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**ARTS & LETTERS**


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*The Newest Wave*

"Here Comes The Fringe" by Steve Lawson, in *Horizon* (June 1978), 381 West Center Court, Marion, Ohio 43302.

A "Third Wave" of audacious and innovative British playwrights is beginning to make its mark on the English theater. These writers—Stephen Poliakoff, Barrie Keefe, Snoo Wilson, Steve Gooch—were spawned in small, makeshift theaters that have sprung up in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Sheffield, and Liverpool as well as in London.

"Young, committed, and astonishingly prolific," the Third Wave dramatists, says Lawson, literary manager of the Williamstown (Mass.) Theater Festival, "reject conventional drawing-room comedy and psychological drama in favor of using the stage as a forum for political and cultural issues" (e.g., the struggle for human dignity and fulfillment in an urban society still ruled by outmoded convention and notions of class). Their inspiration comes from the movies, rock music, and sick humor of today's pop culture.

Third Wave plays deal heavily in violence, alienation, and the distortion of man by his environment. Lawson says it is unlikely that the new playwrights would have flourished without the proliferation of English theaters dedicated to experimental works and without the new freedom bestowed by Parliament in 1968 when it abolished the Lord Chamberlain's powers of censorship.

Typical of the new works is Poliakoff's *Strawberry Fields*, which takes place almost entirely on a British highway and depicts two young right-wingers determined to restore Britain to a previous condition of purity. Whether such plays will win wide and lasting audience acceptance remains to be seen. But they have already made an impact, says Lawson, "by extending their drama beyond the fringe, beyond naturalism, beyond conventional plot lines and into new historical, political, and colloquial areas."

*From Agitation to Auto-Destruction*

"Art and Anarchism" by John A. Walker, in *Art and Artists* (May 1978), Hansom Books, P.O. Box 294, 2 & 4 Old Pye St., off Strutton Ground, Victoria St., London SW1P 2LR.

The anarchist of the popular imagination is a bomb-throwing madman bent on destroying authority through mindless terror. In fact, anarchism as a political philosophy (buttressed by a substantial literature) influenced late-19th-century European thought far more strongly than its main ideological rival, Marxism. The principal anarchist philosophers—William Godwin, Pierre Joseph Proudhon, Max Stirner, and Prince Pëtr Kropotkin—believed in a self-governing society made