



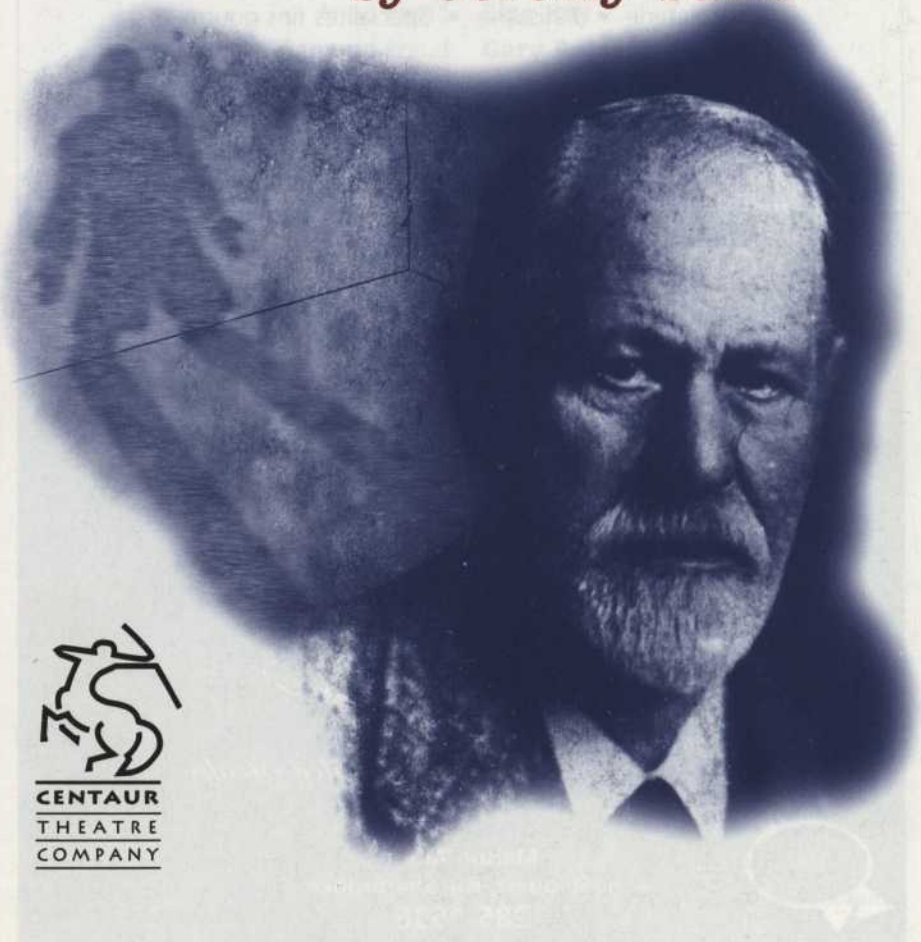
The Visitor

by
Eric-Emmanuel
Schmitt

English adaptation
by Jeremy Sams



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a Centaur Theatre Company
World English-Language Premiere Production of

The Visitor

by **Eric-Emmanuel Schmitt**

adapted by **Jeremy Sams**

by arrangement with Toucan Productions Ltd.

Characters

(in order of appearance)

Anna Freud **Lise Roy**

Sigmund Freud **Gary Reineke**

The Nazi Officer **Martin Neufeld**

The Stranger **Jean LeClerc**

directed by **Daniel Roussel**

set and costume design by **Marcel Dauphinais**

lighting design by **Luc Prairie**

stage manager **Elaine Normandeau**

apprentice stage manager **Gretel G. Meyer**

Time & Setting:

The evening of April 22nd, 1938 in Freud's Study.

In other words, between the Anschluss of Austria by Nazi Germany
(March 11th) and the departure of Freud for Paris (June 4th).

There will be no intermission

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But I did restrict myself to just a taste and it was a heavenly one at that.

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Playwright

ERIC-EMMANUEL SCHMITT

Born in Lyon in 1960, Eric-Emmanuel Schmitt studied music at the Conservatoire de Lyon. He was then admitted to the Ecole Normale Supérieure de la rue d'Ulm, and received his philosophy degree in 1983. In 1986, he was awarded a Ph.D. upon completion of his thesis entitled *Diderot et la Métaphysique*. He was Senior Lecturer of Philosophy at l'Université de Savoie until 1994.

