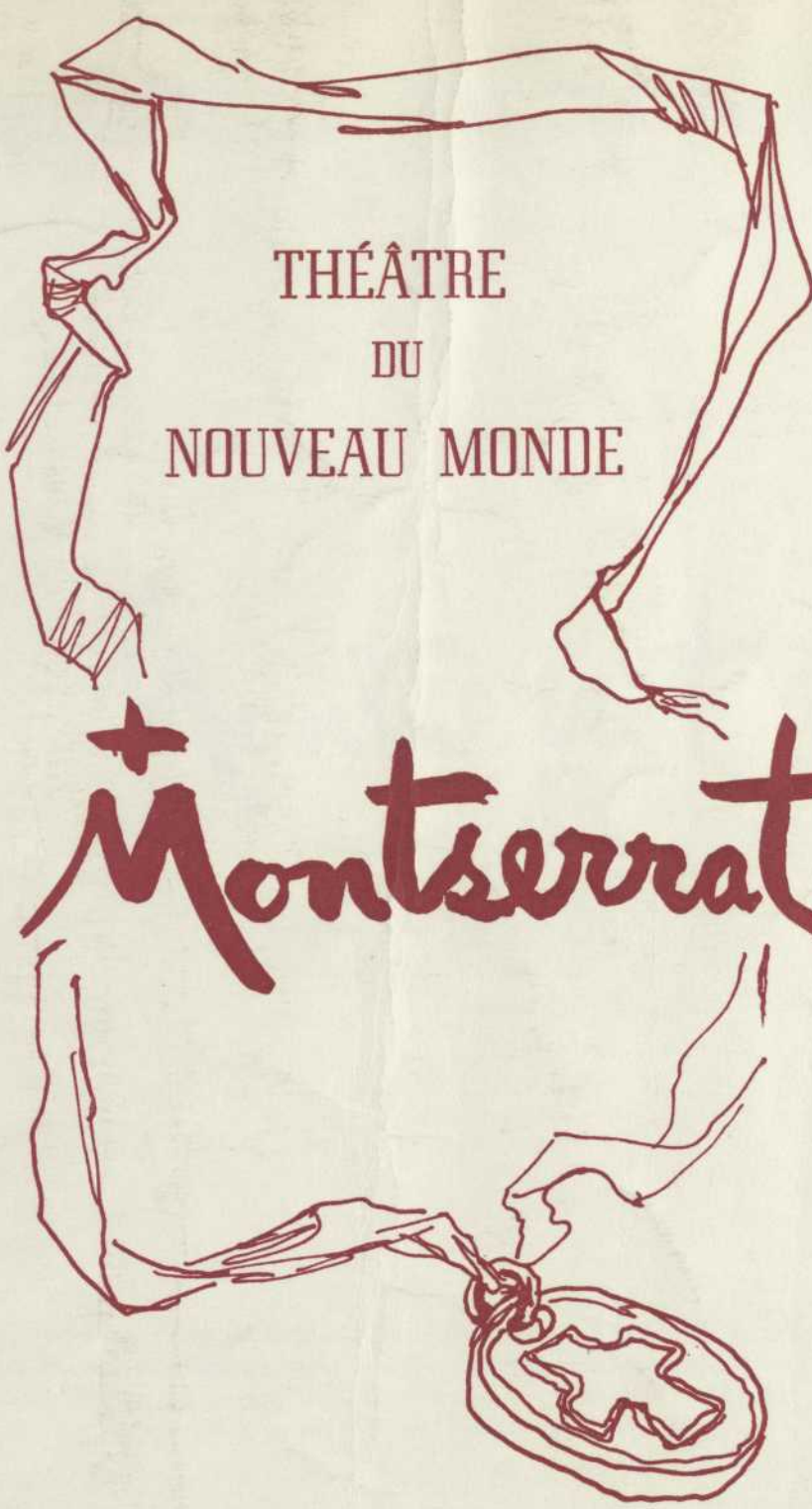
