

UPSTAIRS BULLETIN

Volume 18 - No. 2

October 15, 1978

Chicago, Illinois

An Educational Group.

I am pessimistic about the human race because it is too ingunius for its own good. Our approach to nature is to beat it into submission. We would stand a better chance if we accomodated ourselves to this planet and viewed it appreciatively instead of skeptically and dictatorily.

- E. B. White

This season began with a furore of change. After playing 45 years for us MADELENE DAHLMAN HARGADON decided to retire. We understand her wishing to, because of all the traveling involved and the late hours. However, we are extremely grateful for all those wonderful years of fine music and dependability. No sooner had classes begun when HILDUR NELSON took to her bed with a bad back and sciatica. All this put a heavier load on ANDREA KUSHAR with whom we are blessed to have playing.

The season also began with much good news. JOHN DENNIS has signed a contract to dance for George Skibine in Dallas, Texas this year. Everyone at SC is happy for John after having gone to tryouts from one end of the country to another. CHRISTOPHER ADAMS after the demise of the National Ballet of Illinois was taken into the Boston Ballet. At long last I got to see PEGGY LYMAN dance in the Martha Graham Company at Ravinia. She danced the leads in two ballets - "Errant Into The Maze" and "Diversion of Angels". Peggy makes a stunning appearance on stage besides being a magnificent dancer in both Modern and Ballet. Summer visitors were DAN & DIANE REILY from the Basil Ballet Company in Switzerland...VANNESSA MERIA from Lubeck, Germany recovering from a broken foot...PHOEBE REDMOND now a real glamour girl and full of enthusiasm about her work in the film version of "The Wiz".

RAY CHAPPATTA is now recovering from a severe attack of heptatitis which caused him to forfeit his chances in the Stuttgard Ballet. RUTH ANN KOESUN is pulling up roots and moving to Minneapolis to work with he Minnesota Dance Theatre. While MARK TRUDEAU was not in evidence his name appeared on the roster of the Dutch National Ballet. SCOTT SCHLEXER is now a full fledged member of the American Ballet Theatre. We recently heard that DEAN BADOLATO has joined the New York Company of Chorus Line. MANUEL URREGO is dancing with a small group in the west with stars from Ballet Theatre. It will be touring as far east as Champaign, Illinois. HANK ADAMS - now ADAM HEILMANN has signed until next spring with the Colorado Concert Ballet also using stars in lead parts. LINDA SWAYZE has gone to New York to join Arthur Mitchell's company - at least she was encouraged to come with that in mind. She will be living with CAROLYN COWIE and WENDY LEO. HEIDE HAMILTON joined the Milwaukee Ballet Company and DEBORAH RIDLEY is still with that group. VICTORIA PELUCHEWSKI and INES LAIMINS have both enrolled in local colleges this autumn and we are happy to have them both for our next season at St. Alphonsus. MORAG MAC KENZIE was in for a few days from California where she is working in a sound studio and is extremely happy there.

Having reached the three-quarters of a century mark I wonder if there will be other European trips. People far older do travel - I wonder how they do it and why? Flying from Lisbon to London and ancient couple boarded our plane slowing up the loading by a half hour while they inched their way aboard and to their seats. During the flight the steward was busy running back and forth with medicinal aids and as we landed it was oxygen. The man's face was that of a corpse - maybe coming home to die. Why leave home in the first place?

Traveling nowadays - luxurywise or otherwise is no breeze. One still has to fight the mobs of humanity - the incompetence of the world - as well as the economics. On all our previous flights we had always enjoyed 'transfer service' to and from the airports or the railroad stations. We had always been helped courteously and without worry. NO MORE! Today they ask \$75 for the service and you end up transporting yourself and your baggage if you expect to make connections. When one is young it is no problem within nature's slow-down it is another story.