His distinct voice as a playwright, established in 1991 with the production of *La Nuit de Valognes*, was enhanced with the outstanding success of *The Visitor* in 1994. *The Visitor* was awarded three *Molières* (equivalent to Montreal's *Les Masques*) and these, coupled with the critical acclaim and audience enthusiasm the play received, encouraged him to dedicate his career to writing.

His adaptations for Jean-Luc Tardieu, the director of his first play, include *Sarcophagus* by Vladimir Gubariev and Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*. His play, *Golden Joe*, directed by friend Gérard Vergez, was produced in Paris last year. His other plays include *Variations Enigmatiques* for Théâtre Marigny and *Milarepa* being co-produced by Théâtre de Vidy, Lausanne and le Théâtre de l'Invisible.

Mr. Schmitt's projects with director Vergez also include the television adaptation of *Senso* (based on Camillo Boito's novel), *Le Droit à l'oubli*, and *Machinations* (based on Françoise Sagan's screenplay). Together, they wrote the film script for *Le Temps des cerises* (based on the life of Louise Michel). Upcoming adaptations include *Les Noces de Figaros* for l'Opéra de Compiègne and *Le Bossu* by Paul Feval.

Last year, in September, Mr. Schmitt surprised the literary world with his first novel, also favourably received: *La Secte des égoïstes*. His second novel, *Évangiles oubliés*, is scheduled for release in the fall of 1996.

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**JEREMY
SAMS**

(Adaptor) translated Jean Cocteau's *Les Parents Terribles* which recently played on Broadway. Other translations include: *Becket* (Haymarket), *The Miser* (National), *The Rehearsal* (Almeida / Garrick - Time Out Award), *Leonce and Lena* (Sheffield Crucible). He has also translated many operas, including *Le Roi Malgré Lui*, *Jonny Strikes Up*, *L'étoile*, *Orpheus in the Underworld*

(Opera North), *The Magic Flute*, *Macbeth*, *Figaro's Wedding*, *La Bohème*, *The Force of Destiny* (English National Opera). He is also a composer and has written over thirty scores for theatre and television. Credits with The National Theatre include *Ghetto* (Music arrangements and lyrics), *Sunday in the Park with George* (Music Director), *The Wind in the Willows*, *Arcadia*. He has directed *Schippel the Plumber* (Greenwich / Edinburgh Festival), *Entertaining Mr. Sloane* (Greenwich), *The Card* (Watermill Theatre, Newbury), *Neville's Island* (Nottingham Playhouse), *Le Roi Malgré Lui* (Opera North), and *40 Years On* (West Yorkshire Playhouse).

Centaur Theatre Company gratefully acknowledges the Parisian producers of *Le Visiteur* for their contribution toward the World English-Language Premiere of *The Visitor*.



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GARY REINEKE

(*Sigmund Freud*) will be remembered by Centaur regulars for his performances in *Creeps*, *Tooth of Crime*, and

Successful Strategies, and for his role as the delightfully devilish Woland in *The Master and Margarita* last season. The winner of a Dora Award for Best Actor for his role as Tilden in *Buried Child* (Toronto Free Theatre, 1980), he also received a Genie Award nomination for Best Supporting Actor for his portrayal of Seavey in the 1982 film, *The Grey Fox*. His extensive Canadian and American credits include the recently completed *Later Life* (Grand Theatre / Citadel), *Taking Liberties* (Factory Theatre), *The Cherry Orchard* (Tarragon Theatre), *The Tempest* (Skylight Theatre), *Jitters* and *Lilies* (National Arts Centre), *On the Razzle* and *The Winslow Boy* (CentreStage), *The Doctor's Dilemma* and *Timon of Athens* (Grand Theatre), *Cyrano de Bergerac* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Guthrie Theatre, Minneapolis), and *Execution of Justice* (The Virginia Theatre, New York City). In addition to radio work for the CBC, his numerous television and film credits include, among others, *Street Legal '93*, *The Exxon Valdez Story*, *Canada's*

Sweetheart: The Saga of Hal Banks, the renowned CBC miniseries, *Dieppe*, and *Hiroshima*, a Canadian/American/Japanese co-production filmed last year in Montreal.



