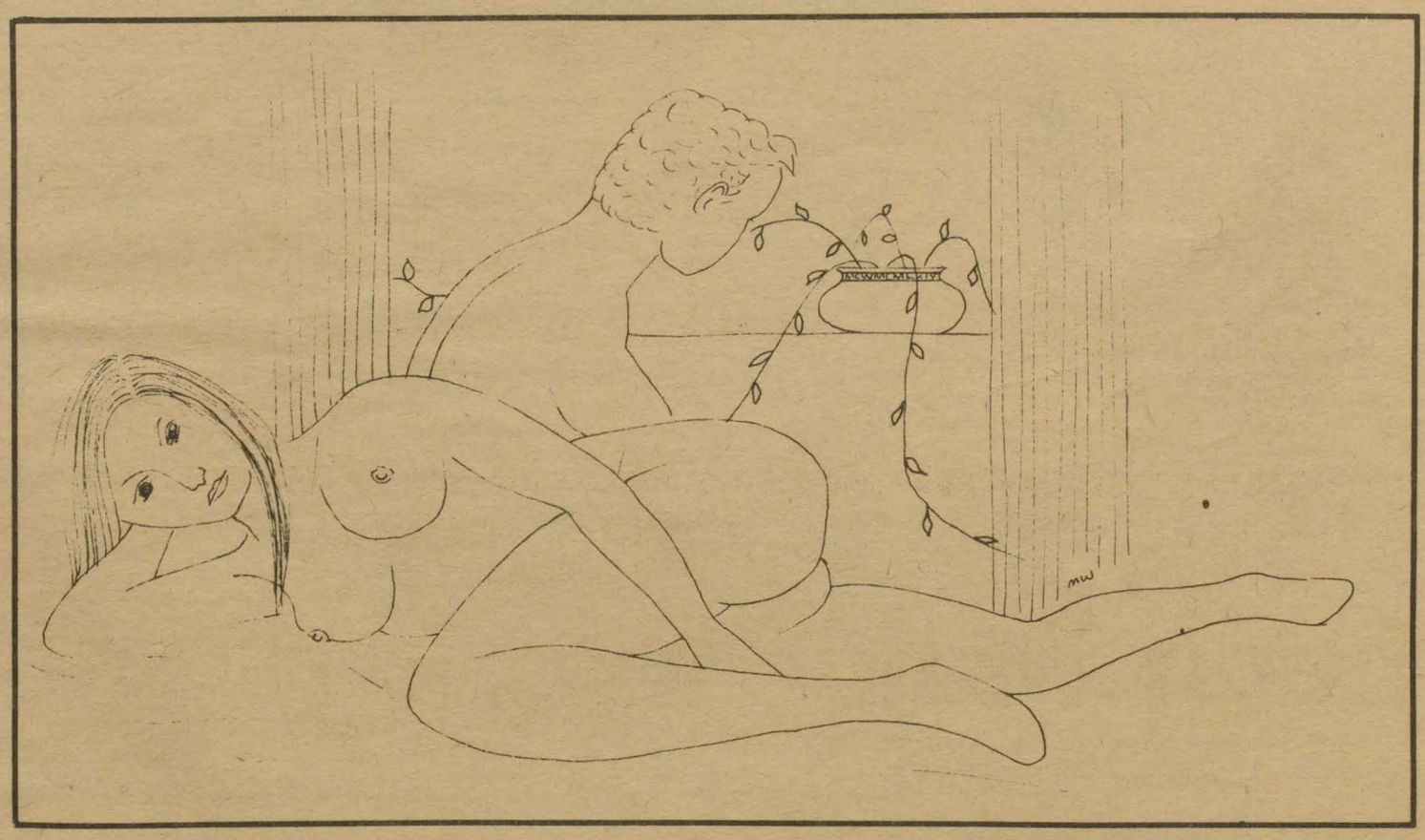
# Where Have the Days of Spring Fled?

At seventeen Shelly Thorpe had borne a son. The baby was taken for adoption; she had ceased to think about it almost at once. She went on to university, enjoying the atmosphere of college life. She had even contemplated post-graduate study, but her parents at length lost patience with her, and the necessity of earning her own way forced her into a business career. Seven years, three affairs later, she decided to enter another profession. She seldom regretted the decision.

