

total theatre

The magazine for
mime, physical
theatre & visual
performance

Volume 7 Number 1 Spring 1995

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Manipulating the Material

**puppets, objects,
animation and
virtual reality**

Challenging convention

**the dynamic of the
audience/actor relationship**

Physical film

**hello Hollywood,
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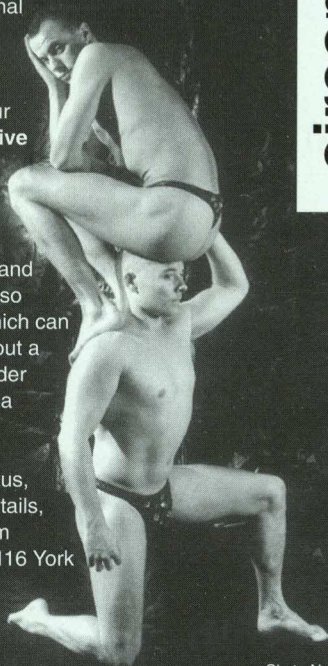
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Editorial

What's in a name?

"Mime" Theatre has often been viewed as a restrictive way of describing performance which encompasses a range of physical and movement approaches. Now, it seems the puppetry world is finding the word "puppet" limiting. In the feature on MANIPULATING THE MATERIAL, we look at the way in which performers are using the new materials of our age in theatre performance. No longer is the manipulator necessarily simply concerned with giving a Puppet human characteristics or telling a narrative. Watching The Umbilical Brothers at this year's London International Mime Festival demonstrating their unconventional and amazingly cruel, but also hysterical, propensity towards small furry inanimate creatures brought this home to me. Even so there is no doubt that the more traditional story-telling forms of puppet theatre do continue to delight and entertain.

In the feature, CHALLENGING CONVENTION, Augusto Boal is concerned with an audience that can change the shape of a plot, take on characters and an active rather than passive role. In a series of articles we examine the dynamic that exists between the performer and the audience.

And, with the recent trend in physical, violent and often gruesome films, Total Theatre looks at the work of current exponent Quentin Tarantino in the feature, PHYSICAL FILM as well as Peta Lily's debut movie of her theatre production, BEG! and the highly charged work of DV8, Nigel Charnock and Wendy Houston.

The features in this issue highlight some of the developments in our "Total Theatre" world, but sadly, a sign of the times is a lack of commitment to funding project companies working at the cutting edge. Project allocations of the funding bodies have been progressively cut over the years and recent decisions at the Arts Council have meant that companies such as Forced Entertainment and Reckless Sleepers may now be forced to disband. Mark Cunningham discusses some of the issues in his letter on Page 19.

But "Signs of the times!" also show exciting new companies emerging every day. Lets hope we can continue to have a funding structure that support's the innovators of the future.

Editorial Group

Editorial prepared by Shani Solomons

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MAG was founded in 1984 by practitioners to advocate for greater recognition and status for Mime and Physical Theatre, providing opportunities to meet, share and bring together the views of the profession.

Since its inception, MAG has grown and developed a crucial role in raising the public profile of Mime and Physical Theatre and is an important source of information and advice for the public and practitioners. MAG also organises and supports activities designed to develop Mime and Physical Theatre Regionally and Nationally.

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Feature: MANIPULATING THE MATERIAL

- puppets, objects, animation and virtual reality

Introduction by Tim Eagle

Marionetteatern, Multi-media puppetry
by Jac Wilkinson

Objects of Glee - In conversation with
Mark Whitelaw of the Glee Club by Tim Eagle

Virtual Trajectories: Technology in performance
by Susan Kozel

Multi-media - The new puppetry? by Tim Eagle

Feature: CHALLENGING CONVENTION

- the dynamic of the audience/actor relationship

Introduction by Mark Cunningham

"Coragem De Ser Feliz" - Have the courage to be
happy. Ris Widdicombe interviews Augusto Boal

Performing performance - The new authenticity
of OPTIK by John Freeman

Audience involvement - "THE THEATRE OF WAR"
by Brendan Stapleton

A dialogue with the audience by Sarah Dawson

Feature: PHYSICAL FILM

- hello Hollywood, bye bye theatre

Introduction by Faye Chang

Fetch, Sit, Kill! Andrew Ayers on Peta Lily's new
film, BEG!

Dance for the Camera 2 by Mark Cunningham

Tarantino - Out of Order by Brendan Stapleton

The unidentified man by Faye Chang

Letters...

Contracts, Circus and Crisis

Reviews

From Mime and Physical Theatre Performances

Regulars

Management News and Awards

Noticeboard

Recently Read... and Publications

Performers and Company Update

Performances and Festivals

Workshops and Training

copy deadline

If you would like to submit news, views, letters or advertise in the next issue of *Total Theatre*, please note that the deadline for copy for the Spring issue is 14th April 1995. The next issue will cover the period June 1995 to September 1995.

Cover: The Lindsay Kemp Company: CINDERELLA
(Review from LIMF 1995 appears on Page 24).
Photo: Cesar Soler (Courtesy of Sadler's Wells Theatre)

4
5
6
7
8
9
9
11
12
13
14
14
16
17
18
19
19
21
25
26
27
28
29
31

Manipulating the Material

Puppets, Objects, Animation and Virtual Reality

Recently, festivals such as **visions94** (The Festival of International Animated Theatre) and The London International Mime Festival included companies who use the manipulation of materials in their work.

Material manipulation might seem like just another mouthful of words that try ironically to encompass a predominantly visual form so why not just say this feature is about puppetry? I spoke to

attracted new audiences."

Was one of the aims of **visions94** to attract a new audience?

"With **visions94** we were trying to set up a festival structure that would be ongoing, introducing venues to new companies and establishing a framework for production that would continue after the festival. The aim was to attract and keep new audiences by continuing to offer this kind of work."

work on offer revealed the flourishing range of materials and styles that have a common thread of interactivity between the puppet and the puppeteer. How did Sharon Kivity see the work reflecting a contemporary view of animated theatre?

"I deliberately set out to introduce non-traditional work that offered something different to our expectations of puppetry. The revelation of the puppeteer as performer

The London International Mime Festival this year highlighted the work of five companies who used objects or puppets. With groups such as Faulty Optic successfully performing at both mime and puppetry festivals throughout Europe there are obviously a lot of crossovers between the worlds of mime and puppetry and visual theatre. But as Sharon pointed out, the important thing was "not to worry too much about the labels that get used but rather

"Groups like Trestle deliberately did not call their work mime and in so doing attracted new audiences" Sharon Kivity

Sharon Kivity, Artistic Director of **visions94** and found a reluctance to use the "P" word.

"My decision to call it a festival of animated theatre was not out of a dislike of puppetry but rather due to what had been learnt in mime over the last ten years from groups like Trestle who deliberately did not call their work mime, and in so doing

visions94 was the first large scale contemporary puppet festival to be held in this country for ten years. Based in Brighton with Brighton University acting as host, it took place throughout October and November in venues all around the country and incorporated three satellite festivals in Surrey, West Yorkshire and Berkshire. The diversity of

does seem to be an important contemporary aspect, even Teatro del Drago, perhaps the most traditional group, who have been passing their craft on through the family since 1820 presented a very modern adaptation of Pinocchio using just about every kind of puppet you could think of, as well as interacting directly with them as actors."

continue to ensure that festivals like **visions94** present work that offers people something that they've never seen before, which they like, and which they will come back and see again."

In the following four articles we look at the diversity of the world of material manipulation, including The Glee Club's "objects of glee" and Susan Kozel's experience as a dancer in a virtual world. We look at the challenges we face for the future as the development of new technology changes our contemporary aesthetic and offers us a virtual new world in which to manipulate material. ■

Tim Eagle

visions96 will take place from Brighton to Bradford and beyond in Autumn 1996. Contact Sussex Arts Marketing on 01273 724811 to join the free mailing list - including updates during 1995.



Bambalina Titelles: ULYSSES in **visions94**

Marionetteatern, Multi-media Puppetry

Jac Wilkinson considers the work of Swedish company Marionetteatern, who opened the London International Mime Festival 1995

The publicity shots promised a polished, multi-media interpretation of August Strindberg's classic, *THE GHOST SONATA*, from a well established and clearly well resourced company, setting the stage for this "symbolic" drama. I was looking forward to being impressed and absorbed by the stagecraft and magic of a puppetry performance.

Maybe it is wrong to get so excited by such a prospect, yet the heightening of experience and expectation is one of the strongest assets of art form festivals.

On entering the auditorium the performers were already in place - standing very still. The atmosphere was distinctly sombre. The waiting and inactivity associated with death was well established with music, lighting and the performers' attitude.

The almost Dickensian style of dress imbued the performers with an appropriately ghostly air and the atmosphere was built upon through slow deliberate repeated rituals - pall bearing, the pouring of water and sand and the burning of a paper house. Suddenly there was a change of tempo, upbeat music, a soft shoe shuffle and the introduction of *Yacob*, the central character, wheelchair bound and played by a puppet. A quite effective change but one of few, in a piece that offered little in the way of surprise, its only rival being the moment the actors spoke in English provoking an audible intake of breath from the audience.

Despite this lack of unrepeated tempo and mood change, Marionetteatern displayed considerable ability and skill. The puppets were beautifully made, including plastic/glass eyes that caught the lights occasionally and made you sit bolt upright in your seat. Also, when left unattended one was constantly expecting the puppets to do something by themselves. The manipulation was good (especially *Helena Nilson*) if a little restrictive.

Yet despite the high standard of theatrical elements and the introduction

of puppets, actors, props, audience recognition, I felt they did not really draw the audience into their world. Ultimately the piece was about 3 performers presenting a story using puppets to enact certain characters and moments.

To puppetry purists this might be disappointing, to physical theatre exponents, it might be limited, but to those relatively unfamiliar with either, it

of 40 supplied with blankets. They explored the various media, adapted them for theatrical effect and developed and played with their presentation. No single aspect overpowered another: they were all interwoven for meaning and comment.

Although this is what I feel Marionetteatern aimed to do, (... "Thus, in addition to the work, puppets of all techniques, actors, mimes, masks,



Photo: Karl Gabor

Marionetteatern (Sweden): *THE GHOST SONATA*

might well serve as a quality introduction to the range of work being produced.

For me, the piece fell short on its supposed use of multi-media and its relationship with the audience. This approach to presenting work is both an inevitability (considering the prominence of visual and oral material with which we come into contact everyday) and a reflection on the creative desire for multi-faceted non-text based exploration of theatrical performance.

An example of a company who exemplify this approach is GRIFTHEATER from the Netherlands, whose recent show inspired by Man Ray's "objets de mon affection" *SA GRIFFE* (Monochrome 8) combined dance, movement, sculpture, puppets, ritual, creating environments, characters and narrative superbly. It was performed in a Dutch factory warehouse to a carefully positioned festival audience

music etc., are all seen as alternative instruments for the purpose of communications" [Programme note]) the result was far less integrated and developed.

Marionetteatern obviously have immense ability and explored their theatre most attentively. But they still left some of their audience confused and somewhat disassociated from a work that was obviously refined and deeply considered. However, their work was very stimulating to see, especially in terms of one's own art and theories, and as such was vital for UK audiences and artists to witness and discuss. I feel it is still a rare thing to witness a puppet or animated theatre company that manages to combine both polished artistry with challenging, stimulating, engaging and amusing material for adult and family audiences. ■

Objects of

Glee

Tim Eagle in conversation with Mark Whitelaw of THE GLEE CLUB



Photo: Debbie Downham

The Glee Club: THE TRUTH ABOUT THE RUSSIAN DANCERS. Mark Whitelaw building the Kremlin

What part do objects play in your stage productions?

As a company we've tried to work away from a verbal language and create a visual one through bringing to life objects and images that we relate to and that relate back to us and to each other.

The objects remain as themselves, whether a cup, a pair of scissors or a chair - they are what comes to life. A lot of our work is on the relationship between the performer and the objects, as well as the objects themselves and how we manipulate them. We are constantly working on changing the focus between these elements on stage.

What kind of objects do you use?

Anything really! For example in THE TRUTH ABOUT THE RUSSIAN DANCERS we built the Kremlin from glass jars and bottles. In our latest piece COTTON MATHER'S WONDERS OF THE INVISIBLE WORLD we used mostly two-dimensional objects like cardboard cut-outs of clouds and angels, really just two-dimensional representations that we moved and used to create different pictures. In COTTON MATHER'S we created Spring and Autumn through manipulating 2-D props against a backdrop with 3-D objects, like a coffin, in the foreground. We tried to create a cinematic look by making pictures with these very simple objects just made out of any old bits of junk and tat.

As a performer what difficulties have you found working with such material?

None really, ha! ha! We don't consider our type of manipulation to be that difficult! It's simple stuff with bits of string and wood. We have been working with these materials for some time now and really enjoy it. You find a focus and it becomes quite straightforward. We don't try to be great technicians or anything. We're in antithesis to that and believe that it need not matter if you aren't technically excellent at something. As well as the manipulation, we also dance in the show and in no way would I call myself a dancer, but that is not the point for us. We don't want to be too illusionary with the objects or hide what they are made of. If it's a cardboard cut-out of an angel, then that's what it is. As manipulators we

don't mind showing that. It's like something Brecht said about starting with the old things first, and using them before the new.

How do you see your work developing in the future, new materials, new types of image?

Our recent work has seen us developing our use of light. We've started to look more at light and shadow and the interplay between these two areas, using the shadows of objects to contrast with what makes up the picture on the stage. Again it's the tensions between the various material and elements. The use of light and lighting may lead us away from using the objects if we can create a similar effect in a different way. There are so many areas to experiment with that it's really impossible to know exactly how we will develop.

What would be your ideal audience?

Three hundred plus! No, really! We like to play to as large and as broad an audience as possible. We are concerned that we don't just get seen by an art-house crowd, which did seem to be happening at one point. We deliberately work with children and the parents of children who are not regular theatre goers. This work has gone well and I'm keen to continue making high quality work for these groups. ■

The Glee Club are performers Mark Whitelaw and Eddie Aylward, and musician Steve Mead.



Susan Kozel (projected image) in *TELEMATIC DREAMING*

Virtual trajectories

Technology in performance

Dancer and writer *Susan Kozel* discusses her role in the installation *TELEMATIC DREAMING* and looks at movement in a virtual world

"I work the angle of transit. Vectors of neon plaza, licensed consumers, acts primal and undreamed of..." William Gibson¹

Angles of transit are intimate to the act of staging a performance, or to negotiating your way across the street. When performance involves computer and video technology, manipulating and transforming your body and the space in which you move, angles of transit are no longer natural or realistic. They become fantastical. Like vectors of neon light, they are culturally generated.

This installment in my on-going consideration of dance and virtual reality brings up the nature versus culture debate.² What happens to the "natural" body when it is enhanced technologically? When it becomes "virtual"? Donna Haraway writes that a cyborg is a hybrid of machine and organic being, a creature of technology and fiction as well as a creature of social reality.³ She claims that, at this stage in our development, we are all cyborgs and it is impossible to preserve the idea of a natural body as distinct and separate from a culturally generated body.

TELEMATIC DREAMING is an installation by Paul Sermon. It was part of the "IK + DE ANDER" exhibition of contemporary art in Amsterdam in the summer of 1994. As the performer in this piece, my image was projected onto a bed in a room open to the gallery visitor. When someone got on the bed and interacted with my image, the action was transmitted back to me on monitors in my own room, where I was alone on another bed. By observing our bodies in monitors I was able to respond, and a sort

of simultaneous contact improvisation took place. For them I was a 2-dimensional image. From my perspective both of us were figures on monitors: they were images, and I was an image of an image of my body. Yet this virtual image of myself was an extension of my physical self, not a replacement.

