

total theatre

Celebrating and Promoting Physical & Visual Performance Volume 12 Issue 3 Autumn 2000

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Total Theatre Awards 2000

At the Edinburgh Festival Fringe

A Walk on the Wild Side

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Celebrating and Promoting Physical & Visual Performance

VOLUME 12 ♦ ISSUE 3 ♦ AUTUMN 2000

This autumn is a good time for puppet-lovers. The bi-annual visions2000 Festival of International Animated Theatre is already underway at venues in Birmingham, Brighton, Bracknell, Jersey, Ludlow, Oxford, Portsmouth, Walton on Thames and Walsall (see page 33 for details). Total Theatre Network holds its ninth Critical Practice Debate at the Sallis Benney Theatre, Brighton as part of the visions festival on Saturday October 21st (see page 21 for details). The event - Hands Up: What's New In Puppetry? - will take a timely look at new and emerging collaborations between puppeteers and theatre-makers.

Next month, Total Theatre Network collaborates with Central School of Speech & Drama, the Puppet Centre Trust, and the Theatre Museum on a one-day symposium designed to give both a practical and theoretical perspective on the emergence of puppetry in contemporary theatre-making. The event, Puppetry Into Performance: A User's Guide, takes place at the Theatre Museum, London on November 27th and will feature a panel of internationally distinguished performers and directors who work in the field of animated theatre (see page 21 for details). Amongst these, it is hoped, will be Ariane Mnouchkine, whose latest show for Théâtre du Soleil is reviewed by Penny Francis on page 14 of this issue.

Also in this issue we announce the winners of the Total Theatre Awards 2000, which were held at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe this summer. Congratulations to British companies Spymonkey, Shunt and Generally Better Productions, and to international companies Ariel Teatr (Poland), Pig Iron Theatre Company (USA) and BlackSKYwhite (Russia), for winning awards. The 2000 Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to Monika Pagneux, who has influenced a host of current British physical theatre-makers, including John Wright, who is interviewed in this issue on page 16.

Elsewhere, you will find features on the Plunge Club, Anthony Howell's Analysis of Performance Art Summer School, Kaizen's Arts of Coaching training course and the Matter of Life & Death festival at BAC, London held earlier this summer. Finally, in a bid to differentiate between the activities of Total Theatre, the networking organisation, and Total Theatre, the magazine which it publishes, you will notice that the organisation has amended its name to Total Theatre Network. We would be grateful if you would kindly remember the change when referring to us in the future.

John Daniel, Editor

Total Theatre Magazine is published quarterly by Total Theatre Network, the UK network for physical and visual performance. If you would like to submit news, views, letters or advertise in the Winter issue, please note that the copy deadline is November 14th 2000. The next issue will cover the period January-April 2001.



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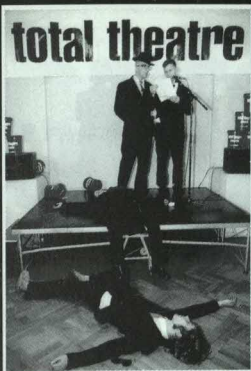


Photo: Dan Tufts

Total Theatre Awards 2000

The Total Theatre Awards 2000 were announced at a ceremony at the Assembly Rooms at the end of the last week of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe.

JOHN DANIEL introduces this year's winners



Photo: Simon Richardson

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT - MONIKA PAGNEUX

The Total Theatre Lifetime Achievement Award was this year presented to Monika Pagneux. In a long and distinguished career Monika Pagneux has worked with such masters as Jacques Lecoq, Etienne Decroux, Moshe Feldenkrais and Peter Brook. For ten years she ran a movement studio in Paris, visited by actors and dancers from all over the world. Today, drawing on Alexander, Feldenkrais and massage techniques, she leads workshops around the world. Commenting on her work, Monika says, 'The task throughout my life has been to help people re-find the life in their movement on stage. The big risk for us all is to become mechanical in our movement. What we must seek out is the same quality of surprise and spontaneity that we find in our everyday lives. It is our bodies which teach us. All my work has taught me how to feel and how to listen with my body. It is such a difficult process to describe, but I know that it involves a lifetime's searching.'

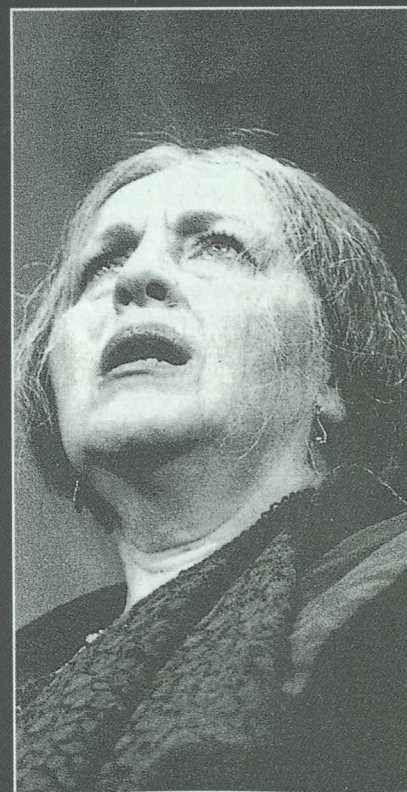
Accepting the award on her behalf, Dick McCaw, director of the International Workshop Festival, relayed the following message in Monika's absence: 'I don't feel it's right to describe me as a teacher. What is important to me is the people who are standing in front of me - it is their work, their responses, that give me my inspiration. I am profoundly touched that you have honoured me in this way and I thank you all.'

ARIEL TEATR (Poland) A LITTLE REQUIEM FOR KANTOR

It is fitting that Ariel Teatr's *A Little Requiem for Kantor* played at Richard Demarco's Rocket venue in Edinburgh this summer, as it was Demarco who first introduced Kantor to British audiences twenty-seven years ago. Zofia Kalinska, artistic director of the Krakow-based Ariel Teatr, performed with Kantor's company Cricot 2 in three of his productions, *The Water Hen*, *Lovelies and Dowdies*, and *Dead Class*. This show, which was originally created for the 1998 Edinburgh Festival Fringe (when it won a Fringe First), is Kalinska's tribute to Tadeusz Kantor.

A letter posthumously written to her artistic mentor - Kantor died ten years ago this year - Kalinska's 'little requiem' evokes the master's spirit by lovingly recreating images from some of his epoch-defining shows. For an audience too young to have seen the originals, Kalinska provides a tantalising glimpse through the mists of time. Accompanied by a haunting score by Bartek Chajdecki, Kalinska and Mira Rychiska (also a veteran of Cricot 2) don the black garb and ashen faces of Kantor's iconic *Dead Class*. Both actresses - now in their seventies - are joined by an ensemble of players too young to have witnessed Kantor's work first-hand. This is really the key to Kalinska's project - the mission to keep the spirit of Kantor alive and to introduce his ideas to a new generation.

Commenting on winning a Total Theatre Award, Kalinska said, 'I am very happy to receive this award from a group of people who, though so much younger than myself, nonetheless appreciate my work. I am so pleased that my work, itself a continuation of the work of Tadeusz Kantor, can continue to move people. Mine is a theatre which brings a message, which provides people with a cathartic experience, and thus allows them to live with their memories. With reference to tradition, Kantor used to say that it is impossible to invent something totally new, you always have to draw upon the past.'



Zofia Kalinska of Ariel Teatr

Photo: Dan Tuffis



**blackSKYwhite (Russia)
BERTRAND'S TOYS**

Midnight at Demarco's Rocket venue was the perfect time and setting for this full-on sensory assault from Moscow's underground theatre company, blackSKYwhite. Amidst a wilderness of mediocre theatrical fare, this show was like manna from heaven. Presenting a simply-conceived, hour-long slice of pure mime theatre, finally here was a company whose physical skill matched their artistic ambitions.

In a performance that is part sideshow, part freakshow, this fantastically talented Russian duo present a scene from a nightmare, in which two 'mannequins' (Bertrand's toys of the title) come to life to perform a mediaeval dance macabre. Performed in semi-darkness amidst swirls of dry ice and against a vicious industrial soundscape, Bertrand's Toys is an intense and unnerving experience, vomited from deep within a disturbed psyche. Two human mannequins - one male, one female - hang from their necks from bungees. One is painfully skeletal with a ghoulish grin and cavernous eyes. She is manipulated by a sinister puppet-master; contorting her slender, distended frame into postures that are unrecognisably human. With incredible physical precision and skill, both performers twitch and jerk in painful ecstasy; limbs appear to extend way beyond their limitations, arms are tossed in the air as if disembodied.

No words are spoken and - apart from what I've already explained - nothing much actually happens, but this company create a stomach-churning and totally absorbing theatrical experience. Comparable perhaps to Derevo's Red Zone or Franko B at his blood-spilling best, Bertrand's Toys may not be for the faint-hearted, but for lovers of the dark, the twisted and the bizarre, and for all who like their theatrical experiences to be transcendental, blackSKYwhite deliver in bucket-loads.

**SPYMONKEY (UK)
STIFF - UNDERTAKING UNDERTAKING**

Since its first airing almost two years ago, Spymonkey's debut show Stiff has been polished and perfected so that it now sparkles like a freshly-cut gemstone. Side-splittingly hilarious with some inspired comic routines and characters, Stiff is set in a funeral parlour. Self-consciously artificial, the show explores the notion that its central character, the Rada-trained Forbes Murdston (Toby Park), fancies himself playing the lead in a high-brow dramatic tragedy, whilst his supporting cast (Petra Massey, Altor Basaur and Stephan Kreiß) see themselves more accurately as clowns in a ridiculous black comedy. The mayhem that ensues hinges on this central dichotomy - that the players are not all working towards the same end. Murdston - the conceited tragedian - is, of course, the butt of most of the show's jokes.

There is rich comic potential in the funeral trade and Spymonkey take every available opportunity to make tasteless and vulgar jokes at the expense of such a dignified profession. Best of all is Petra Massey, who in the show's most inspired routine, crudely applies clown make-up to her own face whilst describing in meticulous detail the painstaking process of preparing a corpse for burial. That some of the material is reminiscent of Peepolykus is not surprising, given that the show is directed by Cal McCrystal. However, Spymonkey effectively carve their own niche and for pure bad taste and raucous tomfoolery this show can't be beat.



Photos: Dan Tuffis

**GENERALLY BETTER PRODUCTIONS (UK)
3 DARK TALES**

This young company of Lecoq graduates have come on leaps and bounds since their Edinburgh debut in 1999 with Bond. This year their hugely inventive and good-humoured show, 3 Dark Tales, played to packed-houses at the Assembly Rooms. Not since The Right Size or Peepolykus at their crowd-pleasing best have I seen a company whose comic routines are met - more often than not - with spontaneous rounds of applause from their audience.

This is comic, physical storytelling at its best, performed by a talented bunch who might, I suspect, spawn the next round of Hayley Carmichaels, Sean Foleys and Hamish McColls, from amongst their midst. Watch out for Lucien Lindsay MacDougal in particular. Bearing more than a passing resemblance to Rowan Atkinson, he's a comedy king in the making. It's unfair, however, to pick out one actor from a company whose strength lies mainly in the collective skills of the ensemble. Artistic director Joseph Alford, Sarah Coxon and Carolina Valdés also shine.

It's a broad comic terrain that Generally Better Productions (GBP) traverse - with its roots in Lecoq's exaggerated 'buffoon' style theatre. 3 Dark Tales weaves together the disparate life-stories of four gloriously grotesque characters - the down-trodden Tibble (Lindsay MacDougal), his indomitable Italian wife Amelia (Valdés), the corporate hotshot Frank



(Alford), and the aspiring opera singer Dawn (Coxon). Although the show could at this stage benefit from a tightening of its dramatic structure (the story does at times gets a little woolly), it is performed with such spirit and commitment and is so wholly in-the-moment, that its flaws are more than compensated for. GBP are definitely a company to watch out for.



Photo: Dan Tuffis

**SHUNT (UK)
THE BALLAD OF BOBBY FRANCOIS**

With such limited time allowed for get-ins and set-strikes, it's no wonder that so much theatre on the fringe is visually unambitious. Full-marks, therefore, must go to Shunt for transposing their brilliant site-specific show, *The Ballad of Bobby Francois*, from the East End railway arch for which it was originally created, to Edinburgh University's students' union building, without compromising for a moment on its technical realisation. In fact, although the Edinburgh venue could not match Shunt's London base for atmosphere, arguably - in every other respect - the show has gone from strength to strength since its London run last year.

A totally engaging participatory experience, Shunt involve their audience from the moment they arrive. The stylised recreation of an aeroplane crash in 1972 - when a jet carrying a team of young rugby players went down in the Andes - *The Ballad of Bobby Francois* takes its audience on an exhilarating and doomed flight aboard Shunt Air. From its comic opening - in which a bored air hostess issues garbled safety instructions whilst swigging surreptitiously from the spirit miniatures on the mini-bar - the show soon descends into bleaker territory: the icy Andean landscape in which the few survivors of the crash emerge dazed and terrified to wait for their rescuers. With scant resources, as the days pass, there's only one option left to them to stay alive - they must cannibalise one of their deceased team-mates.

Avoiding sensationalising what is undoubtedly a ghastly scenario, Shunt create a subtle and evocative performance that is at times darkly comic, but also quietly moving.

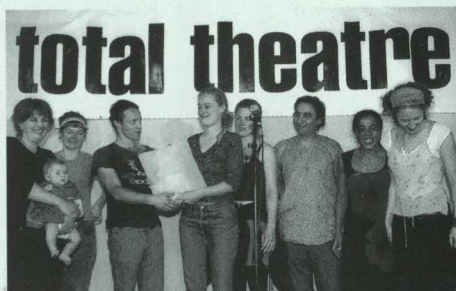


Photo: Dan Tuffis



Photo: Natalie Madani

**MOST SUPPORTIVE VENUE -
THE PLEASANCE**

Christopher Masterson collected the 2000 Total Theatre Most Supportive Venue award on behalf *The Pleasance*. Now firmly established as the main venue of the fringe - having eclipsed the *Gilded Balloon* and the *Assembly Rooms* in terms of its scale and programme for the last couple of years - *The Pleasance* is most immediately identified for its strong line-up of stand-up comics. However, in a festival that has been hijacked over the last decade by stand-up, the venue is to be applauded for having retained its commitment to the physical and theatre sector, from newcomers to established companies. This year two Total Theatre Award-winning companies - *Spymonkey* and *Shunt* - were both programmed by *The Pleasance*, amidst a line-up of others that included: *Unlimited Theatre*, *Blow Up Theatre*, *Trestle*, *The Weird Sisters*, *Rejects Revenge*, *Maybellene* - *The Living Fashion Doll*, *UMO Ensemble* and *Les Bubb* (to name a few).



Photo: Dan Tuffis

The judging panel for the 2000 Total Theatre Awards comprised: Mary Brennan, Glasgow Herald; John Daniel, Total Theatre Magazine; Anthony Dean, Central School of Speech & Drama; David Jubb, British Festival of Visual Theatre; Helen Lanaghan, London International Mime Festival; Dick McCaw, International Workshop Festival; Tom Morris, BAC; Paul Pinson, Boilerhouse; Mark Saunders, Royal Scottish Academy of Music & Drama; Joseph Seelig, London International Mime Festival; Martin Sutherland, Martin Sutherland Productions.

andco

SPONSORS OF THE 2000 TOTAL THEATRE AWARDS

Formed in 1997 andco is a consortium of Hampshire arts centres, comprising Ashcroft Arts Centre, Fareham, Fairfield Arts Centre, Basingstoke, Forest Arts Centre, New Milton, Havant Arts Centre, The Tower, Winchester and West End Centre, Aldershot, plus the County Arts Office of Hampshire County Council. Its main aims are to improve the quality, quantity and range of programming at its venues, particularly in the area of physical theatre, and to develop new audiences for this work.

Commenting on the Total Theatre Awards, Kate Barrington, andco's Stabilisation Co-ordinator, said, 'Two years ago we considered sponsoring our own andco awards, but then we discovered Total Theatre were looking for a sponsor and realised theirs were just the sort of awards andco was looking at. The companies we saw winning last year are exactly the kind of companies we are interested in, for example, Ridiculusmus, who won an award last year, have recently visited andco venues, as has Ken Campbell.'

The andco consortium was the brainchild of Hampshire County Council's Arts Office in Winchester. In a successful bid for 'stabilisation' money from the National Lottery through the Arts Council of England, the six centres became members of the consortium in 1998 - the main thrust of their bid being to develop the performance programme and market it to new audiences, particularly in the 18-30 age group. Now midway through the three-year period, it is already clear the process has had far-reaching effects on all areas of their output, and that these effects will last way beyond the scheme's end in March 2001.

By working together as the andco consortium, the centres have found they can take risks and programme productions that would otherwise be beyond their reach. They can also join forces to create new work, which last year led to the bringing of a Grand Guignol performance by the Parisian Compagnie du Carnage to this country. This is not the only time the centres, in their capacity as the andco consortium, have been able to commission work. As well as the Grand Guignol piece, andco has been able to underline its commitment to physical theatre with commissioning money going to Kaos, Jade, Economical Truth, Spymonkey and Union Dance. Their latest commissioning project will see DansConnect performing new work at the six centres in November, following successful schools' workshops during the summer.

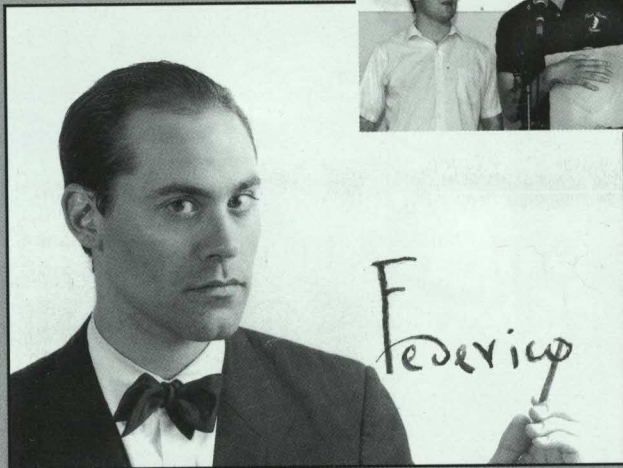
In addition, andco has broadened its scope to play a vital role in Hampshire's three-year project to develop the crafts in the county. It is responsible for the creation of a new website for craftspeople ('Spacecraft'), the commissioning of practical craftware for each of the centres, and craft for offices within Hampshire County Council. It is therefore appropriate that once again the awards that were presented in Edinburgh were pieces of fine craftware made by Hampshire craftspeople.

andco's philosophy is very much to build relationships with the companies they work with, deciding together the best ways of developing and reaching target audiences. As well as taking a fresh look at the venues themselves - to see if their profile is right for the people they are trying to attract - the consortium work in partnership with companies to find a successful joint approach to marketing productions. This approach appears to be working well, with the consortium happy that it has helped venues and companies reach new and vibrant areas for its audience.

And the partnership with Total Theatre has also helped this process. As Kate says, 'Our relationship with Total Theatre has certainly been fruitful. Our involvement with the Edinburgh Fringe allows new companies to find out about us, while at the same time we get to know and help reward the best new talent around. The majority of the companies and artists we deal with are members of Total Theatre Network, so it's a natural partnership. All of this can only be good for our audiences.'

andco's development programme is supported by the Lottery through the Arts Council of England. For more information about andco contact Kate Barrington on 01962 846024.

Photo: Dan Tuffs



AUDIENCE CHOICE - PIG IRON THEATRE COMPANY (USA) POET IN NEW YORK

The Philadelphia-based Pig Iron, whose show *Gentleman Volunteers* was highly commended in the 1999 Total Theatre Awards, won the 2000 Total Theatre Audience Choice Award for *Poet in New York*. In contrast to *Gentleman Volunteers*, which is performed in promenade by a cast of five, *Poet in New York* sees actor Dito Van Reigersberg assume multiple roles in a one-man show that takes us back to New York in the late twenties, just before the Wall Street crash of '29. Taking the actual event of Spanish poet Federico Garcia Lorca's nine-month visit to the Big Apple in that year as its starting point, the play is a fictional account of the poet's experience of the city. From gay parties in Brooklyn to the burgeoning mixed-race jazz dives of Harlem, *Poet in New York* - written by Dan Rothenberg and Dito Van Reigersberg - follows Lorca's tentative journey of discovery. Infused, like Lorca's own writings, with melancholy, magic and romance, the sensitive and intelligent text evokes a clear sense of character and situation.

Van Reigersberg really embodies the role of Lorca - the introverted, tongue-tied innocent cast adrift in a foreign metropolis. But he also excels as Lorca's fellow countryman Salvador Dali (whose hedonism couldn't contrast more with Lorca's hesitancy); the bohemian poet Hart Crane; the Harlem blues singer Victoria Spivey; and the New York socialite Mildred Adams. Catapulted from rural Spain into a city of skyscrapers, New York must have seemed like a fairground to Lorca and the city was to provide rich fodder for his poetry.

The best thing about this well-modulated, skilfully performed piece, however, is the way it succeeds in communicating a genuine passion for Lorca himself. Poetic and mystical, the play is rendered especially poignant given what we know of the poet's tragic demise in 1936.



A Walk on the Wild Side

This month a collection of artists are setting off on a series of shared journeys through the landscapes of Wales. The project, Expedition-Mapping Wales, is part of the Restless Gravity festival organised by the Centre for Performance Research. **DOROTHY MAX PRIOR** considers the rich tradition of environmental performance Photos: Ged Murray

A group of people are gathered in the woods at night. They build a fire, sing songs, dance and take turns telling tall-stories. There is a sense of occasion, a shared expectation of something happening, and everyone present feels free to contribute to the evening in any way they wish.

In the same woods, two years later, a different group of people are guided along the dark paths by a storyteller who addresses them in High Javanese, leading them through archways of fire to a series of glades transformed into sculptural representations of the five elements. The group finally arrive in an amphitheatre filled with fountains. A performer makes a tortuous but triumphant climb up a metal stair-

case as water cascades over him, whilst others appear in silhouette behind lighted screens.

Both of these occasions could be described as theatre events. The second example was Alam Halus, created in 1998 by environmental artists Red Earth in collaboration with Indonesian performer Parmin Ras. Although some may argue that such an event is not theatre, it was clear from the moment this performance began that there was an obvious end, and although the audience were not passive - they were required to walk, sit and climb at different points in the evening - it was still easy to differentiate between performer and spectator.

The other example was a workshop led by Phil Gunderson as part of Discovery 1: Out of

the Woods, a week of skill-sharing and artists' development organised by Total Theatre and the Sussex-based Bodily Functions Forum in 1997. It was a theatre event because Gunderson framed it as such. His 'pre-existing text' was the guidelines he issued before the evening commenced: the stated objective to create a communal event, the ritual gathering of wood and fire-making, the instruction to bring along an unbelievable story that could be true or false. The 'performance text' was all that took place that evening - planned or unplanned.

This event could be seen as an example of what Jerzy Grotowski called 'Art as Vehicle', a form of theatre that challenges the division between performer and spectator. In Gro-

towski's view, everyone is creative and should be encouraged away from the 'passive culture' of reading other people's books and watching other people's films or performances to instead take part in the 'active culture' of shared performance events.

This notion is at the heart of the shared journey, a form of performance that returns us to the roots of theatre: to the gatherings made to celebrate or worship that live on in the statue-bearing processions of Northern Italy and the Mardi Gras carnivals of the Caribbean. Everyone is part of the process, everyone a 'performer' - although it needs to be acknowledged that the event is held by someone who carries the crowd. One or more people have a separate role to the other participants - the cross-bearer in the Good Friday procession takes on the burden for the crowd, the African shaman enters the trance on everyone's behalf. Indeed, the shaman/performer is often considered to be so separate from the other participants in the event that she or he is beyond the human whilst in that role - a vehicle for the spirits to move through. This may be the reason why Grotowski called the last phase of his work 'Art as Vehicle' - perhaps we are all vessels of the divine.