This year's trip took us to one new country - Luxembourg where we went to visit Deborah Podore Wais - a former pupil. This part of the trip was a genuine delight. Delight with the quaintness, the beauty and the charm of Luxembourg (even if it did rain every half hour). Delight, also to see that beautiful maturity of a pupil into an efficient and an amazing human being; one with taste and talent, managing a home and a career with ease and naturalness. Her profession is in the field of Dance Therapy. We had such a lovely time catching up on the time between the time she left the school to the present. I was especially thrilled that in the interval she had fallen under the influence of Trudy Schoop - that great Swiss artist who once had the only dance company in the world. I would have given an arm to be one of her performers. Strange how influences and tastes do connect up. Debby has a beautiful life - a charming and sympathetic husband and two amazing children - Adam and Rebecca.

From Luxembourg we flew to Madrid on a Russian plane - a real 'no-frill' flight and a harrowing experience. It was the only direct flight between the two cities - the alternate was a stop-over in Paris and as always the French have a way of causing trouble - this time with a slow-down. When our Russian plane landed lights fell out - and things fell all over the place. We fully expected to be in a pile of rubble on the field. That flight was filled with the strangest assortment of humanity - all no doubt flown to Moscow for a jazz-up course in communism.

In Madrid we ran immediately into the incompetence of the Spanish - our travel agent failed to meet us and we had to make it on our own to the beautiful Palace Hotel. So far so good but the possibility of missing our tours to Toledo and Escoreal could have been a calamity. It took a day of fighting and arguing with "Melia" - along with many other Tourists whom they had no record of - despite the fact that their services had been paid months in advance.

From Madrid we took two interesting tours - to Escoreal and to Toledo. Driving to Escoreal we went through some highly populated countryside to the Monastery. It was a fascinating place complete with libraries, chapels, museums and connected by millions of stairs - up and down. The down lead us into the King's tombs where all the Spanish Kings and Queens are in ornate caskets piles in tiers up to the ceiling. There is still room for the present King and future royalty. The huge spacious rooms had richly carved and painted ceilings with tapestries on the walls and paintings by Goya, Titian and Rubens. The famous El Greco painting "The Martyre de Saint Mauricio" is placed on a blank white wall making it the most startling painting. In the Basicilica we visited Charles the Fifth's bedroom where he could open a door onto the alter for his prayer, (he was a cripple). This interesting day ended on a visit to "The Valley of the Fallen" a memorial to the Spanish Civil War dead. This monument has great chapels - halls and rooms all carved under the mountain. Fourty five thousand war dead from both sides are buried within this complex. Franco is buried under one of the alters along with Jose Antonia - the Spaniards special War hero. An enormous cross towers at the very top of the mountain which can be seen for many miles. It is hard to believe the enormity of this Memorial which unfortunately the Spanish people create a carnival spirit all around it.

What can one say about Toledo? Everything about it is impressive. Approaching the city one contemplates the city like a fortified castle on her ochre and dusty mountain - gifted with a generous sun and circled by the river Tajo. In early times

it was the common dwelling of Hebrews, Moors and Christians where they learned to live together peacefully. Just walking through its streets and having those tiny cars (like bumble bees) racing through the crowds of people - it is a bit nerve wracking. No one seems to get hit but you have the impression of them driving between your legs. The Cathedral of Toledo is by all odds one of the most unforgettable in the world. Built over the centuries in a half dozen styles of architectural styles - all blending beautifully together and each style somehow separated. Its art collection alone is one of the richest in the world. Their collection consists of Carvaggio, Titian, Valesquez and an enormous collection of El Grecos. The Sacristry houses paintings of Grecos, Goya, Giordana, Bassano and the one Caravaggio of the youthful "Saint John" was worth the trip in itself. The great room is emotionally over whelming and leaves one speechless. There is a very lovely carved marble alter by a pupil of Bellini with a carved opening in the ceiling for light. Bellini would have been very proud of his pupil. In the Parish Church of Santo Tome a single El Greco - "The burial of Count Orgaz" - placed on a stark white wall is easily one of the most magnificent ones. Certainly Toledo is a city that one should spend much time in and on a tour you are rushed through with little time to linger.