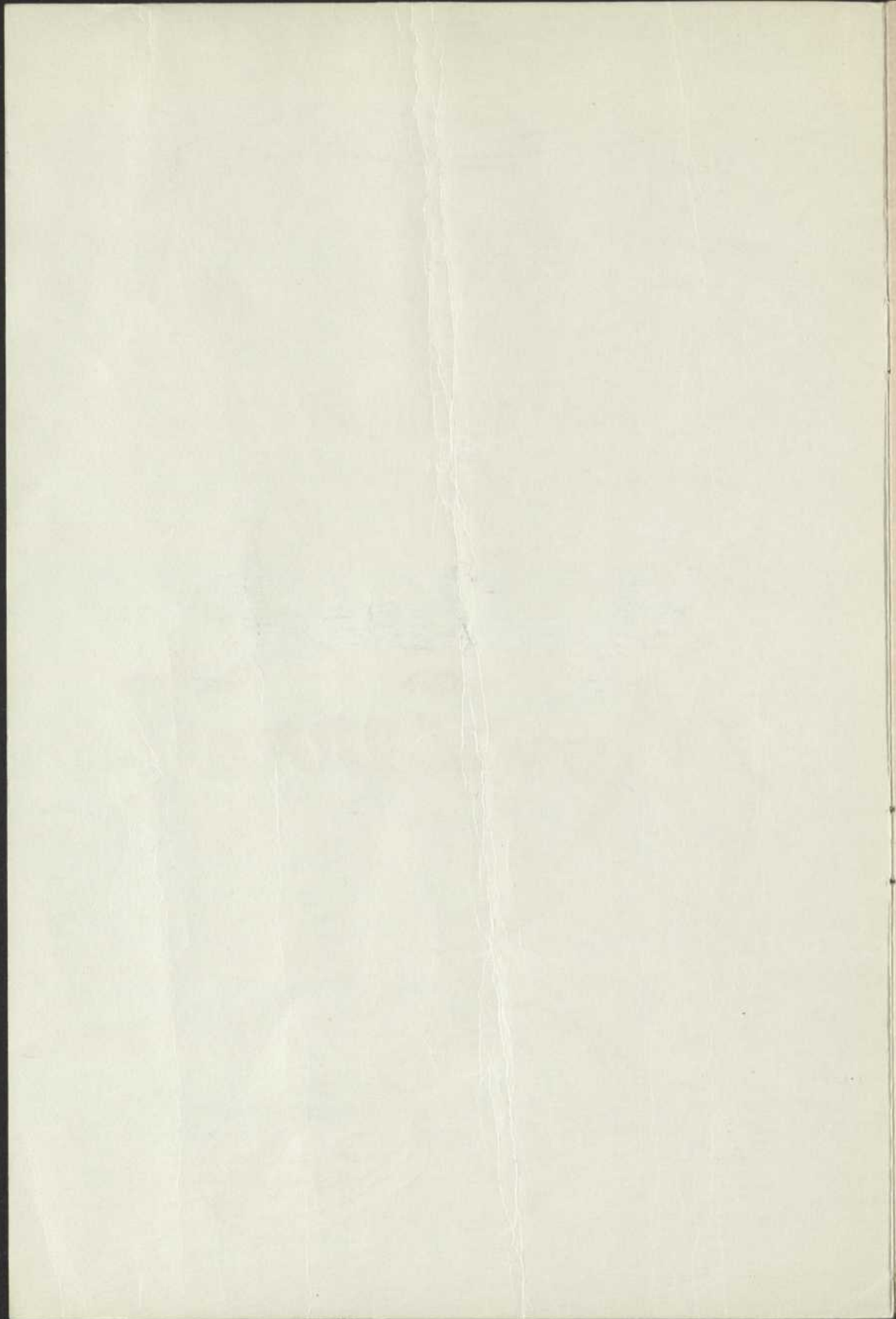