In contemporary performance, it is the artist or facilitator who carries that responsibility for everyone taking part. Keith Khan is an artist who is aware of the issues around that responsibility. In his work - which has included environmental projects with the Brick Lane community in London and design for Carnival that strips back the superficial glitz to get at the roots of the form - Khan aims to create a dialogue with the audience that changes the hierarchy between audience and artist.

Carnival takes many forms, one of the most prevalent is the pre-Lent extravagance of Mardi Gras. Whilst cold Northern Europeans spend their 'Fat Tuesdays' eating pancakes and sugar, residents of warmer climes drink and dance through the streets for twenty-four hours or more. Again, the shared journey is at the heart of Mardi Gras - the weaving through the streets of musicians, dancers, costume-wearers and general revellers. Within Northern European culture there is also a tradition of processional performance - both the religious celebrations or entreaties to saints or virgins and the pagan festivals linked to the cycle of the year. Companies such as Welfare State International have created contemporary interpretations of these ritual performances, such as walks through town or countryside carrying candle lanterns made from hazel withies and tissue paper. In a cold climate, the flame of light is more than a spiritual representation of the forces of life - it is literally the means of survival, the fire that saves us from dying of cold or starvation.

Schoolchildren in Germany celebrate the feast of St Martin, the patron saint of beggars



Welfare State International

Armed with sketch-books, diaries, laptops, musical instruments and mobile phones, their mission is to search for the 'stuff' of Wales in the 21st Century

and travellers who ripped his own cloak in half to clothe the naked Christ-child. The tradition has been brought to this country through the Rudolph Steiner schools, always keen to create rituals and celebratory festivals. Martin-mass is celebrated on November 11th with a lantern walk, songs around the bonfire, and mulled apple juice - a gathering of strength before the worst of the winter sets in. Same Sky, an off-shoot from Welfare State International, have created an annual event called Burning the Clocks, which takes place on December 21st to mark the winter solstice. A lantern walk through Brighton ends on the beach where everyone who has taken part in the procession throws their clock lanterns onto a massive bonfire. Large structures and sculptural puppets surrounding the bonfire are set alight, in celebration of the return of the light at winter's turning point. Burning the Clocks is so successful that most people

assume it is an ancient ritual - a sure sign that Same Sky have tapped into something deep in the English psyche.

Whether through the streets of a town or across the countryside, the shared journey unites people in a common purpose - the starting point can be art, religion, or celebration, but the intention is the same: to frame a section of time and move a group of people through a designated space to enjoy and share the experience of departure, journey and arrival.

This month the Centre for Performance Research is hosting a project called Expedition-Mapping Wales. Artists working in pairs - one from Wales and one from elsewhere - will share a journey through the country's hills and villages. Armed with sketch-books, diaries, laptops, musical instruments and mobile phones, their mission is to search for the 'stuff' of Wales in the 21st Century. In the second week of the festival, Welsh artists Glen Davidson and Anne Hayes will travel by train from Merthyr Tydfil through the valleys to Cardiff with Australian John Baylis, a pioneer of community and environmental performance. He is currently artistic director of Urban Theatre Project, who work with a form they term 'intimate spectacle'. Their work is process-led and leads to highly-acclaimed public events that are deeply rooted in their physical location. Other journeys include a walk from the source of the river Ystwyth to its estuary and the creation of a sonic map by American performance artist Rachel Rosenthal paired with Simon Whitehead. And in the final week, Bill Shannon and Sean Tuan John take a Seaside Jaunt through the funfairs, piers and promenades of Welsh seaside towns.

The notion of the journey as an artistic form is one that challenges the boundaries in many ways - sometimes literally crossing national boundaries and borders, often crossing the divide between different arts disciplines. At its heart, a journey is a microcosm of life. We start off somewhere, move to somewhere else, and then stop. Along the way, we share the sights, sounds and sensations of life with fellow travellers - a journey shared is both a celebration and a confirmation of life. A journey encapsulates a little piece of time and space that stay forever linked - a piece of all-encompassing total theatre. ■

Expedition-Mapping Wales is a special commission as part of the Restless Gravity festival taking place at venues throughout Wales until October 29, organised by Aberystwyth Arts Centre, Theatr Gwynedd (Bangor) and the Centre for Performance Research (Aberystwyth). For further information call 01970 621571 or visit www.restlessgravity.org.uk.

The Art of Dying

Summer might seem an unlikely time for a performance season about death and dying. But Battersea Arts Centre like to break taboos, as **DAVID HARRADINE** discovered at the Matters of Life and Death festival
 Photos: Alexandra Butler

'I'm in mourning for my life,' says Masha at the very beginning of Chekhov's *The Seagull*. 'Take up the body,' says Fortinbras at the very end of *Hamlet*, as the corpses start to stack up around the stage. 'Fade to blackout,' says the stage direction at the end of innumerable plays. 'Theatre: The Dying Art,' cries the headline, as another company folds and disappears.

It seems to have been a year for dying, this year. Perhaps it's the millennial madness, making us all too aware of our mortality, reminding us that time's marching on, and that the future is running faster and the present's running out. Death seems to be everywhere - in the newspapers, on the telly, on the streets. My mother phoned me up the other week to ask if I thought she should be cremated so that we could all have a separate little bit of her in a pot, to keep. My dad's been joking about the heat it'll take to melt his new steel knees. The spectacular performance of the Queen Mother's birthday was just another reminder of the build-up to the cultural shut-down planned for when she finally sets-off on the big walkabout in the sky.

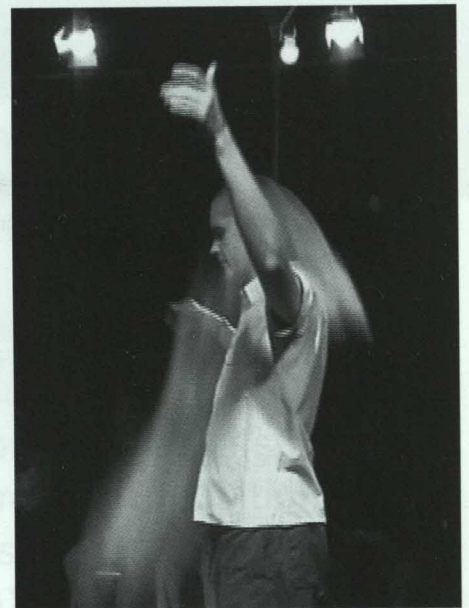
In the midst of all this, Battersea Arts Centre - not a venue to follow the straight path to your usual millennial festivities - saw in the new century with a festival of work about death and dying, which over four weeks from mid-June to mid-July presented thirty-odd performances, screenings, workshops and discussions, programmed to open up a challenge to the denial of death that still pervades our culture. Programmers Tom Morris and David Jubb write in the festival brochure that 'Death is the last great taboo of our age. Sex, madness and 100 kinds of abuse have all been "outed", examined and therapised in the last 50 years. Death is



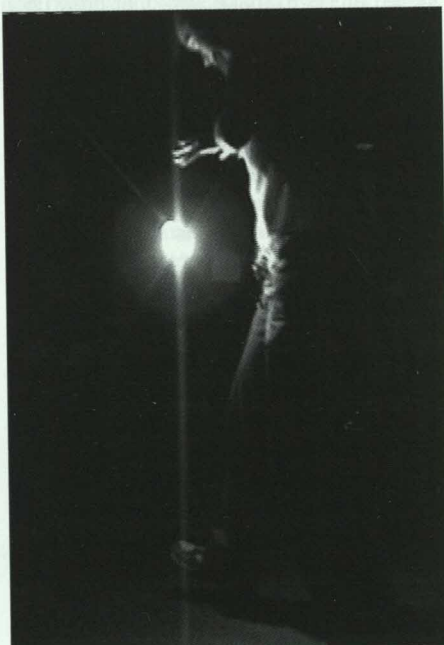
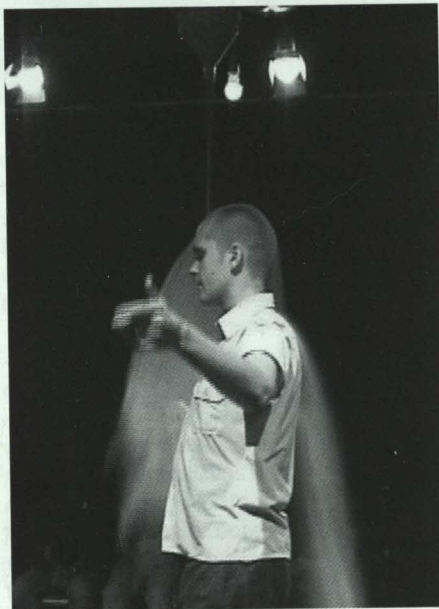
wedged in the closet. Old people seem determined to deny the possibility of death until the very last gasp. The young don't think about dying at all. As a result we are panicked and unprepared when our loved ones die. Age old rituals are dusted down, half-remembered and creaked out to say our farewells.'

Against this apparent inability to deal with death, the Matters of Life and Death festival invited a host of artists to make and share work that might reinvent our rituals and our understandings of death, and our ability to accept it, live with it, maybe even celebrate it.

It's no coincidence that a venue renowned for its programme of innovative performance should be one of the first to place its cards on the table and its neck on the line with such a risky season - for the entire history of theatre and of performance (this is the bit where I make the grand claim) is tangled up with death and dying. From the earliest forms of performance grounded in ritual and religious wor-



ship, to the chronicles of change and murder we call the Greek tragedies; from mediaeval liturgical drama's reflection upon the moral and philosophical problems of death and life, to Shakespeare's meditations on time; from the classical aesthetics of death in French renaissance tragedy, to the personal experiences of death that run through nineteenth century realism; from the muck and ooze of death explored by the surrealists and expressionists, to the metaphor of life as a detour on the way to death poeticised by Beckett; from the reflections on the body and on mortality enacted by performance artists, to the contemporary fascination with escaping death through technology - it wouldn't be too difficult to claim that there has never been a performance that is not driven or shadowed, somewhere, by the spectre of death and dying.



It seems to have been a year for dying, this year. Perhaps it's the millennial madness, making us all too aware of our mortality, reminding us that time's a marching on

But wait! Don't get depressed and turn the page - maybe this is a good thing. Maybe this is exactly what theatre and performance are all about. If death is currently subject to the kind of horrified repression that once characterised sex, then perhaps performance offers us the opportunity to confront and explore our own mortality, and to think of ways of marking death in better rituals than a swathe of black and a few ham sandwiches. Maybe the reason that companies as diverse as Theatre de Complicite, Frantic Assembly, Improbable, In Situ, Edible Theatre and my own company, *Fevered Sleep* - to name but a few - seem so obsessed by death, is because we have all realised that at the end of the day, it is the only thing that's guaranteed. And maybe performing death brings us all closer to understanding the meaning of life.

One of the ways in which theatre brings us closer to contemplating death, is by forcing us to deal with loss. Like life, performances only exist for a limited period of time, after which they vanish, never to be identically repeated or regained. These were the themes that *Fevered Sleep* explored in our recent project (made for the BAC festival), *Exquisite Moments and Imperfect Endings*. We were interested in exploring how the very formal aspects of live performance are linked to living and dying. Like life, performance speeds through time, from an awkward beginning ('how do you start a piece that's all about endings?') we asked ourselves every day in rehearsal) to an inevitable ending. Like life, performance is peppered with moments of beauty, stretches of boredom (we

all know that one), exhilarating journeys and tragic loss; and no loss more tragic than the one that happens every night as the lights begin a long slow fade to blackout, the performers clear the stage, and the audience clears the theatre, leaving an empty silence hanging in the air.

This is one of the most profoundly valuable aspects of live performance, this existence in real time, and I can't help but wonder what effect the technologies that are encroaching on theatre (the mandatory video insert, the multimedia spin) will have on it. I don't want to be reactionary, but I think the obsession with new technologies is a way of absorbing that which is most threatening to live performance - if you can't beat them, join them, or better yet, get them to join you. Maybe we can afford

to be more reflective, more cautious, to celebrate the loss that marks live performance (as it isn't preserved on film) rather than denying it. Unlike film, unlike digital media, unlike the quirky avatars that dance across the CD-ROM, theatre brings us eye to eye with living bodies, with other human life, with the warmth and the poetry of the flesh. And these performing bodies are bodies that every night, at the end of the show, we have to applaud and lose, that disappear into the memory and into the heart. I can't be the only one who cries when something is so good that it's just too unbearable when it ends.

So maybe we can find in live performance a poetic, an embodied, a profound means for us to prepare for death - for our own deaths and for the deaths of those we love. Perhaps theatre can tell us things about mortality that cannot be explained any better anywhere else (as the festival at BAC seems to suggest) - and, if after two and a half millennia, performance can still find fresh ways of contemplating death, this certainly seems to be the case. And maybe, in enabling us to reflect upon dying, upon our own inevitable and inescapable endings, live theatre and performance can help us to find better, more exciting and more valuable ways to live.

'Dying is an art,' whispers Sylvia Plath as the gas caresses her face, 'and like everything else, I do it exceptionally well.' ■

David Harradine is Co-Artistic Director of Fevered Sleep.

CLUB FOR HEROES

Rene Eyre, the driving force behind Plunge Club, discovered a long-neglected youth club in South London to stage a twenty-four hour 'ambient event' last month. **RAY NEWE** reports

'A wilderness of desolation with miles of ugly, vulgar, shoddy stuff, without one touch of imagination, one message to history'. This is how King George IV described Walworth after a visit in the early twenties. Today, travelling the Walworth Road, staring blank-eyed from the top deck of a bus, it is easy for those unfamiliar with the area to sympathise with his sentiment.

Artist and founder of Plunge Club, Rene Eyre knows better, and last month staged a twenty-four hour 'ambient event' - Theatre of Memory, Theatre of Myth - at one of London's best kept secrets. Behind the unexceptional frontage of Walworth Methodist Chapel lurks Clubland - one of the country's first youth clubs - a product of the imagination, stamina and charisma of the diminutive preacher, James Butterworth.

Butterworth began his ministry in Walworth in 1922 having been appalled by a declaration made by one of the local slum-dwelling boys that he would rather commit another crime and return to reform school than stay in Walworth where there was nowhere to play. Butterworth determined to build a haven where local children could play and create. By the end of the twenties, a new chapel and club stood on the site of the old Wesleyan chapel and, during the thirties, slum property was purchased and demolished to build a gym, theatre, art studio and workshops.

Clubland opened in 1939 only to be destroyed two years later by German bombs. Butterworth undertook a massive post-war fundraising campaign to rebuild the chapel and club. In the hidden courtyard five hundred donor stones, sold at £100 each, bear the names of luminaries of sport, cinema, theatre and politics whose contributions led to the rebuilding of Clubland. Consequently the place resonates

with a bygone glamour that's strangely at odds with its prosaic South London setting.

It is difficult to believe that this potent brew of mid-twentieth century celebrity could be so thoroughly hidden. Yet, these days Clubland is seldom used. 'It's so strange,' says Rene Eyre, 'because this place found me.' Approached by Southwark Council to stage an event for the millennium, Eyre already had the

Plunge Club provided an umbrella for as wide a range of artists as possible - established and neglected artists, students and chancers of every stripe responded to the monthly themed evenings

idea for Theatre of Memory, Theatre of Myth and was searching for a suitable location in which to stage it. 'I was looking for a place with big and small spaces and both indoor and outdoor locations,' Eyre tells me. In the run up to New Years Eve 2000, the present Reverend of Walworth Methodist Chapel found his congregation swelling and feared that by December 31st he would be unable to

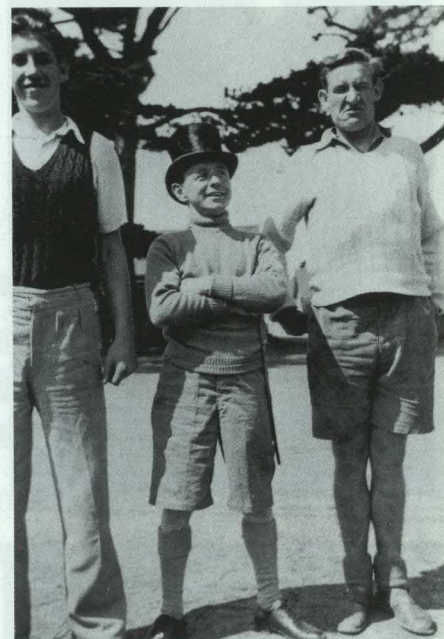
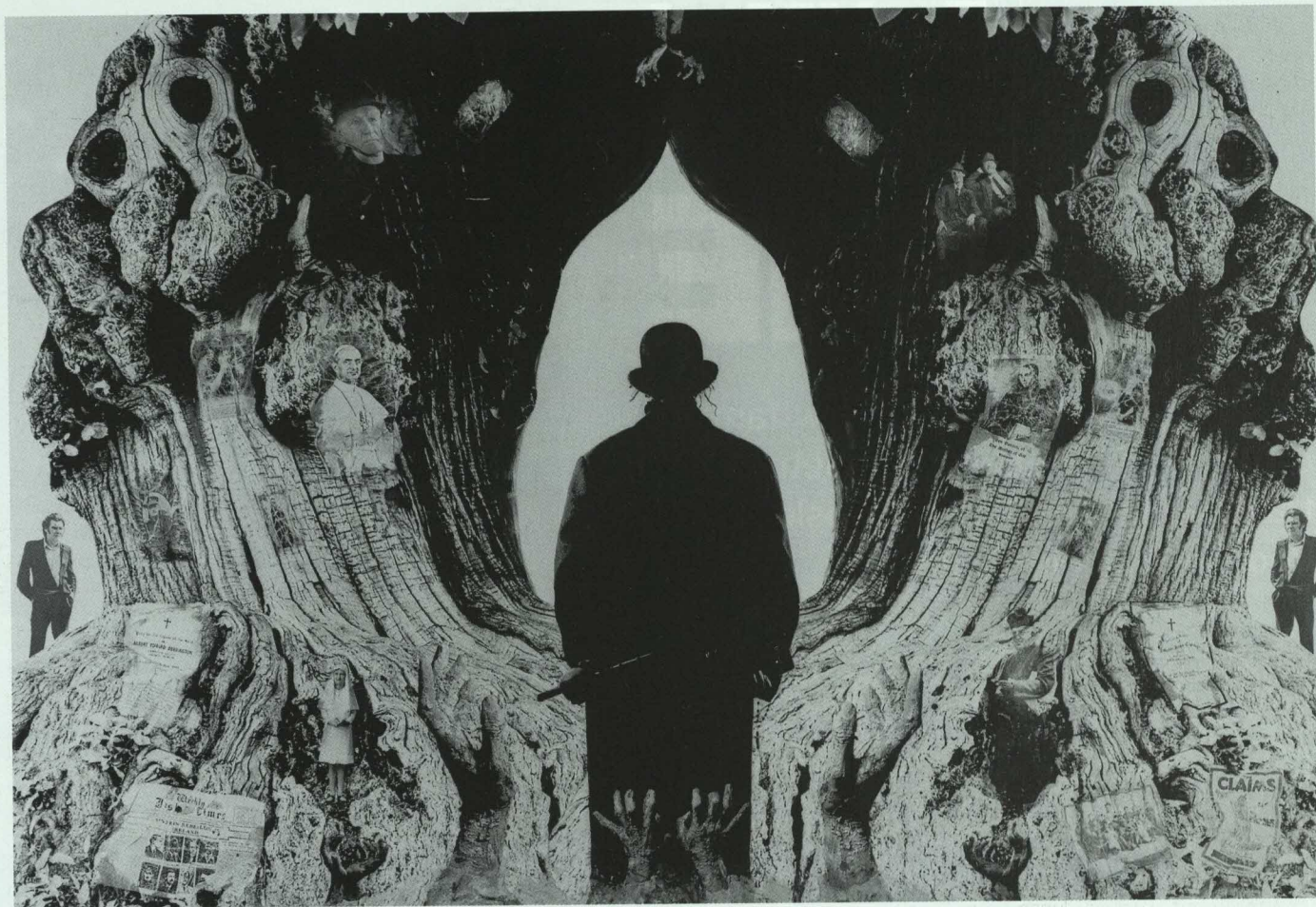


Photo: Rev Jimmy Butterworth, Founder of Clubland

fit them all into the Chapel. Consequently, he invited Eyre to discuss the possibility of installing a live video playback so that those members of the congregation unable to get into the Chapel, could listen to the service outside. Her excitement at having discovered this neglected gem is still undiminished.

The idea behind Theatre of Memory, Theatre of Myth came from an investigation into the history of memory, as Eyre explains: 'Greek orators had a memory trick in which they imagined a building and filled each room with a resonant object. The orator would then move from room to room - the object serving to remind them of the next stage of their speech.' Clubland's rooms are already full of resonant objects, and remain very much as they were. Responding to the space, Eyre invited artists to make work that drew upon the history and mythology of Clubland or their own memory and mythology.

Thus, in the canteen, artist Victor Mount staged a nostalgic event that drew on his own memories of youth clubs. The contribution of Dartington College graduate Sarah Butterworth pulled together both strands of the suggested remit, for she is founder Jimmy Butterworth's grand-daughter and used the opportunity to create a shrine to her grandmother. Where underprivileged youth once played cricket on the roof, artists' group Syzygy created a huge kite. In the shell of the gym Eyre performed My Father's House, an autobiographical piece about her father inspired in part by an etching of him that she had done when only nineteen. 'My dad would barely talk to me and it was an attempt to communicate with him,' she explains. 'I always start work with an image that somehow embodies the piece that I'm going to work on. Finding the etching was sort of spooky. I thought "Oh God,



Would I Could Photo: Eyre & Nash

I've been doing this all along really. I've been pursuing my dad and trying to get to grips with him and understand him all this time."

My Father's House was a barren landscape of earth and fetid pools, a veil of tears was projected and an outsized hessian doll represented the deceased patriarch. Eyre describes it as 'creating an alcoholic reverie and nostalgia for Ireland that every immigrant feels'. This is not the first time that she has turned to her family history as source material. In 1993 she created *Say a Little Prayer*, a dance piece about her mother. 'A lot of my work has been autobiographical,' she concedes, 'and I'm sort of ashamed that I'm constantly pulled back into memory and exorcising my family but I've given up fighting it.' Her art is a kind of alchemy where she transforms the base material of her childhood into performance, and her family history - at least the way she tells it - is so full of violence and abuse that it makes an embarrassing inadequacy of the word 'dysfunctional'.

Given the show's themes of memory and myth, it is worth a look at the history of the Plunge Club itself. Born in Brixton in 1994, Plunge Club was a response to funding problems. Eyre's own work - informed as it was by her background in fine art illustration and dance (she has degrees in both) and her enthusiasm for theatre and music

- was becoming more difficult to categorise and, therefore, fund. 'This was pre-Combined Arts, I think, or just on the cusp of it', she says. 'Categorising my work was becoming increasingly difficult, so myself and a bunch of Brixton artists decided to create our own context, a club night once a month - not banging techno and hard drug abuse (although there was quite a bit of that) but rather seasons of monthly platform events.'

Plunge Club provided an umbrella for as wide a range of artists as possible - established and neglected artists, students and chancers of every stripe responded to the monthly themed evenings. 'It was a chance to fail, to take the plunge. It provided an opportunity for established artists to migrate to different forms. A lot of healthy throwaway work was created that would not be seen and done again,' remembers Eyre. 'We all pulled together. We had no money, we did it for love. All the artists were complicit. There would always be a meeting to discuss how your work would be programmed, it wasn't just "come in, do the work, fuck off again".'

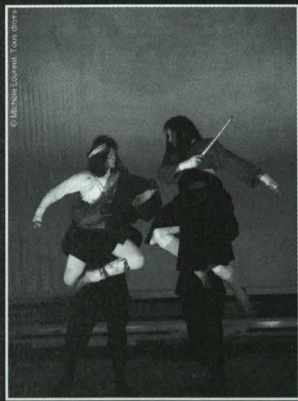
One of the Plunge Club's great strengths was its informality. 'It allowed everyone to take chances that they wouldn't have in a more formal setting - it wasn't going to ruin their career,

but it would inform their practice. Artists are on something of a treadmill of applying for funding and making a piece and getting it all right and its very pressurised. If you do appear to squander your money on a piece that doesn't work, then the likelihood is that you won't get funding again.'