She lay with one arm across her abdomen and like a ballet dancer, stretched her leg. Her head turned on the pillow toward the boy at her side. He showed not the least uneasiness at her admiration, and found it easy to return her gaze. She smiled, and said, softly, "How old are you?"

"Nineteen".

"Nineteen," she sighed.



"Anything the matter with that?" he said. "Or maybe you're worried about corrupting the morals of our youth?" This she found really funny and she laughed with him. He reached over and tugged at a strand of her hair. She slapped at his hand and he gave up, still laughing.

"No. It's just . . ." Her hesitation hung in the air like smoke. Then, "I had a child once. He'd be your age now."

The statement didn't startle him. He was vaguely flattered that she was confiding in him. This, he realized, was not something she told everyone. At the same time, it came to him as a surprise that he had estimated her age so well. He found it impossible to think of her as having been a mother. He felt that he should say something.

"You're wondering what happened to him. He was put out for adoption. I hope to hell they found him a good place. I guess he deserves something". She lay silent awhile, staring at the ceiling, "What time is it?"

"Four thirty . . . ah . . . five . . . six . . . Four thirty-eight."

"Pretty near time for you to toddle off, little man."

"Uh." He lay back whining like a child, "But mommy, I don't wanna."

"She laughed. "Well, want to or not, you're going." She moved beside him and got up.

"Whither away, blithe spirit?"

Over her shoulder she threw back at him, "To the can, little man." He was about to say something, in reply but checked himself.

When she came back, she was wearing a robe, hidden in the whipped-cream folds. Her soft smile pleased him.

"Could I have your phone number?" His politeness was genuine. She recognized this and felt grateful. She took a slip of paper from the table and wrote it down for him.

"Now back to your studies, little man."

"Mind if I eat first?"

"Not at all. Glad to see you're not trying to live on love alone." They both laughed. As he turned to leave, she reached out for his arm, "Tell me your name again."

He was caught off guard. "Timothy Adam Harding, esquire. For God's sake, call me Tim."

"Is your father the lawyer?"

"Yes, but he's not my real father. I was adopted, too."

For a moment her face clouded. "Why didn't you say so before?" she asked.

"Didn't think it was important. Besides, I had other things on my mind." He smiled at her and she felt warm. "Well, I'm off." He waved to her from the door and was gone.

In the weeks that followed they met occasionally. She grew to like him as a person; was interested by what he told her of his life in college. She thought again of her own college days, and he soon learned that she had been to university. This he found more surprising than the fact that she had a baby. She saw his puzzled look and asked him what was so funny; lots of girls go to university and some learn even more than what's in the books, little man. He laughed then at her seriousness.

He was in her apartment on a March Saturday. Rain fell, pounding the city. He went to the window. Mood and the weather matched tones for them both.

"Ah, spring, spring. Where have the days of spring fled? Aye, where are they?" He spoke softly in the dim room. The rush of rain against the windows drowned the sound of his voice. She stirred on the bed.

"Get me a glass of water?" she murmured. For a moment she couldn't understand why he laughed. He went into the kitchen and got it for her, aware of the water's iciness on his hand. She sat up when he returned, looking almost child-like, smiling at him. "Thanks."

He sat down beside her as he drank. "Where did you have the baby? The quiet question hung suspended for an instant. She was not expecting it and did not know how to reply.

"What do you mean?" she said to fill the pause.

"Here? In this city?"

"No. Montreal. Why?"

"When?"

"What do you mean, when?" She was becoming angry. "What right have you to ask all these damn questions?"

"When?" His voice bore the edge of insistence.

She put the glass down and flung her arms wide in exasperation. "Oh, for the love of . . . in May, May something or other. Why don't you get the hell out of here and come back some time when it's not raining?"

He got up. "Yeah. Sure". He left her door signalled it, and she was prepared when she opened to admit him. He stared at her dully as he brushed past into the room. He sank onto the couch and without waiting for her to follow him began to mumble, "Got to know, I have got to know," lengthening the words out in a slur.

She stood over him, neutral.

Slowly, as though it required the maximum of concentration, he spoke. "I have to know," he repeated, "the day. You mush . . . must remember the day." His voice trailed off.