An over-simplistic reading of the culture/nature divide would see my physical body as the natural element and my projected body as the cultural artefact. It would see natural space as the room in which my real body moved, and cultural space as the technologically enhanced areas. But in performance there was no such divide. The distinction between my real body and my virtual body became irrelevant, I moved through the technology. It amplified and it seemed less "real". My sense of sight took on extraordinary importance; smell and taste were peripheral; touch was disconnected yet central to the often intense personal engagement which ensued. My hierarchy of senses and movement was scrambled through the forcible intervention of technology and its impact on my imagination. I came to understand experientially A.R. Stone's claim that there is "a protean quality to cybernetic interaction, a sense of physical as well as conceptual mutability that is implied in dizzying, exciting movement"⁴ - yet for A.R. Stone this movement occurred in purely conceptual space. But, for me it occurred in physical space, expanding the expedience of materiality into the domain

of the virtual so that the categories real/virtual, natural/cultural seemed to blur and overlap.

An important extension of the nature/culture debate is the feminist claim that the construction of identity and gender is a performative act: maleness and femaleness are culturally constructed, not naturally determined.⁵ This does not mean that physicality or sexuality are abandoned, but that they participate in the flux of cultural forces which shape us. From the perspective of a dancer I see the performative creation of the self as a liberating idea since it is based on a dynamic of movement. From time to time the gender of the person on the bed with me was unclear due to poor video transmission. This didn't matter. The movement was the substance of the piece: shaping our rapport, inscribing our genders.

The amplification or distortion of physical experience is at the heart of virtual performance. The phenomenon of technology in performance does not ride on the coat-tails of cutting edge social and philosophical thought, it embodies the ideas and takes them further. It is a pushing at the boundaries of art and physicality, creating new angles of transit through both physical and conceptual space. ■

Susan Kozel is a dancer and freelance writer. She holds a Ph.D. in the philosophy of dance. Her areas of speciality are French philosophy, new dance and the aesthetics of virtual reality.

1. William Gibson, *Academy Leaders CYBERSPACE: FIRST STEPS* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1993), p.27.

2. See Susan Kozel *VIRTUAL REALITY: CHOREOGRAPHING CYBERSPACE* and *SPACEMAKING: EXPERIENCES OF A VIRTUAL BODY* in *Dance Theatre Journal* Volume 11, NO. 2 Spring/Summer 1994, and Volume 11, No. 3 Autumn 1994.

3. Donna Haraway *A CYBORG MANIFESTO: SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND SOCIALIST-FEMINISM IN THE LATE TWENTIETH CENTURY, SIMIANS, CYBORGS, AND WOMEN: THE REINVENTION OF NATURE* (New York: Routledge, 1991) pp.149-181

4. Allucquere Roseanne Stone, *WILL THE REAL BODY PLEASE STAND UP?: BOUNDARY STORIES ABOUT VIRTUAL CULTURES: CYBERSPACE: FIRST STEPS* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1993) p.110.

5. Judith Butler *GENDER TROUBLE: FEMINISM AND THE SUBVERSION OF IDENTITY* (New York: Routledge, 1990).

Multi-media The New Puppetry?

Tim Eagle considers the impact of New Technology on our potential for material manipulation

At the technological extreme of material manipulation lies the burgeoning world of Multi-media and the new media of CD-ROM, CD-I and Virtual Reality.

These new media offer those with access to them the ability to select and animate sequences of information, pictures, words, and video clips, plus, in the case of CD-I, interactivity, the ability to change add to and adapt this information. In virtual reality this can all be done in a 3D liquid crystal world of computer generated

images. Ever greater interactivity is foreseen with research into the creation of body suits that entirely encompass you in the virtual world.

So what of this and theatre?

Although seemingly a long way from puppetry and animated theatre these new technologies are related by their very nature as sources of communication and as such compete in the same field as theatre and all other media for an audience.

Probably the clearest relation between the media is seen in the use of a visual language through which to communicate, play, learn and interact. The virtual world aims to represent a reality that we can understand, feel part of and uses the same techniques as the visual story-teller of any medium.

These new media have become then another vehicle for the same product as we see the production of book, film, tape, and now CD-ROM of the latest blockbusting stories.

Potentially what we have in multi-media is the most dynamic medium of communication yet invented, with its interactivity, its 3-dimensional realisation of any space and the complete ability to manipulate this to the limits of our imagination.

It is this potential ability to manipulate the virtual space and the materials therein that relate to puppetry and animation theatre. In the virtual world, as designer at least, you have a means of manipulating the whole of virtual space in a way that essentially

captures the essence of puppetry - the magic of seeing an inanimate object come to life.

Yet the use of these media for the artist is limited to those with access to the hardware and the training and skills necessary to explore it. The means may have arrived to replicate a material reality over which we can have fantastic control, but we are not offered the relative simplicity of animating a glove. Virtual reality requires a rarefied knowledge dictated by the very nature of the medium. For artists interested in working with this technology new challenges of skill and technique must first be broached.

As a player or spectator of virtual reality you derive the same pleasure gained from belief in the real time world of a puppet - but now you also have the option of recording or pausing the action. Just look at the growth industry of computer game heroes where you are given the opportunity to become these characters and transform from passive viewer to hero and animator. This is an opportunity very rarely offered in theatre.

Of course the players are still limited by the designer's choice and the technology has some way to go before it can offer the chance to be puppet, puppeteer and spectator. But interaction with virtual reality is becoming a feature of our lives that will culturally change us and our expectations of the media of communication, including theatre.

It is not, therefore, that the new technologies threaten theatre, but rather that we have in them a new means of exploring our reality. This exploration will be through a multi-sign language that is interacted with - in real time, in a real, though virtual space, will affect the audience's, the artist's and our understanding of reality. As such it cannot be ignored. ■



Challenging Convention

The dynamic of the audience/actor relationship

Post-modernism is cool. At least, that's the supposed opinion of T.V. moguls around the world. The emphasis is on deconstruction where nothing can survive in the wake of this monster. Society is bombarded by brief, intermittent seemingly meaningless snaps of "culture". The monster has no feelings for the sacred and remains intent on destroying any comfortable and archaic notions of the norm. However, from the rubble of the destruction arises the individual's voice in the wilderness, ready to use what is left to revamp

our preconceived notions of communication.

Nothing can be more true of today's theatre practitioners and companies. Intent on remaining at the fore of artistic debate, traditional notions of the performers and spectators' roles also suffer at the hands of post-modernist thought. Perhaps suffer is the wrong word to use. Theatre has always provided a reflection of the society from which it is created, and so to present a fragmented society where all rules are being questioned, the same must occur in the theatre. No longer can one expect to go to the theatre in

one's evening dress, enjoy a G&T in the interval and return home after a satisfying evening of "entertainment" Argh! The dreaded word - entertainment. This is most certainly NOT cool. Audiences can no longer enter a theatrical arena without the fear of being hassled, physically moved, prodded, verbally abused and even forced to engage in the performance itself. Every effort is made to break the illusion of theatre - using performers' actual names, removing costumes, referring to the production while it is still in progress. But is this

really a new concept? Many "traditional" plays employ self-referential techniques and direct interaction with the audience. The difference is the physical attitude to these processes. A theatre can no longer be regarded as a stage and an auditorium or merely an arena for presentation. The following articles examine this philosophy where for example, practitioners such as Boal use theatrical freedom in order to facilitate social action and both companies and performers alike address actor/spectator relations. ■ **Mark Cunningham**

"Coragem de ser feliz"

Have the Courage to be Happy

Augusto Boal worked with Arena Theatre of São Paulo in the 1950's, a theatre company whose work focussed on the oppression of the people of Brazil. He was then exiled in the West during the 70's dictatorship. In the West he found a different kind of oppression and developed the techniques of RAINBOW OF DESIRE and COPS IN THE HEAD.

His work has now turned full circle and in the last two years, since being elected to the City Council in Rio de Janeiro, he has developed Legislative Theatre. With his new power he is able to act on the injustices revealed through his work with Forum Theatre - proposing and introducing necessary laws for the people of Rio.

Boal is a truly radical man, a revolutionary, whose path through his forty year career has been guided by the "oppressed" with whom he has worked.

He has constantly developed new techniques, updating exercises and games in order to maintain "simultaneous dramaturgy" with every group. His work has also always been physically based.

In January, the Brazilian theorist and practitioner, Augusto Boal was in England teaching workshops for the Manchester City of Drama and the London Bubble Theatre as well as promoting his latest book THE RAINBOW OF DESIRE - THE BOAL METHOD OF THEATRE AND THERAPY

Ris Widdicombe met him with the intention of talking about the development of the Theatre of the Oppressed but found him revolutionising both politics and political theatre

"I insist that both actors and participants familiarise themselves with their bodies, communicating with them rather than getting distracted by words, trying to verbalise the sub and unconscious parts of the brain."

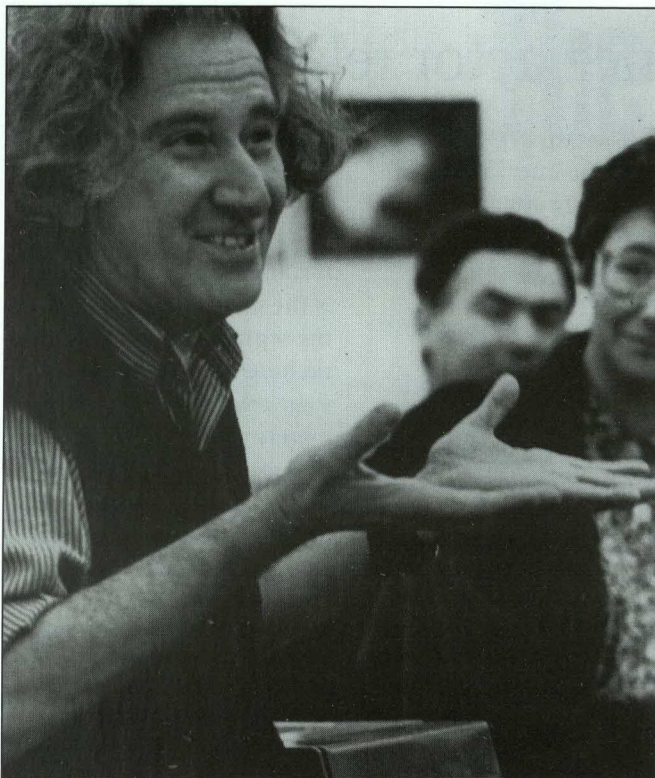
Early on in the development of the Theatre of the Oppressed he was impressed by the work of Che Guevara: "Solidarity means running the same risk, you cannot impose your ideas onto others, but together you help them identify some solutions." Thus theatre became a rehearsal for reality.

Theatre of the Oppressed developed out of agit prop theatre. Participants decided upon an oppression which was then

shown in its current "realistic" form. However instead of observers watching passively, Boal created "Spect-actors". The audience was empowered to stop the action and either make suggestions or replace the actor. By taking on the character themselves, demonstrating their own ideas (not talking, doing), the best solution out of the oppression would be found by common consensus and active engagement with the "show".

Overseeing, encouraging and explaining the rules of the Forum (but not directing) the "Joker" worked as a "difficultator" as opposed to a facilitator, provoking the "spect-actors" into further questioning, acting and action.

Photo courtesy of Routledge



Augusto Boal

Unlike the concrete, visible oppressions found in Brazil, Boal's work in the West required a change of focus. The work adapted to encompass self-censorship, something that prevents our self-fulfillment. As Boal explained, "the cops are in our heads, but their headquarters and barracks must be on the outside. The task (is) to discover how the "cops" got into our heads, and to invent ways of dislodging them."

Oppressions are expressed, and solutions found in collaboration with

therapeutic purposes. Institutes for Theatre of the Oppressed are increasing around the world with centres in Paris, Nebraska and the latest one opening in Brisbane, Australia in September this year. Proponents of his work published *PLAYING BOAL* (Routledge 1993) describing and analyzing their developments of his ideas worldwide.

Election to the Chamber of Vereadores (Regional Council) has taken Boal into the third stage of the development of his techniques. As a Vereador he is permitted

"Solidarity means running the same risks"

other participants by re-inventing, interpreting, and trying to find a path from the "real" to the "ideal", through the creation of images. The *RAINBOW OF DESIRE* confronts the protagonist with concrete images of the spectrum of their desires (both positive and negative) to a particular situation, created, by the other participants. This overlap of image and emotions creates a net of solidarity and learning among the group.

Four years ago Boal was invited to open an international gathering of over 1000 psychotherapists in Amsterdam, not because he was a therapist, but because his work is therapeutic.

to employ assistants, and thus he employed his own company, the Arena Theatre of São Paulo, to act as "cultural animators".

"They go to the slums, TV, progressive churches, any place there are groups of oppressed people. They work with them and make a play about their problems, using Forum Theatre techniques. The interventions by spect-actors are analyzed to see if it's necessary to make a law, which is then proposed for approval to the Chamber."

This work has already had tangible success. A group of blind people made a play about one serious problem of

"When you can see psychological problems that you have visually, theatrically you can see how other people feel in the same situation. Always we have the tendency to think we have this problem no one else has, and it's not true."

Boal's techniques have been taken up by therapists all over the world, many attend his workshops in order to spread the techniques and monitor their effectiveness to clients and patients.

In Germany, the Moreno Institute has been established to teach Boal's methods specifically for

bumping into public telephones, *THE BIG EAR*. Following this, the council agreed to build platforms around the phones, enabling them to be touched by the person's white stick. Another law protecting the working rights of pregnant women is on the verge of being passed.

Visits between oppressed groups are organised to exchange ideas through Forum Theatre. A simple but brilliant suggestion from a black student solved the problem of the withdrawal of a Charity organisation acting as mediator between a private health centre in the slums and the government. Forum plays presented to try to persuade the Charity to repeal their decision were unsuccessful. An exchange with a black student group brought health organisations in slum areas together, creating a charity between them to distribute the government funds where they were needed.

"It is a way of using theatre as politics," says Boal, "it's not to make political theatre as it was in the sixties, but to use it as a form to change things."

As an experiment Boal's work is being closely observed and monitored by other states and the Federal government in Brazil. Although they did not win a presidential post, the elections in October have made the Worker's Party stronger. However, Boal does not believe Forum Theatre could be used at a Federal level because it will be too abstract, too general.

"Whatever we find which has to be national law not local, we send to them (to Brasilia) to approve nationally."

Things have not always been easy. Last year the newspaper "O Dia" ran a violent smear campaign against Boal. Although it is hard to imagine Boal angry, he did cause trouble at the Tribunal when, in a rage, he referred to the other Vereadores as "thieves and jackasses".

He is a remarkably open, generous man, passionate about theatre and politics, but most importantly constantly surprised and changed by people.

Boal has always been ahead, we can merely follow his guiding light. His work affects individuals from small groups to huge Forums held before thousands of people in the street. If the pattern of the adoption of his techniques by therapy continues, maybe we can hope that in the future all governments are run by Forums. By this time, however I'm sure, Boal will be onto something else. ■

Performing performance

The new authenticity of

OPTIK

In order to "read" a presentation from OPTIK it is necessary to recognise that the cutting edge of performance is shaped like a star, not a spear, and that post-modernisms, quasi-patent on bricolage, media overload and fractured, ephemeral memory is simply one aspect rather than the whole of contemporary practice. OPTIK use no hi-tech equipment whatsoever: no video screens or microphones and yet this creates a focus of near-Grotowskian dimensions, with the essential dynamics of time, space and human contact re-examined through a forward-seeing eye.

OPTIK's verbally textless performance is concerned with a series of loaded moments, each equalling one of a potentially limitless variety of possibilities, the spatial, physical and connotative ramifications of which are interpreted or mediated by the individual spectators.

This signifies a radical shift in any serious consideration of the spectator's response, for where the watcher's role is or was that of consumer, any real sense or reciprocity is denied in favour of a closed and ultimately sterile relationship. OPTIK's work is important because it recognises and releases the energy between the watcher and the watched in a prescribed space at a given time, nurturing the origins of theatre at the same time as it creates a performance as distinct from any crippling notions of Aristotelian unities as one could possibly wish for.

The work itself is not easy to discuss. The danger of distortion looms large. OPTIK's is not a theatre of representation, imitation or preordained signification. It exists as a new and necessary authenticity; a post-semiotic performance where the improvisation (for nothing thematic is

ever prescribed) flows along a current which has everything to do with truth and nothing at all to do with psychology. Not so much the trawling of emotional memory as the presentation of a sometimes emotional now.