LISE ROY

(*Anna Freud*), winner of a Gemini award for Best Supporting Actress for her role as Chantal Lavin in *The Boys of St. Vincent*, is

making her first appearance here at Centaur. Recent French theatre credits include *Mme de Pontagnac* in *Le Dindon* at le Théâtre du Rideau Vert under the direction of Denise Filiatrault, *Six Personnages en quête d'auteur* under the direction of André Brassard at le Théâtre du Nouveau Monde, *Jeanne d'Arc* in *Jeanne D'Arc au bûcher* for the 50th anniversary of the Conservatoire de Musique de Montréal. Previous English theatre credits include the role of Aimée Fraser in *L'Affaire Tartuffe* and the woman on the phone in *Sliding in All Directions*, both for Theatre 1774. Among her many film and television roles are those of Estelle in *L'Homme perché*, the mother in *Nous n'irons plus au bois*, Elise in *Comme un voleur* and Emily Brontë and Virginia Woolf in *Les Grands esprits* for Radio-Canada.

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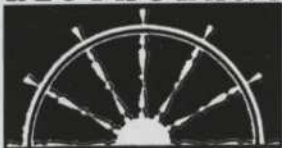
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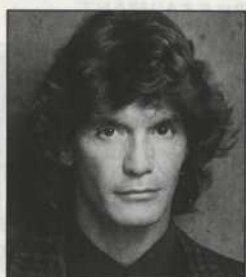
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**MARTIN
NEUFELD**

(*The Nazi Officer*), a native of Montreal, is a graduate of the Dome Theatre, LAMDA (London Aca-

demy of Music and Dramatic Arts) and Jacques LeCoq's École Internationale de Théâtre in Paris. His career was launched in 1982 when he landed the role of the young lovestruck soldier, Emmanuel Létourneau, in the film and television versions of Gabrielle Roy's *Bonheur d'occasion/The Tin Flute*. After several productive years in Toronto, which culminated with his performance as Snake in Darryl Wasyk's critically-acclaimed and award-winning film *H*, he moved to Europe to work and study. There, he also founded his own theatre company called Labyrinthe 38/11. In 1993, he returned to Montreal where he currently resides. Recent film and television credits include *Highlander III*, *The Child*, *Obstruction of Justice*, *Bolt*, *War at Sea*, *Hiroshima*, *Are You Afraid of the Dark?*, *4 et demi* and *Les Grands procès*. Stage credits include Eckart in *Baal* at the Toronto Free Theatre, Shalimov in *Summer Folk*, and Jeremy in *Love for Love* at the McGowan Theatre in London, England.



**JEAN
LECLERC**

(*The Stranger*) is widely known for his role of Jeremy Hunter on ABC-TV's soap opera *All My Children*. He is, however,

delighted to be returning to his first love - the theatre. Jean received a B.A. in Letters from the Université du Québec à Montréal. He has acted in plays such as *Waiting for Godot* at the Place des Arts (for which he won the Fleur de Lys award for Best Actor); *Tale of the Wolf* by Molnar at the Williamstown Theatre Festival (Mass.); *Becket* and *The Lion in Winter*, earning him the Best Supporting Actor Fleur de Lys award. He co-starred opposite Zoe Caldwell in a drama on the life of Sarah Bernhardt and from there he went on to play the lead in Broadway's *Dracula* for two years.

His film credits include *Mother Seton*, with Kate Mulgrew; *Misfortunes of the Rich*, an eight-part miniseries; and the original cable television production, *Justice Express*. Other films include *Whispers*, based on the best-selling thriller written by Dean Koontz, *Blown Away*, and *l'Homme idéal*.