THÉÂTRE
DU
NOUVEAU MONDE

†
Montserrat



THÉÂTRE DU NOUVEAU MONDE

artistic director: JEAN GASCON

FOURTH SEASON

1954-1955

Montserrat

a drama in two acts

adapted by LILLIAN HELLMAN

from the French play by

EMMANUEL ROBLES

Simultaneously produced in French, on April 23rd, 1948, at the Théâtre Montparnasse in Paris, and at the Théâtre du Colisée, in Algiers. The English adaptation was presented on October 29th, 1949, at the Fulton Theatre in New York.



RUPERT CAPLAN

The public interest and response to our production of *Come Back Little Sheba* last season encouraged us to continue in our plan to bring professional theatre to Montreal using English and French actors. It seems to me that the barrier of accent is largely either imaginary or a sort of habit pattern which exists in this province and especially in this city.

Montserrat is a good example of a play which can be produced and acted by players speaking either French or English or both. I chose this particular play because I think it is a good play, that it has something to say and says it in terms of theatre. I have attempted to avoid the pitfalls of political or ecclesiastical argument and have placed the emphasis on the people of the play and how they react under a set of circumstances over which they themselves have little or no control.

I hope my choice of this play will result in a rewarding and stimulating evening in the theatre. Much depends on public acceptance of our work. Jean Cascon and I have interesting plans which we intend to implement this season and for the future as well.

RUPERT CAPLAN

RICHARD NEWTON



PHOTO HELEN MERRILL



PHOTO HENRI PAUL

JEAN GASCON

About the Play . . .

MONTSERRAT

The subject of this play could well have been situated in the antique Rome, in Spain under the reign of Philip II, or in France during the German occupation. The author hesitated a long time before setting the stage and he finally decided to choose the period of the South American Independence simply because certain studies on the history of the Young Latin American republics in which he had interested himself, had already created in his mind, an "atmosphere". Consequently, all the facts found in the play, should not be considered as absolutely correct from an historical point of view. The author was mostly concerned in making clear the universal principle which he was discussing. One point however remains authentic, the savagery of the Spanish conquest. We could mention, for instance, that the real Morales delighted himself in having his prisoners quartered; that the real Antonanzas found his pleasure in having pregnant women killed, and kept on sending to his friends whole cases of human hands cut from his prisoners; that the real Zavala had the eyes of his enemies pierced with spears and that Father Coronil was in favour of exterminating all Venezuelans more than 7 years old.

Mr. Michel Vaucaire, who wrote the history of Bolivar says that "professional hangmen could not suffice". The atrocities committed were such that some of the Spaniards belonging to Monteverde's group were completely disgusted. The rebels had to be punished and it was necessary to cure, once and for all, the masses of their taste for a revolution.

Since such cruelty, such massacres do not belong specifically to Bolivar's time and that for centuries, all over the world, men have been tortured, either on the crosses where the friends of Spartacus died, or in torture chambers during the Inquisition or in the modern concentration camps, it is clear that the author simply borrowed from history a pretext and a setting where to develop his ideas.

Montserrat

a drama in two acts

adapted by Lillian HELLMAN

from the French play by Emmanuel ROBLÈS

Directed by Rupert CAPLAN

Sets designed by Robert PRÉVOST

C A S T

IZQUIERDO, first lieutenant of General Monteverde	Richard NEWTON
MONTSERRAT, spanish officer	William ALLYN
JUAN SALCEDO ALVAREZ, a comedian	Max HELPMANN
MATILDE	Eileen CLIFFORD
ZAVALA, spanish officer	George ALEXANDER
ANTONANZAS, spanish officer	Arthur MOTYER
MORALES, spanish officer	François LAVIGNE
FATHER CORONIL, a capucin monk	Alfred GALLAGHER
SALAS INA, a merchant	Gerald ROWAN
LUHAN, a potter	Ramer HENRY
FELISA	Elizabeth BARRY
RICARDO	Gilles PELLETIER
A MONK	William Robert FOURNIER
A SOLDIER	Jorge Juan RODRIGUEZ

Only one intermission of 15 minutes — between act 1 and 2

July 1812, the Spanish General Monteverde has won the important battle fought on July 11th and has captured Miranda, the chief of the Venezuelans. Simon Bolivar, one of the lieutenants of Miranda has fled.

Some patriots are hiding him and, so far, nobody has been able to find him. The Spaniards control three quarters of the country and their retaliation is terrible. Cities are looted and their inhabitants killed. The two acts of the play take place in the outer room of the General's Palace, in Valencia, Venezuela. It is a huge room with thick walls.

Cover design by **Robert PRÉVOST**

Costumes through the courtesy of **Brooks Costumes Company**,
New York City, N.Y.