Optik, formed in 1981, deal with the 'psycho-biology' of gesture, blatantly disregarding the conventional rules of acting and spectating. *John Freeman* examines the work of this experimental company

Like a Rorschach inkblot, the work is at once abstract and immensely significant: a percussionist plays as two men and one woman walk, run, touch, stop, turn and lie down at will - but the word "will" here is perhaps confusing. This has less to do with will than with faith in the utilisation of a highly developed performative instinct. The patterns thus formed are the result of the somatic intelligence of the four performers, freed by the confidence of director, Barry Edwards who, in stressing a fierce resistance to the director-performer-performed continuum of the standard theatre process, allows OPTIK's art to exist with an absolute absence of artifice. Personal process and formal articulation create here a seamless blend which is not so much a synthesis of form and content as a unique exploration of the very context of performance.

The result is something which appears to be ritualistic, and it is. For despite the fact (if theatre has any facts at all this is surely one of them) that degenerated ritual amounts to little more than spectacle, the important thing here is that OPTIK's concern is with the ritual of performance rather than performance as ritual, not to mention that even more deadly and often seen subterfuge, the performing of dislocated ritual as



Photo: Barry Edwards

OPTIK

something of transferable spiritual value.

OPTIK's productions are more vital than the bulk of contemporary theatre practice, not simply because Edwards' exploration cannot be found in any other company's work, but because OPTIK is the group most concerned with (re)discovering the quintessence of performance.

OPTIK operates on a complete refusal to leave the experimentation in the process and the process in rehearsal. As such, the company are investing the much-maligned term "experimental" with a genuine rigor and authenticity of purpose not seen for many years. It is impossible to leave an OPTIK presentation without considering the point where process becomes product and work in progress stands as performance; where the presentation of the self is deemed sufficient; where content, theme and meaning are subordinate to the physics of the space; where the divisions between the watchers and the watched are made fragile to the point of breaking down.

These questions are at the very core of contemporary practice - no company is cutting deeper, quicker or with less compromise than OPTIK. ■

OPTIK are Barry Edwards, Patrick Driver, Jerry Killick, Alison William Bailey and Simon Edgoose.

Audience Involvement

The Theatre of WAR

Brendan Stapleton focuses on prejudices of the performer in relation to the spectator

Wit's nice to have people out there on our side", a dancer recently said to me when we were performing in a show. This comment although not uncommon did strike me as somewhat bizarre and set me thinking on other peculiarities in theatrical conceptual language, such as why are massive conflicts and conflagratory strife described as "the theatre of war"?

It is assumed quite rightly that theatre is about the involvement of one and all and, in a ticket selling sense, how the audience perceives a production (and its' performers) is of paramount importance. However what seems sometimes to be

matinee is a rehearsal for the evening performance? Or one must pace oneself perhaps? Or maybe the audience in matinees are of a lesser calibre i.e. children? The contradiction is apparent, the show was specifically for children.

"Lets face it darling..." is patronising (she did know my name), arrogant and obviously delivered as if it's something one should know and no two ways about it. It's such a cliché in style and delivery, representing a type of performer or particular generation who believes the role of the audience is to be passive, with no part to play in the theatre except to watch and learn from the more talented

computer literate and now must not be ignored. They need guidance because it is too simplistic to say the roles have reversed.

We are seeing a highly sophisticated channelling of connective information between all forms of theatre to create something completely new. Audience involvement will be a key to the future with a more collaborative feel to it. If the transition is to work efficiently we are all going to have to change and fast. Resistance is expected and only natural, but something has to give, or be destroyed otherwise chaos will ensue and that's WAR. ■

"The greatest performers intuitively tuned into their audience"

forgotten is how the performers perceive the audience (its' role and function) and subsequently how performers perceive each other.

The above quote could be taken to be misleading because the dancer concerned was referring to friends who were also performers. I don't think however, this creates confusion in a debate about an "us" and "them" scenario, if anything, it compounds the abstract perceptions that exist in theatres.

"Well let's face it darling it's only a matinee". This quote is LOADED (and also my favourite). It was said to me by a well-known actress when we were both performing in a large scale childrens musical. We were discussing certain liberties we could take with the parameters of the direction.

Lets analyse it; "it's only a matinee" - what exactly does this mean, that a

amongst us.

Times change and artists now have different approaches which could be described as a generation gap and can cause a clash of ideals. For example, a young actor now with the Royal Shakespeare Company described "skin work" as "just a man in a suit". The physical theatre innovations in the last decade have given rise to more movement based performers. This can confuse some of the older sacred tenets of theatre and compound the snob value with subliminal contempt and status.

The greatest performers intuitively tuned into their audience. Nowadays a lot of directors, especially in repertory, have never performed and it shows in their work.

With the advent of computer technology, all thinking and prejudices will be challenged. Children are the most

audience

A dialogue with the

Sarah Dawson describes her personal experience of an enquiry into audience relationships in *BURN* (or *Well Bruno Believes in the Ecstasy of the Magic of the Sudden Revelation*) the latest work of *No Lost Souls*

In the performance *BURN* we aimed to create a complete round trip of experience for the audience. At first participatory, then illusionary, then on to a more visceral experience, and back again. By enjoying the benefits of so many different relationships in one performance, we wanted to give people the opportunity to appreciate the beauty of the possible plethora of readings. A contemporary experience of receiving images often means there is no active role for the viewer.

Theatre is one of the few mediums that still encourages an input from its audience. In exploring the different ways theatre does this, we wanted to establish a faith in performance as a means of expression which can, and does, inform the viewer of their environment and experience.

Our performance was to take place in the Sunday School Hall of the Union Chapel in Islington, London - an old Victorian wooden hall surrounded by a balcony with separate compartments. We wanted to create a site specific performance and knew from the start that we wanted to perform in the compartmentalized spaces. This meant that we were faced with two choices: to have the audience on the balcony with the performers, or to have the audience viewing from below. The latter idea excited us most.

We began work on creating a design that would be visually stimulating when seen from below. The acoustics and the distance between the performance space and the audience made a concentration on text impossible and it became obvious that for at least part of the performance we would need to get the audience onto the balcony in some way. But this

How do we want an audience to experience our work?

What is the most effective way for them to "read" our images?

How can we make the images have personal relevance to the audience?

would go against our first ideas.

A simple solution was to allow the audience onto the balcony area, prior to the performance. What was most successful about this decision was that it gave us the opportunity to give hints and traces of the forthcoming performance to the audience, whilst simultaneously enabling them to further appreciate the design. Pieces of text and hidden characters were left for the audience to discover with enough space for them to create their own stories and meaning.

The most satisfying thing about working in this way was the freedom it created. The text of the performance became stark and the story was pushed forward mainly visually. Although our narrative was primarily concerned with alchemy - the audience were able to add layers to this "text" via their experience of the installations and scraps of information around (based on the character's experience of heaven, hell, death and loss).

The physical distance between the audience and the performance meant that the audience relationship moved from participatory to distant. We overcame this problem by leaving one performer on the

audience level while moving the narrative along from below. This not only enabled the audience to enjoy another level of the story but it also connected them to the work being performed on the balcony. The performers action downstairs, allowed the audience to continually relate her live physical presence to the material above.

We pushed this idea further by creating a section where all the performers descended to the audience's level, only a few inches away from them. The performers took off the costumes they had been wearing on the balcony and sat in plain clothes, completely breaking the illusion seen from the balcony. The performers then returned to their original costumes and went back to the balcony.

The show pointed out to us the many different possibilities that performance can provide for creating and breaking fictions, for hinting at narrative, for participation, illusion and distance.

Our next performance will push these ideas further and perhaps we won't be so polite about it. There is work to be done to reassess a viewer's response to images. Theatre can be a means towards this. ■

Physical Film

Hello Hollywood, bye bye theatre

What do Peta Lily, DV8, Brad Fraser and Quentin

Tarantino have in common?

The following articles aim to look at the connections between physical (theatre) action and film. Mime and Physical Theatre practitioner Peta Lily talks to Andrew

Ayers about the adaptation of her stage play BEG! into a feature film, Mark

Cunnington casts a critical eye over STRANGE FISH by DV8 screened recently on television as part of the BBC2 series Dance for the Camera, Brendan Stapleton

explains why he is so impressed by the visual style of Quentin Tarantino's PULP FICTION and RESERVOIR DOGS and I write a letter to scriptwriter Brad Fraser asking for explanation on the filmic references in his play THE UGLY MAN

performed last October at BAC in London.

In the early days of film making, movies were shot like stage plays and variety stage and vaudeville performers found new fame as stars of the silent screen, entertaining new audiences

Fetch, Sit, Kill!

Mime and physical theatre practitioner Peta Lily's first feature film BEG!, originally produced as a two-hander theatre piece, debuted at last year's Edinburgh Festival and is soon to be released in the UK. *Andrew Ayers* spoke to her about the transition from stage to screen

In the crumbling, *fin de siècle* atmosphere of St. Caninus Hospital, a series of gruesome murders occurs. Each time the method of death is the same: the victims are injected with a muscle relaxant and cut open whilst still alive. A dog is inserted inside and they are stitched up again. The first victim is the lover of Dr. Penny Second (played by Peta Lily), the only woman at a senior level,

qualities not readily associated with masculinity. The audience wouldn't know whether the man had agreed to do it or not. We wanted the power struggles to be ambiguous and shifting.

"Then we thought we would draw from AN AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN LONDON - "bad" man bites "good" dog, dog gets sick and starts to change..."

"My concern since I went solo in 1983 was to make a better marriage of the physical and textual components of theatre..."

who is enduring an ongoing battle to stave off closure of her women's ward by the misogynistic hospital board. The plot unfolds as Detective Sergeant Stiltskin is assigned to the murder investigation and falls in love with Penny. After the second murder, Penny's father becomes the prime suspect.

How did this scenario evolve?

"The original concept of BEG! started from the idea of a power struggle being represented through the interchange between a woman and a dog, portrayed by a man. The dog would be a symbol of loyalty and devotion -man's best friend -

From this starting point, Peta and co-writer David Glass developed the stage version of BEG! Right from the beginning it was thought of in filmic terms.

"A lot of the physical theatre I've done is informed in its vocabulary by film. When you have more than one person on stage you can use all sorts of filmic effects - cross-fades, wipes, dissolves, repeat sequences - the vocabulary of montage. Mime and physical theatre have always drawn from film. Go back to Marceau - where he walks on the spot. This would make no sense without people knowing about film.

"It was David who suggested doing

BEG! as a horror story. We liked the idea of Cronenberg style body horror. Hence the surgical nature of the crime. The werewolf idea became something of a loose-ended thread. Because of the tight rehearsal period we didn't have time to explore it properly and it disappeared altogether in the film. We also drew from the work of Roger Corman - we recreated that B-movie melodramatic acting style you see in his films."

Peta explained that fairy tales, another strong element in the stage version, were dropped from the film.

"In the stage version, Penny's relationship with her father was expressed through fairy tales - for example BEAUTY AND THE BEAST and RED RIDING HOOD [where the grandmother tells Red Riding Hood to cut open the wolf's stomach and sew some stones inside]. As the film was inevitably more naturalistic in appearance than the stage version, David was keen to

create a rich, heightened atmosphere. He advocated getting rid of the fairy tale elements of the script as they might remind people too much of real life. Robert Golden [the film's director] also wanted to create a highly coloured world in the film. He used different colours to set each room and to evoke the time of day. The film has an atmosphere quite like that of DELICATESSEN, a graphic novel flavour, in the Bande Dessinée genre.

"Obviously in the film we had a lot more actors than the two in the stage version and we invented more subplots. Writing a screen play is a strongly collaborative experience but without the

with their visual comedy and clowning. Film soon began to talk and developed as an art form in its own right - with its unique language and conventions. The characteristic lighting, atmosphere and performance of the

Hollywood melodramas of the 40's and 50's were largely influenced by German expressionism following the arrival of, in the main, Jewish theatre directors and artists who fled to America in the 30's and 40's from Germany and Eastern

Europe.

Today, film, video and TV are our most effective methods of mass communication. They supersede theatre in their ability to reach vast audiences and pass comment on society and the human

condition in a visual contemporary way. And so we find physical performance drawing on the language and content of film and TV - and together finding a new form - united for public viewing. ■

Faye Chang



Peta Lily: BEG!

original theatre piece we could never have written the screenplay as quickly. Never having written one before we worked in the bliss of ignorance. However David is extremely film literate, he has a very rich and inventive imagination and came up with wonderfully rich and grotesque images.

"Because the film was made on such a tight budget we rehearsed solidly before shooting. The rehearsals included physical and ensemble work and warm up games which meant that the people came to the scenes prepared to work together."

It is often said that film is such a sensitive medium that it demands a very understated

acting style, quite unlike stage acting. How did Peta Lily adapt to film acting?

"In the film (apart from a few surreal moments), all my acting is quite straight. In the stage version Penny was a very held woman. Playing her demanded sustained actions so I didn't need to 'tone it down' much for the film. The camera shows so much. I found the best technique was to fill myself up with emotion and then relax my face and allow the inner to suffuse outwards when in front of the camera. Sometimes, watching the rushes, I'd find myself thinking 'Should I not be being more kooky here?' But my character held a lot of the pathos supporting the melodrama in the film.

"Other characters were presented in a quite grotesque or comic style. Different stratas of characters in the film were played differently - similar to Commedia where the masked and unmasked characters play alongside each other."

BEG! has generated a lot of interest. How does Peta hope it will be received?

"As well as being shown at the Sundance Festival in the US it's going to a festival in Portugal, which is one of three main international fantasy film festivals. It's also going to Edinburgh again in a horror festival called DEAD BEFORE DAWN.

"It was interesting last year going to the Edinburgh Festival with a film as I've been on many previous occasions with theatre productions. I hope that when BEG! is released in this country it will inspire people to free themselves from the naturalistic, literary bound emphasis you find in British Film. BEG! is more like European work in atmosphere. Anti-naturalism has penetrated into a lot of building based theatre. Hopefully BEG! will be at the apex of some kind of movement to encourage that in film as well.

"Originally, I got into physical theatre because I wanted to create good roles for myself and I wanted to integrate acting with physical techniques. My concern since I went solo in 1983 has been to make a better marriage of the physical and textual components of theatre. The content and the craft - structure, convention, style - equally attended to. I wanted to do new things, to cross barriers. I've learnt a lot along the journey and I got a lot from the extra experience of writing the screenplay - it was wonderful to be able to cross over into film." ■

Dance for the Camera 2

What price does physical theatre pay in turning to film? *Mark Cunnington* reviews the role of the camera, in relation to risk taking and the interaction of the audience

February saw a welcome return of the BBC2 series "Dance for the Camera", and with it a repeat of DV8's successful *STRANGE FISH*. The production, (originally commissioned by Expo'92 and premiered in Budapest), explored cogent, far-reaching images of personal insecurity. The narrative centred around Wendy Houston, the protagonist and outsider, in her desperate attempts at human acceptance. Having suffered the transience of young adolescent girls' friendship; the insensitively forceful pounding of Dale Tanner, where sex is denied emotion in the desire for orgasm; Houston, in accordance with the exorcism so apparent in DV8's work, undergoes a purifying dance on a bed of stones. One is presented with the sorrowful experience of personal alienation and isolation.

Since its commission, the production has won the Grand Prix Internationale Video-Danse/Pierre Cardin Award (1993); the Festivale Internationale Danse Visions of Best Choreographer (1994); and the

video-footage of Newson and Charnock's exhilarating love-hate duet *MY SEX, OUR DANCE* (1986) stands testimony to a seemingly inexorable link between Dance and Video 8. Yet this undoubtedly begs the question as to whether physical theatre is acceptable in a filmic form. The awards appear to suggest that it is a successful transition, and the number of new viewers exposed to the art form for the first time must be a good thing for its promotion. The fact that film can be a safe medium, however, is a different matter.

The earlier work of DV8 can be noted for its personal, emotional and physical risk-taking. Many of the productions left audiences wondering how far the performers would push the boundaries of theatrical exploration (*DEAD DREAMS OF MONOCHROME MEN* perhaps the most well known of these productions). Yet any works that involved risk-taking to such a high degree, have the danger of becoming anaesthetised under the eye of the

focus of an audience requires a completely different set of codes for criticism. The concept underpinning "Dance for the Camera 2" was to "combine the talents of television directors, choreographers and musicians to create original and inventive television" and one cannot, therefore, bracket the works as being either physical theatre or dance - they are television programmes.