Besides his role as Jeremy on *All My Children* and *Loving*, Jean's television



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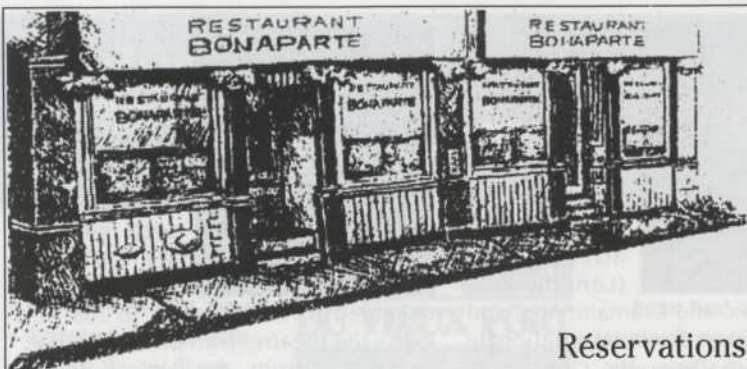
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performances have included program host for the gala of the 200th anniversary of the French Revolution on the A&E Network and host of the Genie Awards. He participated in a special performance of Cole Porter's *Fifty Million Frenchmen* which was recorded in New York City for RCA Victor.

No stranger to theatre production, he has produced several plays in Canada, including *The Elephant Man*, *The Exercise*, *Key Exchange* and a production of *Love Letters* which he adapted and translated.

He is currently producing two plays scheduled for Broadway and London's West End. This summer, he will direct A.R. Gurney's *Sylvia* in Montreal.



DANIEL ROUSSEL

(Director) returns to Centaur after having last directed the 1979 production of *Piaf* which he co-wrote with

Pauline Lebel. He trained in theatre at the Centre National d'Art Dramatique in Paris and in television production

and direction at New York University. Between 1963 and 1967, he performed in Paris and was Assistant Director on productions by Théâtre de la Madeleine, l'Opéra Comique, the Festival d'Aix en Provence and for tours to South America, the USSR, the Orient and Italy. Between 1970 and 1978 he held his first role in a weekly series with Télé-Métropole. Since then, he has gone on to direct extensively. Some of these credits include *P'pa*, *En Première page*, *Mort accidentelle d'un anarchiste*, *Gin Game* and *Le Printemps*, *Monsieur Deslauriers* for the Compagnie Jean Duceppe; *Les Fourberies de Scapin* and *Le Marchand de Venise* at the Théâtre du Nouveau Monde; Ionesco's *Les Chaises* and René Daniel Dubois' *Being at Home With Claude* at the Théâtre de Quat'sous; *Juste un p'tit souvenir*, *Chat en poche*, and *Tailleur pour dames* at le Théâtre du Rideau Vert, and *Carmen* for l'Opéra de Montréal. Most recently, he directed the Ionesco double bill *La Cantatrice chauve* and *La Leçon* at le Théâtre du Rideau Vert. Daniel Roussel has directed some 30 dramatic episodes for Radio-Canada as well as musical revues in New York and television series in Paris.

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MARCEL DAUPHINAIS
(*Set and Costume Designer*) graduated from l'Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Montreal and l'Ecole des Métiers d'Art

in Paris, where he later lived and worked for four years. His work also took him to London, England, for ten years, where he set up his own freelance design studio, and to New York to create sets for the Robert Stigwood Organization. In Montreal, in addition to running his own graphic design studio, he has created some 90 sets for the following companies: Café de la Place des Arts, Compagnie Jean Duceppe, Conservatoire d'Art dramatique du Québec, Les Grands Ballets Canadiens, la Nouvelle Compagnie Théâtrale, l'Opéra de Montréal, La Licorne, Showbiz International, The Piggery (North Hatley), Théâtre d'Aujourd'hui, Théâtre de Marjolaine (Eastman), Théâtre Populaire du Québec and Théâtre du Rideau Vert. This is Mr. Dauphinais' 15th set design for Centaur Theatre Company which began with *Piaf* (also directed by Daniel Roussel), and includes such favourites as *The Leonard Cohen Show*, *Empress Eugénie*, *K2*, Michel Tremblay's *Albertine in Five Times*, Neil Simon's *Biloxi Blues*, Fugard's *My Children! My Africa!*, Fennario's *The Death of René Lévesque*, Marie Laberge's *Aurélie, ma soeur*, and last

season's *The Substance of Fire*. Mr. Dauphinais was also Artistic Director and Designer of the Gala Pavarotti for l'Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal.

