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Vienna fills a gap with Art Revival.

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Newsletter:**Vienna Fills
A Gap With
Art Revival**By Klaus Mann
Staff Writer*(Third in a series of
articles from Vienna)*

VIENNA—There is something like a cultural boom to be noticed in this struggling and starving city—a peculiar and impressive phenomenon. If political conditions in Vienna are muddled and explosive, if business is practically paralyzed, if reconstruction is slowed down—the theaters and concert halls are certainly doing well! Culture prospers, in the midst of ruins and misery.

Tired of politics, fed up with the drab realities of its daily life, Vienna looks for comfort and stimulus in lofty symphonies and frivolous operettas, in ballets, dramas and farces, in spectacles and recitals of all kinds.

NOT JUST NARCOTIC

One may frown upon such "escapism," but then, art is not just a narcotic. Its impact can also be encouraging and constructive.

There may be something hectic about the present outburst of artistic activity in the otherwise lethargic Austrian capital, but the results are indeed enjoyable. At least a dozen of legitimate theaters are presenting colorful and lively repertoires. The productions are, in general, on a remarkably high artistic level.

If you care for the classical drama, you will enjoy the somewhat conventional, but dignified and accomplished, performances of the "Burgtheater."

The "Theater in der Josefstadt," on the other hand, specializes in dramatic experiments. At present, the big hit there is a new play by Bert Brecht, German leftist writer now living in the U. S., and starring the great Austrian actress, Paula Wessely.

WILDER POPULAR

Meanwhile, Thornton Wilder's "Little Town" draws full houses at an intimate "studio" connected with the "Josefstadt." So keen is the interest in that American drama that the management had to arrange for a special lecture on Wilder's ideas, followed by an "open forum" discussion.

Other theaters feature plays by Ibsen and Shaw, Cocteau and Hofmannsthal, Strindberg and O'Neill. A young Austrian playwright, Hans Weigel, has made a name for himself with a satirical review, "Barabbas." Another native dramatist of considerable stature, Franz Theodor Csokor, recently returned to Vienna after years of exile in the Balkans and Italy, will shortly come out at the "Burgtheater" with a tragedy on Yugoslav partisans.

While the literary stage thus flourishes, vaudeville and musical comedy are by no means neglected. Time-honored favorites like "The Merry Widow" prove as attractive as ever—famine and depression or not.