The use of camera work is perhaps one of the most important aspects in this question. One cannot make a film by merely placing a camera at the back of an auditorium in order to record a production. Although a useful point of reference, this serves merely to produce a stale, unimaginative video, fit only to gather dust in an archive. Those involved in such work need to appreciate the possibilities of the medium. In the current series of *Dance for the Camera 2*, *TOUCHED*, directed by David Hinton and devised by Wendy Houston exemplified this point to an extreme. Filmed in black and white (immediately setting up fictional parameters) the camera never allowed more than half a body to be seen at any one time.

The result was a sense of friendship, intimacy, claustrophobia and a somewhat uncomfortable journey through a night in a North London bar. Such work though, is obviously good only for film, the intimate gesture and tiny facial expression would be lost on an open stage. Yet it does permit intimate rehearsal material to be seen, rather than having to be augmented for the stage.

With its metaphorical theatricality and a score of liturgical laments by Melanie Pappenheim, *STRANGE FISH* successfully crossed the gap from stage to screen. Despite having its "danger" element nullified, the company presented a harrowing depiction of the acceptance of pain as a natural part to life. Thus proving that physical theatre *can* be transposed into a filmic medium without losing its core energy. ■



Dance for the Camera 2: *TOUCHED*

Prix Italia Music and Arts (1994). With such prestigious accolades bestowed upon the company's work and a second screening on national television, does this mean that Physical Theatre is becoming a mainstream commodity?

Since the inception of the company, film has played a vital role in the development of its work. The amateurish

camera. Sitting in the comfort of our living rooms we, the audience, know that there is no actual danger involved. Whether this be a conscious or subconscious recognition, the event is not "live" in front of us and thus we search for other stimuli.

One must appreciate that the introduction of the camera as the sole

Photo courtesy of BBC/Arts Council of England

Tarantino Out of Order

QUENTIN TARANTINO recently visited the National Film Theatre in London causing mass hysteria from young fans. *Brendan Stapleton* examines his unique visual approach

Quentin Tarantino, Mr Hollywood and the film industry's flavour of the 1990's, is a master at asking questions and supplying answers but not necessarily in that order.

The reaction of his audience is for them to ask questions of their reactions and gain some sort of enjoyment in doing so.

RESERVOIR DOGS, Tarantino's first big screen attempt, raised quite a stir. He admits to many influences and explains his craft is not original in content but rather it is his form of presentation that makes his work different. This is the key to his particular success. For example, the visual sequencing employed by most film makers is story telling, a narrative with beginning, development and conclusion. The protagonists react to situations in their environment. In RESERVOIR DOGS' central theme, the bank job, (or the "happening" is a "non-happening"), the main action is not shown at all. Tarantino de-constructs typical sequential logic by juggling sequences about. He dispenses with the obvious because it is obvious. His genius comes from a simple root, taking risks that other directors would not attempt. Directors tend to fall, with Lemming-like regularity, into the trap that they must make the audience understand



Quentin Tarantino: RESERVOIR DOGS

Visual sequencing is paramount in showing this new style. It reminds me of telling a joke using a long visual gag. In PULP FICTION two of the main characters turn up at a certain part of the film illogically dressed for the type of

in the tale. The only hood to get away is the sole professional (or adult) on the team. This provides an excellent underlying theme. The gang of hoods act like children throughout, which of course is extremely funny (not just because of

Tarantino admits to many influences and explains his craft is not original in content but rather it is his form of presentation that makes his work different

by giving them what they expect, thus making films less original and more predictable.

The fundamental difference of Tarantino film characters is that they are "real". They are shown and portrayed on the screen as people, not just reacting to a situation or telling the audience about what they've done and why they did it - but what they are about as people. Their eccentricities tend to be examined more closely by Tarantino who creates almost cartoon-like subtle caricatures.

characters they are. The audience laugh at this pantomime and laugh again later when the question of why these three characters should be in this situation has been answered. The black humour involved in the RESERVOIR DOGS torture scene is a parody of how people do what they do best, in a good mood, listening to music that they like.

The scenario is horrific but people still laugh at this absurdity because the joke is on them. In RESERVOIR DOGS the story is more like a fable with a distinct moral

good acting and editing) but because most of the audience can relate to the clowning and have seen such scenarios played out at work or "at play". The hood who survives does not let his emotions cloud his judgement while the others end up destroying each other.

In both RESERVOIR DOGS and PULP FICTION the logic and content of the visual sequences employed by Tarantino compounds the way the audience take in information and very successfully creates order out of apparent chaos. ■

The unidentified man

An open letter to Brad Fraser
from *Faye Chang*

Dear Brad Fraser

Who are you? I know that you have been writing award winning scripts for radio, theatre and the movies. I have read your resumé. You certainly do have a weighty body of work

by Co-Active Theatre Factory, directed by Fenton Gray and Michael D'Cruze.

The publicity for THE UGLY MAN intrigued me, inviting the audience to "an isolated ranch in the oppressive heat of

expectations. The characters driven by their own personal desires, hurtled towards their destruction without apology or excuse. The pace and dialogue give the play a filmic quality. I therefore wasn't

"The publicity for THE UGLY MAN intrigued me, inviting the audience to 'an isolated ranch in the oppressive heat of Arizona in a world where pop culture and classic theatre collide'"

behind you. How long have you been a script writer? How long have you been winning awards? You seem to have enough to last you a lifetime.

I wanted to discover more about you and your work and so I went to see THE UGLY MAN performed at BAC in London,

Arizona in a world where pop culture and classic theatre collide". A string of questions began to form: How did the story come about? What kind of things do you find disturbing? Do they find their way into your scripts?

After the show I met with the company to try and unearth more facts. The depth and quality of the performance had lead me to believe that the two directors were heavy weight's in the theatre world. This turned out not to be so - Michael D'Cruze was a first time director. Money for the production had been raised by begging and borrowing. Each member of the company sending a letter to ask everyone they know to contribute £5.00. (In Britain it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for first time directors and new companies to get public funding). What is the situation in Canada with regards to public funding of the Arts? I wonder if Canadian artists are also forced to send begging letters to all their friends and enemies to fund their work, but I digress.

Some would say that THE UGLY MAN is a conventional play. But I have to disagree - inspired by the Jacobean revenge tragedy THE CHANGLING you used late 20th century idioms and images - comic books, T.V. shows and old movies to play with our perceptions and

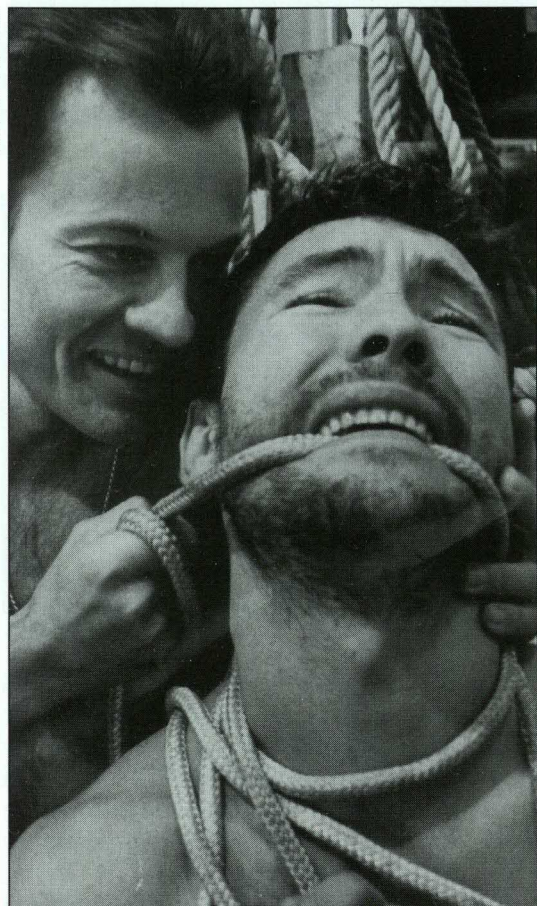
surprised that Michael D'Cruze thought that "the script read like a stage play". Each scene was like an edit and in this sense the whole style and approach was reminiscent of a Quentin Tarantino film".

The difference was that THE UGLY MAN, even with its contemporary feel, appeared to be stuck somewhere in the past. It could very easily have been a kind of modern Hollywood melodrama. What are your views on theatre and film conventional or otherwise?

Another thing, does your writing style have a bearing on the final outcome - the quality of the production? Do you feel the need to have control over what happens to your scripts? The director, on first reading, found the script 'dry', with very little in the way of stage direction. The company spent many months of improvisation, just trying to discover the characters; who were they, where did they come from, what motivated them, how would they react to certain situations? Once the characters were fleshed out everything else seemed to fall into place. (I have to say, it was a refreshing change to see homosexuality shown as a natural and very much human state of being, rather than a theme to be studied). The company concluded that the bareness of the script was, in fact, it's strength.

I am told that I ask too many questions, although I have many more, so this is probably a good point to stop. So Mr Fraser, I sincerely hope that you will read, and reply to this open letter. It's all up to you from here! ■

Photo: Ben Cole



Co-Active Theatre Factory: THE UGLY MAN

■ Brith Gof

Arturius Rex

Cardiff, November 1994

We were taken by bus from Chapter Arts Centre to a cold, barren industrial shed - where inside, a long, narrow performing space was filled with beds - waiting to be transformed by performers and audience.

ARTURIUS REX showed the scummy, demeaning, dirty deaths of a hero of the Celts, of every society at the hands of another. Power given with "carte blanche" to use it turned neighbours into torturers, rapists, killers. Became ethnic cleansing, the release of evil.

All this was shown through a physical theatre of tenderness, violence and ideas that embraced and

distanced. The physical and emotional proximity made us voyeurs, victims, torturers.

Images:

- Chalk drawn outlines of bodies scrubbed out in physical and cultural genocide.
- A text of raw poetry, rhythm and repetition and thrash music.
- Hospital beds become torture frames, rape and death cage.
- Audience gets out of the way or is pushed aside.
- Water over floor, over us.
- A fractured singing of "Mae Hen Wlad Fy Nhadau/Land of my Fathers" makes

Reviews

from Mime and Physical Theatre Performances

patriotism ironic and broken.

This was a performance total in the commitment of performers and audience. It was raw and moving, making insipid most of what passes for physical theatre. A theatre of body, mind, emotion that made an image both simple and complex.

It was a very special experience.

John Keefe

■ Star Trek:

The Lost Voyage of the Enterprise

Churchill Theatre, Bromley, November 1994

A fine young company has been assembled by Director/Producer John Gore (of Mime Theatre Project, Thunderbirds FAB fame) to boldly go where no company has gone before; namely the theatre production of STAR TREK.

The audience of trekkies were out in force and as soon as they heard the opening theme tune they burst into rapturous applause!

The character affectations employed by the actors provided enough of the comic element of satire to remind the audience of the original series and camera methods, though now outdated, viewed in a theatrical context made the mid-1960s action mannerisms all the funnier.

The special effects required for this production were evident and spectacular from the start and especially enhanced when the "expected" party "beamed" down to the planet utilising body posture and lighting simulation to create the illusion.

The plot just about covered the entire spectrum of the original series with all the in-jokes and references to events in Earth's history. As each character was introduced, the audience cheered as if meeting an old friend, or foe; in the case of Pete Seraphinovitch (head Clingon) and Michael Michael (The Romulan) who instigated the nasty situations whilst also providing a few surprises.

Good performances also from Andy Nimmo as "Scotty" and Darrell Bates as "Dr. McCoy", with Richard Knight providing good acrobatic skills and physical pace to add extra impetus. However, it was Adrian Neil's "Mr. Spock" who as the central character ensured the humour was maintained throughout in this jolly good romp!

On a negative note there were too many ideas crammed in, but one got the feeling that this was just the beginning of this show's epic journey. With some sound editing and technical adjustment a smash hit will be created. Which only leaves me to say - "Go Forth and Prosper".

Brendan Stapleton

■ Theatre de Complicite

Out of a House Walked a Man

Lyttleton Theatre, London, December 1994

Theatre de Complicite have an extraordinary ability to take a seemingly simple narrative - a man believing he has killed an old lady - and transform it into a superbly performed and ingeniously conceived production. OUT OF A HOUSE WALKED A MAN, at the National's Lyttleton Theatre, combined humour, slapstick, theatrical jokes and clichés with absurdism, black-comedy, tragi-comedy and a belief in the purposelessness of life.

Kathryn Hunter, who played the old lady, exemplified the skill of the company's performers. Her performance was mesmerising as she drifted in and out of the protagonist's troubled consciousness, playing with his earthly hunger for food, and cerebral hunger to write. We were presented with a carefully crafted and choreographed ensemble who whirled around the disturbed poet, Daniil Kharms (played by both Jozef Houben and Toby Sedgwick). This chorus consisted not only of consummate performers, but also musicians and singers who provided an eclectic and unconventional underscore to the protagonists' plight.

The domineering backdrop served to represent not only the chaos of life - but also the artistic oppression of 1920s Russia. Characters melted in and out of its surface,



Photo: Nobby Clark

Theatre de Complicite: OUT OF A HOUSE WALKED A MAN...

swooping up the various props as the show glided onto the stage only to disappear with a haunting beauty.

Complicite have absorbed this little known Russian poet's way of thinking. Paralleling their own impressions and views of the seemingly ridiculous in theatre, a skilfully crafted piece of theatrical poetry has been created that should not be missed.

Mark Cunningham

Celebration or Epitaph?

Forced Entertainment and Funding in Crisis

At the last round of meetings for the Arts Council of England's Drama Project Committee, the decision was taken not to provide Forced Entertainment with funding for their latest project application. An established company with over 10 years of work behind them had been dealt what could turn out to be a fatal blow. The Arts Council's reasoning behind the decision was as follows:

- (1) Reports (from Arts Council Assessors) on the most recent project HIDDEN J were apparently "poor".
- (2) There "had been concerns" for two or three shows about the quality of the work (i.e. EMMANUELLE ENCHANTED, CLUB OF NO REGRETS and DREAM'S WINTER).
- (3) There was a feeling that the work was not developing artistically.

As a group of people who feel passionately about their work and thrive on performing, the Sheffield based company felt it necessary to present a repeat of last December's hybrid talk, performance and lecture "A DECADE OF FORCED

ENTERTAINMENT" to be followed by an open debate entitled "What Price Innovation?" The whole event took place at the I.C.A. on Saturday 4th February 1995.

Of course, this was no ordinary showing of the company's work. The whole afternoon was billed rather as a protest event - including speeches by Rose Fenton (LIFT), Claire Armistead (The Guardian), Deborah Levy (writer) and Lois Keidan (ICA Live Arts). The speeches tended to be concerned not only with the work of Forced Entertainment, but also the wider implications surrounding the Arts Council's decision. Allusions were made to Pip Simmons Theatre Co. of the 1970s and Impact Theatre of the 1980s as the whole concept of refusing Forced Entertainment funding seemed to represent a fearful repetition of history.

Despite what one may feel about the work of Forced Entertainment, one cannot deny the signals that are being sent from the Arts Council to those involved in New Theatre forms. Who decides when experimental theatre stops

becoming experimental, and who draws up such seemingly impossible guidelines? Surely, the whole concept behind theatrical innovation is to push the boundaries of what is considered the 'norm'.

Admittedly, experiments do not always go to plan but that is the danger of such work. Should one really be punished if theatrical innovation fails to please every member of an audience?

In conversation with Tim Etchells before the "show", his main concern seemed to lie with the Arts Councils process of report writing - fears that were echoed by those at the debate. Only five reports were written about HIDDEN J, all but one of the reports disliked the production and on this evidence the Arts Council took its decision. This again raises wider issues. How does one value theatre that actively deconstructs one's preconceived notions of what "theatre" should be? Does such a limited number of reports truly reflect the opinions of the masses? In the face of adversity, the drama panel tries to acknowledge and support experimental work but

perhaps the terms and conditions of the ACE are no longer appropriate to experimental and innovative work and thus need revising.