"Would you mind telling me first what it is you're talking about?" Her tone was firm, commanding.

He laughed foolishly. Then "You know what I'm talking about. You know." He nodded solemnly. "Baby. Got to know about the baby." He paused as if trying to remember something.

Suddenly it struck her. She found the idea so enormously ridiculous, so astoundingly absurd that she could not feel shocked by it. The magnitude of the boy's guilt resembled in her mind the burden carried by an ant, its significance as great. It was so outrageously funny that she could not even laugh. Slowly she realized the torment he must be in. Oh, little man; poor, poor little man.

She began to stroke his hair gently, softly; but when he became aware of what she was doing, he thrust her hand away and rose savagely to face her. But before he could say anything he retched.

Afterward, she would have helped him to his feet, but he pushed her away. He said nothing, not a word, and staggered out. She cleaned as best she could the carpet and the davenport, not repelled by the task, simply neutral. She went to the window to feel the touch of spring. Oh Shelley, Shelley, she thought, all things are possible, but nothing is probable for very long.

He was drunk. The ringing at him from the window go splashing off into the night. He swam out of her sight before she realized that the room was growing cold.

She heard nothing from him for weeks. In April, the weather suddenly turned warm; she felt cheered by the youth of the world. It was in April that he came to her.

THE AUTHOR: David Giffin a graduate student in English, has been a regular contributor of critical articles to the Gazette. He also writes poetry and haunts movie theatres.

# MUSIC RANT 1:

DOUGLAS BARBOUR

# CULTURE Down Among The Zombies

Ortega Y. Gassett in his book The Revolt of the Masses, was one of the first thinkers of our time to react to the problem of a partically literate and infranchised mass public. He pointed out that this mass was destroying all the old artistic and cultural values of Civilization. Yet they erected no new values of any worth; rather they called for what is known as popular culture, in which the values are akin to the taste of pablum as compared to Filet Mignon. Ortega blamed the mass for the decline in culture. He firmly believed that it had caused the loss of all cultivated values in his world; and the picture of society he painted forty years ago is as bleak today, perhaps even more so.

But there was a flaw in his reasoning, as C. Wright Mills points out in The Power Elite: Ortega allows the mass more power than it really has. The initiative that Ortega believes the mass to have is denied them by the very fact that they are a mass rather than a public. A public can take initiative, can have power by virtue of the fact that it is composed of responsible and intelligent citizens. A mass cannot, because it is an amorphous entity composed of ciphers unable to react as individuals, who are moved, as a mass, by those in control - the leaders in the political, industrial and military establishment.

All of whom have something to sell, be it themselves, their ideas, or their products, to the widest possible market. It is for this reason that they wish to have power over the mass, and want a mass rather than a society of responsible individuals. They want power, not necessarily as a dictator wants it, merely to promote their own security and economic interest. Thus they turn to the mass media, not for communications, but for propaganda.

Influence over the mass can best be gained through these media, especially if they are disengaged from reality. Thus popular culture becomes a fact. It is not art, but entertainment. It is not designed to stimulate thought; it is aimed at dulling the mind, at bringing about a state of euphoria, but all on false premises. Satisfaction of a sort is provided, but it is the pseudo-satisfaction of masturbation. Art, which appeals to a select group (not always the same group); the point is that no work of art can be universal in appeal), is of no use to those in power because it cannot be used to sell anything. It
…t reach the masses for someone or some-
…else. And the mass is to be kept as it is,
…d uncomplaining.

So it appears that Ortega analysed the results correctly; the vast inertia of the masses crushing any hint of individuality in a person, the conformity of thought and belief, the dull, deadening effect of the mass media upon the individual intellect, the cancer (Mailer's phrase) of all modern popular 'art'. But he did not see that these exist not so much by the will of the mass as through the will of the few who control communications in the society, and through the necessary acquiescence of the mass to these few.

But now we can see the two-fold reasoning behind the actions of the purveyors of mass culture, the men in power. On the one hand, as they want docility in the mass, they wish to dull the minds of the mass to everything except the cliches of belief in whatever they sell. So they inflict pseudo-art upon the people. They are the originators of the defecation that is mass culture. Also it is the only way to reach the widest possible market. 'Offend no one'. Obviously such works will never awaken anyone either. For art does both. The mass media can do neither by their very nature. So because they desire power, the leaders of society are forced, by the very nature of the beast they deal with, to create within it that void of intellect which is symbolised by practically everything 'cultural' it appreciates.