In addition to monthly events in a club environment, Plunge Club staged larger-scale events at Nunhead Cemetery and the Oval House. These days, however, it is more of a banner for occasional spectacles such as the one at Clubland. Still Eyre is not yet tempted to lay it to rest, despite the mountain of administrative worries it presents: 'I need the warmth of a community in which to make work,' she explains.

In a sad footnote, Theatre of Memory, Theatre of Myth may well have been the last chance the public had to see Clubland in its present state. Modernisation, and even possible demolition, is due next year. Walworth will be robbed of a remarkable tribute to working-class culture and energy as Clubland itself passes into myth and memory. ■

For further information on Plunge Club events call 020 7793 9752 or e-mail: rene@plunge.demon.co.uk.



FIT FOR THE GODS

Théâtre du Soleil's new show *Tambours sur la Digue* is a supreme example of the use of puppetry in performance. **PENNY FRANCIS** travelled to see it at the Basle Theatre Festival in August

Photos: Michèle Laurent



We are witnessing a colourful tapestry in the weaving, depicting humans destroying each other and the world they live in

The key to the concept of *Tambours sur la Digue* ('Drums Above the Dyke'), written by Hélène Cixous and realised, in collaboration with the company, by Ariane Mnouchkine, comes after three and a half hours, when we think the end of the epic has come and gone and the house erupts in a frenzy of applause. The performers - all but two stripped of their masks and costumes - leap onto the stage for their bows, retiring and returning again and again. But in front of them, chest-high in the deep water at the centre of the stage, the Old Puppet-Master remains - masked, hatted and immobile - with a hooded puppeteer behind him. After the fourth or fifth return of the actors, he and his operator climb slowly out of the water, and solemnly he bows to the rest of the cast, who bow in return, acknowledging his supremacy and control.

Mnouchkine received the Molière prize, the most prestigious France can offer, for *Tambours sur la Digue*. It is an elaborately staged play, densely scripted. Mnouchkine, says Cixous (a regular co-worker), asked

her to write 'an ancient piece that could have been written by Hsi-Xhou the poet, sometimes performed by puppets, sometimes by actors'. There followed extensive research in the Far East, when the author felt that 'the master-puppeteer Hsi-Xhou was with her, setting the imagination of the author-puppet in motion'. The result is a fast-moving tale which may be received by the spectator on many different levels, with multiple layers of meanings and timeless resonances.

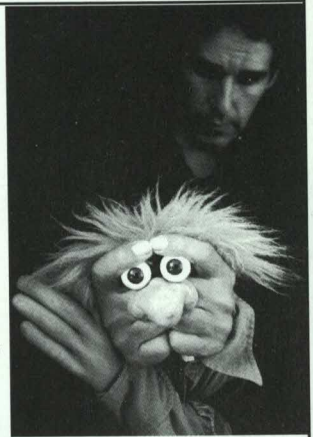
This is a story and an allegory, played by actors as puppets, mostly of the Bunraku technique (though the drummers are on strings), with their black-hooded operators behind them (but not in the Joruri tradition, in that these puppets speak their own lines). Their features and movements are stiff and they have to be lifted across the stage as in a minutely choreographed ballet, some gorgeously costumed in Japanese court robes. Their faces are strangely masked or bandaged in stockinette stretched across the features from eye to upper lip and fastened so as to flatten the nose and tilt the eyes. The delivery of the dialogue is formal, addressed as much to the audience as to other characters, unfolding the story in simple, poetic French (here with German surtitles).

The story is set in China, in an age when it seems the cultures of Japan and China were far closer than they are today, and it concerns a great flood which threatens to overwhelm a kingdom, half of which can be saved if one of the two dykes holding back the river waters is breached to release the pressure. The drums of the title are guardians stationed high above the land to overlook the dykes, ready to sound the alarm as the flood waters rise. One dyke defends the countryside and young industries, where thousands of ordinary people work and live; the other defends the city, where stand the great buildings housing the arts, the nobility and government. The choice - which side of the kingdom to destroy - is impossible for the old king to make, but only too possible for the villain of the piece, the king's nephew, who cares little about the lives of a hundred thousand peasants.

However, this dilemma is only the skeleton of the play, which develops new themes and problems, partisanships and enmities, corruption and eventually many murders, as it progresses. We are witnessing a colourful tapestry in the weaving, depicting humans destroying each other and the world they live in. They manipulate and are manipulated at every social level. The story is not so ancient. Mnouchkine's staging of this grand design engages the ear and eye at every moment. The set is severely linear, all wood, with a central rectangular area framed by

MY THEATRE

Hugo Suarez of Teatro Hugo & Ines



stones and intersected by boards, with ramps and steps on different levels serving as plains, rivers, mountains. Behind, covering the vast back wall of the Reithalle, towers a silk cloth which gracefully flutters to earth at every scene-change to reveal another and then another, each subtly different, usually undecorated, but sometimes minimally painted in the Chinese manner with shadowy trees and hills.

The effect is beautiful. We watched from steeply tiered, end-on seating imported with the show from the Cartoucherie near Paris, the company's home. The performers numbered about twenty-six, variable in quality of voice and movement. The story is embedded in the words, so clarity and strength of tone is essential, and weaknesses in projection threatened our understanding of the plot, especially in so large a theatre and against the almost constant music from Jean-Jacques Lemêtre. The demands on the actors of physical flexibility and control were also great, and most notably he who played the Chancellor (Ducio Bellugi Vannuccini), exhibited all the attributes of what Gordon Craig must have meant by his über-marionette, his vision of the supreme actor 'plus fire minus egoism'. Many of these performers would have won his approval, for they appeared not to be flesh and blood but bodies in trance.

This was theatre fit for the gods, but essentially a theatre for Everyman, for the punters once high in the 'gods' or down in the pit. Mnouchkine would have intended that. ■

Tambours sur la Digue continues its tour in Europe. For a list of dates phone the Cartoucherie in Paris on +33 43 74 24 08.

What did you see the first time you went to the theatre?
A mime performance.

What productions will you never forget?
Les Petits Suicides by Giulio Molnar and Shipwreck by Bolek Polivka.

Which performer, alive or dead, makes you laugh the most?
Buffo (Clown-mime).

Who is your favourite playwright?
Dario Fo.

When was the last time you walked out of a theatre before the end of a show?
I don't remember.

When was the last time you cried during a performance?
I never cried during a show.

Who is your favourite performer?
Bustric (Italia).

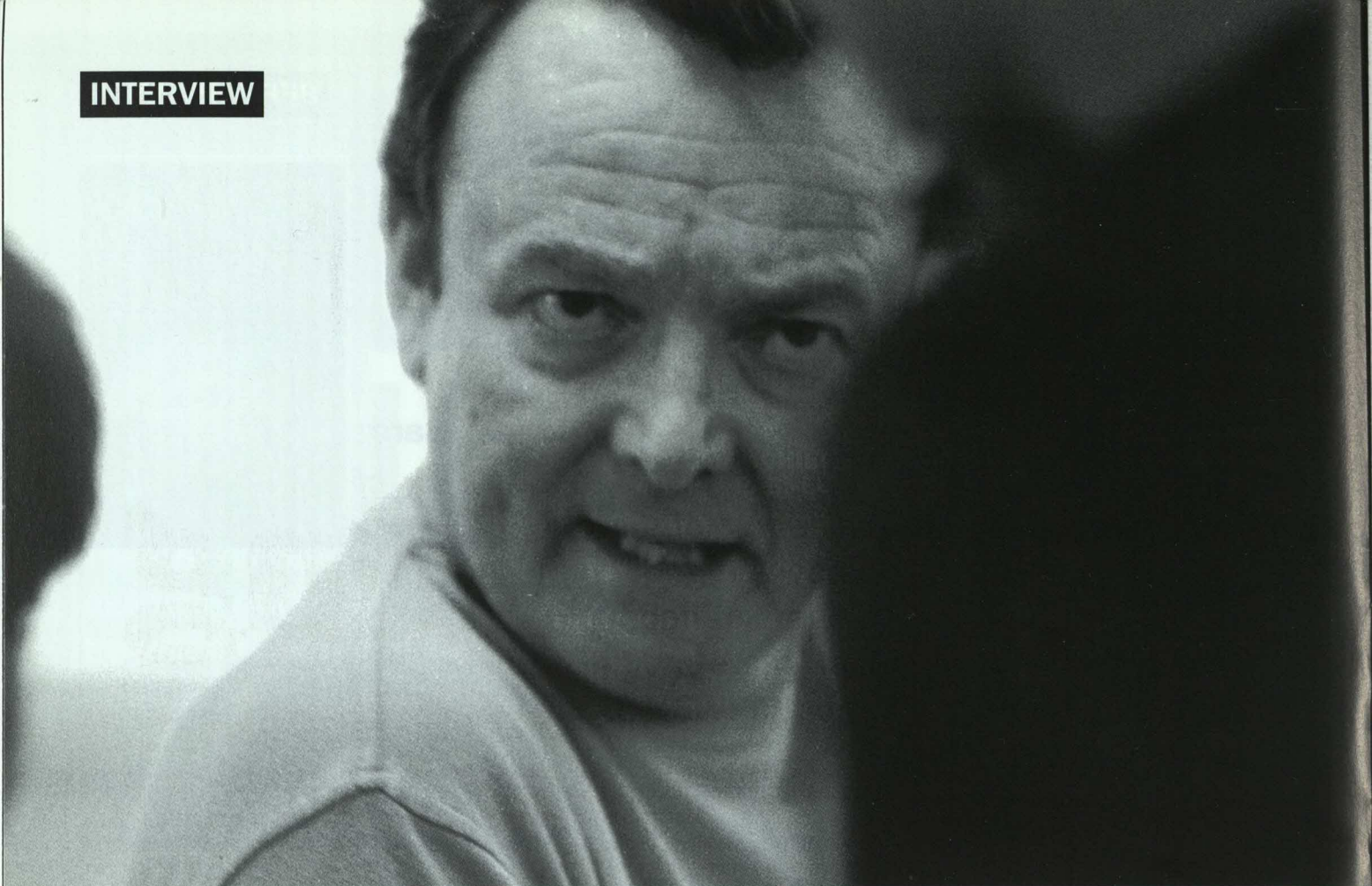
If you could meet any theatre practitioner, alive or dead, who would it be?
Augusto Boal.

Which contemporary theatre director's work do you most admire?
Giorgio Strehler.

What does the term 'physical theatre' mean to you?
Dance, mime, athletics.

What would you do if you didn't work in theatre?
I'd be a designer.

Teatro Hugo & Ines from Peru make their first visit to the UK in ten years this month, with Hugo Suarez performing solo in Body Talk. Hugo uses only his knee, hand, or even belly button plus a few simple props to conjure a parade of crazy personalities. Hugo tours the UK as part of visions2000, the Festival of International Animated Theatre. See page 33 for performance dates or call 01273 644099 for a visions2000 brochure.



Talking with John Wright can be a little daunting at times. He is affable and approachable, but at the same time he always seems to have something on his mind. It is only when you start talking about theatre, that you realise it is probably this subject that has been distracting him. As soon as the topic is broached, his eyes seem to light up and he speaks with excitement, determination and passion on his own views of the theatre world.

John Wright has been teaching and directing for over twenty years. He was a co-founder of Trestle Theatre Company and continues to work with *Told by an Idiot*. He conducts workshops all over the world, travelling as far as Hong Kong and Singapore to direct for international companies. He's currently writing a book about his approach to theatre, and has recently returned from Edinburgh after directing the new company, *The Way We Are Over Here*, in *The Lion*, *The Witch* and *a Bag of Chips* at the Fringe Festival. Fortunately, I managed to catch him on one of his quiet days at home in North London. I wanted to ask him about his approach to theatre.

There are four main influences that John Wright holds dear. The first is Lecoq and his concept of 'Toute Bouge' (that everything has a movement quality) and 'Mime du Fond' (the fundamentals of movement). The second is Monika Pagneux, who taught him the concept of 'complicite'. The third is Philippe Gaulier, who taught him how to 'play'. And finally, there are the teachings of Moshe Feldenkrais; Wright spent four or five years working with Christopher Connelly, who set up the Feldenkrais

School in Britain, exploring the idea of awareness through movement. When taking part in a John Wright workshop, one can usually expect some sort of floor-work derived from the Feldenkrais Technique. 'I nearly always start with some sort of physical softening for the

Wright talks about 'complicite' as sharing the vision, being in the same game as everyone else

actors,' he tells me. 'I have about fifty or sixty Feldenkrais lessons that I draw on and I've kind of made my own movement approach. I use it to find 'complicite' - with yourself, with others, and with objects and space.'

Wright talks about 'complicite' as sharing the vision, being in the same game as everyone else. He uses the French word because it sounds a lot more like an adjective than a verb. Feldenkrais taught that you shouldn't look at the end, but only at the bits you create as you go along. He also encouraged his students not to criticise and believed that less is better than more. All of these principles appear in Wright's work, as he explains: 'The idea of subtlety, the power of passive as opposed aggressive movement, the way in which the body learns to

retain things - these ideas are fully imbedded in my approach to acting. From here I progress to using impulses - the idea of 'complicite' gives me an open canvas on which to exploit an impulse.'

When working with Wright, an impulse can come from anything you choose - a mask, a hat, a pair of shoes, from the breath, or from some sort of physical energy. In other words, anything that the actor might choose to bring into the rehearsal room, as he explains: 'My preoccupation as a teacher and as a director is with the performance text. The performance text is the invention, the physicality, the individual skill and quite unique personal qualities that actors bring into the room. My work starts from there. If you put the emphasis on the performance text then everything changes, because you bring the play into the group of actors, you don't bring the group of actors to the play.' The emphasis is on an attitude of openness and playfulness, so that investigation and experimentation can be brought into the rehearsal room. Wright's actors are given an opportunity to find things for themselves, as he says, 'The stress is always on discovery - that's the real tenet of my work.'

When talking about his approach to theatre, Wright often uses the words 'pleasure' and 'play', and he is adamant about their importance: 'If you start using words like these, immediately people think you're somehow devaluing things, that you are somehow trivialising things and turning the profound into the vacuous. But it doesn't happen that way. If an actor on stage is having a really wonderful

Do The Wright Thing

From Trestle Theatre Company to *Told by an Idiot*, John Wright has left a distinctive mark on devised theatre. **PAUL MATTHEWS** talks to the acclaimed teacher and director

Photos: Tim Nunn

time, that pleasure is infectious - it communicates with the audience, allowing him or her to go further, to take more risks.'

John Wright's work relies on the idea of fun. Performers who work with him should enjoy what they're doing and through this sense of 'play' find ways to free themselves and discover new ways of telling stories.

One of the primary methods of discovery in Wright's approach came to him almost thirty years ago, after studying different writings on Jacques Copeau. Copeau's method involved putting a handkerchief around the performer's face to make them feel less self-conscious. 'When I tried Copeau's method with a handkerchief, it was a disaster,' Wright tells me. However, he took the idea a stage further and managed to persuade a technician he knew to make him a set of masks, which then became the foundation of a great deal of his early work, particularly with Trestle. 'Being transformed by a mask took the ego out of everything we did,' Wright explains. 'We were then in a position of being able to make the masks, audition the masks, and make the set before we'd written the play.'

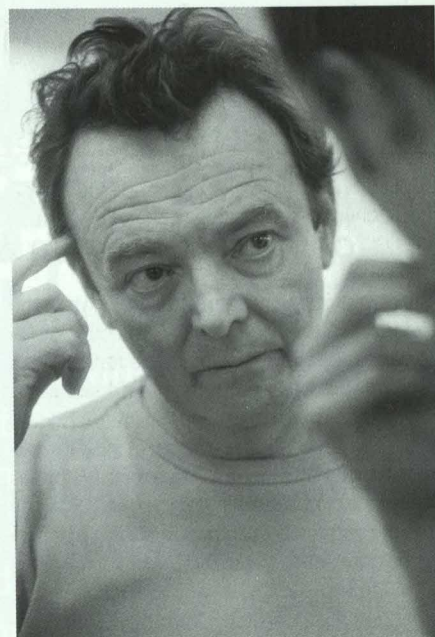
The idea of transformation comes up frequently as he talks about his mask work; the way that you can change species or sex, to appear more beautiful or more ugly than you actually are. Masks also give you the feeling of distance and of being hidden, which can be liberating. The mask is another tool Wright uses to find the impulses that he wants to exploit. He talks about using these impulses to constantly work beyond the self, to achieve a

level of inspiration which takes you beyond what you think you can do (what the Balinese refer to as 'taxu'). His latest ideas incorporate many of the discoveries he has made over the years.

'The more I work with masks the more I'm going away from that. I'm using these elements, but I'm trying to take them out of the genre debate. Once you start using words like melodrama or tragedy, the resonance that comes with them tends to get in the way. So I'm looking at different ways of being on stage. I talk now about being better than you are, playing worse than you are, playing the way you are, and playing in a manner that is nothing like the way you are.'

'Playing better' means playing the ideal - looking at the hero, the mother or the huntress - while 'playing worse' explores the grotesque, being more stupid, more ugly, distorted from the way you are. Being yourself is, as Wright says, just the idea of letting the text speak for itself, cutting away all the clichés, while playing nothing like yourself envelops you in a cartoon-world, a world of fantasy, of shape and three-dimensional form.

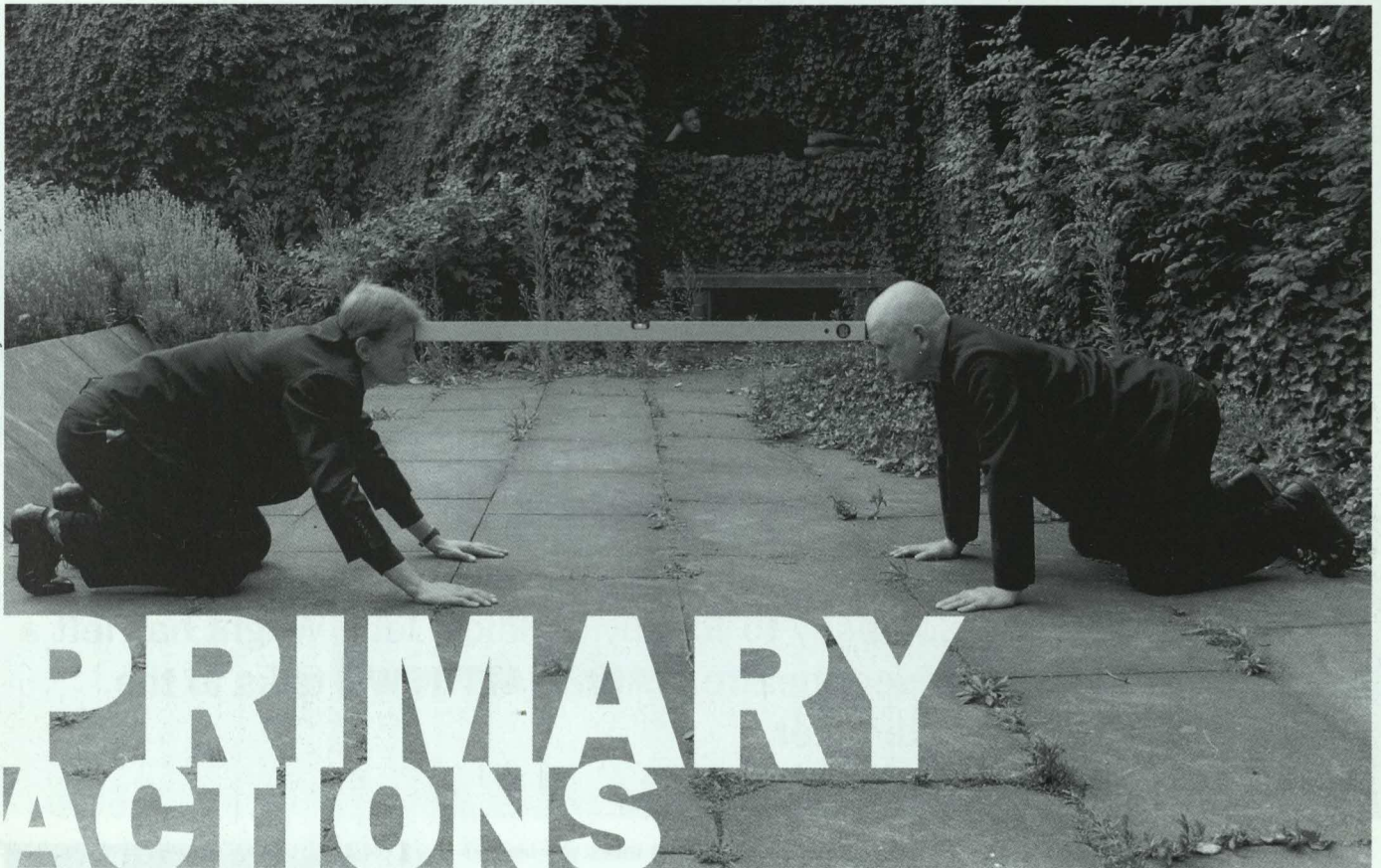
For Wright these are new explorations, culled from old ideas and games, and reformed into a new discovery. As for teaching, he has decided to break free from the institute: 'I am basing my teaching in an entirely independent way. My main teaching is now entirely in my workshops, it's not connected to any institution. I still have a connection with Middlesex University, but Middlesex is now not a culture that has enough space to accom-



modate the detailed work on acting and performers that I teach. My work is now found in short intensive courses that I do all over the world, it's now found in my practice with my company and with other companies, so there's a constant cross-fertilisation between my teaching and my theatre practice.' ■

John Wright is currently setting up a 'virtual school' on the Internet, a means of networking the different workshops and production initiatives he takes part in all over the world. Call 07967 730788 for information.

Dead Horizontal By Martin Burton, Lorna Stewart & Pedro Diablio



PRIMARY ACTIONS

The poet, novelist and performance artist, Anthony Howell held a Summer School in August to introduce his theories on the analysis of performance art. **JUDE KERR** was amongst the participants
 Photos: Martin Burton & Janet Pettman

A blank canvas is to a painting what the naked human form is to performance art.' This was just one of the earlier ideas challenged during Anthony Howell's two-week Analysis of Performance Art Summer School at ArtsAdmin in August. In fact, the notion that some of the established laws of painting can be applied to performance art, is an integral part of Howell's theory - explored both in the initial stages of his Summer School and also in the introduction to his accompanying book.

Participants of the Summer School included people from a variety of creative practices and ages: established performance artists, students and fine artists. I myself stumbled into the performance art arena having begun my training as an illustrator and painter. I use the word 'stumbled' advisedly because, more often than not, performance artists fall into the practice by accident rather than choice. Performance art is, after all, still considered to be elitist, avant-garde and generally inaccessible to the general public. Performance art pieces are often one-offs, and there can be reams of documentation to accompany them which, in turn, isolates the work from prospective audi-

ences. Plus, performance art relies rather heavily on its own self-generated language and hence can seem impenetrable. Anthony Howell's Analysis of Performance Art (the book and the Summer School) analyses the process, appearance and perception of the work of performance artists, and also provides a framework for practising artists to construct and coherently deconstruct their own work.

Howell believes that three 'primary actions' are central to any performance art piece: stillness, repetition and inconsistency. These, when mixed, produce a set of secondary actions (and so on). The first day consisted of a workshop on one of the primary actions, stillness. Through a series of workshops, Howell then went on to isolate other important factors which may constitute an engaging piece of performance art - including (to name a few) transferences, triggers and homeostasis. It was as if he was unveiling the secret ingredient of a favourite recipe or revealing the magic potion that is injected into performance to make it feel rounded, inspired and engaging for the viewer.

This was the crux of the workshop for me. It is, perhaps, these factors that explain why performance art is set apart from drama. In the case of the performances created, the emphasis is laid on form and structure - narrative or social issues are not central objectives. It seems, therefore, that Howell may have located what it is that gives performance art its sense of other-worldliness.