The afternoon's debate concluded with an agreement that steps need to be taken to develop a lobbying voice for practitioners involved in this area of work. Only then will British experimental theatre continue to be a form that is respected and admired. Perhaps the 200 letters sent to the Arts Council in protest at their decision will not help the plight of Forced Entertainment, but they will certainly send a strong message to those involved in funding decisions that their own work, too, needs assessing.

Mark Cunnington

(Ed: The debate, of course, does not end here and MAG would be interested in hearing any views you have on this area.)

Dear Total Theatre

The Unwritten Contract

What I look for in the artifice of theatre is something real. When I say 'something real' part of what I mean is connected. We, all of us, have the capacity to distinguish between real and fake in human behaviour, or between real and meaningless in art. We know when we meet someone whether they're

actually connecting with us or not, whether their thoughts and feelings are wholly in the present or elsewhere. Meeting someone who is fully present is always at the least interesting, which is more than can be said for a lot of theatre. How can this be?

How can a situation as intrinsically interesting as one

where a group of humans pays to watch another group of humans become boring?

Trying to have a conversation with someone who's reading a newspaper is very frustrating - they're not connecting with us. Similarly, watching theatre where the performers are private, where they are not making public their real

thoughts and feelings, is frustrating. They can either be bored or they can become voyeurs. Either way, at some level they will feel cheated, cheated out of the possibility of entering into a relationship with the performers, with the show. Sometimes this space, this hollowness, is filled with ideas or with images, but ▶

letters... letters...

The Unwritten Contract (continued from page 19)

unless these ideas or images are connected with the heart they are going to be empty.

An audience goes to the theatre with an expectation, and this is where the notion of a contract comes in. When I go to the theatre I want to be entertained. I also want to see daily life transcended in

some way. I'm often disappointed on one or both counts. I'm disappointed so often that I wonder whether other theatre practitioners have the same desires. Those

of us engaged in creating new theatre are often confused about what sort of contract we're offering to the audience. We should not be surprised when that confusion is reflected back to us. For a lot of us the starting point of the shows that we make is ourselves - ourselves as clowns or bouffons or simply as humans. Let's make our responses honest! Once again we face the spectacular and delightful paradox of theatre; emotional honesty has to be conveyed through craft. And once again we come to the notion of being connected - connected with our emotions and our thoughts. Anger, for example, is an energy, like any

emotion. If it is suppressed it becomes like a dammed river, building up in force until it bursts the dam, with potentially devastating results. If, however, we connect with the anger, acknowledge it, express it, then it is energy in motion.

Connecting with our feelings allows us a greater opportunity of connecting with the audience. Regrettably, few, if any, of the physical theatre training that I know of place any emphasis on the emotions. I'm not advocating tortuous therapy sessions in the rehearsal room the process can be very simple: I have often seen frozen and stilted improvisations dissolve into

laughter and play when the participants are encouraged to say how they feel. The simple act of saying 'I feel nervous' or 'I feel scared' gets the energy moving and acknowledges something that the other people in the room are already aware of at some level. It is also very empowering and allows the performers to incorporate greater areas of their experience into their play and consequently into the work that they create. It is an area that we must address if we are to create work that is psychologically, as well as visually, stunning.

Rick Zoltowski
Commotion

Dear Total Theatre

Continuing the circus debate

I was very interested to read the article in the Winter issue discussing the position of Circus in the current arts environment and would like to add my opinions to the debate.

Similar to Mime, Circus is one of those indefinable terms. In the eyes of the Arts Council, this is no bad thing because definition would bring forward a case to fund Circus work. After much lobbying by MAG and key individuals, plus some startlingly good work over the years, Mime has emerged with a voice and an agenda which is now being listened to. Even the inception of Mime Officers at RAB level points to a developing recognition of the form from both public and Arts Council sides (albeit sometimes slowly...).

Circus has yet to reach this

point of strength. It has seen a very transitional period in this time. Whilst the invention of television culled a large percentage of audiences for Popular Circus (aka Traditional), more lately the new fusion of boundaries between theatrical styles has seen a resurgence of interest in this lost art. But how does it move forward?

Circus more than any other form has over-riding problems. Internal squabbling over whether anything can be learnt from the Traditional styles dominates the debate. In common with other forms money is also high on the agenda. At the heart of the Arts Council funding debate, as Faye Chang points out, is the "high arts" vs "entertainment" argument - that Circus has its roots within a working class framework and until it

can be "liberated" from middle class enjoyment it will never gain Arts Council support. I sometimes think that this also holds true for the purist New Circus artists who see Traditional Circus as ultimately trite.

After a noticeable lack of Government funding, Circus has begun to benefit from The Foundation for Sports and the Arts. Their funding criteria strictly state that projects must appeal to the donators of the money: ie Football Pools Speculators. Circus, in its most widely known form, seems ideal - but I can't see the "C's" of this world getting too excited about juggling, abstract narratives and moody lighting.

At January's official launch of the new Combined Arts Department of the Arts Council, Iain Reid (Director of

the Combined Arts Dept) when questioned as to the status of Circus within the department, answered with a question: "Is it Sport or Art?" Formerly of the Gulbenkian Foundation and therefore instrumental in producing Reg Bolton's "Suitcase Circus" books, Iain Reid seems to have been silenced by the politics of his current employers.

For my part I am willing to sit through the sadly often technically inept and theatrically poor New Circus productions and await the dawn of a creative fusion knowing that the funding for development is not there. I hope that audiences can also be this lenient. But like re-inventing history, I am sure there is an easier way...

Verena Cornwall
Manager, Zippo's Academy of Circus Arts

Second Stride Fast and Dirty

Curtain Theatre, Toynbee Hall, London, December 1994

Interested in the development of performance language and styles, last December I went to see FAST AND DIRTY. The evening was the culmination of a series of collaborative workshops run by Second Stride, billed as Theatre Experiments. Disappointingly I did not see anything inventive, daring or experimental, and even though the assembled groups had spent four weeks together, I felt that no new ground was explored.

I was particularly interested to see the work of Ian Spink and his attempts to create a complex fusion of dance/theatre. I wanted to

witness his movement vocabulary and hoped to see a performance that bridged the precarious gap between dance and theatre.

Ian Spink's work in FAST AND DIRTY, entitled FRAGMENTS, was based on the writings of a young woman - in abstract diary form. The six performers charged the work with awkward and jerky movements developed from the original starting point. An abstract distorted performance evolved from an abstract piece of writing. There was strong use of imagery and symbolism and a high level of technical ability from the performers.

A few weeks later I was lucky enough to take part in a practical workshop with Ian Spink and discuss FRAGMENTS with him. The workshop offered an interesting method of approaching physical work but not much freedom of movement expression. However this experience did give me a way in to the process he had used with his performers to produce FRAGMENTS. With this insight I could see how restricting only having four weeks must have been for the performers.

I felt that Ian Spink had found it difficult to analyse his

performance practices, though still considered his work to be new and experimental. I had found the performance genuinely interesting visually, yet felt the work needed a backbone, a reasoning and a deeper understanding.

The dilemma of how we work to attain new performance styles when faced with having to confront the need for terms and language was once again highlighted. This problem is faced by many practitioners today and we need to continue to create more opportunities to discuss this expansion of performance.

Clare Allsop

Trestle Theatre Company & Birmingham Contemporary Music Group The Soldier's Tale & Goblin Market

LIME, Queen Elizabeth Hall, London, January 1995

In contrast to earlier works such as STATE OF BEWILDERMENT, the opening to Trestle Theatre's latest production, THE SOLDIER'S TALE, was disappointing to say the least. The tame and rather unimaginative revival of Stravinsky's work laboured along at a frustratingly turgid pace, and little attention was paid to the rhythms of a score incessantly interrupted by poor acting. Billing themselves as Britain's leading mask/mime theatre company, the company showed little of the excitement and ingenuity that has become the trademark of their work. Instead the initial use of mask, to set up a reality/fantasy opposition, seemed inappropriate as the original Russian tale was paralleled with that of a family suffering the trials of a repossession order. There was the occasional flash of theatrical vision as the performers attempted to jovially integrate with the musicians converting a bassoon into a tap for pulling pints, but these were few and far between. Rather the continual presence of the musicians onstage seemed at odds with Stravinsky's desire to mix artistic genres.

Based on Christina Rossetti's poem of the same title, GOBLIN MARKET was the company's attempt to incorporate mime, narration, puppetry and music into a single work. The puppetry, however, was unable to



Trestle Theatre Company & Birmingham Contemporary Music Group: GOBLIN MARKET
Puppet made by Andy Lawrence

concretise the theatrical intensity of Rossetti's writing, and poor design meant that much of the work could not be seen clearly from the auditorium. An attempt at a twentieth century allusion to two young girls running away from home also failed to have any impact - the predominant reason being the two protagonists' amateurish rendition of melodramatic mime.

The one redeeming aspect of the evening was the music, the two pieces being superbly performed by the Birmingham Contemporary Music Group. It was just unfortunate that Trestle's desire for theatrical creativeness, daring and quality could not be made manifest on this occasion.

Mark Cunningham

Teatral Yen KAÔ

LIME, Turtle Key Arts Centre, London, January 1995

Anglo-Brazilian company, Teatral Yen presented their performance art/installation piece POPOL VOH in the London International Mime Festival in 1993.

The production of KAÔ was conceptually similar: a mix of performance and live art, ethereal music, and abstract images of desire and conflict found in chaos rather than convention.

A leaf covered floor, sleeping bodies draped in five large, white baths, two symmetrical staircases of milk crates

leading up to an enormous central crucifix with statutory Christ-like figure - the impact of the first image was strong. It promised great things. Sadly it was immediately undermined by a child running on firing a toy machine gun at the audience.

This set a precedent: images half presented and lost, a frustrating lack of theatricality, ideas indicated but not explored, performers in their own little worlds.

The set was cumbersome, much of the visual impact lost

because of awkward practicalities. The taking down of the cross was not exploited and instead of assisting the idea of persecution and slavery it merely held up the action. The performance level dropped, and as the play continued the actors looked uncomfortable and even bored.

The play lacked an overall drive and structure. Even in Live Art images need to build upon each other and connect. Here all was dissociated.

Ris Widdicombe

The Lindsay Kemp Company Cinderella - A Gothic Operetta

LIME, Sadler's Wells, London, January 1995

After a four year absence The Lindsay Kemp Company returned to the UK with their new production CINDERELLA.

A major influence in international theatre since the 1970s, there is no doubt that the company perform in a strange, definitive style, attuned to the mind of the originators persona. He manages to do this with amazing panache, utilising theatre combinations that are the products of great artistic influences.

Far removed from the bitter sweet fable of childhood we are told that Kemp's inspiration for CINDERELLA was drawn from influences as diverse as Wagner, Edgar Allan Poe and Lubitsch.

Lindsay Kemp is unique, definitely a one-off. It would be unfair to describe his theatre as pastiche. Using his vast knowledge of dance-theatre, mime and ritual, he created in CINDERELLA an environment that was comically surreal and religious - sometimes erotic - certainly not shocking or original today, however transcendent in entertainment.

The production's strength lay in the different performance dynamics of film, theatre and operetta, stimulated to create a piece that successfully caricatured the theatre experience.

Brendan Stapleton

Cabaret at the Circus Space

Zirk Cirque, Higher than the Sun, The Gandini Juggling Project, Skinning the Cat

LIME, Circus Space, London, January 1995

The Circus Space is a former power station just off Old Street.

A low entrance hall, adorned with paper lanterns, Toulouse - Lautrec style posters, and girls with flowers in their hair writhing in leather thongs suspended from the ceiling led into the main, cavernous space. The atmosphere here was electric with anticipation. Cabaret means tables and food, both of which there were plenty.

Our host for the evening was Steve Best, magical compere. His stage persona was appealingly gauche, but not quite polished enough to animate the audience in the way it should have done.

Skinning The Cat, who bespangled the cover of the LIME programme,

were up first, threshing about on a trapeze. Then the Gandini Juggling Project treated us to choreographed throwing of batons. Kevin Brooking, one half of Zirk Cirque appeared in Chaplinesque persona DEEP FREEZE, next Higher Than The Sun, a trapeze trio of indie peacocks wowed us to the strains of Bjork. Then both halves of Zirk Cirque appeared, clowning and miming with timeless silliness. For the finale, Skinning The Cat again, wreathing, writhing and contorting on a rope.

Maximum spectacle with minimum content, a premium on *skill*. Fabulous! The circus is in town.

Andrew Ayers

People Show Number 100

LIME, ICA, London, January 1995

Perhaps one of the most difficult aspects with multi-media visual performances can be a loss of vision and clarity in direction and devising. The latest production by the People Show was one such work. Using the life (and death) of the world renowned musician Chet Baker, who died on 13th May 1988 after falling out of a first floor hotel room in Amsterdam, the piece attempted to present images of the artist's life. Rather than merely presenting an autobiographical reconstruction, the company were more interested in developing images of the man's life.

There was, indeed, a fine and innovative blend of artistic expressions but one felt that little was actually "said" during the show.

In some cases, one felt the production was devised purely as an opportunity to present the singer's vocal skills, admirable as they were. However, one felt that more time and effort had been spent on the jazz excerpts than the overall concept.

The use of a video camera to film the audience, behind the scenes, Josette Bushell-Mingo merrily cavorting down The Mall, and the more intricate details of

the set, merely had the effect of distracting the audience's attention from uninspiring stage work.

In all, this was a rather frustrating show. The awkwardly revolving set detracted from any flow the piece may have possessed, and the one clever theatrical progression of performers repeating and slowly extending a set sequence was only played with a few times.

Perhaps a directionless show was the intention, but even that was not clear as the production veered haphazardly from one form of visual expression to another.

Mark Cunningham

■ Théâtre de L'Ange Fou

L'Homme Qui Voulait Rester Debout

LIME, Purcell Room, London, January 1995

It is indeed a rare opportunity to see a whole evening devoted to the works of Etienne Decroux, but it is perhaps even more extraordinary to see them performed with such incredible skill. The material presented by Théâtre de L'Ange Fou in their show L'HOMME QUI VOULAIT RESTER DEBOUT spanned the master's working life. With reconstructions of pieces such as LE MENUISIER (1931) to LE PROPHETE (1984) and their presentation by such

consummate performers, one could not help but be both thrilled and touched by these poems of the air.

Steve Wasson, joint Artistic Director of the company with Corinne Soum (who also performed extensively), opened the programme with a striking performance of LA MEDITATION (1950) Part 1. Clothed in only a white jock-strap and hood, the piece stood as testimony to Decroux's desire to save the world by inviting it to stand up. It was not only beautiful to

watch as a work of art in its own right, but also to watch a performer with incredible control over his body. All of the company members had to be admired for their commitment and dedication to developing their bodies for artistic expressivity - a refreshing change from seeing those performers who can only dream of attaining such skill. The artistic direction must also be praised as in L'USINE(1946) where nine performers, instead of the normal three, dressed in

black body suits with white outlines, clarified much of the socialist overtones underpinning Decroux's life and work. The evening closed with a beautiful performance of LES ARBRES (1946) where, despite the near nakedness of the performers, the human body was de-personalised for representational expressivity. Decroux abhorred carelessness and laziness and I feel privileged to have seen his purist beliefs concretised by such dedicated people.

Mark Cunnington

■ Brouhaha

Light at Night

LIME, BAC, London, January 1995



Brouhaha: LIGHT AT NIGHT

Brouhaha, the all women clown trio, have a great reputation: winners of the Prix d'Or for their previous show FISH SOUP and LIMF participants for the past 3 years. This was the first outing for their latest show LIGHT AT NIGHT, and their first collaboration with Paul Hunter of Told By An Idiot (formerly the John

Wright Company) as director.

Instead of conventional red nose clowns, we had long nosed, top hatted, sinister undertakers who appeared throughout the show as ambiguous, moral caretakers, the consciences of the characters. A story unfolds of 3 sisters who have

"accidentally" killed their fourth sister, Mandy, but have lost her body. Journeying in her coffin to try to find her, they discover a baby and their odyssey develops.