THE AUTHOR: Douglas Barbour hangs around the English Department. He also rants about novels, little literary magazines, F.R. Leavis and free love.

This does not mean that I believe no art has been created in this century. I do, And I believe that the greatest of this art will be of lasting value to humanity if it survives to ever grow up to awareness of the lack of art in life. There is a minority that knows this. The problem is whether or not, in the future, as a whole generation is brought under the daily influence of the mass media, this minority, which has always been of extreme importance to humanity, will continue to exist. That there are still some individuals who care about and appreciate real art is obvious. The situation outlined above is an 'ideal' one which has not yet come into existence. Up until a few years ago it appeared very near at hand in North America. Such things as the Negro Revolt argue that perhaps the situation is not as bad as Ortega feared. On the other hand, the existence and powerful influence of the Southern reaction to the Revolt, of the House Committee on Un-American Activities, of Herbert Hoover and Barry Goldwater, of the John Birch Society and all other far-right extremist groups in both Canada and the United States, of censorship as it still exists on both sides of the border, and of much more, especially perhaps the ever-current Television 'Season', does not indicate that there is much to be hoped for in the future. Society moves ever closer to the ideal portrayed above, not ever further away).

Part of the problem this situation represents lies in the creation of a literate mass society. By literate here I do not mean 'able to read and write'. I do mean, 'able to think cogently about the problems of living'. What is in fact true of the vast majority of people in this mass is that they are illiterate in a new and terrifying sense. They cannot carry out an inner dialogue with themselves concerning new or old rational ideas. They are unable to conceptualize, especially in the artistic and ethical spheres. Often they are less able to think than many of their 'illiterate' ancestors.

Especially, they are unable to think about their own lives, or about the relationship that would exist in a properly democratic society between their personal problems of existence and the whole great structure of their society. Because they are unable to see this possible relationship they are unable to do anything about it, which leaves the men in power right where they want to be: in control. And culture remains where it has been for most of this century also: in a coffin.

The CBC announced in Halifax that the brilliant Canadian pianist, Margaret Ann Ireland, will perform a recital of Germanic composers for the CBC Invitational Concert, November 29.

The first in the 1964-65 season, this concert will be held at Halifax's Neptune Theatre at 2:30 p.m. and the public is cordially invited to attend. They may obtain tickets, free of charge, at the reception desk of the CBC building, 70 Bell Road.

In making the announcement, the CBA/CBH program director, John MacEwan added, "We are very pleased about this and feel it a privilege to present this internationally-known artist for the first time publicly in this city. She has done broadcasts from here before, but has never presented a public recital".

The recital will be recorded for broadcast on CBC Radio's "Music In The Evening", Thursday, December 3, at 6:35 p.m.

A pianist who has won international acclaim, Margaret Ann Ireland has performed in London, Paris, Berlin, Moscow, Copenhagen, Amsterdam, and Stockholm. She recently completed her sixth European Concert Tour.

During two tours of the Soviet Union in 1960 and 1962, Miss Ireland played in 13 major Soviet cities. In January, 1963, her New York debut at Town Hall won her added acclaim. A critic for the New York Times wrote, "Miss Ireland is a real artist with both the soul and the fingers to guarantee her success." The press of nine countries have lauded her performances. Paris critics called Miss Ireland "an artist of rank", and in Copenhagen she was hailed as "a great talent". In Moscow the Soviet pianist Emil Gilels pronounced her "an outstanding musician".

She tours extensively in Canada where she made her debut with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra at the age of sixteen. She has appeared with many orchestras in Canada, Western Europe and the USSR, and leading European radio and television networks have presented her recitals. She has also appeared many times on CBC Radio and Television.

Margaret Ann Ireland received her early training at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto and has studied with eminent pianists in New York, Paris, Salzburg and Vienna.

Bryce Morrison is writing his Master's thesis on D. H. Lawrence. His other activities include being English and playing the piano.