LUC PRAIRIE (*Lighting Designer*) has been a lighting designer, assistant designer and stage manager since 1974, and has worked on over 100 productions as lighting designer and on approximately 50 shows as assistant director and stage manager. Over the past few years, he has designed for La Cie Jean Duceppe, Le Théâtre de Marjolaine, Le Théâtre D'Aujourd'hui, Tess Imaginaire, Le Café de la Place, Le Théâtre de la Manufacture, Le Théâtre Populaire du Québec, and Opera McGill. Work outside of Quebec includes The National Arts Centre, Center Stage Company (Toronto), Manitoba Theatre Centre, Mirvish Production (Toronto), Theatre New Brunswick (Fredericton), Persephone Theatre (Saskatoon), Guelph Festival, Pacific Opera (Victoria), Canadian Opera Company (Toronto), Belfry Theatre (Victoria). He redesigned *The Real World* for The Mayfest in Glasgow, Scotland for Tarragon Theatre (Toronto). Among the many directors he has enjoyed working with are Monique Duceppe, François Barbeau, Lorraine Pintal, Gilbert Lepage, André Brassard, Claude Poissant, Bill Glasco, Glynis Leyshon, Paul Hébert, Marie Laberge, François Racine, Michael Shamata, Albert Millaire, Serge Denoncourt, Micheline Chevrier, Alain Fournier, Ian Strasfogel, and Rita Russek.



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**ELAINE
NORMADEAU**

(Stage Manager), a Quebec City native, is happy to be back for her sixth season with Centaur Theatre. Having completed her apprenticeship here on such shows as *The Death of René Lévesque*, *Karla and Grif* and *Blokes*, she went on to stage manage *Look Back in Anger*, *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me* and *Someday*, among others. Apart from Centaur, Elaine has been a resident of the Banff Centre for the Arts for three summers and has stage managed at Magnus Theatre in Thunder Bay. This past September, she stage managed the Nouvel Ensemble Moderne - Banff Centre for the Arts co-production of Alban Berg's opera *Wozzeck* at the Monument National. Later, in the fall, she stage managed POV Production's *The Small Play* and *The Mandrake* for which she was also translation dramaturge.

part of this first English production of *The Visitor*. Previous Centaur credits include the recent South African hit *Take The Floor*, *The Substance of Fire*, *Tall Tales of a Generation*, *Someday*, and *Blokes II*. Gretel studied theatre in Lennoxville, Quebec, at Bishop's University, where she also worked as a Technical Apprentice for Centennial Theatre. This past summer, she spent her second season at The Piggery Theatre in North Hatley, Quebec, as Props Builder for *Not Now Darling*, *Marry Me a Little*, and *The Wild Guys*.



**GRETEL G.
MEYER**

(Apprentice Stage Manager), now in her second season as Centaur's Apprentice Stage Manager, is thrilled to be a

part of this first English production of *The Visitor*. Previous Centaur credits include the recent South African hit *Take The Floor*, *The Substance of Fire*, *Tall Tales of a Generation*, *Someday*, and *Blokes II*. Gretel studied theatre in Lennoxville, Quebec, at Bishop's University, where she also worked as a Technical Apprentice for Centennial Theatre. This past summer, she spent her second season at The Piggery Theatre in North Hatley, Quebec, as Props Builder for *Not Now Darling*, *Marry Me a Little*, and *The Wild Guys*.



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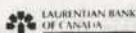


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PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTES

The idea of *The Visitor* came to me while I was watching the news on television. The screen revealed the usual litany of horrors, wars, and scandals but that particular evening, contrary to my habit, I truly heard what was being said. I felt the pulse of the world; its evil oppressed me; and I suffered in body and soul.

I thought to myself: *God must be so depressed by television news*. Then the question insinuated itself: *Who does God turn to when He is suffering? Who does He consult?* And the image of God spread out on Freud's couch came to mind.

The scene amused me... then my mind wondered onto other things... Nonetheless, over the following weeks, the idea grew and found a place within me. God and Freud - two people who are so different, so contradictory, who would have a million things to say to each other... particularly since neither one believed in the other...