Although it takes a while to get going, and dips in the middle, the tale is witty and inventive, twisting and turning through unashamed cliché

and visual jokes. The performances were all strong, and the coffin was fabulous, being turned into all manner of things.

The show needed cutting and tweaking but I'm sure that this will happen in the course of their forthcoming nationwide tour.

Ris Widdicombe

■ Theatre in Cahoots

Day of the Dead

LIME, BAC, London, January 1995

A cemetery somewhere in Mexico. Enter Pedro and Rosita, come to seek his mother's blessing for their wedding on the Day of the Dead. The day when those who have passed over have divine permission to return to earth and share in the pleasures of the living. However it is not Pedro's mother who joins the couple on this day, and Pedro is not quite what he seems.

DAY OF THE DEAD was a comedy, of manners, nationalities, and acting styles; active and passive, English and Latin, self involved and reflexive. It was performed in a mode of ironic clowning, where the audience/performer relationship was always conscious. It was from this that much of the humour was derived creating a genuinely very funny piece. To keep an audience enraptured however, acting must be guileless. Stephen Harper and Adrian Norman were sometimes too self conscious to pull this off properly, but Carla Candiotta was utterly charming as Rosita and the direction made the most of the intimate space at BAC. The piece itself was a little too long and rambling to fully realise its potential, but its sunny disposition and quirky atmosphere left one beguiled and enheartened.

Andrew Ayers

Management News

Arts Council of England

The Arts Council of England has announced its grants to arts organisations in England for 1995/96 (£191.1 million). The Chair, Lord Gowrie, said: "The welcome £5.1 million increase in our grant in aid from government has enabled the Arts Council to give increases to a number of organisations currently in a critical position. At the same time we have taken the opportunity to consolidate support for artists and arts organisations who have been leading the development of the arts all over the country in recent years. But because the increase only restores us to the position of two years ago, the Council has had to take a firm strategic view overall rather than distribute the money evenly. Our overall aim has been to help organisations survive until capital improvements through the National Lottery begin to be felt in terms of improved audience involvement and attendances".

Community Dance and Mime Foundation to become DanceLink

The new name for CDMF (subject to voting at their AGM) will be DanceLink - dedicated to dance in the community. CDMF hired consultants, Likeminded and Drakes Jardine, to review marketing activities and make recommendations for a new name and corporate image. The consultancy was funded by the Arts Council. On a sadder note, Lucy Perman, Director of CDMF, will be leaving the organisation after six successful years. Her last official engagement will be at their AGM on 3rd & 4th March at Greenwich Dance Agency. MAG wishes her the best of luck in her new post as Training and Development Officer at the Community Radio Association.

European Live Arts Network

A new network for practitioners, companies and anyone involved in Live Arts has recently been set up. For more details contact: E.L.A.N.Wales, Chapter, Market Road, Canton, Cardiff, CF2 1QE. Tel & Fax: 01222 345831.

British Performing Arts Medicine Trust (BPAMT)

This organisation provides specialised medical help for all those involved in the performing

arts. BPAMT carries out research and provides a confidential telephone helpline open to all performers. Details on 0171 636 6960.

South West Arts Board

In February 1995 a number of full time posts at SWAB were cut and the Bristol office closed. SWAB have said that the reduction in internal expenditure will create new funds which can be applied flexibly and directly to support the arts of the region. Chief Executive Chris Bates has stood down and Nick Capaldi, former Director of Performing Arts, is Acting Chief Executive.

New Lottery Officer for London Arts Board

Andrew Farrow has been appointed as the Lottery Officer for LAB. Research shows that London has had a low response rate from small scale and touring organisations. Application packs can be obtained by calling 0171 312 0123, or for a detailed enquiry contact Andrew direct on 0171 240 7690.

New Director for VAN

The Voluntary Arts Network has appointed Roger Fox to succeed Peter Stark. Fox is currently Director of the Drama Association of Wales and was a founder member of the Council and Executive of the Network.

Awards

Eastern Arts Board

Performing Arts Departments at Eastern Arts Board have had their Projects and Schemes cut for 1995/96. This has affected the Commissions, Education, International Initiatives and Festivals budgets. The Dance, Mime and New Circus General Projects Scheme has been reduced to £21,000 from £25,000 but most of the funds have already been allocated as a result of the affects of the other cuts. Chief Executive, Richard Evans said, "We decided to reduce the funds available through our Projects and Schemes in order to protect the network of regional organisations from the Board's lower level of resources this year."

Forced Entertainment

At the most recent ACE Drama Project round, Forced Entertainment, who have been funded consecutively since 1986, were unsuccessful in their application for 1995/96. Forced

Entertainment have mounted a massive campaign to back their bid to the Drama Dept to restore their funding. (See the letter in this issue). If you would like to contribute to their campaign, contact them on 01742 664029.

The Mime Forum (Scotland)

The Scottish Arts Council have awarded TMF(S) £6000 for the following financial year. Unfortunately the organisation required at least £17,000 in 1995/96 in order to maintain the current level of their administrative support, training activity and advocacy. This has serious ramifications for the organisation and unless other funds can be found their long term future is in jeopardy. Contact TMF(S) on 0131 225 3145 to find out how you can give them your support.

ACE Fixed Term Revenue Clients

David Glass and Open Hand have been added to the list of franchise funded companies, having successfully developed through the Drama Department's projects scheme. Funded companies in 1995/96 include: Black Mime Theatre Company £102,500, Cambridge Theatre Company £501,500, David Glass New Mime Ensemble £80,000, Forkbeard Fantasy Theatre Company £96,700, Gloria Theatre £89,100, IOU £105,500, Kaboodle Productions £86,600, Open Hand £100,000, People Show £88,100, Right Size £97,000, Theatre de Complicité £135,700, Trestle Theatre Co £127,000.

ACE Small Scale Touring 1995/96

Lip Service, London New Play Festival, Not The National, Pan Project, Scarlet Theatre, Strathcona, Y Touring.

ACE Drama Projects 1995/96 (First round)

Alison Andrews, Monkey In Heaven, Hathi, Maya, Mu-Lan, Tamasha, Commotion, Mime Action Group, Northern International Mime Festival, Tottering Bipeds, Woman's Work, Mind The Gap, Strathcona, Cornelius and Jones, Doo Cot, Faulty Optic, visions96, Clean Break, Dodgy Clutch, Foursight, Hijinx, Wild Iris.

ACE Venue Programming Funds

A new £200,000 fund for distribution to small scale venues to programme touring companies has been announced. Criteria have still not been set. Further details from ACE Drama Department on 0171 333 0100.

LAB

Details of LAB Training Programmes for 95/96 have just been released. Arts Development for Arts Organisations, deadline 7th July and Training Opportunities an ongoing programme for senior arts managers to support attendance at specified courses and attendance at seminar and conferences.

The Paul Hamlyn Foundation

The Foundation is interested in projects that support the arts, education and book publishing. Smaller grants of under £2,000 are given for short-term projects and capital costs. Larger grants are advised to allow a couple of months. Details: Faye Williams, Administrator, Sussex House, 12 Upper Mall, London, N6 9TA.

Barclays New Stages for Independent Theatre

Barclays Bank is inviting applications from UK based small to middle scale independent theatre companies looking for sponsorship to develop new work. Successful companies will perform at the New Stages Festival to be held at the Royal Court in May 1996. There will also be a Barclays New Stages Festival in Nottinghamshire. Closing date for entries is 26th May 1995. Applications are encouraged from live art or non-English speaking theatre, dance or mime, opera or music-theatre, theatre-in-education or projects for people with disabilities. Details: Barclays New Stages, Kallaway Ltd, 2 Portland Road, Holland Park, London W11 4LA. Tel: 0171 221 7883.

Barclays Youth Action Awards in association with Youth Clubs UK

This scheme aims to encourage "not for profit" youth groups with projects planned, managed and run by young people themselves. Grants are between £500 and £2,000. Closing date is 31st March 1995. Details from: Laura Stanley, Youth Clubs UK, 11, St.Bride Street, London, EC4A 4AS. Tel: 0171 353 2366.

board

NOTICE

Performance

Chisenhale Dance Space

Invites applications for a season of commissioned solo work in July. Awards are between £300 and £1,500. Deadline: 31st March, 1995. Details: 0181 981 6617.

Plunge into Oval-lation

Saturday 8th April, 1995
A performance event to take place at the Oval House Arts Centre, London. Visual artists,

performers, installation artists, theatre designers, film-makers, dancers, poets and general "art tarts" are invited to participate/contribute to the event. Details: 0171 274 6914.

Bath Fringe Festival

19th May - 3rd June 1995
Bath Fringe aims to feature the best in contemporary theatre, dance, mime and street performance. Send details to Bath Fringe 95, c/o The Bell, Walcot Street, Bath, Avon BA1 5BW.

Fifth Round Festival

Capel Manor, Enfield
5-9 July 1995
Attention all practitioners. This is a self-inviting arts festival exploring Theatre in the Round. Physical, philosophical and psychological effects of roundness; multi-foci performances; skills sharing etc. Details: 0171 704 9197.

Mosaics 1995, Lillian Baylis Theatre, Sadler's Wells

7 August - 9 September 1995
Applications are invited for the 4th annual Mosaics series of new and experimental independent dance, dance theatre and performance. Details: Nicola Young, Arts Programming. Tel: 0171 278 6563.

Theatre Workshop, Venue 20 - Edinburgh Festival Fringe 1995

Applications are invited for this 155 and 55 seater venue. In all TW's work they aim to be aware of the image they are presenting of disabled people, black and ethnic minority, women, children and young people, and disadvantaged communities. Companies visiting TW are asked to be sensitive toward this policy. Details: 0131 225 7942.

Wakefield Theatre Royal and Opera House

The new Artistic Director of this 500 seater middle scale Matcham designed theatre is Tony Lidington (ex-Theatre in the Mill at Bradford University). He has launched a new artistic policy, with support from ACE Venue Development Funds and increased support from Yorkshire and Humberside Arts, focus particularly on non-text based theatre. He is very keen to hear from companies who are producing middle scale work which incorporates a variety of artforms -

Mime, Physical Theatre, Visual Performance, Puppetry, Dance Theatre, Dance

and Music Theatre. Send details to: Tony Lidington, Artistic Director, Wakefield Theatre Royal and Opera House, Drury Lane, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF1 2TE.

Development Plans for the Roundhouse, London

Anyone interested in finding out more should contact Keith Osbourne (on 0181 348 1661) who is planning to make it into a performing arts centre. He is keen to hear from small/middle scale companies who want to know more or who would like to support his bid.

Women's Creativity Course

Tower Hamlets College, London
The practical equivalent of a Women's Study Course, it intends to include Performance, Mask and Visual Art. To gain backing for the course the organisers need to know of any women who would be interested in taking the course. If you are interested contact Brige Bidell on 0171 378 7933.

Production and Administration

Maskarray

Maskarray is a multi-media arts company, which uses masks, sculpturing, drama, dance, live and recorded music to create interactive events in the wider community. We are currently in search of premises in which to rehearse, platform work, run workshops and place installations. Contact: 0171 378 7933.

Process Ten 28

Are looking for a London-based administrator / producer who might be able to help produce their next large-scale work. Contact Kenneth Davidson on 0141 552 4665.

Essentially Theatre

This theatre company is looking for an expenses paid volunteer to work with Mark Heron on their production performing at Turtle Keys Arts Centre, London in April. Contact: 5 Clifford House, Edith Villas, London, W14 8UG.

Trading Faces

Seeks an Administrator, part time 20 hours per week (pro rata £13,500). Trading Faces is a participatory theatre company and is a regional resource for Southern Arts specialising in projects and residencies involving all sections of the community. Closing date for applications is 10th March with interviews on 17th & 18th March. Contact Thomasina Carlyle on 01235 550829.

Conferences, Events and Festivals

Tom Leabhart Exponent of the Decroux method.

South East Residency
23-31 May 1995

Phil Gunderson is organising this event, aimed at practitioners and teachers in the South East. For further

details contact Phil on 01273 699147.

International Festival of Fringe Theatre

Cracow, Poland
23-26 March 1995
This festival will involve fringe companies from around the world. Further details: The Academic Culture Centre of Jagiellonian University, 30-060 Krakow, ul. Oleandry 1, Poland.

Contemporary Performance Dreams and Reconstruction

Oporto, Portugal
20-23 April 1995
The event will explore different kinds of theatre languages among theatre schools of Europe: methods, processes, performance for the nineties. The conference will consist of demonstrations, workshops and working groups. Details: CONCEPTS, Dept. of Visual and Performing Arts, De Montfort University: 01533 577837.

Open Confrontation of Vision and Movement Theatres

Poland
May 1995
Details: Srodniejskie Forum Kultury, ul. Roosevelta 17, 90-056 Lodz, Poland.

Helsinki Act

Finland
9-14 May 1995
The theme of this festival is Changing Forms in the Performing Arts changes will be examined through discussions and performance. Details: Theatre Academy, Continuing Education Centre, Helsinki Act, PO Box 148, Sturenkatu 4, 00511 Helsinki, Finland.

Change of Address

Inside Out Theatre Company

Unit 9-3-3, The Leathermarket, Weston Street, Bermondsey, London, SE1 3ER. Tel & Fax: 0171 378 7137.

Offering

Mole Wetherell and Daniel Rogers of Reckless Sleepers

Are offering their services as visual co-ordinators for theatre/dance projects. Trained theatre designers, they produce innovative set and costume designs. Contact Mole on 0115 945 5852 or Dan 0171 490 0607.

Scarlet Theatre Company

Has storage space to share with another company. Contact: Marie Remy on 0181 441 9779.

Arts Admin

Rehearsal, performance, office and storage space on offer at very reasonable rates. Contact: 0171 247 5102.

Calling all companies

A new Romanian Theatre group entitled Masca is requesting information from similar companies who would be interested in performing and exchanging ideas to contact them. Details: Margareta Barbutza at the Romanian ITI: Uniter, str George Enescu 2-4, 70 141 Bucurest 22.

total theatre

The National specialist magazine for Mime, Physical Theatre and Visual Performance. *Total Theatre* reaches practitioners, performers, administrators, universities, colleges, students, trainers, venues, funding organisations and the public. *Total Theatre* includes features, articles, interviews, news, reviews, opportunities and developments in training and includes information on companies and their touring schedules.

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Subscribe to receive *Total Theatre* by becoming a member of MAG.

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Students	£11.50
Individual	£15.00
Company	£20.00
Educational	£40.00
Corporate	£50.00

For subscription

enquiries contact:
Mhora Samuel, Administrator
MIME ACTION GROUP
Sadler's Wells
London EC1R 4TN
Telephone 0171 713 7944
(or fill in the Membership Form on the back of this issue of *Total Theatre*)

Opportunities to advertise in total theatre

1. Free listings service for Members

We encourage members to use our free listings service to inform readers on their activities and touring plans. Listings can be put into the Notice Board, Performers and Company Update, Performances & Festivals, Workshops & Training pages.

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Eighth Page	£ 60

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Full Page	269 x 188
1/2 (landscape)	129 x 188
1/2 (portrait)	269 x 89
1/4 (landscape)	64 x 188
1/4 (portrait)	129 x 89
1/8	64 x 89

Copy Deadlines

Summer: 14th April
Published 7th June

Autumn: 14th July
Published 7th September

Winter: 14th October
Published 7th December

Spring: 14th January
Published 7th March

The Paper Canoe

by Eugenio Barba

WHENEVER I have either read the writings of Eugenio Barba (director of Nordisk Teaterlaboratorium and founder of Odin Teatret) or heard him speak I have always found myself with the usual prickle down my back or avidly making pencil marks in the book - underlinings, huge exclamation marks and many a capital YES! in the margins.

My experience of reading THE PAPER CANOE (his latest guide to Theatre Anthropology) was no different apart from a feeling of indigestion due to the rush of having to read it for the purpose of this review.

Barba's writings demand savouring - to devour is sheer gluttony and an insult to what has taken a lifetime's work to create. AND, I know I cannot do it justice here.

One might be put off by the apparent scientific nature of the subject, but on reading the first chapter I think you get a sense of a very human theoretician together with a very "hands on" practitioner. There is a highly personal style to the writing which draws on the biographical, the poetic, the anecdotal, the sense of the traveller's recollections... There is the scholar's analysis and

flawless comparative study of performers from the North and the South Pole - those whose training and performance style are codified, fixed, classical and those whose practice is opposite to that...dare I say "freer"?