After a few days participants took part in 'free sessions', allowing them to put into practice what they had learnt from the accumulating exercises. By layering the primary and secondary actions, the group eventually arrived at an improvised performance. These exercises and free sessions also enabled group members to find compatible collaborators for the second week, which was put aside for the devising of performances.

Arlene Garrett crystallised her response to the workshop through a demonstration of 'stillness'. Beneath the departures board at Liverpool Street station during rush-hour, Arlene stood in a bewildered pose with her eyes fixed on the floor. She wore a red sun-dress that was hard to ignore amongst the barrage of be-suit-

Circus News

News from the Circus Arts Forum: the UK network for circus. Issue 2 Autumn 2000

www.circusarts.org.uk ■ e-mail: info@circusarts.org.uk ■ Tel.: 020 7729 7944 ■ Fax: 020 7729 7945
c/o Total Theatre Network, The Power Station, Coronet Street, London N1 6HD

If you're a circus performer, an artist using circus skills in their performance work, a teacher, promoter, or anyone else with an interest in circus, Circus Arts Forum wants to hear from you. The forum has been set up to represent all of the circus community - traditional, new circus, circus/theatre, and any form of performance that incorporates circus skills. We have started to gather information for the databases and the website that is being set up soon. We need your help - and would appreciate any information that you have to contribute: your contact details, information about classes and training, where to buy circus equipment, venues you know of where rigging can take place, contacts with other circus-friendly people and organisations etc..

We would also like to know what you think should be included on the Circus Arts Forum website - what sort of information would you like to see there, where should the site link to, suggested subjects for debate etc.. We are also looking for suggestions for articles for Circus News and the website. This is your forum - we need your input.

To close, I thought you might be interested in this definition of circus sent to us by Mike Finch of Circus Oz from The Circus Book by R. Croft Cooke:

'Circus - a fighting machine of gruelling work, of long hard hours; a thing that fights constantly for its life against the demons of adversity; a great primitive, determined organisation that meets defeat every day, yet will not recognise it; a driving, dogged almost desperate thing that forces its way forward through the sheer grit and determination of the men and women who can laugh in the face of fatigue, bodily discomfort, and sometimes in the leering face of death itself.'

So now you know. Do make a connection with the Circus Arts Forum. I'm in the office on Wednesdays and Thursdays where you can reach me on 020 7729 7944 - or you can e mail anytime to info@circusarts.org.uk.

Dorothy Max Prior
Co-ordinator, Circus Arts Forum

Circus News is published quarterly by Total Theatre Network, the UK network for physical and visual performance and edited by John Daniel © Total Theatre Network



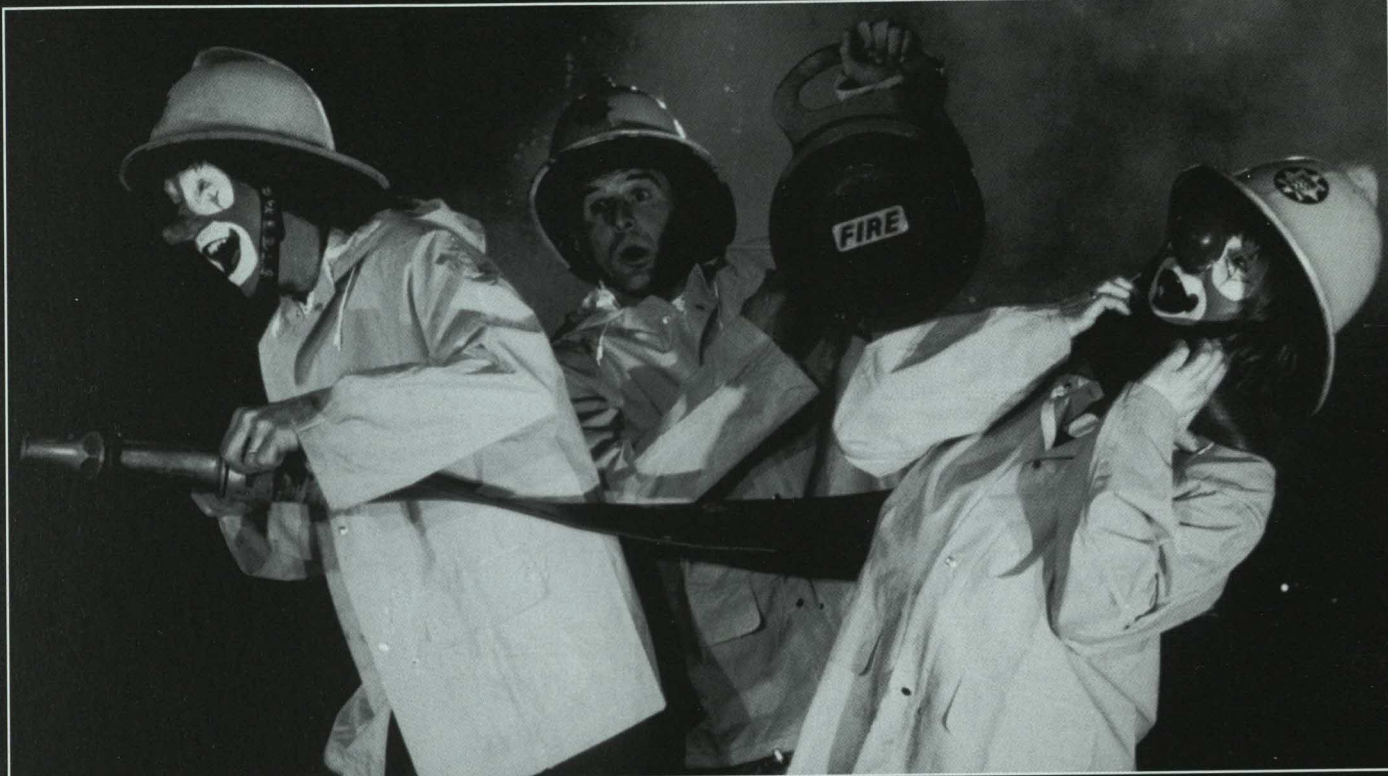
Cottle & Austen's Electric Circus

Has Circus Lost its Heart?

Despite the growing trend for circuses outside of the traditional Big-Top arena, **STEWART MCGILL** argues that there's still a lot to be said for traditional touring companies like Zippo's and Cottle & Austen Photos: Linda Rich

Michael Coveney reviewing the acclaimed Cirque Eloize from Montreal at their London premiere recently, identified a particular absence from the world of (so called) contemporary circus. It was the smell of sawdust, the unique atmosphere of the Big-Top. In essence, Coveney lamented the loss of a circus heart.

The debate between contemporary and traditional circus continues as new players arrive on the scene determined (once more) to reinvent the form, whilst in many cases refusing to accept its history - an ongoing evolution that embraces all-comers and enables the form to evolve.



Personally I think the day of the contemporary stage circus is coming to an end, as there are so few venues that suit its specific requirements.

Despite often heard cries of despair concerning circus in the UK, this summer I must admit to having felt a surge of optimism, however. Cirque Eloize, Circus Oz and Cirque Du Soleil all arrived on British shores; Circus Space announced a new, large-scale touring project; Mamaloucos promise a potentially thrilling touring show for 2001; and there have been major UK tours from the more traditionally-based circus companies. I certainly would not cry that 'circus is dead'.

Gerry Cottle, along with his long-time associate Brian Austen, heads the European Entertainment Corporation, arguably this country's foremost operation producing circus without subsidy. The three touring shows - Chinese State Circus, Moscow State Circus and Cottle and Austen's Electric Circus - cover the British Isles, with substantial outfits presented in superb Big-Top's with very high production values and customer care. Cottle's other project, Circus Of Horrors, has just launched a number one theatre tour directed by the enfant-terrible of circus, Pierrot Bidon, late of Archaos. It seems that Cottle is in the perfect position to view the landscape of circus and offer advice on how it can push forward.

'I think circus must learn from history,' he observes. 'Pierrot started with a small tent, a tiny show to learn the craft - rather like Nell Stroud's

year this is the one that seems to hook the largest audiences. Yes, it is hard work and I am a great supporter of new talent and initiatives, but you can't just sit and wait for sponsorship. I do tend to feel that many of the new circus outfits want big money whereas there is a need to get on and do it. I am full of admiration for Nell Stroud. With Gifford's Circus she has identified an audience and created a show with absolute commitment. I hope it will survive into a second season.'

Gerry Cottle's circuses draw audiences from across the social spectrum and, whilst not claiming to be arthouses of the form, they demonstrate the excitement and sheer joy of the Big-Top atmosphere that Coveney so misses in stage circus.

Another leading company in the more traditional camp is Zippo's Circus, which has evolved from a tiny non-animal show available for fetes and galas into one of the UK's largest tenting shows with a feel for the theatrical but its heart in the sawdust ring. David Hibling is Creative Director and runs ZACA, Zippos Academy of Circus Arts. Hibling echoes Coveney's reservations about stage circus: 'Every time I arrive at our show I get a kick from the smell of sawdust and grass. My problem with contemporary circus right now is that in many cases traditional images have been removed but not replaced with something else.

'I think with Zippo's we are successful in three key areas. Firstly, Martin Burton aka Zippo is unique in his total commitment to his prod-

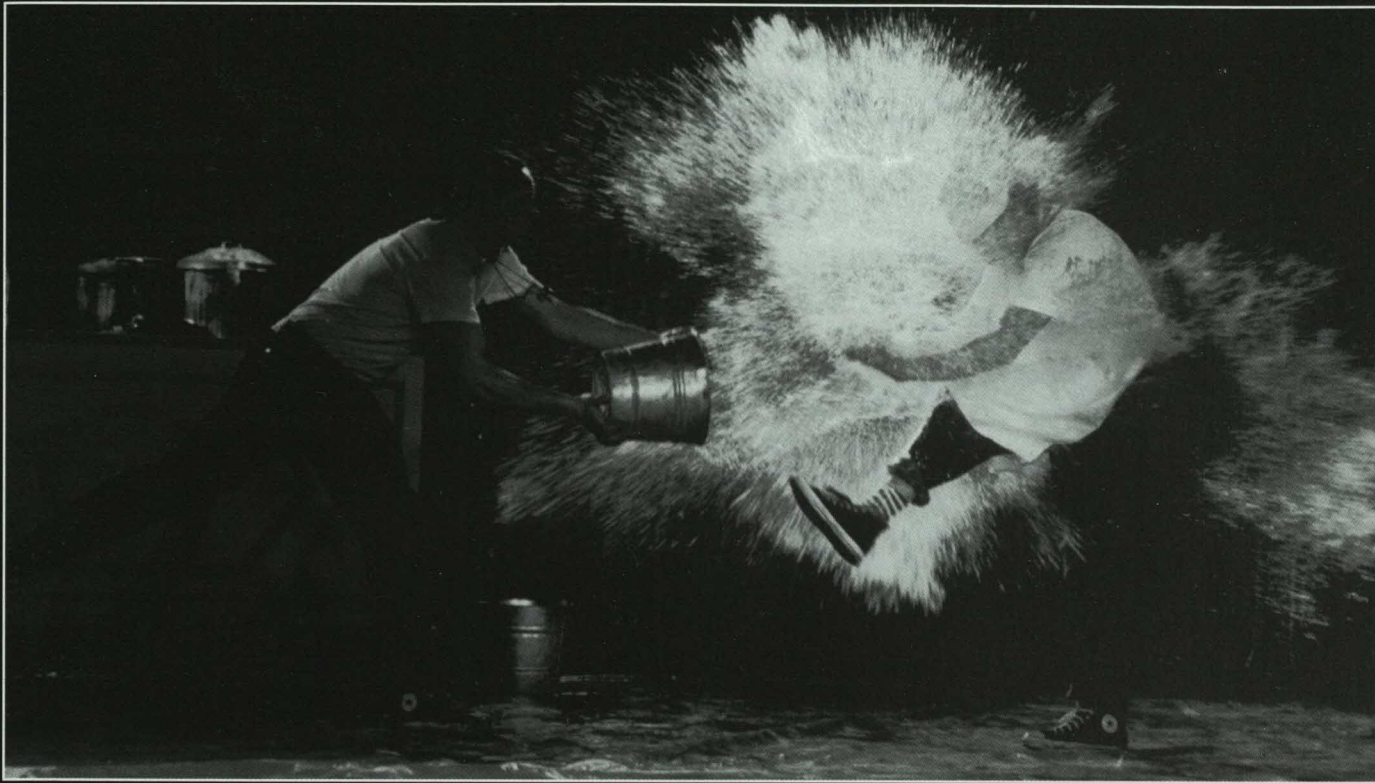
To start a circus you need to blend experience with the skills required to manage the show. It is not enough to produce vast amounts of paper, mission statements etc.

emerging Gifford's Circus. Look at Roncalli and the like, all were created as manageable outfits. To start a circus you need to blend experience with the skills required to manage the show. It is not enough to produce vast amounts of paper, mission statements etc.. It is about commitment to long hours, enormous workloads and learning the skills.'

Cottle ensures that each of his circus productions has both a clear identity and provides value for audiences. 'The Chinese State Circus has a dynamic young troupe and the Moscow State Circus is a very big and powerful force,' he tells me. 'Whilst Cottle & Austen's Electric Circus is young and pretty traditional, Brian Austen felt that it needed a flying act to give it that "wow" factor and this really works. Of all our shows this

uct and daily seeks new ways to promote and better his circus. Secondly, we retain a huge administrative base, blending traditional methods of promoting circus with new developments. Marketing is vital and I believe some of the newer companies fail to understand how to market their work. And thirdly, Zippo's draws on a wealth of background. We are hungry, do not rest on our laurels and, without subsidy, use our own efforts to get audiences.'

David Hibling shares with Gerry Cottle the view that British circus has an image problem that our European neighbours don't share. 'In France Cirque Plume can happily co-exist with the animal circuses,' he points out. 'There is no snub from new circus to traditional circus, with direc-



tors working in both side by side. Circus is an umbrella. One of the things I tell students at ZACA each year is that circus is global, worldwide and remains what your grandfather or great-grandfather would recognise as circus. I want the two expressions of circus to co-exist and I believe they can. At Zippo's right now I think we are moving closer to being a model of perfection. Certainly we can't really get much bigger as we can only just fit on our regular grounds. Yet daily we strive to improve all areas. Recently our focus has been on the foyer, making it more welcoming with the band playing, clowns, jugglers and magic. We endeavour to improve our lighting and move towards the idea of a conceived circus with a multi-talented core company.'

Circus is richer than ever before with a variety of expressions currently being explored. Both Cottle and Hibling urge action, commitment and energy with the need to absorb the history and culture of

circus. The landscape is full of individuality. I regret, however, that whilst I can visit a circus anywhere else in the world knowing pretty much where to find it, in this country there remains a veil of secrecy that keeps the touring circus masked from many potential visitors. When Billy Smart's Circus arrived in Battersea Park during August, few people knew it was there. And yet, one can book today for a performance by Cirque Du Soleil in Manchester in March 2001.

Perhaps it is time to advocate a new policy of openness in circus and to celebrate diversity, individuality and the many manifestations of the form. Personally, I hope to see Pierrot Bidon direct the Moscow State Circus. Now there's a thought for 2002. ■

Cottle & Austen's Electric Circus can be contacted on 01932 830000. Zippo's Circus can be contacted on 07050 121416.

AND WHY NOT?

Angela De Castro is serious about clowning. So serious, in fact, that she's established an institute for contemporary clowning in London.

ANNE-LOUISE RENTELL reports

It has taken four years for The Why Not Institute to finally find a home at ArtsEd in Chiswick, London. Dedicated to bringing together performance, teaching, professional development, events and resources connected to contemporary clowning, the Institute is the creation of Angela de Castro. Brazilian born but based in England for the past fifteen years, De Castro is best known for her appearance in Slava Polunin's international award-winning Snowshow and for her workshop masterclass, How to be a Stupid.



Angela De Castro as Silva

The Institute will have been open a year in November but is officially launched by a season devoted to women in clowning called Who Said Women Can't Clown?!, which started in September.

This provocative title came from a newspaper review of De Castro's performance in Snowshow. 'It is a great title as well as a good basis for discussion,' says De Castro. 'It's an important issue,' adds her partner Catherine Bewley, 'because if you ask people to name the clown teach-

ers or performers they can think of, nearly all of them are men.'

But De Castro is quick to point out that the season is not a political event, and that it, and the Institute, are open to both men and women. 'It's just a different perspective on this particular skill,' she continues. 'Because my idea is to have other seasons that may involve magic and clowning, singing and clowning, or men and clowning. It is important to consider what people will find interesting. People see many shows but there aren't many places where you can go to learn something, to develop. Performers show you the dish but they don't tell you how to cook it. They keep the recipe and I think that we should put the recipe out there. This is my idea for the Institute. It is the kind of resource where you can go and learn, investigate and network.'

The Who Said Women Can't Clown?! season comprises six workshops run by women working at the top of their profession and extends to April 2001. This year's programme includes a workshop in fooling by the Bristol-based Franki Anderson, an exploration of the Theatre Clown with the accomplished Linda Kerr Scott, and the internationally-renowned Nola Rae with her workshop Broaden Your Mime. The workshops in 2001 will bring three international female clowns to London: Carina Bonan from Belgium, Christiane Paoli Quito from Brazil and Marcelline from Spain.

The diversity of the programming is indicative of De Castro's own philosophy and interest in the investigation of the difference between the theatrical and the clown. It is a very broad discussion and one which she raises in her own workshops. 'We always specu-



Carina Bonan as Leonie

Performers show you the dish but they don't tell you how to cook it. They keep the recipe and I think that we should put the recipe out there

late for an hour about what is the difference and we have many answers. One line of thought says that the difference is logic. The clown follows the logic of the unconscious, that is the things that we all think of but never do, and the actor follows the logic of the conscious, by outwardly portraying characters that everyone can relate to. For me Giulietta Masina [Fellini's wife and frequent leading lady] was the ultimate idea of a clown and an actor. She is indeed the most amazing clown I have ever seen.'

What remains integral to the Institute and the current season is not performance but teaching, - the passing on of the recipe. Catherine Bewley sums it up: 'Not everybody who is a good performer can teach clown. Being a good teacher is a completely different skill.'

De Castro emphasises that these women are very good teachers and also says that in a workshop the main thing is that participants learn to feel comfortable with themselves. 'I can't teach you how to be yourself,' she says, 'or how to use your own stupidity because I won't know your stupidity in a weekend or

over a day's course. How can I? I may know up to a certain point but it is up to you to go beyond that. I also stress that you have to have a lot of patience because it's not in a weekend that you're going to get it. You have to go through the rough bits and you have to fail. But the most important thing is to understand that to fail is fine, to feel scared is fine. If you don't take the risk, you're never going to discover.'

The word 'institute' is an interesting choice of name to give to an organisation with play at its heart but De Castro defends it. 'A lot of people don't like this word because it looks too serious, too confined, too structured. But I like that. I think it is time to take clowns seriously. I am very serious about clowning. It has become my life, my mission. So if we're going to have an organisation, I want it to be taken seriously. I want to be taken seriously.'

Indeed. And why not? ■

The Why Not Institute is based at ArtsEd, 14 Bath Road, London W4 1LY. For information on the Who Said Women Can't Clown?! season of workshops, call 020 7733 7026.



Linda Kerr Scott

Dead Horizontal By Martin Burton, Lorna Stewart & Pedro Diablo



Performance art is still considered to be elitist, avant-garde and generally inaccessible to the general public

view the game. As audience numbers depleted on the stage, they reconverged as a full party in the auditorium to witness Rene, naked among the redundant chairs, and me (now clothed), as I closed the curtains on her. This performance demonstrated what Howell calls 'a transference of place' and a form of temporal mirroring.

Lastly, Lorna Stewart, Pedro Diablo and Martin Burton gave a beautiful, contemplative performance, rich in geometric and formal imagery, at dusk in the garden at Toynbee Studios. Inspired by their obvious height difference, they proceeded to create duos and solos. Measuring devices such as spirit levels and tape measures were employed as props to construct geometric human shapes around the garden. Dressed in black suits, a narrative based on their physical differences and their spatial relationships developed. To end, Lorna laid herself to rest in a perfectly horizontal reclining position. This was measured by a spirit level set in position by her, between the heads of the male performers.

All six performances clearly demonstrated an eclectic mix of many of the concepts that had been tackled in the workshop the week previous. The process of analysis and deconstruction, post performance, took four hours - which proved how engaged and dedicated the group had become to thorough analysis. Howell's adamantness to remove documentation from the process proves his loyalty to the idea that performance art is a purely physical thing which needs to be addressed in the here and now and not through a representative document. His unwaning energy and enthusiasm for his subject was apparent from beginning to end and it would be true to say that we all felt moments of humour, disturbance, challenge, ridicule and surprise, which has to make it an experience never to forget. ■

The Analysis of Performance Art Summer School was produced and presented by ArtsAdmin with financial assistance from Chelsea College of Art & Design. Anthony Howell's book, The Analysis of Performance Art, is published by Harwood Academic Publishers.

ed commuters. Although appearing to be motionless, throughout the duration of the half-hour performance she changed her pose subtly. Commuters examining the departures board also stood still, but for much shorter bursts, and generally were too preoccupied to notice Arlene's performance. Quite clearly, our applause at the close of the performance appeared ludicrous to passers-by. All in all, Arlene's choice of venue and timing for the performance was the perfect contrast for her action (or rather non-action) and a very powerful and memorable image.

Robin Bale and Janet Pettman collaborated on a performance in the Courtroom at Toynbee Studios. The room - which was once used to try juvenile delinquents - had quite clearly inspired this site-specific performance. The audience sat along two walls in front of words chalked on the floor. Tennis balls were thrown simultaneously across the length of the room, arriving at positions close to one of the phrases or words. On announcement of these words, both performers walked in unison to the centre of the room where one performed a forfeit on the other. The position of the balls determined which props would be used for the forfeit. Each throw determined a loser and the audience became witness to a slowly depleting and incapacitated pair of individuals battling to stay in the arena. Their formally structured and synchronised movements were punctuated by the grotesque and ridiculous images of the forfeits and were highly resonant of a justly conducted case which had turned into a messy courtroom drama.

Chloe Dyn Tsoe's solo performance took place against a backdrop of unbearable sound and a distorted video image. Tsoe, half-bound and half-naked, struggled to play a broken violin in fits across the stage. Her spasms contin-

ued through the darkness to the edge of the stage. Startling the audience, she crashed to the floor of the auditorium and into the spectators in the front row. On finding her way back to the stage, she aggressively shook a doll before falling in a heap to the floor. Tsoe's cyclical journey was perhaps the most physically challenging and melodramatic of performances to occur that day. She uprooted the spectators' sense of security by disrupting our perception of physical boundary implied by the theatre space.

Ffion Couch's solo piece took place in the Fire Room at Toynbee Studios, where we had all been given the impression that we would queue in turn for a five-minute 'one to one' with her. However, on arriving at the space, we were to find no such performance taking place. Previous to the performance (throughout the morning) Ffion had individually approached each of us to discuss and offer advice about what she was planning to perform. Without realising, we had, at this time, all participated in her 'one to one' performance. The designated performance slot therefore became a discussion surrounding each individual's response to the meeting with her.

I worked with Rene Eyre on a performance which also took place in the theatre. Rene, dressed in cabaret, attire met the audience at the stage door and ushered them to seats on the stage. The audience sat in darkness and Rene opened the curtains to reveal my naked form in the middle of the front row of the auditorium. The music paused and the audience were instructed to take their chair to the front of the stage ready to begin a game of musical chairs. As the music stopped, the audience watched as Rene removed a single article of clothing and I put one on. Audience members without a chair when the music stopped, then took a seat in the auditorium to

THE ARTS OF COACHING

Performer and teacher **TRAY MCCONNELL** attended Kaizen's Arts of Coaching course at Manchester Metropolitan University in August

The Arts of Coaching, run by the Manchester-based training organisation Kaizen, introduces and clarifies coaching skills within the arts. Primarily concerned with the principles of Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP), other complementary systems such as those found within communication studies, movement and psychology are also utilised in Kaizen's training methods. The course totals one hundred hours and comprises training, supervised practice, individual coaching, supported home study, certification, and course materials. It is equivalent to a one-year diploma course.