Produced by special arrangement with
Dramatists Play Service Inc., New York City, N.Y.

Stage manager		George ALEXANDER
Stage assistants		William Robert FOURNIER and Guy LEDUC
Chief-electrician		Georges FANIEL
Chief set builder		Georges SAVARD

Notes on the play, the author and the adaptator.

Robles is now 40 years old but he was only 34 when *Montserrat* was played in Paris for the first time. Robles was born on May 4th, 1914 at Oran, North Africa. His parents were from the labouring class, his father being a bricklayer (Robles dedicated his work "*Travail d'Homme*" to his memory) and his mother a laundress. His father died during an epidemic of typhus leaving his wife with 2 young children. The numerous sacrifices made by his mother and 2 scholarships permitted Emmanuel, the younger of the two, to continue his studies in Oran and Algiers.

In 1937, when Robles was 23, he met in Algiers, the well-known writer Albert Camus, the editor Edmond Charlot, the literary critic Jean Hytier and René-Jean Clot. These meetings definitely had an influence on him and the following year, in 1938, while he was doing his military service, he wrote his first books "*L'Action*" and "*La Vallée du Paradis*".

In June 1940, Robles is still in the army, posted in the desert near Constantine, surrounded by flies, boredom, paludism and dysentery. After the liberation of North Africa he became war-correspondent for the Air-Force and, while miraculously coming alive out of 5 crashes, he flew over or visited Sardinia, Corsica, Italy and England. These however, were not Robles' first travels since already in 1931, 1932 and 1933, he had visited Spain on numerous occasions, had been to Russia and Germany in 1934 and to Indo-China and South China in 1935. In 1945 he crossed the South Atlantic to go to Brazil and Argentina as correspondent.

The following year, in 1946, Robles settled down at La Bouzareah where he has lived ever since.

The peace and quiet he had found there were however disturbed when his first play, *Montserrat*, was presented in 1948. The play was simultaneously produced for the first time, in Paris at the Theatre Montparnasse and at the Théâtre du Colisée in Algiers. It would not be exaggerated to say that the Paris critics considered *Montserrat* a revelation. As the Théâtre Montparnasse had been rented by the committee of Arts and Letters for a limited period, to present numerous original plays, *Montserrat* had to be withdrawn. However, Jean Marchat and Marcel Herrand accepted it at the Theatre des Mathurins for a period of 3 months. Jean Servais played the part of *Montserrat*, Jean Marchat that of Izquierdo and Roger Gaillard that of Salcedo. *Montserrat* played to full-houses during this whole period and closed at the beginning of December as the theatre had to meet other commitments. *Montserrat* had also been presented, with the same success in Tel-Aviv, Geneva, Prague, Rotterdam, Munich, Bucharest, in Italy, Scandinavia, Egypt and New York.

Lillian Hellman, who adapted the play, is well known for the numerous plays she presented on Broadway: "The Children's Hour", "The Little Foxes", "Watch on the Rhine" and "Another part of the Forest" which have been the most popular of the eight plays she had written.

Lillian Hellman saw *Montserrat* in Paris for the first time in October 1948 as she was coming back to New York after having interviewed Marshall Tito for *Colliers*. Right away she was enthusiastic. One year later she had completed the adaptation and the necessary arrangements had been made for try-outs in Princeton and Philadelphia after which the play was presented at the Fulton Theatre in New York on October 29th, 1949. Emlyn Williams played the part of Izquierdo and Julie Harris that of Felisa.

Miss Hellman's adaptation follows the original quite closely. The parts of *Montserrat* and Father Coronil have been condensed in order to increase the tension of the dramatic situation which is the backbone of the play.

Out of the 3 acts of the original version, Lillian Hellman made 2 acts during which the action takes place without any let-up. As the critic of the New York times said: "it makes a theatregoer's blood run cold".

The T.N.M. and Mr. Rupert Caplan chose this play in view of its dramatic forcefulness and definite human qualities. It is hoped that its universal appeal will move the Canadian public.



PHOTO ANTHONY BUCKLEY

WILLIAM ALLYN



PHOTO ANTHONY BUCKLEY

MAX HELPMANN