Madrid has the Prado. If not the greatest collection in the world, it is close to it. We spent practically three days wandering through its great galleries renewing our acquaintances with many of our favorite - Valesquez, Murillo, Titian - where there are literally room after room of each painter. Spain has always hoarded its own artists and this is the place to see ones not in other Museums. We do not see painters such as Ribera, Ribalta, Cano, Coello, Morales, Zurbaran and Goya in this profusion. The Prado also has collections of Dutch, Flemish and Italian that are rather rare. And I have always had a great fondness for Reni's "Saint Sebastian" which is tucked away in one of the upper galleries. Where the Spanish people are disorganized the Prado employees are not. They handle crowds much larger than those of the Special exhibits at the Art Institute daily with ease and no waiting in line.

Our six day bus tour of Portugal was not easy because of the long drives -twelve hours a day on a bus can be a chore. However ther were compensations and much beauty along the roads. Roads and ravines are lined with blooming oleanders of all the rose shades. One is amazed by the industriousness of the Portugese people whose country is ninety percent rocks, snad and clay and very little moisture -but how they make it produce. Its main crops are olives and cork - but almonds, figs, grapes, citrus fruits, sunflowers, truck gardens, are also grown in quantity. There are so many eucalyptus groves that they all can't be used for cough drops. No doubt there are other uses for the wood. Something is grown on every inch of soil up to the mountain tops.

On our first day before reaching Porto- legre we visited two magnificent cathedrals - Alcobaca and Batahilde. The Austerity of Alcobaca comes fully within the very severe canon of the Cistercian order. The total absence of decoration and stained glass windows was established as a principle of Saint Bernard. The absence of decoration only enhances the beautiful great pillars and arches. It emphasizes the pure lines and simplicity of design so much that one realizes why it is so famed. Batahilde was equally enchanting in another way - more Spanish - more ornate and intricate in design. Simplicity is not one of the traits of Spanish or Portugese architecture.

From Portolegre another long day on the bus to Evora where we had our second night. The third day past miles and miles of cork and olive trees until we came into the Algarve region where the farms were more luxurious and near the coast there were rice fields. Our arrival at the Hotel Alvor Praia was a tremendous relief. Here we enjoyed two marvelous days in the sun and walking through their tropical flower gardens. The Algarve is a rich man's resort and the best one can say is that it has as near perfect weather as one could wish.

The remaining part of the tour back to Lisbon along the coast line up - over - and through mountain roads offered marvelous scenic views - but no photo stops. In the valleys were bright green rice fields and truck gardens. Like all tours today you

only get rest stops at souvenir shops or factories where there is a sales pitch. Our very first tour of this sort in Germany spoiled us for all future tours.

We were more than content and happy to settle in at our favorite Hotel on earth - The Estoril Sol - between Estoril and Cascais. Nine wonderful days sunbathing - resting - walking and reading. These days went past so fast we were on our way home before we knew it.

In both Spain and Portugal it is obvious that both countries were better off under Franco and Salazar. There was order and a certain discipline that kept their cities clean and liveable. In Spain especially the filth is everywhere - every vacant lot is a dump for garbage. Why they

do not have cholera is beyond me. In Portugal the political graffiti of two years ago is a sorry sight. All the beautiful buildings are marked up with every conceivable slogan. The communists who are the minority are the loudest and have destroyed more beauty. Our travel agent assured us the democracy will win out in the end.

In the American newspaper - the Herald - we read where the United States had shipped 62 million dollars worth of tobacco products to Europe last year. I'm sure it all went to Spain and Portugal because every man woman and child smokes incessantly. Flying back to the States two-thirds of our 747 was a non-smoking section. In this respect we are ahead. They are just beginning to campaign against the danger of smoking.