Through the facilitation and teaching of four practitioners - Rivca Rubin, Bob Jones, Niamh Dowling and Steve Purcell - course participants are guided through the foundation models and theories surrounding NLP, considering them particularly within the realm of coaching. Kaizen's training director Rivca Rubin holds a Research Fellowship at Manchester Metropolitan University and works internationally as a freelance coach and trainer. She teaches creative thinking, communication development, and the facilitation of effective change. She is an NLP 'master practitioner' and also a movement specialist with over twenty years' creating and teaching experience in the arts. Many of you may remember her as the artistic director of Physical State International.

The Arts of Coaching applies a number of NLP principles to the process of effective coaching within the arts, including: 'emphatic' listening; being objective as a coach; building rapport and sometimes breaking it; understanding other people's views and models of the world; analysing and clarifying other people's preferred choice of listening to, storing, and retrieving information; and the aiding of others in their realisation of their desired outcomes or goals. Participants are invited to try out and test each skill or system as it is presented, practising their roles as coach, coachee, and observer respectively.

Previous to attending the course myself, I had already made many assumptions about its aims and content. I presumed that it would consist of physical classes with other theatre and dance practitioners, with a view to developing coaching skills (through my own stereotypical ideas of

sports coaching) within the arts. I was therefore surprised to find that the first four days are very much about talking, thinking and trying exercises, most of which are verbally communicated and executed. It is equally of interest to note that by the end of the course - having believed it to be doing the opposite of what I had anticipated - I found the course fulfilling all my initial criteria, expectations, and more.

Within my actor training I am involved in the holistic integration of body and mind.

During nine days of listening, talking, cogitating and experiencing, participants are introduced to many models and systems to guide them in their development as coaches

Through the early stages of the course I came to realise that I had been concentrating most of my previous efforts developing the body aspect of that holism, and avoiding anything overtly connected to the mind. Thus, after some initial resistance to the course due to its intellectual and discursive nature, I began to consider how further exploration of the latter could inform my coaching abilities.

During our initial sessions, the group of twenty-two participants considered what were, to us, the purposes of coaching. We constructed our thoughts into these statements: to elicit peak performance and/or potential; to support, challenge and encourage someone in achieving their stated and unrealised goals; to enable someone to open up new possibilities for themselves; to empower people to make positive changes; to provide guidance; to cultivate positive self-development;

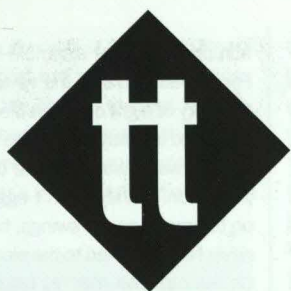
and to encourage self-knowledge rather than providing knowledge.

The course does not teach NLP but rather uses NLP processes as part of its approach. During nine days of listening, talking, cogitating and experiencing, participants are introduced to many models and systems to guide them in their development as coaches. These included, to my relief, movement exploration, which was reinforced and framed by the other knowledge we were developing. Something that became apparent to me during the course was the ability for this work to be applied within a multitude of situations and disciplines. Through the particular teaching style of this course, I have come to understand the importance of the individual within the coaching situation, rather than the specifics of the models and systems being introduced.

The other participants on the course, who were either on a four-day foundation course or the full twelve-day certification course, came from varying disciplines - from law to dance, theatre to surfing, and garden design to Alexander technique. All of us came with our own coaching agendas derived from our own work. The application of this work has proven as vast as its participants' backgrounds, and most of us, if not all, have taken away an understanding of what that application is and how to achieve it. As a theatre practitioner involved in actor training, directing and teaching, I am able to take from the course a better understanding of what is required from me in order to achieve the best from my students/actors. I am able to specifically clarify what I can do in order to communicate better with the other people with whom I work; and to help others change situations and events that are within their control, that they would like to adjust.

The Arts of Coaching has enabled me to define what it is that I already do in coaching situations, what I could do better, and also what I am not including or what I have not yet considered. ■

The Arts of Coaching is available to professionals within the arts, education and cultural industries in various formats - both intensive and modular - on a regular basis, several times a year and in different locations. Details: 0161 374 2353 or e-mail: rubin-kaizen@idea.org.uk.



total theatre

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NEWS

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Toby Wilsner
Dorothy Wilson

Total Theatre Awards 2000



Photo: Dan Tuffis

The 2000 Total Theatre Awards, sponsored by andco - the consortium of Hampshire arts centres - were announced at a reception held at the Assembly Rooms on August 24.

Ridiculusmus (winners of a 1999 Total Theatre award) compered the award ceremony. William Burdett Coutts of the Assembly Rooms presented Generally Better Productions with an award for 3 Dark Tales; Katrina Lunde of Anonymous Society (winners of a 1999 Total Theatre award) presented an award to blackSKYwhite for Bertrand's

Toys; Nelson Fernandez of Visiting Arts presented Ariel Tear with an award for A Little Requiem for Kantor; performance poet John Hegley presented an award to Shunt for The Ballad of Bobby Francois; writer and broadcaster Simon Fanshawe presented an award to Spymonkey for Stiff - Undertaking Undertaking; Paul Gudgeon, Director of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe presented the Audience Choice Award to Pig Iron Theatre Company for Poet in New York; Jan Ryan of Fifth Amendment/Jan Ryan Productions pre-

sented the Most Supportive Venue award to The Pleasance. Finally, Dick McCaw of the International Workshop Festival accepted a Lifetime Achievement award on behalf of Monika Pagneux, who was unable to attend the reception.

Companies shortlisted for Total Theatre awards this year included: Circo Teatro Udi Grudi, O Cano; Maybellene - The Living Fashion Doll; Mizutoabura, Cellophane Singular; Perpetual Motion Theatre, One - the other; and UMO Ensemble, Eldorado.

Total Theatre Network extends its thanks to everyone who worked so hard to make the awards a success, in particular the team of assessors who saw around 200 performances; the judges who worked tirelessly to come to a fair decision; and finally Phil Hoffman, Teri Sayers and Claire Newby who worked non-stop for the last week to ensure that the awards ceremony ran smoothly and who handled the press. Total Theatre Network also extends its thanks to andco for sponsoring the awards; to Pig Iron and Maybellene for performing at the ceremony; to Allan Ross, who made the Most Supportive Venue Award; and to all the companies who entered the awards. Anyone interested in joining the team of assessors for next year's Total Theatre Awards should contact Annabel Arndt on 020 7729 7944.

NAME CHANGE

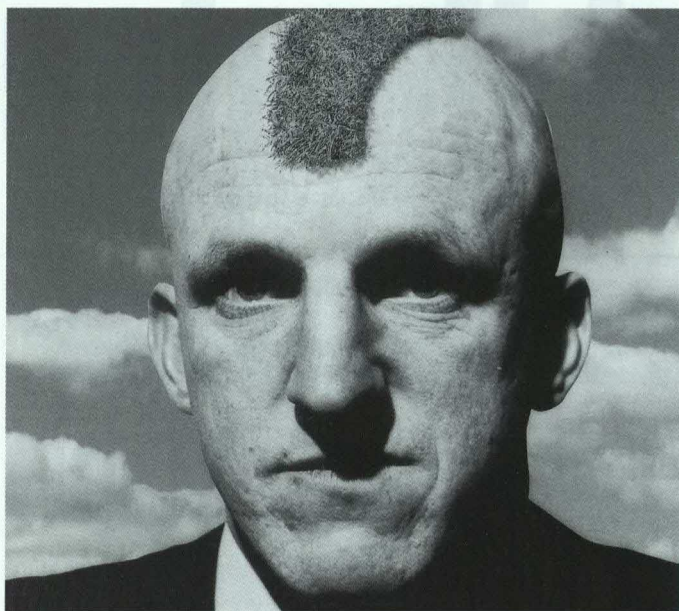
You will notice from this issue that we have amended our name slightly to Total Theatre Network. This change arose after much discussion at board level about how Total Theatre the membership organisation and Total Theatre the magazine could best be distinguished from each other. The official name for the organisation from henceforth is Total Theatre Network, reflecting our function as a membership organisation.

WEB SITE

Many thanks to those who have sent in suggestions on what you would like to see included on the Total Theatre Network website. Please keep the ideas coming in, preferably by e-mail: admin@totaltheatre.org.uk.

PUPPETRY INTO PERFORMANCE - A USER'S GUIDE

Total Theatre Network is collaborating with Central School of Speech & Drama, The Theatre Museum and The Puppet Centre Trust on a one-day symposium, Puppetry Into Performance - A User's Guide, which will take place at The Theatre Museum, London on November 27 2000. Designed to give both a practical and a theoretical perspective on the emergence of puppetry in contemporary theatre-making, the day is relevant to directors, writers, scenographers, performers, puppeteers and critics. Invited speakers (tbc) include Robert Lepage, Simon McBurney, Phelim McDermott, Ariane Mnouchkine, David Pountney and Julie Taymor. The event is the third in Central School of Speech & Drama's A User's Guide events. The first, Dramaturgy - A User's Guide, was organised in collaboration with Total Theatre Network in September 1999. A publication featuring articles on issues emerging from the symposium will be published before Christmas. For more details and a booking form contact Rachel Parkinson at Central School of Speech & Drama on 020 7559 3990 or e-mail r.parkinson@cssd.ac.uk.



Ridiculusmus Say Nothing

The Traverse

There's something peculiarly English about Ridiculusmus. From the whimsy of their first show *Three Men in a Boat*, to their journey round the Raj in *Yes Yes Yes*, this is a company with an old-fashioned and rather charming vision of English eccentricity. Clearly, therefore, they must feel like fish out of water in their adopted home-town of Belfast. And it is the direct experience of being English in what is (essentially) a foreign land, that has fed into the company's latest show, *Say Nothing*.

The frantic physicality for which the company is known is radically curtailed here: Employing a stunning visual conceit reminiscent of Beckett's *Happy Days*, David Woods and Jon Hough perform the entire show from within the confines of a suitcase. An effective metaphor for the tiny province that has long been the centre of such terrible strife, the suitcase is lined with turf - the green, green grass of Ireland (the emerald isle). Though physically constrained, the duo's other characteristic feature - their love of complex and often nonsensical language and their delightfully dark sense of humour - are in abundant display here. Woods plays Kevin, an Englishman with a PhD in Peace and Conflict Studies who's come to Ulster on an EU-funded programme, 'Hands Across the Barri-cades'. The world he encounters -

which is fleshed-out by a marvellous array of idiosyncratic Irish personalities played by the perpetually dour Jon Hough - is introverted and impenetrable. In this climate, nothing Kevin can do is right, despite his optimism and good intentions.

Say Nothing is a complex collage of personal observations on the Anglo-Irish conflict and, one suspects, a journey of personal catharsis for its creators. It's also compelling, intelligent and challenging and confirms the company's place at the top of the pile of British experimental theatre-makers.

East Productions Steven Berkoff's Messiah

Assembly Rooms

When Terence McNally's *Corpus Christi* played on the fringe last summer, Christian zealots turned out in droves to picket the play. Why? Because McNally had the audacity to suggest that Christ may have been gay. No such protest met Berkoff's confused and confusing *Messiah* at the Assembly Rooms this year, despite the fact that his play - which characterises Jesus as a manipulative liar, a scheming revolutionary, a showman and a charlatan - is more subversive by miles.

It could be because the play is so muddled and riddled with contradictions that some of the sting has been taken out of its tails. Running at close to two hours, its sprawling, interminable monologues and rambling set-pieces also dissipate the impact. It's

actually a curiously undramatic experience. There's very little dialogue; just a monotonous succession of lengthy oratories from the key players - Pilate, Christ, Satan, Mary Magdalene et al. Then, of course, there's the predictable chorus of brutish East End barrow boys; the ubiquitous stark, monochrome set; the familiar slow-motion gestural movements.

It's all unmistakably Berkoff and perhaps that's the problem. The style's wearing thin - where once it seemed fresh and exciting (witness *East* or *Salome*, for instance), now it seems leaden and crude. There are some great individual performances (notably from Volcano Theatre's Fern Smith) and the tableaux which stylishly suggest Renaissance Christian iconography are pleasing to the eye. But on the whole Berkoff's *Messiah* is a clanking, lugubrious and self-indulgent experience.

Grid Iron Theatre Company Decky Does A Bronco

Scotland Yard Playground

Douglas Maxwell's play about childhood and the loss of innocence seems especially poignant in light of the recent murder of schoolgirl Sarah Payne. Scottish company Grid Iron continue their tradition of creating site-specific performances for unusual places, with this show staged in a municipal playground.

The story, which is narrated in flashback by 26-year-old David (Keith Macpherson), takes us back to 1983 when the then 9-year-old David and his mates whiled away the long summer months at the local playground. That was the summer when the 'bronco' - jumping to the ground from a swing as it reaches its apex - was the latest craze. Daredevils O'Neill (Paul Harrison) and Chrissy (Andy Clark) are masters of the art, whilst fall-guy Decky (David Craig) - on the other hand - is too scared to try.

Maxwell's play is a poignant and beautifully observed portrait of youth, performed with spirit and commitment by a talented cast. Watching adults playing children can often be a queasy experience, but Grid Iron pull off a difficult task with aplomb. *Decky Does A Bronco* is a touching rite-of-passage drama about a bunch of kids whose carefree childhoods are

abruptly ended by a terrible tragedy. For the adult Dave, the re-telling of the story of night on which Decky was murdered is a way to assuage his guilt - Decky was always the one the boys picked on, if they hadn't egged him on to bronco on the swings, he might never have returned to the playground on the night he met his fateful end. It's a simple story compellingly told in a non-theatre environment which adds to its sense of sincerity and authenticity.

Maybellene - The Living Fashion Doll Kitsch 'n' Synch Drama

Pleasance

Borrowing her name from the famous cosmetics manufacturer - taking care to tweak the spelling to avoid litigation - Maybellene is a pre-shrunk, high-fashion, glamour-goddess for the new millennium. Camp-as-a-row-of-ten's, her terrifically trivial fifteen-minute 'MGM-style' musicals are performed in the smallest theatre in town - a puppet booth.

Maybellene is nothing other than the head of an immaculately coiffured and made-up drag queen, perched on top of the body of a nine-inch fashion doll - Barbie, Cindy and Pippa all rolled into one. She lives in a world of sequins and spangles, love-hearts and flowers - lip-synching her way through a series of kitsch classics inside a miniature world where dreams really do come true.

Kitsch 'n' Synch Drama - one of Maybellene's two fabulous musical adventures - takes our heroine back to the '50s where, gloriously attired in a lilac gingham frock, a freak accident at the kitchen sink causes her to shrink and disappear down the plug hole. Catapulted through the U-bend and into an alternative universe, Maybellene finds herself in Umo - a stricken world which alien invaders have bleached of colour. But never fear - Maybellene comes to the rescue, giving the dull and dreary aliens a glamour-overload, before marrying her diminutive Hollywood heartthrob in an all-singing, all-dancing, gold lame finale.

This human puppet show gave a daily injection of magic to audiences who pitched-up to see it in Maybel-

lene's purpose-built tent in the Pleasance courtyard. London audiences will get the chance to meet Maybelene when the living fashion doll brings her unique brand of glamour to next year's International Mime Festival.

The Weird Sisters Loveplay

Pleasance

With infectious enthusiasm and huge amounts of energy, Alison Goldie and Kath Burlinson divide all of the characters in this diverting kitchen sink drama between them, jumping from role to role in a bravura display of character-acting. From Nana, the ageing matriarch; to Carla, her bohemian daughter; and down to Pippa, Carla's lesbian niece; Loveplay takes a cross-generational look at love and relationships inside one dysfunctional family - throwing in a supporting cast of friends and neighbours for good measure.

Without the aid of props, Goldie and Burlinson bring each character to life in turn - shifting from 75-year-old Nana to 6-year-old Jack, 34-year-old Dave to 18-year-old Pippa - with such dexterity that somehow each of them seem to exist simultaneously in the same space. Relying on nothing other than their own skill as performers, the women successfully create a complete world. However, if you remove this entertaining device from Loveplay, regretably you'd be left with rather a flimsy supporting structure.

Part soap opera, part sit-com, the material is all a bit mundane and pedestrian. There's really no edge to the complex web of relationships

that the play seeks to explore. The basic ingredients are all there, but somehow they don't develop. I'd love to see The Weird Sisters push their material further into the surreal, funny or filthy territory which they hint at. At the moment, it all seems too safe, too cosy, too Radio 4. Having said that, however, Loveplay is undoubtedly entertaining and The Weird Sisters are clearly creating a strong reputation for their work both at home and abroad.

Dark Horse Dive Urgence

Continental Shifts at St Brides

Performed in a relaxed style by a seven-strong cast of jugglers, acrobats, aerialists and clowns, this first show from Circomedia's newly-formed professional touring company, Dark Horse, integrates circus and theatre with the lofty aim of illustrating in dramatic form the rise and fall of the great ideological movements of the last two thousand years. It's a joke of course - at least it ought to be - although the publicity does state that the show is loosely based on historian Eric Hobsbaum's vision of society in the new millennium.

In this instance, the company choose to provide a generalised snapshot of 21st Century living through a series of references to TV commercials, football, consumerism, coffee bars and (it goes without saying) Robbie Williams. It all gets a bit too simplistic when the entire company of seven clamber onto a single trapeze to provide a visual metaphor for the problem of global over-population. As the

piece progresses, a sub-text emerges in which each of the performers begin to undermine the collective ensemble by attempting to impress the audience with their own individual skill. This is a handy device to allow for the inclusion of Rod Laver's oral ping-pong ball juggling routine (which has to be the highlight of the show) or for Matilda Leyser to impress on the trapeze. However, the device also, ironically, interrupts the shows theatrical flow, and reveals the fact that, at heart, Dive Urgence is little more than a series of strung-together circus tricks. Exactly what it set out to avoid being.

Circo Teatro Udi Grudi O Cano

Dynamic Earth

Before receiving my first guitar at the age of eight, I used to construct makeshift versions from shoeboxes and elastic bands. The desire to make music from everyday objects is one that every child can relate to and is the focus of this show by the Brazilian clown trio Circo Teatro Udi Grudi.

Found objects of all descriptions are collected together to form an orchestra. Broken bits of ceramic tile become a xylophone; an inflated plastic bag makes a sound like a snare drum; a broomstick and some string create a makeshift doublebass. If you can hit it to make a noise, fill it with water to alter its pitch, or strum on it, you can bet this inventive trio will have dragged it onto the stage. They've certainly cleared the local builders' merchant of drainpipes, as plastic tubes of differing lengths are blown into like didgeridoos or played on in sequence like an organ. Delightfully, the company don't just bang, blow-into and twang these collected bits of junk to create a din; they expertly tease jazz riffs, folk tunes and classical pieces from them. So it's rather like a zany music lesson taught by three crazy-looking teachers - all of whom are having enormous amounts of fun.

And it doesn't stop there. Amidst all the music-making, Udi Grudi find time to throw some more traditional circus tricks into the mix - so there's

juggling, acrobatics, and even a bit of fire swinging. It's the sort of show that kids will love and that will appeal to the inner child inside each and every one of us.

UMO Ensemble Eldorado

Pleasance

Hunch-backed and pot-bellied, with pointy feet, lumpy knees and horns protruding from their heads, the five fantastically grotesque buffoons in this show by UMO Ensemble recount the Spanish Conquistadors futile search of the New World for the mythical golden city of El Dorado. This piece of Buffoon Theatre - created in the style originated by Jacques Lecoq - uses the exaggerated, insane and other-worldly buffoon characters to mock the folly and greed of the Spanish colonialists' sixteenth century search for power and wealth in America.

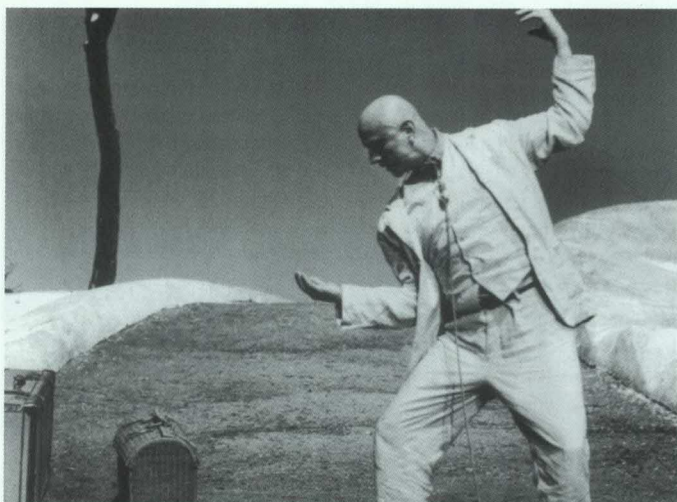
Taking its inspiration from the role of the mediaeval court jester, and finding its antecedents in the fools of Shakespearean comedy, the buffoon functions as a mischievous, disaffected outsider, who hovers on the fringes of society drawing attention to the worst excesses of human behaviour by lampooning them. Typically bawdy, foul-mouthed, obsessed with bodily functions and generally badly behaved, the buffoon's function is satirical. This spirited ensemble from west coast America inhabit their buffoon creations with complete conviction - gurning, farting and goading their way through this loose (un)historical re-enactment of a period of American history that's best left forgotten. Best of all is Bradley McDevitt, who provides a mean on-stage percussive score on a collection of indigenous instruments - chimes, drums and glockenspiel.

There's a lovely quality of play here and a tangible relationship built-up between audience and performer. However, unadulterated buffoonery of this sort can tend to wear thin after a while and, unless you happen to like your theatre ham-fisted and unsophisticated, this show might not be the one for you.



The Weird Sisters, Loveplay Photo: Stuart Colwill

Luc Bondy, en Attendant Godot



**Luc Bondy
En Attendant Godot**

Queen Elizabeth Hall, London, Meltdown, June 2000

Meltdown provided British audiences with their first opportunity to witness Luc Bondy's production of Beckett's influential work. Bondy is best known in the UK for his work in Edinburgh's International Festival. In 1999 his production of Verdi's opera *Macbeth* was warmly received, not least for its visual flair. Beckett's stage directions, however, are notoriously precise, and his estate strict in their enforcement, leaving a director little space for the kind of invention that usually accompanies such prestige productions. So it was that Bondy's *En Attendant Godot* was a largely straightforward realisation of the text, although none the poorer for that.

If anything Bondy seemed intent on making the play more naturalistic than one normally considers it. Vladimir and Estragon were very much tramps, distinguished as much by their tics, rambling and pallor, as by their garb. Few traces of the clownish tramps of silent cinema, so loved by Beckett, remain. In this production Vladimir and Estragon are recognisable to anyone walking the streets of post care-in-the-community Britain. This enhanced the show's bleakness but at the cost of its absurd humour.

Maybe it was for this reason that, whilst never less than good - and often illuminating - the production remained curiously uninvolved.

Ray Newe

The Cholmondeleys & Richard Alston Dance Company Dance Project

Queen Elizabeth Hall, London, Meltdown, June 2000

On paper, tonight's performance promised much. The Richard Alston Dance Company, choreographed by Martin Lawrence, would perform to a specially commissioned work by Meltdown's host Scott Walker, whilst The Cholmondeleys would dance to a new Orbital score. In the event it proved a very disappointing evening.

First up was *Thimble Rigging* by the Richard Alston Dance Company. The programme notes informed that in mediaeval times sufferers of psoriasis were commonly known as 'the silver people'. It wasn't entirely clear what this had to do with the performance, but as dance pieces about itchy skin complaints go, it was choreographed and executed competently.

Scott Walker is hardly the most prolific of composers and the opportunity to hear his new work had drawn a number of fans from their bedrooms. They were rewarded with a slightly clanking piece that failed to surprise anyone familiar with Walker's *Tilt*, without ever hinting at any of that album's greatness.