You definitely get the sense that he is so aware of those who have misunderstood in the past - especially this representation of the relationship between the EAST and the WEST in terms of performance. Yes, he draws on his extensive knowledge of the masters of Asian performance and the masters of twentieth century

theatre makers, but somehow there is so much more to it than that.

His is a theatre of the traveller... the precarious floating island... the stranger with no sense of home. His use of the North and South Pole performer makes for clarification and a sense of belonging that defies geography.

If you're working in a theatre that cannot be compartmentalized in terms of dance, drama, mime... whatever, you too will decorate the book with all manner of pencil marking. If you struggle with those who would make you explain the logicity and the

RECENTLY READ

sense of the work you make, you will boldly affirm this writing. If you struggle with the word in relation to theatre and its inability to be truly meaningful and truly representative without some kind of physicality in terms of performance or indeed its shortcoming with regard to the writing of theatre history, then you will eat this book for breakfast, dinner and tea!

It is a celebration of a life devoted to the study of the performance in training, in creation and in performance. For the journeying physical performer (from whatever tradition) it is a

gift, an affirmation and a manual for living.

I shall now buy my own copy and copies for those who are dear to me and I shall savour a second helping.

Carran Waterfield,
Triangle

THE PAPER CANOE is published by Routledge. ISBN 0 415 11674 0. Price £10.99 Pb.

Publications

Performance

Acting (Re)Considered

Edited by Phillip B. Zarrilli, this publication is a collection of essays from directors, theorists, historians, actor trainers and actors. Contributions include Copeau, Artaud, Grotowski, Meyerhold, Decroux, Barba and Fo. Published by Routledge. ISBN 0 415 09859 9. Price £14.99 Pb.

Devising Theatre

A practical and theoretical handbook written by Alison Oddey. Provides a general theory of devising theatre, supported and illustrated by selected examples from contemporary British-devised theatre practice including Forced Entertainment, IOU, Trestle, Lumiere and Son and The People Show. It includes description, critical evaluation and analysis of specific work processes. Published by Routledge. ISBN 0 415 04899 0. Price £35.00 Hb.

International Workshop Festival/Arts Documentation Unit

The IWF is working in collaboration with the Arts Documentation Unit to build up a library of accounts of their workshops in the form of monographs and videos. Details: ADU at 6a Devonshire Place, Exeter EX4 6JA.

The Rainbow of Desire

The Boal Method of Theatre and Therapy by Augusto Boal (Translated by Adrian Jackson).

(See article earlier in this issue). This publication is a bold and brilliant statement about the therapeutic ability of theatre to liberate individuals and change lives. Published by Routledge. ISBN 0 415 10349 5. Price £9.99 Pb.

Training and Education

INTO Europe

The first ever Directory of professional training and research opportunities for artists working in the performing arts across Europe. Produced by the International Workshop Festival and The Data Place, it is a directory of workshop courses and masterclasses held by internationally recognised teachers and artists. Price £5.40 incl p&p. Details: IWF on 0171 637 0712.

Guide To Mime In Education

Written by Jac Wilkinson and published by Mime Action Group, this publication focuses on the distinctive roles of mime in the context of an enlarged view of human expression. It contains ideas for planning mime activities in schools and with young people and includes case studies from Floating Point Science Theatre, Pat Keysell, Trestle Theatre, Rowan Tolley, Trading Faces and Pegasus Youth Theatre. Price £3.50 plus £1 p&p. Details: Mime Action Group on 0171 713 7944.

First Stage

A Drama Handbook for Schools and Youth Theatres. Written by Ginny Graham and published by Northcote House Publishers this publication is aimed to help youth leaders and teachers help young people experience drama - it also contains sections on Warm Ups, Improvisation and Character work. Price £9.99. Details: 01752 695745.

Management

ACE Press Contacts and Mailing Lists 1995

Updated each year, the lists contain the contact details for newspapers, magazines, radio and television companies. Included in the 1995 edition is a copy of the new Listings Directory - which will be sent free if you buy the other two lists. Price £25 payable to "The Arts Council of England". Send to The Press and Public Affairs Unit, ACE, 14 Great Peter Street, London SW1P 3NQ.

Starting Out

This is an excellent pack prepared by Coventry City Council and Coventry University to assist artists through the maze of business planning and getting started. It looks at legal and money matters, marketing, administration, and producing a business plan. Well worth the £10 (£5.00 for Coventry based artists and organisations). Details: Dick West, Coventry School of Arts and Design, Coventry University, Priory St, Coventry CV1 5FB. Tel 01203 838547.

& company update

performers

Aztec

Kevin Alderson and Clare Jones have joined Aztec for their forthcoming production of *FAUSTUS* - a re-working of the Marlowe Text. Directed by John Britton, choreographed by Hilary Elliot and with musical direction from Chris Coe. *FAUSTUS* seeks to integrate the text with a physical score and live music. The show tours until Easter (see performance listings).

Ruth Ben Tovim

Artistic Director of Louder Than Words Productions has been working with companies and other organisations developing the role of the writer/text in the fields of live art/physical theatre. If you would like information about

consultancy/directing/development services on offer contact Ruth on 0171 713 7843.

Commotion

Rick Zoltowski and Gerry Flanagan have increased the scope of their teaching activities and will be running courses at The Kendal Festival, Nottingham Springboard, London's City Lit. and Circus Space. In May and June they are leading a nine week intensive course at The Circus Space, entitled *FROM PLAYING TO PERFORMANCE*.

Essentially 'Theatre'

Will be presenting the London premiere of *HARLEQUIN* at the Turtle Key Arts Centre in April. This is the company's first production under the direction of Lecoq-trained Mark Heron. *HARLEQUIN*, performed in the spirit of commedia, celebrates the life of one of theatre's great innovators, Vsevolod Meyerhold. The production examines the relationship between naturalism and non-naturalism by mixing serious content with popular physical theatre forms. The company plans to tour the production to Canada in 1996.

Floating Point Science Theatre

A new Floating Point team has been set up dedicated to touring schools in the North of England and Scotland. The team was trained during the Summer of 1994 and began touring with five shows in September. The training and equipping of this team was made possible with the help of PowerGen plc, the Office of Science and Technology and The Foundation for Sport and the Arts.

David Glass Ensemble

In his new production *LUCKY*, directed and designed by theatre practitioner Rae Smith with lighting by Paul Constable and with live music composed and played by Sarah Collins, David Glass is back on stage after a two year absence. Over the last two years David has concentrated on directing his Ensemble in two award winning productions *GORMENGHAST* and *LES ENFANTS*. These two shows toured throughout Britain and the world and helped David win the TMA/Martini Director of the Year Award.

Jade

Is a production company set up by Victoria Worsley in 1994 to promote new work that embraces new forms and combines the direct emotional engagement of a strongly written text with the richness and theatricality of a developed visual/physical language. Victoria has worked with Annie Griffin and Tattycoram. Jade's latest piece *NIGHT TRAIN* has been produced in association with the Belgrade Theatre, Coventry and will be on tour from April.

Peta Lily & Co

After the London Arts Board funded workshop production of Peta Lily's 7-handed play *THE PORTER'S DAUGHTER* (presented at The Cockpit on the 4th July 1994), the company is preparing to co-produce a touring production this Autumn or next Spring.

Peepolykus

Have recently been joined by Kritin Fredricksson for their national tour of *NO MAN'S LAND*.

Rejects Revenge Theatre Company

The Rejects are back on the road with *CRUMBLE* throughout the Spring, culminating in a three week hike round the beautiful

bits of Scotland. There follows two weeks' work in Liverpool's Anglican Cathedral with a schools version of the story of Thomas à Beckett, followed by work on a new touring show, directed by Bim Mason, which will be premiering at The Liverpool Unity Theatre before a run at the Edinburgh Fringe.

Scarlet Theatre

Scarlet is setting up a London offshoot of the Cardiff's Magdalena Project, and preparing the 1996 production, *SMART*, which will renew our relationship with absurdist writer Jill Bradley in a show exploring women in uniforms.

Stan's Cafe

Their latest piece *VOODOO CITY* was commissioned by mac and the mac New Work Trust to open the venue's Moving Parts 95 Season of new performance in February. The creative team involves James Yarker, Richard Chew, Amanda Hadingue, Ray Newe and Sarah Dawson, as well as the return of founder member Graeme Rose.

Talking Pictures

Are currently touring their new show *SECRETS OF THE CITY*. For the first time the company has decided to document its own process of creating a show. Actor and theatre director Simon Murray has produced a teaching pack which is available for schools, colleges and universities. It uses recorded interviews, company meetings, personal diaries, selected video material and detailed observation to provide an unusual case study of a theatre company at work. Details 01270 501905.

Théâtre Sans Frontières

Are currently working with Marcello Magni of Theatre de Complicite on *PIG BOY* - a tale from the Mabinogion. *PIG BOY*, directed by John Cobb, is a wry adaptation of the Celtic legend of Culhwch and Olwen, and tackles myth, magic and the perils of being born in a pig-run. It also explores the quintessential concerns of the questing hero - namely how come it's always me that has to marry the giant's daughter? It opens at the Stanwix Theatre, Carlisle on 31st March 1995, and is touring throughout the UK.

This Way Up Productions

Is a theatre company that fuses the disciplines of dance and aggressive physical theatre with

scripted text. The company has now achieved touring status and has received considerable critical acclaim. Their most recent production, *THE CENCI*, by Neil Monaghan, inspired by Artaud, is a dark tale of murder, corruption, incest and the terrifying forces of nature. It is now taking bookings for 1995 Details: 0151 708 0172.

Told By An Idiot

(formerly *The John Wright Company*)

With first time project funding from the Arts Council of England, *Told By An Idiot* are on the road this Spring with the company's second show *I'M SO BIG*.

Directed by John Wright, the performers are Hayley Carmichael, Paul Hunter and Javier Marzan.



Told By An Idiot: *I'M SO BIG*

Triangle

During the Spring and Summer, Carran Waterfield and Ian Cameron will be creating a new production for 1995 entitled *GODIVA: THE NAKED POLITICIAN* - a story from Coventry about a woman with a "mission". It will be premiered in the Summer at Odin Teatret in Holstebro, Denmark, and will be on tour in the Autumn. Also during the Summer, Triangle and Bare Essentials Youth Theatre will take part in an exchange of performances and practice in Holstebro, working with the Odin Teatret. Details on 01203 362210.

Yllana

Yllana, from Madrid, Spain will be visiting the UK with their show *!MU!* performing as part of the Brighton International Festival in May 1995. They are also performing at Montreux, Montreal and Cannes.

performances &

festivals

Performances

Mike Ashcroft Company: ROPEMAN and LE BATON

MARCH
30 Old Bull Arts Centre, Barnet
31 Woughton Centre, Milton Keynes
APRIL
29 Thame Sports Centre, Oxon
MAY
13 King's Lynn Arts Centre
25 The Mill, Banbury (t.b.c.)
Details: 01223 460075.

Aztec: FAUSTUS

MARCH
13-14 Leeds University
16 Oldham 6th Form College
23-25 Laurence Bakley Theatre, Huddersfield
28-29 Riverside Studio, Coleraine
30-31 Derry Playhouse, Ireland
APRIL
4 Droichead A.C., Drogheda
5 Linenhall, A.C., Castlebar
6 St. John's Heritage Centre, Listowel
12-15 Belfast Arts Theatre, Belfast
Details: Sara Robinson on 01274 480150.

Big Bubble Theatre Company: DECADENCE

MARCH
25 Tamworth Arts Centre
Details: 01860 943427.

Big Bubble Theatre Company: DECADENCE and KNIFE GAMES

Showing on alternate evenings starting with DECADENCE on 4 April 1995

APRIL
4-30 White Bear, Kennington, London
Details: 01860 943427.

Brouhaha: LIGHT AT NIGHT

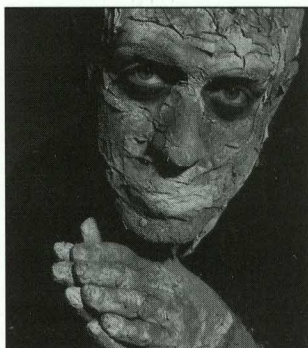
MARCH
20 Acorn, Penzance
21 Brouhaha Theatre, Taunton
22 The Wharf, Tavistock
23 Rolle College, Exmouth
24 Hope Centre, Bristol
31 Theatr Hafren, Newtown
APRIL
1 Assembly Rooms, Ludlow
2 Grand Theatre, Blackpool
17-23 FRANCE
27 Nuffield Theatre, Lancaster
28 The Brewery, Kendal
29-30 Theatre in the Mill, Bradford
MAY
4-5 OMAC, Belfast
6-7 Nun's Island, Galway
9 The Mechanics, Burnley
10 Arts Centre, York
12 Arts Centre, Goole
13 Arts Centre, Colchester
Details: 01684 540366.

Essentially "Theatre": HARLEQUIN

APRIL
5-30 Turtle Key Arts Centre, Fulham, London
(MAG Members, on presentation of membership card get two tickets for the price of one, when purchasing one full price ticket for £7.50)
Booking: 0171 385 4905.

Gandini Juggling Project: CAUGHT - "STILL"/HANGING...

MARCH
10 Madcap Theatre, Milton Keynes
13 Rotherham Arts Centre, Walker Place
17 Pegasus Theatre, Oxford
APRIL
1 Roda McGaw Theatre, The Peacock Arts



David Glass: LUCKY

& Entertainment Centre, Woking
10 Bishop Auckland Town Hall
14 Spennymore, Co. Durham
Details: 01223 460075.

David Glass: LUCKY

MARCH
7-8 Unity Theatre, Liverpool
10 Rosehill Theatre, Whitehaven
12 Cricklade Centre, Andover
15 The Hawth, Crawley
16 The Old Town Hall Arts Centre, Staines
17 The Arts Centre, Chesterfield
20-1 April Young Vic Studio, London
APRIL
7-8 Cambridge Drama Centre
20 The Maltings, Berwick
21 Queens Hall Arts Centre, Hexham
22 Lyth Arts Centre, by Wick
26 The Lemon Tree, Aberdeen
27 MacRobert, Stirling
28-30 Theatre Workshop, Edinburgh
(Workshop linked to Sunday performance)
MAY
3-4 Various venues Nottingham
6 Bowen West Community Theatre, Bedford
Details: Nick Sweeting on 0171 833 2180.

David Glass: THE MOSQUITO COAST

7 MARCH-22 APRIL On Tour
28 MARCH-22 APRIL Young Vic Studio, London
Details: Nick Sweeting on 0171 833 2180.

Annie Griffin: IT IS FOR MY MOUTH FOREVER

APRIL
8-9 Purcell Room, South Bank, London
Details: The South Bank Centre on 0171 928 8800.

Hoipolloi Theatre: THE BREEZE

MARCH
30 Old Bull Arts Centre, Barnet
APRIL
8 King's Lynn Arts Centre
11 South Holland Centre, Spalding
18-22 Komedia, Brighton
MAY
4 Bridgewater Arts Centre
5 Forest Arts Centre, New Milton
6 The Plough, Torrington
17 The Junction, Cambridge
27 Bowen West Theatre, Bedford
30 Oldham Festival
Details: 01223 460075.

Jade: NIGHT TRAIN

(in association with The Belgrade Theatre, Coventry)
APRIL
19 Lyric Studio Theatre, Hammersmith, London
MAY
6 Lyric Studio Theatre, Hammersmith, London
8-13 Belgrade Studio, Coventry

Details: Marie Clements on 0171 278 0268.

Ophaboom: ROMEO and JULIET & RICHARD III

MAY
7 Hastings
8 Oxford
12 Kingswood Theatre, Bath
13-14 Brighton Festival
26 Newbury College Theatre
JUNE
3-4 Leicester
12 Warrington College
30 Llandudno National Trust
Details: Ophaboom on 0181 769 9031.

Peepolykus: NO MAN'S LAND

MARCH
31 Barbican, Plymouth
APRIL
11-12 The Brouhaha, Burton-on-Trent
Details: Peepolykus on 01272 773028.