And so, I wrote *The Visitor*. I poured into it the intimacy of my questions. I expressed in it my despair as well as my hope... *How can one believe in God after Auschwitz? What is left of faith as we approach the end of this century?* In my text I absolved God of responsibility for the evil which exists and kept His sense of mystery. When I had completed the play, I was pleased, exhausted, but convinced that the adventure would end there: I had put so much of myself into the text that I was convinced it would not interest anyone else.

Success humbles one. The warm welcome given *The Visitor* in France and abroad led me to understand that my intimacy was not mine alone, but that of each person. Its success taught me that I was not unique, but a

man amongst others, a man exactly like others: anxious, worried, joyful... the only difference being that I was gifted with the talent to express my humanity on the stage.

It is necessary to restore a sense of wonder to this world. Our century expected so much of man - in politics, in science - our century believed so narcissistically in man and man alone, that it emptied the universe. We live on a mute planet, deprived of intrinsic worth, a planet deserted by the gods or God himself. If the philosophers are to be believed, the universe isn't even mysterious anymore, it's boringly absurd.

But God still exists in the form of His question. We are all steeped in doubt - like Sigmund Freud in 1938 when, in Europe shaken by the hysteric convulsions of Nazism, his daughter Anna is taken away by the Gestapo.

Is God possible? If yes, He is necessarily hidden. If He showed Himself as God, He would no longer be God but king of the world and man would no longer be free to believe but obliged to do so. If He hid Himself completely from men, we would not speak of Him; He would not have a name or be a concept. God therefore only manifests Himself in an ambiguous way, present-absent: object of debate for the intellect and object of faith for the heart. If He truly is, as they tell us, good and respectful of men, He cannot then force us to believe. He is entrenched in an intermediary position, offering Himself as a 'possibility' presenting itself to man's free choice.

So it follows that, each theatregoer, as he wanders down the stairs after leaving the play, can decide for himself, in his heart and soul, who the visitor is.

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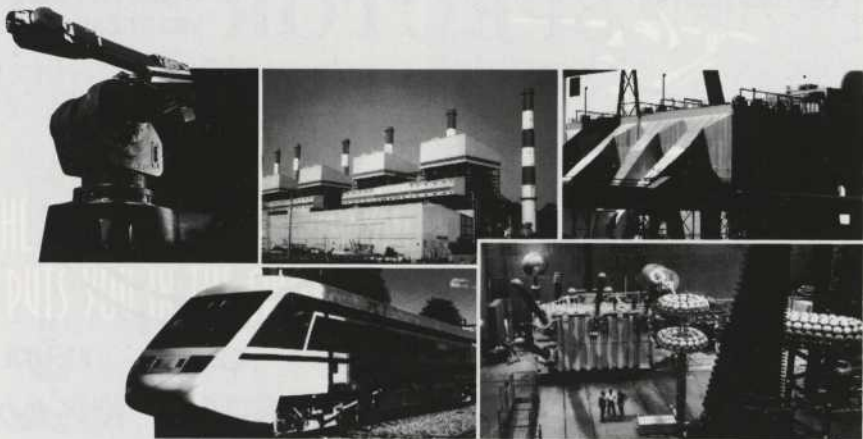


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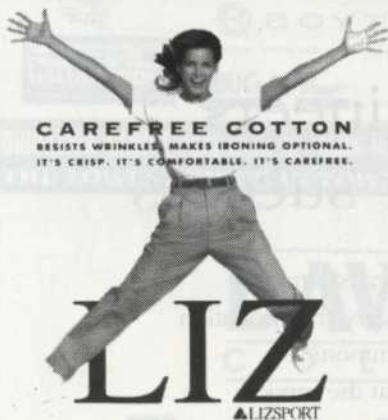
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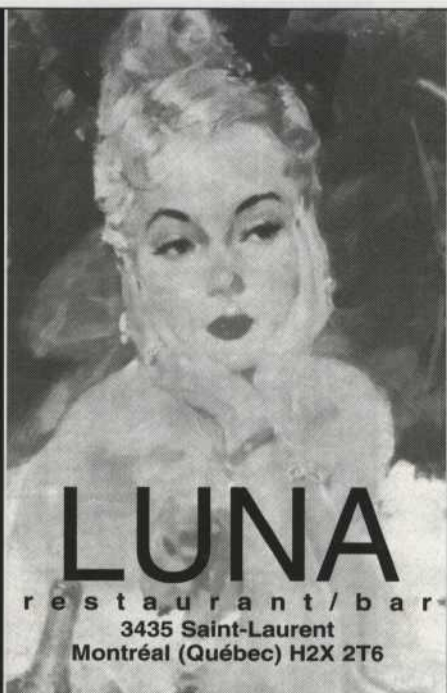