There then followed an interminable interval of some thirty-minutes before the QEH stage was ready for The Cholmondeleys. Although Orbital's work is inextricably bound-up with the dance music scene, this marked their first foray

into scoring for a dance work. Perhaps this goes some way to explaining the finished project, which resembled more a light show than a dance piece. The Cholmondeleys were dwarfed by a forest of light-beams and such choreography there was seemed incidental when not invisible. Not that this made the whole any less pleasing but it was impossible to escape the feeling that, despite the combination of talents featured, there was little here that could not have been part of Orbital's usual live set.

Ray Newe

Rotozaza Rotozaza3

The Lion and Unicorn Pub Theatre, London, July 2000

The premise of *Rotozaza3* is brilliant. Over three consecutive nights, three different actors are invited to perform solo in a play for which they have no script, character, stage directions or idea as to what will happen. The potential for an anarchic re-evaluation of the relationship between the actor alone on stage and his audience is great.

On this particular evening, David Rosenberg was the actor led blindfolded onto a stage littered with debris and punctuated with a suitcase, a table and a wheelchair. A voice directs him to remove his blindfold and immediately we see Rosenberg's dilemma: how should he react? Suddenly the accepted purpose and control of an actor once he steps on stage are relinquished to an anonymous voice which directs his every move and emotional reaction via a headset or projections on the back wall of the theatre. All he can do is react honestly and truthfully in each dictated moment.

The result is interesting and at times funny, if not a little hard-going. Images challenging machismo - gun-toting and tutu-wearing - are surreal and alienating and the music is at times tortuous. Rosenberg copes well but he is perhaps too contemplative or considered a performer to be able to react in a way that is truly free and interesting, both for himself and his audience. To be fair, however, I think he was

also inhibited by the recorded voice giving the orders. If the anonymous voice had been live, the opportunity to really play with (or torture?) the actor may have been more satisfactorily realised.

Anne-Louise Rentell

**Postscript
Coming To**

Komedia, July 2000

Coming To is a performance brimming with ideas. Its narrative explores the experiences of two friends who awake at the same time with different accounts of the previous evening. Its themes are the notion of memory written on the body, of reality versus recorded reality, and of fluidity versus frozen time.

To explore these themes, the two-woman company use a range of theatrical devices - dialogue, monologue, movement - integrated with a visual text using pre-made film and on-stage Polaroid photography. There was a lot I liked about this production, particularly the visual aspects. There were many stunning moments - often based around the two lines used to peg up clothes and photos and the film work. One film section played with the deconstruction and reconstruction of the human body, using Polaroid portraits of different body parts. Another zoomed in on the minor scars and bruises that tell their own story of life's events. A section of poetic monologue twinned with close-up images of a woman in a bath celebrated the alchemical powers of water to wash away our sins.

What didn't work for me were the girly chats that seemed stilted, and a pointless bit of postmodern play-acting with the introduction of a humorous outside character, a lady psychiatrist, whose lecture on somnambulism was an unnecessary distraction. At one hour ten minutes the piece was too long, and it felt as if it might be better placed in a space other than a proscenium theatre - I felt that I would have liked to walk around. There was enough material here for two or three productions. With careful editing and selection, *Coming To* will realise its potential to be a challenging and innovatory new performance piece that crosses the divide between live art and theatre.

Dorothy Max Prior



Kazuko Hohki Toothless

Matters of Life and Death,
BAC, London, June 2000

This show, presented in an anti-theatrical style that relies on the natural quirky charisma of its writer/performer for its success, recounts the death of Hohki's mother, who - in what proves to be a handy starting point - was a leading religious speaker and entertainer in Japan. A mother who advocated a religious denial of illness and died of gum cancer; a mother who would seek to convince sceptics of her faith through the arts of the 'invisible spinning plate' and the 'invisible tightrope' (yes, it's as crazy as it sounds) - is at the same time a gift of a starting point for a biographical show, and a figure of loss made all the more tragic for her oddity.

Hohki recounts her mother's life/death story through a variety of deliberately low-tech devices: a series of crappy stick puppets, some self-consciously 'hip' multimedia video inserts, and a performance style that is both self-reflective and self-effacingly low key. Part of Hohki's charm is her Japaneseness: she combines a love of the kitsch and the bizarre with

a sly and intelligent wit and an open and formal style. But to attribute her qualities just to these cultural stereotypes does injustice to her skill in deliberately playing upon these traits.

This is an engaging and often funny show. It is easy, honest and charmingly naïve, and reveals the tragic absurdity at the heart of illness and death, that is so often hidden or forgotten.

David Harradine

Stacy Makishi Suicide for Beginners

Matters of Life and Death,
BAC, London, June 2000

Presented as part of a double bill under the umbrella of Apples & Snakes, *Suicide for Beginners* is a funny and occasionally arresting guide to how to live, and how to die. Fusing video and slide projection with movement, images, voiceover text, low-tech cartoons and a large amount of sugar, the piece begins as an autobiographical narrative, then stretches out to include an increasingly bizarre host of relatives, neighbours and friends.

There are moments of visual beauty in this piece, particularly a section where a creamy white light is

worn over the face as a mask, and a corresponding light sits in the base of a bucket teeming with misty icing sugar. Other sections fare less well, particularly as the performance I saw was plagued by a host of technical hitches. What is consistently strong and engaging in this piece, however, is the text, written by Makishi and Vick Ryder. It effectively combines the quotidian and the mythological, the poetic and the banal, to great comic effect. The central character names herself Pan, and at various points in the piece alludes to her naming after the pancreas, and describes its role in producing insulin to metabolise sugar (hence the sweet motif); after the Greek god of fields and flocks; after the homonym of the French word for bread. To spin out so many associations from a character name reveals the care with which this text is written, and it is a strong and fascinating skeleton for the rest of the piece.

David Harradine

Barnaby Stone Why Am I Not Dead Yet? - 382 Near Misses

Matters of Life and Death,
BAC, London, July 2000

You can figure out all you need to know about this show from its title. Barnaby Stone raises a lot of questions about death, dying, and his own (surprising) survival, recounting all the close shaves he's had on his thirty-odd year journey to date. This structurally simple premise enables him to dig out many an old anecdote about his family (from murderous nephew to granny's ashes), his life from birth to BAC (most of which seems to have been spent on a bike), and his remarkable capacity to encounter death and just escape it.

There is much in this idea that could prove fruitful, and Stone's natural charisma as a performer does just manage to keep one engaged. However, at the moment, as work-in-progress, this piece lacks any real depth, and its improvisational form - brave though it is - generally results in a lack of pace or dynamic. The fact that Stone raises a lot of questions, then offhandedly dismisses them, or that his tall toll of tales really only has one point to make, reveals a lack of conviction and clarity at the heart of this piece. At its lowest point this

results in an uncomfortable sense that Stone doesn't really know what he's trying to say, and that we as an audience don't really have to pay that much attention. Whilst I'm an avid supporter (and grateful beneficiary!) of BAC's policy of supporting and programming developing work, this piece needs to go a long way before it figures out what it is that it is trying to be.

David Harradine

Theatre Edible Entertaining Death

Matters of Life and Death,
BAC, London, June 2000

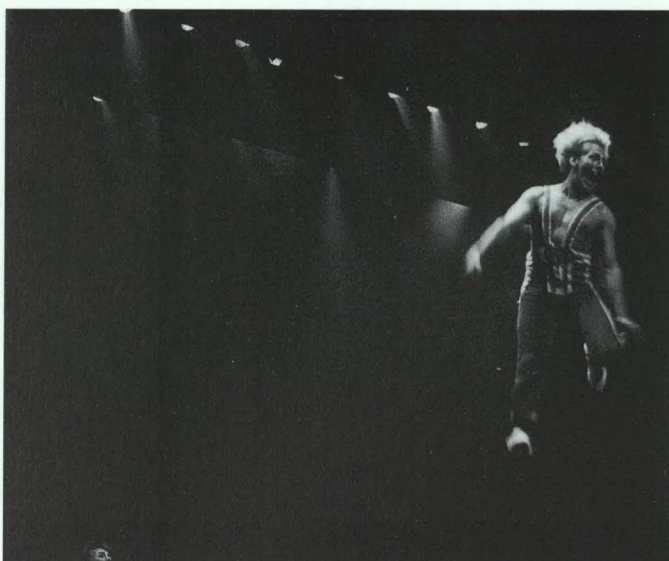
The flyer for this work-in-progress presentation invites viewers to 'the death of the world - death by (un)natural disaster; death by war; death by accident; death by (un)natural causes; the death of us all'. It also tucks in a hidden question at the end - 'how do you feel?'

This reveals a lot about the production. Not only is it immensely (over) ambitious but it self-consciously seeks a form of politicisation in which our supposed media-saturated desensitisation to death is shocked into new life by the power and presence of live theatre. This is an intention to be lauded, and as a work-in-progress piece, there are some good ideas at play here. If the piece is to be developed, however, it could do with some vicious pruning and re-structuring, as it is both too long and too dynamically uniform, and contains just too many ideas all fighting for space to breathe and come alive.

In presenting the various narratives, discussions, re-enactments of and reflections on deaths' famous and infamous in a cabaret format, there are the seeds of a good structure and holding form. But the cast shift too much between being a chorus of corpses, children, adults, clowns and over-emoting actors to really make this, at this stage, a convincing format - and performances vary from funny and assured to really rather bad. As the MC, however, Ian Golding really is a breath of fresh air. In turns paranoid, frantic, charming, psychotic and sexy, the strength and focus of his performance hold together what otherwise would be a flat and fragmented piece of work.

David Harradine

Cirque Éloize, *Excentricus* Photo: Geraint Lewis



Cirque Éloize
Excentricus

The Barbican, August 2000

In Cirque Éloize's *Excentricus*, the troupe of performers and musicians is unabashedly directed to charm and entertain the audience in a high-energy and at times extraordinary and unrelenting display of comedy and skill. Indeed, the routines are so accomplished that the edge comes in the time-honoured circus tradition of sheer physical strength, precision, discipline and danger. Audience gasps and the odd loud and free expression of expletives can be heard around the auditorium.

The simple narrative revolves around the different relationships between the characters and the audience. There are gentle nods to romance. The one dark moment teeters on the verge of being heavy-handed, if not unnecessary, but a well-directed reserve from the performers prevents a lapse into self-indulgence and instead paves the way for a spectacular display of ensemble work, including eight people on a bicycle.

Within this magnificent exhibition of group work there is a star in the central clown character. He wonderfully manipulates a deliberately drawn-out moment where he fails and fails again - and then again and again - to pick up a large number of clubs. His slackrope routine is hysterical and almost unbearable to watch, especially for the children in the audience practically wetting themselves with the torture of it.

I would think that Cirque Éloize's charm may conceal the high level of

skill and the very real sense of danger that accompanies it, from the more cynical and 'adult' audience members out for some sophisticated theatrical grit. For those still young at heart it is unashamedly enjoyable.

Anne-Louise Rentell

Ton und Kirschen
Wandertheater

Dr Faustus

The Basle Theatre Festival,
August 2000

Ton und Kirschen ('Clay and Cherries') are an international travelling troupe whose collaborative creations admirably reflect the influences of Foolsbarn, Sartori and Lecoq. In addition, for this show, the puppetry clearly shows the hand of the Sicilian maestro Mimmo Cuticchio. The directors are Margarete Biereye and David Johnston, who together perform this shortened, open-air version of the Marlowe classic.

The production mixes mask, mime, commedia, imaginative props and puppetry with most of Marlowe's text to make a popular, entertaining form of the tragical history which sweeps us faster and faster along the downward slope to Faustus' ruin. There are some wonderfully theatrical effects, such as the fierce fires of hell which rage behind the devils who emerge to drag Faust to his damnation. Elements of fear and the demonic are effectively portrayed throughout - in the imagery of the masks (excellently designed by Josephine Hayter) and the contorted physicality of the devils. Mephistopheles convinces

totally of his otherness. Here is a deeply tortured soul played by a genuinely gifted and original actor, Mahommed El Hassouni.

By contrast, in the cutting of the text and the casting of the part, a lightweight, youthful Faustus is endowed with boyish curiosity more than an intent to plumb the depths of the unknown. There were other weaknesses as well, mainly in some of the voices. But on the whole I thoroughly enjoyed the vitality and invention of the performance.

Penny Francis

Fireraisers
This Rough Magic

Brighton Beach, August 2000

This *Rough Magic* was a one-off event - a multi-media production based on *The Tempest* that aimed to celebrate the magical transformational power of Brighton. The event was focused on a specially constructed oil rig sited between the two piers, animated by light, sound and performance. The problem was that large and stunning as it was, the rig just wasn't as big and interesting as the structures on either side of it - the formidably beautiful, laser-lit palace pier and decadently gorgeous floodlit West Pier, both masterpieces of wrought iron engineering. And this sighting of the piece was its downfall in every other way. Yes, there were helicopters soaring above and jet skiers in the sea, but there usually are anyway. There was nothing that the company could do to draw the crowd's attention away from their cans of Stella purchased from kids with cool bags.

Thousands of us sat and chatted, occasionally glancing up to see someone welding at the end of the rig, or rollerblading down the gangway. There were a few nice effects - the gangway lit by a waterfall of fireworks, a flag-bearing procession, lasers running along the hotel fronts. But what was missing was an awareness of the need for a human scale to the event. There was no sense of drama, or engagement with an audience. We were promised a kaleidoscope of sound and vision, but it was hard to tell whether there was any soundtrack beyond the usual noise and flurry of this part of the seafront, heaving with bars and clubs. As an installation, it

was a modest success. As a performance, a spectacular failure.

Dorothy Max Prior

Ex Machina
The Far Side of the Moon

Henson Festival of Puppet
Theatres, New York, September
2000

Robert Lepage loves technology, and in *The Far Side of the Moon* we are once again faced with a complicated system of shining machinery which challenges description. The framework is a mechanised sheet of metal the width of the stage: one surface a giant mirror, the other matt. Its broad straight lines are paralleled on the stage by a linear backdrop of low screens which make a variety of settings for the action, including the video and film sequences.

The metamorphoses of this astonishing design are what gives the production its theatricality. Artificial and obtrusive, the set acts as the dynamo of the piece, constantly transforming itself into the unexpected. It may be a launderette, an office, a surgery, an entrance to a wardrobe or to space. The story concerns two brothers, one a loser with a heart and a head in the stars, the other a materialist with little heart and absolutely no interest in the stars. Their antipathetic relationship is developed alongside documentary footage of the Soviet/US race to the moon.

It is an intriguing show which owes most of its considerable attraction to the contrast between the naturalism of the spoken text and its casual delivery by Lepage (who plays all the roles) and the hard-edged artificiality of the set. The first acts as a deliberate drag on the second, like a sleek new racing car hung about with old luggage and brown paper parcels. There are long monologues that are dangerously sleep-inducing, but the subtle unfolding of an interesting tale demands full attention, and there's always the anticipation of the next transformation of the set. Lepage demonstrates that the smallness of man in the context of a universe waiting to be explored (suggested not only by the visuals but also by a terrific soundscape composed by Laurie Anderson) cannot detract from our fascination with everyday lives and relationships.

Penny Francis



Improbable Theatre Spirit

Komedia, Brighton, May 2000

Spirit is a Boy's Own story about war and death, heroes and enemies, friends, fathers and brothers. It is a tale of childhood fantasy and aspiration, but also of adult pain and disillusionment.

With simple ease, the balsa-wood planes thrown from the top of the hillside become enemy bombers, and each fighter pilot caught in the battle is a victim of the eternal male dilemma - the realisation of boyhood dreams versus an awareness of the futility of war. In this central theme, the production reminds me of the writings of Antoine de Saint Exupery - our warriors soar above the battle of life and death to engage with the metaphysical question of the endurance of the human spirit.

In this show, Improbable Theatre use many of the techniques familiar from previous productions 70 Hill Lane and Coma. Design and performance are inextricably linked: a slanting wooden structure transforms from rooftop to hillside to airplane cockpit with the sort of stunning simplicity that is characteristic of the company's work. Scale is played around with as objects take on multiple meanings. The characters melt in and out of the action; actors frequently stepping out of role to muse on the story or comment on the real-time situation.

'Every time I come on stage, someone at the back leaves,' says Phelim McDermott at one point, breaking the tension. It is this lightness of touch when dealing with serious issues that makes Improbable Theatre's work so easy to experience. In their press release, the company ask: 'Is it possible to make a show about these things that isn't po-faced and depressing?' The answer is yes - and they have. Although I sometimes feel that they don't go as deep as they could.

Dorothy Max Prior

Forced Entertainment Emmanuelle Enchanted

Purcell Room, SBC, London, June 2000

I was a little nervous about this show. I first saw Emmanuelle Enchanted at the Royal Court Theatre in 1992 and it was glorious. At that time, it was the fourth show by Forced Entertainment that I had seen and was, I thought, the most perfect realisation of their aesthetic up to that point. Eight years on and not much theatre has thrilled me as much as Emmanuelle Enchanted did then. Forced Entertainment's shows remain 'must-sees', of course, but none since have achieved the kind of iconic resonance that Emmanuelle Enchanted has in my memory. This memory is the yardstick by which so many shows are measured - and, all too often, are found wanting. For this reason, I approached this re-staging with some trepidation. What if, after all this time, it seemed clunky and dated

- more of a museum piece than vital theatre? What if I had simply mis-remembered it?

As it turned out I had forgotten much. I remembered the show's frenetic pace but had forgotten just how physically demanding it is. I had remembered it as lovely, sweet poetry but I had forgotten its sly wit, and I remembered, of course, its fairylight backdrop but had forgotten the fantastic cartoonish soundtrack that accompanied much of the performance. It was a relief to realise Emmanuelle Enchanted was not only as good as I'd always maintained. It was better.

Arguably, some small part of this show's pleasure for me was simply empty nostalgia but as I left the Purcell Rooms the city and the night seemed charged with poetry and possibility. This is Forced Entertainment's great power and this re-staging reminded me once more why we should treasure them.

Ray Newe

The Streets of Brighton Festival

May 2000

This year's Streets of Brighton included the usual array of stiltwalkers, people in furry costumes, quirky bands of musicians and men in funny hats juggling plates. The best of the bunch were the Whalley Range All-Stars and Pearshape. Funding Pending created a clever and amusing piece that fell somewhere between the dance theatre of Pina Bausch and the live sculpture of Gilbert and George. Using gesture, synchronised dance signatures and group movement motifs, they work well as an ensemble, although they could take more risks.

It is interesting to compare them with Disco Sister, who in some ways occupy a similar slot - both companies started by performing live art in clubs. The latter's new work is a journey for two performers who crawl, stagger and dance through the city streets - crossing busy roads on all-fours and dealing with abuse by walking zombie-like at the perpetrators. There is nothing safe or predictable in this performance. Through the performers' eyes, we are given a new view of details of the streets we walk through every day. Like the parents of young children, we feel both protective and amused

by their innocent use of everything as a plaything, from plate-glass windows to discarded cigarette butts. This is indisputably Street Art - a performance that uses the street not only as a frame for the work but as a crucial element of that work.

Circomedia's new company Dark Horse performed their debut show Dive Urgence in an unfortunate location - so close to the drumming of the Carnival Collective's Beating Time, that they were totally surrounded by thousands of samba revellers. What I saw of the performance appeared to be a reflection on life at the dawn of the new millennium - a sort of pot-pourri of ideas and techniques using physical circus skills, cabaret comedy and storytelling. However, the spoken text was totally inaudible, making it difficult to make fair comment on the content of the performance. It did, however, make me aware of the issues around the placing of outdoor work. This is a static theatre show which would have worked with an audience of moderate size in a place where everyone could see and hear it.

In complete contrast, Red Earth created Convergence, a portal between land and sea on a quiet section of the beach. Just after dusk, fires were lit. A man sounded a conch shell, the melancholy note of the fog-horn. A lone woman emerged from a pit in the pebbles, the sounds of scrabbling stones mirrored in the musician's string of mussel shells shaken as he moved around the space. She is facing the sea; between her are two sets of wooden columns, one pair at the beginning of her path and one at the end. Between those columns are a pool of water and a pit of clay. She passes through each stage of the journey slowly, living each moment fully. When she reaches the clay pit, a ring of fire is lit around her. She finally reaches the last pair of columns and walks through into the water. Emerging from the towers is a smoke cloud that drifts above and moves slowly away from the space. Red Earth's work always contains a strong element of ritual. In Convergence the audience are not only witnesses to the work but also participants in the journey to the land's edge. This was a fitting close to the festival - a quiet and reflective work that really engaged with the space.

Dorothy Max Prior

SERVICES

Bodily Functions

is a Brighton-based forum for practitioners of mime, physical and devised theatre and live art. The forum has a database of artists living in the South East and frequently runs workshops, performance platforms and skill-sharing sessions. Details: 01273 385928. e-mail: dorothymax@excite.com.

eXtant performance company

has a small amount of video projection equipment for hire. The company can also undertake editing and assist with the production of multimedia shows. Incredibly competitive hire rates for fellow practitioners. Details: 07946 460545. e-mail: mailto:extant_pc@hotmail.com.

Rehearsal Spaces

available in East Dulwich, London. Two studios with raised floors. Suitable for performance, rehearsals, lectures and workshops. Details: 020 7582 9375.

Rehearsal Spaces

available 2 minutes walk from Highbury & Islington tube, London. Two large studios, kitchen and production office. Details: 020 7288 1495. e-mail: a&a@corsica.in2home.co.uk.

Rehearsal Spaces

available at Hope Street Ltd, Liverpool city centre. Three spaces: 15m x 6m x 3m; 12m x 6m x 2.75m; and 10m x 6m x 2.75. Competitive rates. Details: 0151 708 8007.

Rehearsal Spaces

available for hire from Nitro, 6 Brewery Road, London N7 9NH. Spacious studio (30ft x 40ft). Access to photocopier, fax, showers and kitchen facilities. Details: 020 7609 1331. e-mail: tasha.btc@virgin.net.

Rehearsal Spaces

available from ArtsAdmin at Toynbee Studios, Aldgate East, London. 5 spaces suitable for rehearsals, showcases and performances. Prices start at £40 per day for the smallest studio (4.5m x 8.5m) and go up to £120 per day for the theatre (stage 11m x 10m). Prices are subject to VAT. Details: 020 7247 5102.

Rehearsal Spaces

available for hire at the People Show Studios, Bethnal Green, London. Three bright, airy spaces plus well-equipped workshop, audio-visual editing suite, self-contained production office and access to photocopier, fax and kitchen. Details: 020 7729 1841.

Rehearsal Space

for rent from £5 per hour. 7m x 10m dance studio in Stoke Newington, London. Details: 020 7249 7141.

Rehearsal Space

available at reasonable rates at Oxford House, Bethnal Green, London. Facilities include a cafe and photocopying and fax.

Details: 020 7739 9001.

Rehearsal Space

available at competitive rates in London N1. Bright spacious studio 6m x 10m with attached green room and parking. Details: 020 7241 2942.

Rehearsal Space

available at the Half Moon Theatre, London. Very reasonable rates. Details: 020 7265 8138.

Rehearsal Spaces

available at Rush House, Three Mills Film and TV Studios, London. Five spaces of varying sizes available on flexible short and long term lets. Details: 020 7377 1154.

Rehearsal Space

available from £6 per hour at Chisenhale Dance Space, London. Details: 020 8981 6617.

Rehearsal Space

available to hire from Clean Break Theatre Company in London NW5. Studio, meeting room and workshop space available. Details: 020 7482 8600.

Spectacular Events Ltd

are a Yorkshire-based entertainment agency interested in promoting individuals or groups with acts suitable for one-day events, evening shows or promotions of any kind. Contact: Ron Wood, Spectacular Events Ltd, Event House, St Nicholas Close, Richmond, North Yorkshire DL10 7SP. Tel.: 01748 822232.