Rejects Revenge Theatre Company: CRUMBLE

MARCH
17 The Maltings Arts Centre, St Albans
23-24 The Old Town Hall Arts Centre, Staines
25 The Limelight Theatre, Aylesbury
27 Chester College of Higher Education
APRIL
4-5 Watermans Arts Centre, London
7 Sutton Village Hall, Sutton, Notts
8 Upper Broughton Village Hall, Notts
21-11 Scottish Highlands and Islands
MAY
12 Blackpool and Flyde College, St. Annes
Details: Rejects Revenge on 0151 708 8480.

Right Size: HOLD ME DOWN

MARCH
7 St Peter's Collegiate School, Wolverhampton
8 York Arts Centre
9-10 Leeds Metropolitan Theatre
17-18 Unity Theatre, Liverpool
22 University College Theatre, Scarborough
23 Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton
MAY
30 The Old Town Hall Arts Centre, Hemel Hempstead
JUNE
3 Bowen West Arts Centre, Bedford
7-9 Jersey Arts Centre
15 Guildhall Centre, Grantham
21-24 The Purcell Room, South Bank Centre, London
Details: Nick Sweeting on 0171 833 2180.

Right Size: STOP CALLING ME VERNON

28 March-20 May Holland Tour
Details: Nick Sweeting on 0171 833 2180.

Scarlet Theatre: THE SISTERS

MARCH
21 Dartington, Totnes
27-28 Exeter and Devon Arts Centre, Exeter
30 Guildhall, Grantham
APRIL
1-2 Jackson's Lane, Highgate
4 Queens Hall, Hexham
5 The Hawth, Crawley
7 Borough Theatre, Abergavenny
11 Old Town Hall, Hemel Hempstead
12 Harrow Arts Centre
14-15 Yvonne Arnaud, Guildford
Details: 0181 441 9779.

& festivals

performances



Stan's Cafe: VOODOO CITY

Stan's Cafe: VOODOO CITY

APRIL

- 1-2 BAC, London
25 Nuffield Theatre Studio, Lancaster

MAY

- 2 Studio One, Dartington Arts, Totnes, Devon
3 College Theatre, Weymouth
6 Portsmouth Arts Centre, Southsea

Details: 0121 449 3731.

Talking Pictures: SECRETS OF THE CITY

MARCH

- 11 Harlequin Theatre, Northwich
14 Blydesdale School, Marske, Cleveland
16 Queen's Hall Studio, Widnes
17 Library Theatre, Skelmersdale
30 Fylde College, Blackpool

APRIL

- 1 Hope Centre, Bristol
5 Rossendale College, Accrington
27 Eastbourne College
28 The Citadel, St Helens

MAY

- 3 Essex University Arts Centre, Colchester
4 Ashcroft Arts Centre, Fareham
5-6 Theatre In The Mill, Bradford
9-28 BAC, London

Details: Talking Pictures on 01270 501905.

Théâtre Sans Frontières: PIG BOY

MARCH

- 31 Stanwix Arts Theatre, Carlisle

APRIL

- 1 Stanwix Arts Theatre, Carlisle
3 Ashington College (t.b.c.)
4 Bydale School, Maske
6 Prudhoe High School
12 Customs House, South Shields
13 The Maltings, Berwick
18 Darlington Arts Centre
19-20 Queens Hall, Hexham
21-22 Penrith
23-24 The Brewery, Kendal
25-29 The Gulbenkian, Newcastle

MAY

- 2 Thornhill School, Nr. Dumfries, Scotland
3 Barrow 6th Form College (t.b.c.)

Details: TSF on 01434 633117.

Told By An Idiot (formerly The John Wright Company): I'M SO BIG

MARCH

- 24-25 The Old Town Hall Arts Centre, Hemel Hempstead
27 David Hall, South Petherton
29-30 The Buddle, Southshields
31-1 April Unity Theatre, Liverpool

APRIL

- 3 Rosehill Theatre, Whitehaven
4-8 Theatre Workshop, Edinburgh
21-22 Cambridge Drama Centre
24 The Brewery, Kendal
26 York Arts Centre
27-29 Phoenix Arts, Leicester

MAY

- 5-7 Komedia, Brighton
9 Stamford Arts Centre
10 The Hawth, Crawley
11 Hurtwood House, Dorking
12 The Old Town Hall Arts Centre, Staines
15-16 Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry
18 Weymouth College
19 Bridgewater Arts Centre
20 Bowen West Theatre, Bedford
23 May-11 June BAC, London

Details: Nick Sweeting on 0171 833 2180.

Told By An Idiot: ON THE VERGE OF EXPLODING

MAY

- 1-2 British Theatre Festival, Romania

JUNE

- 21-24 Gulbenkian Studio, Newcastle
3 July-27 August South African Tour including Grahamstown Festival & Market Theatre, Johannesburg.

Details: Nick Sweeting on 0171 833 2180.

Festivals and Venue Programmes

Watermans Arts Centre

Brentford, London

MARCH

- 10 - 25 Volcano HOW TO LIVE (IBSENITIES)

Details: Watermans on 0181 568 1176.

Circus Space Cabaret, London

MARCH

- 18 Simon Bligh, Ian Keable, Sam I Am, Caroline Palmer, Ben Jennings, The Captains

APRIL

- 1 Simon Drake Sarabians, Rex Boyd, Jane Huxley, Big Spender, Dr Stewart

- 15 Ole, Simon and Julia, Amy and Karian, Boothby Graffoe

Details: Circus Space on 0171 613 4141.

Moving Parts 95 - a season of physical performances

mac, Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham

MARCH

- 9-11 David Glass: MOSQUITO COAST
16 ICE and Commotion: THE QUEST FOR DON QUIXOTE
17-18 Motionhouse: GEISHA
21 Volcano Theatre: HOW TO LIVE (IBSENITIES)

APRIL

- 1 Claire Russ: DANGEROUS WHEN WET/SWEET BOY

Details: mac on 0121 440 4221.

Moving Arts Festival

The Old Bull Arts Centre, Barnet

MARCH

- 24 Frantic Theatre: LOOK BACK IN ANGER
25 Common Ground Sign Dance Theatre: WHAT WE WANT TO SAY TO JUAN JOSE
30 The Physical Triple
Mike Ashcroft: LE BATON AND ROPEMAN
Hoipolloi: THE BREEZE
31 Custard Factory: A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

APRIL

- 1 Kaos Theatre: THE KAOS TRAGICAL HISTORY OF DR FAUSTUS

Details: The Old Bull on 0181 449 0048.

Wakefield Arts Centre & Opera House

MARCH

- 28 Volcano Theatre Company HOW TO LIVE (IBSENITIES) - AC
31-1 The Brothers Grinn JUST ANOTHER FAIRY TALE - OH

Details: 01924 366556.

Festival 95

12th Northern Int. Festival of Visual Theatre, Mime and Dance, The Brewery, Kendal, Cheshire

APRIL

- 21 Youth Mime and guests
21 Collaborators: AND I NEVER KNEW HER NAME
22 Collaborators: A BRUSH WITH THE EMPEROR
22 Snarling Beasties: ONE SHOT
22 Theatre de la Resistencia: UN CONTE DE GUERRA
22 FESTIVAL PARTY with Edward II
23 Banialuka (Poland): THE STORY OF THE BOY AND THE WIND
23 Théâtre Sans Frontières: PIG BOY
23 Friches Theatre Urbane: MEPHISTOMANIA
23 Volcano: HOW TO LIVE (IBSENITIES)
23 More Fool Us: IMPROVISED COMEDY
24 Told by an Idiot: I'M SO BIG
24 Doo Cot: ODD IF YOU DARE
25 Animata: IN SUSPENSION
26 Teatro Cronico: STIGMA (Premiere)
26 Tottering Bipeds: MACARIO (Premiere)
27 Kaos: DR FAUSTUS
28 V-Tol: IN THE PRIVACY OF MY OWN
28 Hoipolloi: THE BREEZE
29 Banyan Theatre: THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES
29 Mime Action Group: RECEPTION
29 Peepolykus: NO MAN'S LAND
29 Ludus Dance Co: THE SPARK
29 Festival Party: THE BRASSHOPPERS
30 Samart (Russia): THE CAT'S BIRTHDAY
30 Brouhaha: LIGHT AT NIGHT
30 Samart (Russia): HAMLET

Details: The Brewery on 01539 725133.

Greenwich Dance Agency

JUNE

- 2 NIGHT OF PASSION: Lesbian and Gay Cabaret
8-9 FIFI: Special commission from GDA performed by Emilyn Claid and directed by Nigel Charnock.

Details: GDA on 0181 293 9741.

workshops

& training

Black Mime Theatre

The South Bank, London
EASTER COURSE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE
10-22 April 1995

For young black people aged 14-26 leading towards a performance on 22 April.
Details: Black Mime Theatre on 0171 928 1311.

Centre for Performance Research

Cardiff
GIVING VOICE 3: A GEOGRAPHY
OF THE VOICE
1-9 April 1995

A festival of workshops, demonstrations, performances and an international symposium exploring vocal techniques from around the world as well as an inner geography of the body and voice. Phone or write for a full brochure and details of CPR's full programme of innovative training and research projects, to: Giving Voice, Centre for Performance Research, Market Road, Canton, Cardiff, CF5 1QE. Tel: 01222 345 174.

Chisenhale Dance Space

London
MORE MAPPING
11-12 March 1995

Led by Simon Whitehead, this workshop is based on Authentic Movement practice.

RELEASE TECHNIQUE WITH IMPROVISATION
6-27 March 1995
Led by Gaby Agis

PERFORMANCE AND CHOREOGRAPHY
COURSE
24-28 April 1995

Led by Wendy Houstoun and Javier de Frutos. For professional performers.
Details: CDS on 0181 981 6617.

Circomedia

Bristol
SHORT COURSE PROGRAMME
COMING OUT OF THE TOYBOX
13-17 March 1995

Led by Dave Spathakay of Ra Ra Zoo

ADVANCED ACROBATICS
18-19 March 1995

Led by Ernesto Sarabia

COMMEDIA DELL'ARTE
1-2 & 3-7 April 1995

Led by Olly Crick

JOURNEY THEATRE
8-9 April 1995

Led by Olly Crick

ADVANCED AERIAL, TRAPEZE AND ROPE
3-7 April 1995

Led by Jackie William

BEGINNER'S CIRCUS SKILLS
10-14 April 1995

Details: Circomedia on 0117 963 2839.

Circus Space

London
WORKSHOP PROGRAMME
INTRODUCTION TO CIRCUS SKILLS

12 March 1995
PLAYING TO PERFORMANCE

From 1 May for 9 weeks

Led by Commotion.

Details: Circus Space on 0171 613 4141.

Desmond Jones School of Mime and Physical Theatre

London
SUMMER TERM
Commences 24 April 1995

The dynamic, modern alternative to conventional Drama School, offering a 3 month intensive Foundation Course and Four-Term Course. The course includes Mime Technique, Mime Acting, Story-telling, Masks, Verbal/Physical/Psychological Improvisation, The Face, Wow!, Body Balance, Colours, Timing, Caricatures, Commedia dell'Arte, Chimpanzee, Acrobatics, Stage & Body Dynamics and much more. Certificates are awarded.

Details: Desmond Jones School of Mime and Physical Theatre on 0181 747 3537.

Ecole Internationale de Théâtre Jacques Lecoq

SUMMER COURSE
LE JEU
July 1995

This course is offered to theatre professionals only once every 4 years.

Details: 00 33 1 4770 4478.

Ecole Philippe Gaulier

London
LE JEU
19 June-7 July 1995

CLOWNS
10-28 July 1995

Details: Paul Milican on 0171 359 0982.

E.L.A.N.

Cardiff
CARIAD - THE EYES OF PHEDRA
March - April 1995

A two week performance montage course under the direction of Firenza Guidi exploring the theme of female and national identity. The course will involve a blend of performance skills including live music text, and movement, vocal and rhythm work. Details: 01222 345831.

FESTIVAL 95 12th Northern International Festival of Visual Theatre, Mime and Dance

Kendal, Cumbria
WORKSHOP PROGRAMME

CLOWN-THE ART OF PLAY
21-25 April 1995

Led by Gerry Flanagan

ART FOR PERFORMANCE

21-22 April 1995

Led by David Cox

STREET THEATRE

22-26 April 1995

Led by Friches Theatre Urbane

THE GAME OF THE MASK

26-30 April 1995

Led by John Wright

BOUFFONS

26-30 April 1995

Led by Rick Zoltowski

MOVEMENT FOR ANIMATED THEATRE

26-28 April 1995

Led by Stephen Mottram

Details: The Brewery on 01539 730257.

Hope Street Actors Centre

Liverpool
WORKSHOP PROGRAMME

PETA LILY
11 March 1995

Workshop for experienced practitioners extending barriers of physical expression.

MACBETH
21-22 March 1995

Led by Peter Row. Shakespearean language and verse in a modern context. Experience not necessary.

MARKETING YOUR THEATRE COMPANY
5 April 1995

Led by Penny Mayes.

TOLD BY AN IDIOT

10-11 April 1995

Led by Paul Hunter and Hayley Carmichael this workshop will explore the world of the clown and physical comedy.

All workshops are free to people over 18 and living in the Liverpool city boundaries. Details: 0151 708 8007.

International Workshop Festival

Adelaide, Australia
16-29 April 1995

Masterclass teachers include Monika Pagneux, Philippe Gaulier, Akajo Maro, Nigel Jamieson, Flora Lauten, Johnny Hutch.

Details: Adelaide Fringe, Lion Arts Centre on +(61) 8 231 7760. Fax +(61) 8 231 5080.

Peta Lily

EASTER CLOWN WORKSHOP
14-16 April 1995

The course will cover body release, the secret disciplines of play, finding out how to share the gift of your Unique Stupidity. Details: Nick Sweeting on 0171 833 2160.

Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts

HONOURS DEGREE IN COMMUNITY ARTS

Commences September 1995

A new first degree course which will prepare students for work in a wide range of employment areas in the expanding discipline of Community Arts. Details: Nick Owen on 0151 707 0002.

Norwich Puppet Theatre

YANG FENG: CHINESE HAND PUPPETS

10-14th April 1995

The third in a series of masterclasses providing an opportunity for professionals to meet and work together in an experimental and creative environment. Details: 01603 615564.

Scottish Mime Forum

Tramway, Glasgow
JOS HUBEN AND MICHELINE VANDERPOEL

27-30 March 1995

Open to performers and musicians. Cost £75/£50 concessions. Details: SMF on 0131 225 3145.

Sheela'na'gig

DANCING MASKS

SPRING FEVER

22 March 1995

MIDSUMMER MASK DREAM
21 June 1995

WORKSHOPS
ELEMENTAL MASKS

25-26 March 1995

ANIMAL MASKS

1-2 July 1995

Details: Maskarray on 0171 738 7933.

Told By An Idiot

TOWARDS THE TRAGIC CLOWN
25-29 May 1995

Five day training course led by John Wright and members of the company. Details: Nick Sweeting on 0171 833 2180.

Training Action Group

LET'S GET TECHNICAL

London
9 May 1995

Can you answer the following questions? What is a tech spec? What is the difference between a fresnel and a spot? What is a contra? LET'S GET TECHNICAL, a course for non-technicians. £10 for members of MAG and Dance UK/ £15 for non members. Details: TAG, Upper Flat, 60 Yeldham Road, off Fulham Palace Road, London, W6.

MIME ACTION GROUP

The UK Umbrella Organisation for Mime and Physical Theatre

Advocating and raising the profile of

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The UK Mime and Physical Theatre Training Directory
Blueprint for Regional Mime Development

- ✓ Price reductions on MAG events, seminars and conferences
- ✓ Advance notice of key events
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pable to Mime Action Group's account for £ _____

Signature _____ Date _____

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Student	£11.50	£15.00
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Company	£20.00	£30.00
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Corporate / Commercial Organisation	£50.00	£60.00

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Post, enclosing any payment to Mime Action Group, Sadler's Wells, Rosebery Avenue, London EC1R 4TN. Further details on 0171 713 7944.