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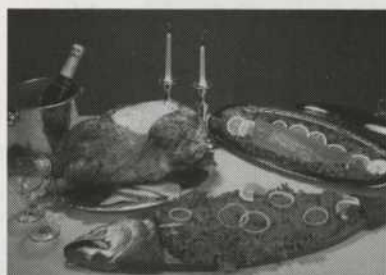
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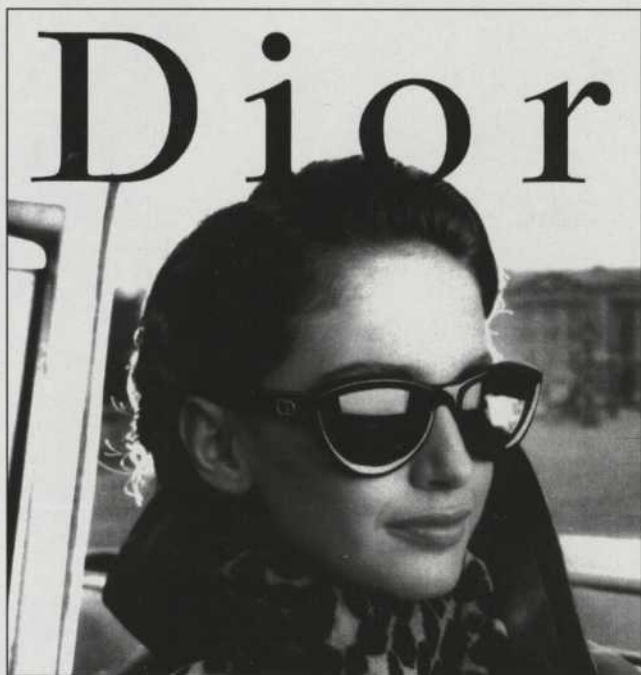
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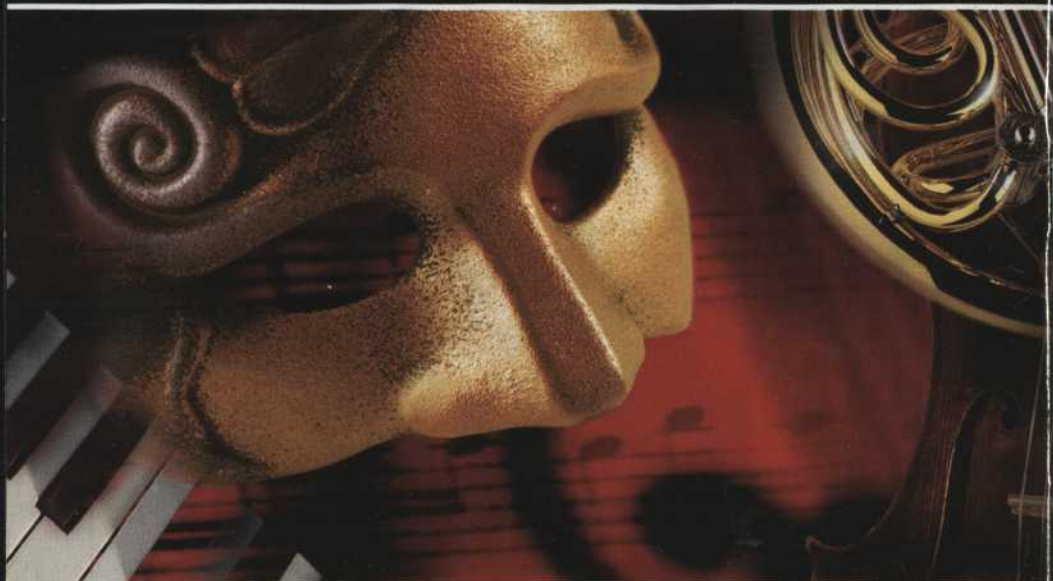
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