OPPORTUNITIES

Company Paradiso

require one male performer - preferably non-English - playing age 30+. Must have training, (Lecoq/Gaulier or similar). To join company for six days of research and development in October/November 2000. Possible further work to follow. Equity pro-rata rates. Auditions/rehearsals in London. Please send details (photos not required) to Jon Potter, Company Paradiso, 34 Riverbank, Lower Beach Road, Shoreham-by-Sea, West Sussex BN43 5YH.

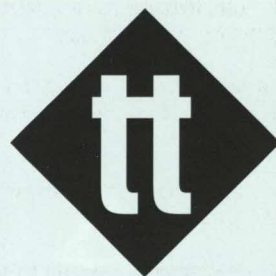
Skylight Circus Arts

are looking for a Circus Animateur for a three-year project using circus as a tool for social inclusion. This is a 2 day per week post. For more information contact Jim Riley on 01706 650676. e-mail: nsfjob@skyline-circus-arts.org.uk.

EVENTS

Kicking Space

is Ireland's first Physical Theatre Symposium, organised by Kabosh in association with the Dance Collective, The Ulster Association of Youth Drama and The Summit. Taking place at Cooke Centenary Hall in Belfast between 2-8 November, Kicking Space includes a series of workshops, classes and training sessions facilitated by both Irish and international theatre, dance and circus practitioners. Participating companies include: Barabbas, Big Telly Theatre Company, Corn



total theatre

Total Theatre magazine is the national, quarterly publication celebrating physical and visual performance. It reaches practitioners, performers, administrators, universities, colleges, students, trainers, venues, funding organisations and the public. Total Theatre magazine includes features, articles, interviews, reviews, news, opportunities, developments and information on companies, performances and workshops around the country.

The Total Theatre Network was founded in 1984 to advocate greater recognition and status for physical and visual performance, providing opportunities to meet, share and bring together the views of the profession. Since its inception, it has grown and developed a crucial role in raising the public profile of physical and visual performance and is an important source of information and advice for the public and practitioners. Total Theatre Network also organises and supports activities designed to develop physical and visual performance.

As a member of Total Theatre Network you can contact the office any time to use the Information Service, ask for advice and to give your comments and suggestions. Total Theatre Network is your organisation and suggestions for campaigns, activities, contributions to the magazine and volunteering offers are always welcome.

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Exchange, Kabosh, Ridiculusmus and Adam Kronenberg. Details: 028 9024 3343.

The National Association of Youth Circus

holds its next meeting at the Dream Factory, Warwick on November 11th at 11am. Anyone with an interest in youth circus is welcome to attend. There will be performances in the afternoon and evening. Details: 01706 650676.

Puppetry Into Performance - A User's Guide

is a one-day event organised by The Central School of Speech and Drama in collaboration with Total Theatre Network, the Theatre Museum and the Puppet Centre Trust. The event takes place at the Theatre Museum, London on November 27th. Designed to give both a practical and a theoretical perspective on the emergence of puppetry in contemporary theatre-making, the day is relevant to directors, writers, scenographers, performers, puppeteers and critics. Invited speakers include: Robert Lepage, Simon McBurney, Phelim McDermott, Ariane Mnouchkine, David Pountney, and Julie Taymor. For more details and a booking form contact Rachel Parkinson on 020 7559 3990 or e-mail r.parkinson@cssd.ac.uk.

Real Action 3

is a 3-week training/residency/performance programme happening in the North West region in March 2001. Managed in partnership with the Unity Theatre and Hope Street Actors Centre in Liverpool, Contact Theatre in Manchester, and the Nuffield Theatre, Lancaster, the event is led by the artistic directors of six well-established theatre companies operating nationally. Event organisers are currently looking for semi-professional and young companies based in the North West region who would appreciate the experience of working with established artistic directors. For further information send a SAE to: Bhatena-Jancovich Arts Management, 4 Ossian Mews, Ossian Road, London N4 4DT.

The Creative Role of the Producer - A User's Guide

is a day of platform discussions and workshops to be held at The Museum Of in London on October 23rd. Stemming from two new course strands from Central School of Speech & Drama - Alternative Theatre at undergraduate level (BA Theatre Practice) and Creative Producing at post-graduate level (MA Advanced Theatre Practice) - and the new Producers Forum at BAC, the event considers the emergence of the producer as a creative figure in live performance. The symposium also reflects a growth in mixed-media and interdisciplinary work, where producers liaise between artists working in different disciplines. The scope of the event will include the experimental sector, the 'established' avant garde and new West End production, as well as innovative practices in the corporate sector. The day's activities are designed to be functional rather than theoretical. They are geared to those who want to work in this field and to companies and individuals who need to connect with producers/managers/administrators. Invited speakers include: Michael Morris, Cultural Industry; Chris Morris, producer/performer/presenter;

Tom Morris, BAC; David Lan, The Young Vic; Marc Von Henning, Primitive Science; Barbara Matthews, TMA; David Jubb, BFTV; and Clare Patey, The Museum Of. For more details and a booking form contact Rachel Parkinson on 020 7559 3990 or e-mail r.parkinson@cssd.ac.uk.

The Suzuki Research Group

is led by Fran Barbe and Antje Diedrich and meets weekly to train in the Suzuki Method of Actor Training. The group also arrange intensives and workshops with invited teachers. To attend, or be on the mailing list, e-mail franbarbe@imaginemail.com or Tel.: 07931 710 808.

Zap Productions

present twelve international masterclasses across the UK in 2000 from three international companies: Da Da Dang (Italy), Les Acrostiches (France) and Danza Libra (Cuba). The programme, which has been developed with funding from ACE's Touring Programme, invites professional and emerging artists to participate in masterclasses that explore advanced street art skills within three disciplines: dance, music and circus. The project takes place in Leicester, Plymouth, London and Brighton, in venues that already host annual street arts events as part of the Zap organised National Street Arts Festival. Previous experience of street art is not a prerequisite as long as participants have a professional arts background. Each master class will accommodate 25 people. Details: office@zapuk.com.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

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www.b-j.dircon.co.uk

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Fax: 020 7833 4975
e-mail: info@culturalindustry.co.uk

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Fax: 020 7485 7701
e-mail: email@complicite.co.uk
www.complicite.co.uk

Theatre-rites

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Fax: 020 7704 0973
e-mail: info@theatre-rites.demon.co.uk

Wyrd Arts

16 Heathdale Gardens, High Heaton,
Newcastle-upon-Tyne NE7 7QR
Tel./Fax: 08700 113050
e-mail: wyrdarts@dircon.co.uk

PERFORMER & COMPANY UPDATE

Big Picture Theatre Company

will tour A Dark River in March and October 2001 with assistance from the Arts Council Of England. Details: 020 8348 0203.

Nigel Charnock & Company

will premiere their new show I Thought You Were Dead Dear in Germany in January 2001, before a UK and European tour. The project mixes dance, song and speech to explore the fantasies and frustrations, desires and despairs, of middle age. Nigel Charnock also performs in Fever, an improvised performance based on Shakespeare's sonnets, accompanied by clarinettist Michael Riessler and a string quartet. Bookings are now being taken for 2001. Details: 01926 339640.

Circus Space

has recently set-up its own circus production company with Paul Cockle, previously Production Manager for the Millennium Dome Show, as producer. The company aims to create medium-to large-scale innovative shows, building on the good working practices established in the development of the Millennium Show. Details: 020 7613 4141.
e-mail: enquiries@thecircusspace.co.uk.

Cirque Du Soleil

are pitching their elegant touring tent, the Grand Chapiteau - a first for this country - in London and Manchester for the debut performances of their new show Quidam. The company's London season at Battersea Power Station commences on December 14th. They move to Manchester Trafford Centre in February 2001. Details: +514 723 7638.

Cirque Surreal

currently features a sensational new cross bow act from France. Grey Arrow (Alain Garnet and his partner Catherine) have been wowing audiences with their extraordinary performance that culminates in Alain shooting an apple off his own head. Details: 01260 276627.
e-mail: phillipgandey@netcentral.co.uk.

eXtant performance company

is currently preparing its new show BEING for a tour of the UK, Germany and Spain next year. The show is a collaboration with Shinta Hermanns, inspired by the Unbearable Lightness of Being by Milan Kundera. It takes the form of a series of textual pictures utilising multimedia elements from eXtant's own theatrical exploration. The piece lies somewhere between installation and the more tradition theatrical experience. Details: 07946 460545. e-mail: eXtant_pc@hotmail.com

Fevered Sleep

has been awarded just under £5000 by London Arts Board to research and develop new working processes. This will be focused as a series of collaborations with practitioners and historians from photography, optical physics and stage illusion, leading to a site-specific performance about the invention of photography to be premiered in Autumn 2001. The company will

also be developing and re-touring Shore in Summer 2001. Details: 020 7978 4200.

Foursight Theatre

premiere a new translation of Euripede's Medea at mac, Birmingham in March 2001. With an original score by Mary Keith, direction by Dorinda Hul-ton, and featuring Naomi Cooke as Medea and Patrick Morris as Jason, this production promises to be fearsome, explosive and a moving exploration of the human propensity to cause pain. Design for the show is by Lucy O'Rorke and Aurelian Koch of Bouge de la. Alison Duddle of Horse + Bamboo will be the puppet-maker. Details: 10902 714257. e-mail: foursight.theatre@cwcom.net.

Full Beam Visual Theatre

tour their latest show, Better To Have Loved... - inspired by Jeanette Winterson's The Passion - from January 2001. Set entirely on a four poster bed, the show explores the risks taken and compromises made in pursuit of love. Specially commissioned by the company from writer David Murphy, Better To Have Loved... incorporates shadow puppetry and animation with live action. Full Beam's first show, Lassoos, Lipstick and a Packet of Port Scratchings, toured last year. They have also received Year of the Artist funding for Don't Play With Your Food, a live installation in Bristol. Details: 0117 930 0808.

Hoipolloi Theatre

tour Sweet Bobabola this autumn. Performed in the company's distinctively physical comic style, Sweet Bobabola is a comedy about alien bakers taking over the world. Two alien bakers entice the world with their irresistible cakes. The human race face a take-over. The planet is on the brink of losing control, and all because of Sweet Bobabola - a cake baked by an alien. Over the last year - Hoipolloi - promoted by the British Council, have represented new British comedy-theatre in festivals around the world, including the Philippines, Romania, France, Belgium, Holland and Germany. www.hoipolloi.org.uk.

Horse + Bamboo

follow a successful tour of the Republic of Ireland over the summer with a UK tour of The Girl Who Cut Flowers throughout the autumn. A contemporary folk-tale for all ages, the show provides a mix of puppetry, mask, shadow puppetry and original music. Horse + Bamboo will be running their annual workshop season in spring 2001 with training courses in mask, music, shadow puppetry and African dance. Details: 01706 220241. www.zen.co.uk/horse.bamboo/horse.htm.

Indefinite Articles

are currently collaborating with the Catalan artist Joan Baix on Dust, a captivating combination of storytelling, shadows, visual theatre and original music. Reality and mythology are woven together in a visionary mix of water, dust, lights and the human body to take audiences on the most fantastic voyage home. A magical journey for the imagination. Dust tours the UK until next spring. Details: 020 7978 4200. e-mail: nsweeting@dial.pipex.com.

Peter Jay's Hippodrome Circus

have had a successful summer with their Show 2000 which featured a water spectacular - synchronized swimmers, trapeze artists, fountains and 75,000 ping pong balls. Details: 01493 780223.

Leikin Loppu

tour Basking With Sharks, a comedy set on a disastrous wedding night, this autumn. Devised, designed and performed by Elizabeth Besbrode and Jason Hird and directed by Cal McCrystal, the show is set in the remains of a burnt-out house: complete with leaky pipe, dickie door-knob and dodgy electrics. The story follows the bride and groom's desperate frustrations, fall-outs and coming together. It is told through funny movements, extreme actions, bizarre facial expressions and deep emotion. This is the company's darkest and funniest show to date. It follows the successes of After Eight & Before Nine and Tailors, which both toured extensively nationally and internationally. www.leikinloppu.co.uk.

Lusty Juventus

performed a rehearsed reading in July of The Maternal Cloister, a new play by Christine Roberts about the life of Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz, in Rio de Janeiro. The piece was co-directed by Cariad Astles and Christine Roberts, and performed by Ruth Way, Roberta Mock and David Coslett. Written for puppets, The Maternal Cloister will be given a full production by Theatre Carnavalesque in 2001. The company also participated in workshops with Richard Schechner, Augusto Boal and Guillermo Gomez-Pena while in Brazil. e-mail: info@lusty-juventus.demon.co.uk. www.lusty-juventus.demon.co.uk.

metro-boulot-dodo

tour The Final Fling this autumn, a multi-media exploration of what happens when a dream becomes reality. Set inside a tower block where the membrane-thin walls reverberate with the sounds of sex, self-confession and DIY, The Final Fling follows the actions of a frustrated artist who threatens to throw his neighbours' fragile world into disarray. The show is supported by the Arts Council of England and is available for booking in spring 2001. Last month metro-boulot-dodo collaborated with members of Blast Theory, Third Angel and Uninvited Guest on a series of workshops which culminated in a public performance of Inside Out, an experiment in experimental theatre. This was an East Midlands Arts Board Year of the Artist project. Details: 07703 173945.

NoFit State Circus

revealed their brand new circus Big-Top at the beginning of September at Cardiff Castle. Shaped like a silver flying saucer, it stunned locals and revellers at the Cardiff Mardi Gras. Built with money from the lottery division of the Welsh Arts Council, the Big-Top is the launch pad for NoFit State's ambitious 'Immortal' project. This collaboration between professional artists and community arts groups working in circus, drama, dance, music, video, and interactive technologies, is a development of previous projects by the company. Details: 0122 488734.

Pandora's Box

is a new London-based performance project set up by Angela Bullock, director of Twisted Stocking, and including Nick Hobbs, Faroque Khan, Dan Skinner, Kristin McIver and Zoe Crowder. Commencing this autumn and leading to performances in 2001, Pandora's Box is directed by Enrique Pardo and will explore the myths of Prometheus with the figure of Pandora and her famous box). www.ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/pantheatre/pandora.htm.

The People Show

revive the People Show Cabaret as part of the British Festival of Visual Theatre this autumn. Devised by the company in collaboration with Chris Monks, the cabaret features the same performers who first created it twenty years ago - George Khan, Mark Long, Chahine Yavroyan and Emil Wolk. This is non-stop, cocked-up cabaret to make your belly laugh - from a snug, candlelit table in the People Show's own cabaret style club. Details: 020 7729 1841.

Point Blank

tour a re-worked production of Dead Causes - with a new cast and original music score - to new venues this autumn. With frenetic physicality and devastating humour, Dead Causes propels the myth of Antigone into a contemporary landscape. Four performers bury awkward facts and lose incriminating evidence as they try hard to drown out the whispers of the dead. With movement direction by David McCormick (DV8 and Richard Alston), Dead Causes is now booking for spring 2001. Details: 0114 249 3651. e-mail: pointblank@opcentre.f9.co.uk. www.opcentre.force9.co.uk.

Ridiculusmus

are currently in the process of making a series of new shorts for performance in 2001, the first of which is being planned for performance as part of the London International Mime Festival in January. The company are also currently touring Say Nothing, following a successful run at the Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh this summer. Details: 020 8348 0203. www.ridiculu.dircon.co.uk.

Scarlet Theatre

remount The Sisters, which they tour this autumn alongside a newly-commissioned companion, Others. Sisters & Others are two exciting, innovative versions of Chekhov's Three Sisters. The original, The Sisters, tunnelled underneath the civilised veneer of the Chekhov play to reveal five women writhing inside their tortured prisons, like specimens under a microscope; while Others illuminates and focuses on the private world's of the men. Sisters & Others brings the powerful sub-text of the famous play to the surface, highlighting the deep divide between the sexes and the hidden loneliness and despair of the women. Details: 020 8441 9779.

The Shysters Theatre Company

comprise nine of the country's most accomplished young learning disabled performers and is based at the Belgrade Theatre, Coventry. The company's latest production Fallen Angels, which combines

mime, movement and poetic text to create a 21st century gothic spectacle, premiered at Coventry's Arts Alive Festival and tours the UK this autumn and in spring 2001. The Shysters are also currently working with Open Theatre Company to develop performing arts for learning disabled people throughout the West Midlands.
Details: 024 7684 6703.

Skylight Circus Arts

premiered *The Bridge*, a spectacular performance event created over the summer with a team of circus, carnival and musical artists - and featuring a cast of up to 100 local people - at the end of August in Rochdale. An exuberant parade of carnival creations and funky musicians, *The Bridge* incorporated trapeze, tightwire and stiltwalking.
Details: 01706 650676.
www.skylight-circus-arts.org.uk.

Stampede

premiere their new show *FlyDragon* at Hoxton Hall, London on November 24th and 25th. Set in an apocalyptic metropolis, the dark paths of two estranged sisters cross. The system that once divided them now has them on the run. Staged in the round with vigorously physical performances, Stampede's four international actors create a tale of suspense and tragedy. *FlyDragon* will tour in the new year. Details: 020 8802 9785.
e-mail: stampede@talk21.com.

Swamp Circus Theatre

are working on an exciting new project, *Groundfly*, which will involve creating a new touring production called *Fundango* to follow the success of their last show, *Moto*. The production and training school will be using an 800 seat mobile venue with a revolutionary new design. Details: 0114 256 0962.
e-mail: swampcircus@btinternet.com.
www.swampcircus.com.

Tanden

is a new theatre company with a commitment to ongoing physical and vocal training. Taking their name from a martial arts term for the centre of the body - the area just below the navel - the company employs the actor training method of Japanese director Tadashi Suzuki, to create works which challenge both performers and audiences alike. Tanden is currently working on *A Breach in Nature*, a production of *Macbeth*, which brings together actors, dancers and circus performers, planned to premiere in December 2000.
Details: 07931 710 808.
e-mail: franbarbe@imaginemail.com.

Theatre Alibi

follow their hugely successful tour of *Shelf Life* last spring with new national dates this autumn. Tapping into a world familiar to us all, *Shelf Life* tells stories about three people and the supermarket in which they shop. Theatre Alibi blend a playful performance style and visual exuberance with a soundtrack by contemporary roots band Spiro. Based on stories by Daniel Jamieson, *Shelf Life* is directed by Nikki Sved, designed by Dominic Hooper and performed by Henry Hawkes, Joe Hall and Jenny Tubini. Details: 01392 217315.
e-mail: alibi@eclipse.co.uk.

Theatre de Complicite

complete a UK tour of *Light*, directed by Simon McBurney, with a London run at the Almeida Theatre, Islington from October 27th to November 18th. Based on the novel by Torgny Lindgren, *Light* is a peasant fable set in a small village where only six people survive a plague. Adapted by Simon McBurney and Matthew Broughton, *Light* is devised by the company, with a cast including Mick Barnfather, Lilo Baur, Maria Eggers, Bronagh Gallagher, Dermot Kerrigan, Roger Lloyd Pack, Tim McMullan, Tobias Menzies and Toby Sedgwick. Details: 020 7485 7700.

Told by an Idiot

tour a new show, *Shoot Me in the Heart*, this autumn. Inspired by a short story by Julio Llinas, *Shoot Me in the Heart* reveals an epic range of emotions, passion and colours, in a very personal story. With original music, chorus singing, and a vibrant and expressive physicality, the company returns to a strong narrative, whilst confirming their national and international reputation for work that is moving, comic and purely theatrical.
Details: 020 7978 4200.
e-mail: nsweeting@dial.pipex.com

Trading Faces

are on tour this autumn with *Tempting Fate*. Inspired by the fateful story of *Carmen* and using *Trading Faces'* unique style of mask, *Tempting Fate* is an absurd and tragic story of love, infatuation and deceit set in nineteenth century Spain. It's an emotional rollercoaster ride that reaches the peaks of both comedy and tragedy, exposing the gritty, uncompromising *Carmen* and her short-sighted lover Don Jose. *Tempting Fate* premiered recently at mac, Birmingham and tours until December. Details: 01235 550829.

Trestle Theatre Company

follow successful runs at the Pleasance in both Edinburgh and London, with a UK tour of *The Barretts of Wimpole Street*. The first time that Trestle has mounted a period drama, *The Barretts of Wimpole Street* also marks a new direction for the company as it combines new writing with their traditional mask skills. Set in 1845, the show tells the tale of the poet Elizabeth Barrett and her elopement with Robert Browning and is adapted from the popular classic by Rudolph Besier. Details: 01727 850950.

Unlimited Theatre

completed a successful run at the Pleasance with *Static and Clean* during the Edinburgh Festival Fringe this summer. The company also showed a work-in-progress, *Scream If You Want To Go Faster*, at BAC as part of BFVT earlier this month.
e-mail: unlimited@pop3.poptel.org.uk.

Vincent Dance Theatre

follow last year's critically acclaimed *Falling From The High Rise of Love* with *Caravan of Lies* which tours this autumn. Compered by a clown who's seen better days, the show weaves together three solos - by T C Howard, Peter Shenton and Iona Kewney. *Caravan of Lies* is directed by Charlotte Vincent with music by John Avery and set design by Richard Lowdon (Forced Entertainment).
Details: 020 8541 5399.



total theatre

FREE LISTINGS SERVICE

Total Theatre Network members only

Members can use the free listings service to inform readers of their activities.

Listings can be placed in:

- ◆ Management News & Awards
- ◆ Noticeboard
- ◆ Publications
- ◆ Performers & Company Update
- ◆ Performances & Festivals
- ◆ Workshops & Training

DISPLAY ADVERTISING

Advert Cost

Size	Members	Non-Members
Full page	£160	£300
Half page	£110	£240
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Advert Dimensions (mm)

Size	Rotation	Width x Depth
Full page	-	188 x 269
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ADVERT COPY DEADLINES

Season	Deadline	Published
Winter	14th November	7th January
Spring	14th February	7th April
Summer	14th May	7th July
Autumn	14th August	7th October

Blow Up Theatre, Somebody to Love



PERFORMANCES

**Blow Up Theatre
SOMEBODY TO LOVE**

020 8348 0203

OCTOBER

- 21 Barbican Theatre, Plymouth
- 23 Marlowe Theatre, Canterbury
- 24-25 Komedia, Brighton
- 27 The Arc, Trowbridge
- 28 Swindon Arts Centre
- 30 Chapman Theatre, Salford University

**David Gale
I AM DANDY**

020 7978 4200

OCTOBER

- 20-4 BAC, London

**Hoipolloi Theatre
SWEET BOBABOLA**

OCTOBER

- 20-21 Watermans Arts Centre, Brentford
- 24 Plowright Theatre, Scunthorpe
- 25 The Junction, Cambridge
- 26 Mollington & Backford Village Hall
- 27 Forest St. Primary School, Weaverham

**Horse + Bamboo
THE GIRL WHO CUT
FLOWERS**

01706 220241

OCTOBER

- 20 Carmarthen
- 23-28 Southwark Playhouse

NOVEMBER

- 1 21 South Street, Reading
- 2 Ridings Arts Centre, Winterbourne
- 3 Blundells School, Tiverton
- 8-9 Contact Theatre, Manchester
- 10 Devonshire Junior School, Smethwick
- 13-15 Durham City Arts (venues tbc)
- 17 Bollington Arts Centre
- 18 Unity Theatre, Liverpool
- 22 Rugby School Theatre
- 23 Citadel Arts Centre, St Helens
- 24-25 Square Chapel, Halifax
- 30 Windsor Arts Centre

DECEMBER

- 1 Guildhall, Grantham

**Indefinite Articles
DUST**

020 7978 4200

OCTOBER

- 20-21 BAC, London
- 28 Komedia, Brighton

NOVEMBER

- 10-11 Cambridge Drama Centre
- 23-24 Green Room, Manchester
- 25 The Unity, Liverpool

DECEMBER

- 1 Merlin Theatre, Frome
- 10-11 Porto Puppet Festival

JANUARY

- 17 Hurtwood House, Dorking
- 25 Nuffield Theatre

**Leikin Loppu
BASKING WITH SHARKS**

0113 217 8827

OCTOBER

- 20-21 Wynd Theatre, Melrose

NOVEMBER

- 1 West End Centre, Aldershot
- 3 Pegasus Theatre, Oxford
- 8 Stephen Joseph Studio, Scarborough
- 9 Guildhall Arts Centre, Gloucester
- 10 Corn Exchange, Newbury
- 14 Junction Arts Centre, Cambridge
- 16 Leighton Buzzard Theatre
- 28 Theatr Mwldan, Cardigan
- 29 Bonnington Theatre, Marlowe

DECEMBER

- 1-2 Arts In Cambridgeshire

**metro-boulot-dodo
THE FINAL FLING**

07703 173945

NOVEMBER

- 1 The Nuffield Theatre, Lancaster
- 4 Bowen West Theatre, Bedford
- 17 Met Arts Centre, Bury
- 23 Colchester Arts Centre
- 25 The Roadmender, Northampton

DECEMBER

- 6 The Studio Theatre, Leeds
- 8 Phoenix Arts, Leicester

**Graeme Miller
SMALL ACTS AT THE
MILLENNIUM**

020 7247 5102

DECEMBER

- 1-31 Warwick Arts Centre

**The People Show
THE PEOPLE SHOW
CABARET**

020 7729 1841

OCTOBER

- 10-28 People Show Studios, London E2

**Point Blank
DEAD CAUSES**

0114 249 3650/1

NOVEMBER

- 15 Romiley Forum, Stockport
- 18 Rotherham Arts Centre
- 30 Chisenhale Dance Space, London

DECEMBER

- 1-2 Chisenhale Dance Space, London
- 7 The Roadmender, Northampton

**Rejects Revenge
THE REJECTS REVENGE
CANTERBURY TALES**

0151 708 4880

NOVEMBER

- 8 Wakefield Arts Centre
- 9 Darlington Arts Centre
- 10-11 mac, Birmingham
- 13-15 Liverpool Everyman
- 16 Alhambra Studio, Bradford
- 17 The Bull, Barnet
- 18 Theatr Hafren, Newtown
- 21 Christ's Hospital, Horsham
- 22-23 Merlin Theatre, Frome
- 24-25 Notts County Council Tour
- 28-29 Gardner Arts Centre, Brighton
- 30 Loughborough Town Hall

DECEMBER

- 1 Guildhall Theatre, Derby
- 5 Rose Theatre, Ormskirk
- 6 Queen's Hall, Widnes
- 7 Ashcroft Arts Centre, Fareham
- 8-9 Old Town Hall, Hemel Hempstead
- 11 Beau Sejour, Guernsey
- 12-13 Jersey Arts Centre, St Helier
- 15 The Gantry, Southampton
- 16 21 South Street, Reading

**Ridiculusmus
YES, YES, YES/
SAY NOTHING**

020 8348 0203

OCTOBER

- 22-29 Leipzig

NOVEMBER

- 15 Triskel Arts Centre, Corke (TBC)
- 22 The Newhampton Centre, Wolverhampton
- 23 Daneside Theatre, Congleton

DECEMBER

- 16 Wiltshire Touring

**Scarlet Theatre
SISTERS & OTHERS**

020 7928 6363

OCTOBER

- 24-11 Young Vic Studio, London

**Shared Experience
A DOLL'S HOUSE**

020 7247 4437

OCTOBER

- 24-28 The Lowry, Salford
- 31 New Ambassadors Theatre, London

NOVEMBER

- 1-30 New Ambassadors Theatre, London

DECEMBER

- 1-9 New Ambassadors Theatre, London

**The Shysters Theatre
Company
FALLEN ANGELS**

024 7684 6703

NOVEMBER

- 7 Loughborough University
- 13 Lawrence Batley Theatre, Huddersfield
- 16 Swan Theatre, Worcester
- 21 Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

**Pip Simmons
AN DIE MUSIK**

020 7247 5102

OCTOBER

- 20-21 Taliesen Arts Centre, Swansea

**Yolande Snaith
Theatredance
THE THING THAT
CHANGES FROM THIS
INTO THAT**

020 7247 5102

OCTOBER

- 23-24 Purcell Room, SBC, London

NOVEMBER

- 18 BAC, London

**Yolande Snaith
MAXIMUM MACHINE**

020 7247 5102

OCTOBER

- 26 Crewe & Alsager College, Crewe
- 28 University of Bath

NOVEMBER

- 3 Forum 28, Barrow in Furness
- 14 BAC, London
- 21 Phoenix Arts Centre, Leicester

**Theatre Alibi
SHELF LIFE**

01392 217315

OCTOBER

- 18-21 Ustinov Studio, Bath
- 24 Portesham Village Hall, Dorset
- 26-27 Komedia, Brighton
- 28 mac, Birmingham

**Theatre de Complicite
LIGHT**

020 7485 7700

OCTOBER

- 27-31 Almeida Theatre, London

NOVEMBER

- 1-18 Almeida Theatre, London

**Told by an Idiot
SHOOT ME IN THE
HEART**

020 7978 4200

OCTOBER

- 17-21 Gulbenkian Studio, Newcastle

24-28 Royal Exchange Studio, Manchester
31-4 Unity, Liverpool

NOVEMBER

7-11 Sheffield Crucible Studio
14-18 The Other Place, Stratford

**Trading Faces
TEMPTING FATE**

01235 550829

OCTOBER

31 Norwich Playhouse

NOVEMBER

1-2 Theatre Royal, Bury St Edmunds
3 Haverhill Arts Centre
7 The Roses, Tewkesbury
8 Stripe Theatre, Winchester
9-10 Central Studio, Basingstoke
15 Weymouth College
16 Trinity Arts Centre
17-18 Pegasus Theatre, Oxford
21 Sundial Theatre, Cirencester
22-25 Ustinov Studio, Bath
28 Uppingham Theatre
29 Birmingham ArtSites, Castlevale
30 Birmingham ArtSites, Sheldon

DECEMBER

1 Rotherham Arts Centre
2 Old Meetings House, Helmsley

**Trestle Theatre
Company
THE BARRETT'S OF
WIMPOLE STREET**

01727 850950

OCTOBER

17-28 Touring The Netherlands
31-2 Nottinghamshire County Council

NOVEMBER

3 The Radlett Centre, Herts.

**Vincent Dance Theatre
CARAVAN OF LIES**

020 8541 5399

OCTOBER

21 University of Bath Arts Theatre

VENUES

**The Bull
BARNET**

020 8449 0048

NOVEMBER

2/10/18 Mu-Lan Theatre Company,
Daughter of The River

**camden people's
theatre
LONDON**

020 7916 5878

OCTOBER

3-22 Crispin Bonham Carter's New
Action Theatre, Gamblers
13/16 Lennie and Morris, The Lennie and
Morris Show
24-31 L'Khaim Theatre, The Ghost of the
Gown Shop
30 Mulch by Sharon Wymark

NOVEMBER

1-12 L'Khaim Theatre, The Ghost of the
Gown Shop
6 Mulch by Sharon Wymark
20 Outside Edge, Harry and Susie Get
Married
14-30 cpt company, The Monkey's Paw
& The Silent Movie

DECEMBER

1-2 cpt company, The Monkey's Paw
& The Silent Movie
5-9 Turning Heads Theatre & Poetry,
About Time!
12-17 E-run, How to be Iranian

**mac
BIRMINGHAM**

0121 440 3838

OCTOBER

20 Green Ginger, Bambi - The
Wilderness Years
28 Theatre Alibi, Shelf Life

NOVEMBER

3 Hugo & Ines, Body Talk
7-8 Hollow Creatures, Great
Expectations

**Trinity Theatre and
Arts Centre
TUNBRIDGE WELLS**

01892 678678

NOVEMBER

2 Ophaboom, The Hunchback of
Notre Dame
8 Theatre sans Frontieres, Le Chat
Noir
10 ATC, The Boy Who Left Home
16 Trading Faces, Tempting Fate

FESTIVALS

**British Festival of
Visual Theatre 2000
BAC, LONDON**

020 7223 2223

OCTOBER

19-20 Apples & Snakes, Raison D'Etire
19-21 The Table Show, The Cutting
Room
20-21 David Gale, I Am Dandy
20-21 Indefinite Articles, Dust

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GOTTINGEN, GERMANY**

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6245

22-28 JANUARY 2001

Includes performances and workshops
from both Japanese and European
performers.

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International
Performance Festival
WALES**

01970 622133

UNTIL 29 OCTOBER 2000

Including performances by Theatre La
Mezzanine (France), Teatr Piesn Kozla
(Poland), William Yang (Australia), Maya
Krishna Rao (India), Victoria (Belgium),
Corn Exchange (Ireland), Armagh Rhymer's
(N. Ireland), Jewish State Theatre of
Bucharest (Romania), Pip Simmons (UK),
Barabbas (Ireland), Bill Shannon
Crutchmaster (USA), Jant-Bi (Senegal),
Desperate Optimists (Ireland) and Young at
Heart (USA).

**visions2000
FESTIVAL OF
INTERNATIONAL
ANIMATED THEATRE**

Various venues, Brighton

01273 644099

OCTOBER

16-29 Theatre-rites, Pillowworks
18-20 Flash Marionettes, Flash Circus
18-21 Mikropodium, Stop
20-21 Wireframe, At Home
21-21 Stephen Mottram's Animata,
Organillo
21-22 Green Ginger, Bambi
22 Moving Hands Theatre, The
Gingerbread Pig
25-28 Theatre-rites, Sleep Tight
25-26 Puppentheater der Stadt Halle,
Can You Whistle Johanna?
26-27 Teatro Hugo & Ines, Body Talk
27 Moving Hands Theatre Company,
Mrs. Barbara Nice and our Helen
28 Indefinite Articles, Dust
28 Theatre Insomnia, The Golden
Bridge
29 On the Other Hand Puppet
Theatre, Frank Muir's Goldilocks
and the Three Bears

**visions2000
SOUTH HILL PARK ARTS
CENTRE, BRACKNELL**

01344 484 123

OCTOBER

31-1 Theatre-rites, Sleep Tight

NOVEMBER

1 Teatro Hugo & Ines, Body Talk
2-4 Blow Up Theatre, Somebody to
Love

**visions2000
LUDLOW ASSEMBLY
ROOMS**

01584 878 141

OCTOBER

20 Company Gavin Robertson,
Spittoon
23 Punchinello's Puppets, Mother
Goose's Story Book
26 Clydebuilt Puppet Theatre, Indian
Tales

**visions2000
PEGASUS THEATRE,
OXFORD**

01865 722 851

OCTOBER

23 Storybox Theatre, The Tin Soldier
28 Teatro Hugo & Ines, Body Talk

NOVEMBER

3 Leikin Loppu, Basking with Sharks
7-8 Theatre-rites, Sleep Tight
30-2 Stephen Mottram's Animata,
Organillo

**visions2000
RIVERHOUSE BARN,
WALTON ON THAMES**

01932 253 354

OCTOBER

27 Insomnia Theatre, Lost Paradise
28 Stephen Mottram's Animata,
Organillo

NOVEMBER

4 Ken Haines' On the Other Hand
Theatre Company, Frank Muir's
Goldilocks and the Three Bears

**visions2000
BLOXWICH LIBRARY,
WALSALL**

01922 653183

OCTOBER

24 Lempen Puppet Theatre, The
Rainbow Forest
29 Moving Hands Theatre, The
Gingerbread Pig

NOVEMBER

2 Teatro Hugo & Ines, Body Talk

**visions2000
PORTSMOUTH ARTS
CENTRE**

023 9283 7373

OCTOBER

Stephen Mottram's Animata,
Organillo

**visions2000
JERSEY ARTS CENTRE,
ST. HELIER**

01534 700 444

OCTOBER

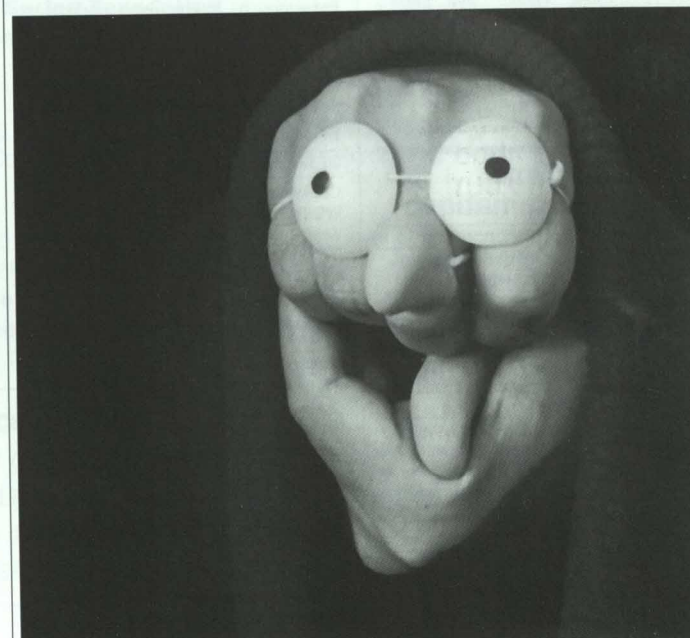
30-31 Teatro Hugo & Ines, Body Talk

**visions2000
MAC, BIRMINGHAM**

0121 440 3838

NOVEMBER

3 Teatro Hugo & Ines, Body Talk



Teatro Hugo & Ines, Body Talk, visions2000

UK

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Training programme for performers and directors involving 40 performers who have graduated through Circomedia, Circus Space, The Dome Circus Project, Belfast Community Circus, Greentop Circus Centre, Skylight Circus Centre, Zippo's Academy and various other international circus schools. Also including representatives from La Fura Dels Baus, Gail Kelly (Club Swing, Rock N Roll Circus) and Kathryn Hunter (Theatre De Complicite).

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Yo-Yo & Diabolo, Trapeze, Tightwire, Acrobatics, Unicycling, Juggling and General Circus Skills.

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01489 799960

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London 020 7613 4141

ADULT CLASSES

Ongoing programme includes acrobatics, trapeze, circus skills and other short courses. Evenings and weekends.

The Creative Role of the Producer - A User's Guide

London 020 7559 3990

23 OCTOBER

A day of platform discussions and workshops on the emergence of the producer as a creative figure in live performance. For arts professionals and companies and individuals looking to make connections with producers, managers and administrators.

Dance UK

London 020 7228 4990

12 NOVEMBER

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For more information contact: Philippe Gaulier School, St Michael's Church Hall, St Michael's Road, London NW2 6XG.

Horse + Bamboo

Rossendale 01706 831166

20-21 JANUARY 2001

WORKING WITH ANIMAL MASKS

With Victoria Lee. £55.

27-28 JANUARY 2001

THE BREATH OF THE MASK - MUSIC & MASK WORK

With Loz Kaye. £55.

3-4 FEBRUARY 2001

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With Alison Duddle and Bob Firth. £65.

20-11 FEBRUARY 2001

AFRICAN DANCE

With Funmi Adewole. £60.

Independent Theatre Council (ITC)

London 020 7403 6698

25 OCTOBER

PERSONNEL SYSTEMS & MANAGEMENT

With Madeline Hutchins.

26 OCTOBER & 30 NOVEMBER

RELATIONSHIP FUNDRAISING

With Rick Bond.

7 NOVEMBER

INTRODUCTION TO ARTS PROGRAMMING

With Stella Hall and Katrina Duncan.

8 NOVEMBER

THE ITC/EQUITY CONTRACT: MAKING IT WORK FOR YOU

With Charlotte Jones.

14-15 NOVEMBER

MARKETING FOR ARTS ORGANISATIONS

With Gerri Morris.

22 NOVEMBER

SPONSORSHIP

With Philip Spedding.

28 NOVEMBER

MANAGING MULTIPLE PRIORITIES

With Mark Trezona.

International Circus Reunion

Hinckley 01253 352681

4 FEBRUARY 2000

All circus people are very welcome to attend - artists, directors and promoters from any branch of the circus community.

Kicking Space

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2-8 NOVEMBER

PHYSICAL THEATRE SYMPOSIUM

Presented by Kabosh with workshops, classes and training sessions facilitated by Irish companies including Barabbas, Big Telly, Blue Raincoat, The Corn Exchange, Pan Pan and Ridiculusmus.

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01342 823410

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For young people 8+ covering acrobatics, manipulation and circus acting.

Puppetry Into Performance - A User's Guide

London 020 7559 3990

27 NOVEMBER

A day of discussion and presentations organised by The Central School of Speech and Drama in collaboration with Total Theatre Network, the Theatre Museum and the Puppet Centre Trust. Invited speakers include Robert Lepage, Simon McBurney, Phelim McDermott, Ariane Mnouchkine, David Pountney and Julie Taymor.

School of Physical Theatre

London 020 8215 3350

SEPTEMBER 2000-JUNE 2001

THE PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL

One-year intensive programme split into three terms (mon-fri 9.30am-2.30pm, rehearsals daily from 2.30-5pm).

PART-TIME CLASSES

The school runs part-time classes throughout the year, both introductory and advanced.

Street Wise

Kirklees 01924 455555

25 OCTOBER 2000

STREET ARTS NETWORKING & INFORMATION SEMINAR

Hosted by Yorkshire Arts Board for regional street artists, the seminar includes Pax Nindi from ACE, Manchester International Arts and x-trax, the Independent Street Arts Network, representatives from Local Authorities and union reps from Equity and elsewhere.

Suzuki Research Group

London 07931 710808 or

020 8451 1268

WEEKLY WEDNESDAY EVENING SESSIONS

with Nakayama Ichiro of the Suzuki Company of Toga. 6.30pm-9.30pm. £5 per session.

Total Theatre Network

Brighton 020 7729 7944

21 OCTOBER

CRITICAL PRACTICE 8: HANDS UP!

Discussion on the widening appeal of puppetry chaired by Linda Lewis, director of visions. Sallis Benney Theatre 2.30pm-5pm. £5/3 concs. Free to Total Theatre Network members.

The Why Not Institute

London 020 7733 7026

CLOWNING WORKSHOPS

Held regularly by Angela de Castro at ArtsEd, 14 Bath Road, London W4 1LY.

Zippo's Academy of Circus Arts

Winchester 07050 282624

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Cost 450 DM/400 DM.

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MAY 14-JUNE 4 2001

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The dynamic modern alternative to conventional Drama School, offering a 3-month intensive Foundation Course and a 5-term Course. The Spring Foundation Course begins January 15th 2001. Afternoons only. Mon-Fri. Fully international. Certificates awarded.

The course includes: Decroux Mime Technique, Mime Acting, Story-Telling, Masks, Verbal/Physical/Psychological Improvisation, Style & Stylisation, Body-Balance, Colours, Timing, Caricatures, Commedia dell'Arte, Chimpanzee, Acrobatics, Stage & Body Dynamics, Performance and much more.

The School gives a thorough and intensive grounding in mime and acting techniques to a very high level of physical expertise, and explores the energy, creativity, excitement and power of modern visual and physical theatre.

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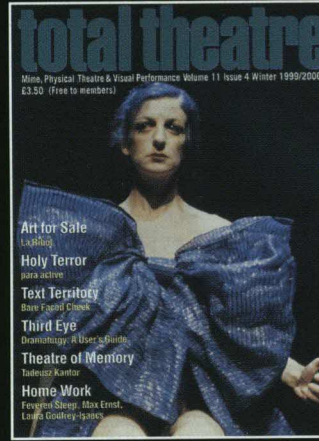
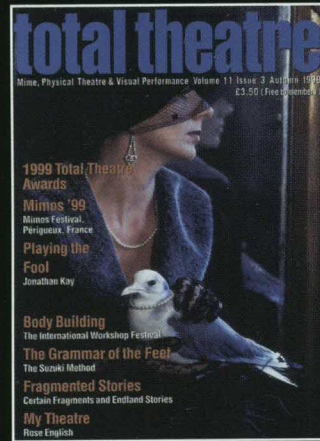
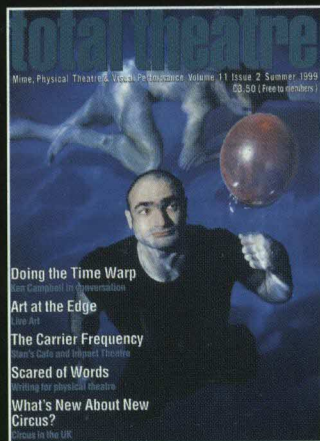
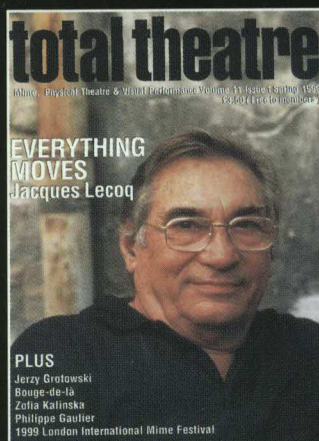
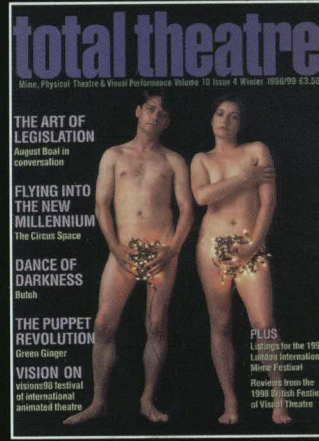
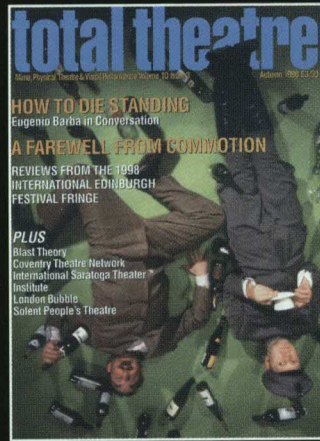
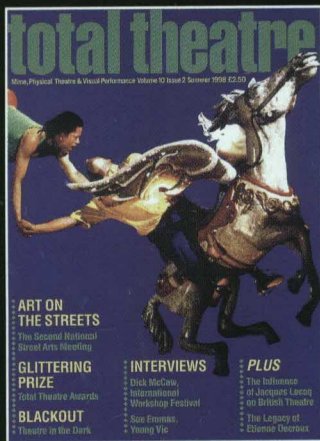
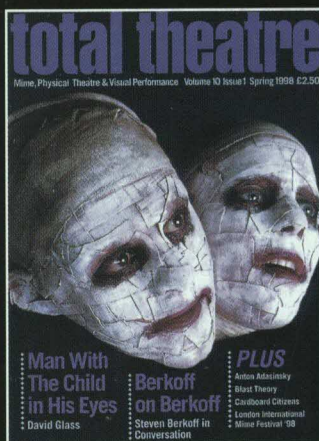
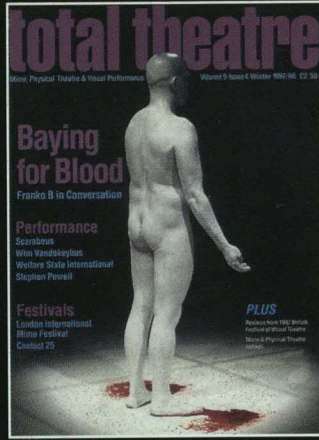
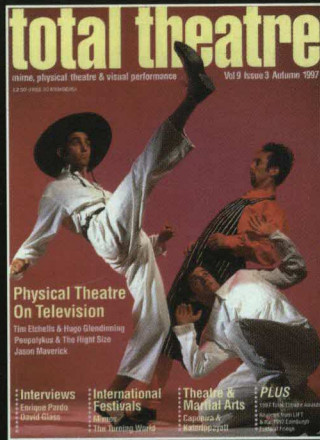
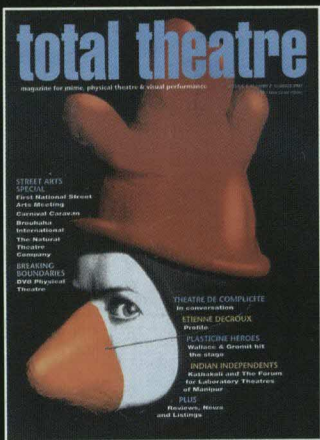
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