Theatre Australia: Australia's magazine of the performing arts 4(1) August 1979

Robert Page
Editor

Lucy Wagner
Editor

Follow this and additional works at: http://ro.uow.edu.au/theatreaustralia

Recommended Citation
http://ro.uow.edu.au/theatreaustralia/33

Research Online is the open access institutional repository for the University of Wollongong. For further information contact the UOW Library: research-pubs@uow.edu.au
Theatre Australia: Australia's magazine of the performing arts 4(1) August 1979

Description

Publisher
Theatre Publications Ltd., New Lambton Heights, S8p

This serial is available at Research Online: http://ro.uow.edu.au/theatreaustralia/33
COME ON BRUCE, THE AMBASSADOR SAYS THEY WILL SEND THE NEWSPAPER TO THEM.

I CAN HEAR THEM SARCASTIC AS I SAW BRUCE.

SOUNDS LIKE A FANOTIC'S PASSION PLAY?

JEEZ- Y

YEAH I'VE HEARD OF ARCHETYPES.

WHAT'S THE PRODUCTION ANYWAY BRUCE?

THE CLUB?

Yeah that'd be about right Bruce.

IT'S ABOUT A GROUP OF BENCHHEALED THAT Run A VFL AUSSIE RULES CLUB.

AUSSIE RULES, STRUTH.

SAY MORE, OOFERS.

Yep, same as before.

THAT'S THE CAN'T TRANSCEND THE PETTINO, OR, AS WE ARE THE SPRILL A ONCE-SAY.

I'M GONNA BE PUFFED AND PRUD, YOU'VE NO IDEA WHAT'S HERE TO MAKE, IF YOU RECKON YOUCAN'T PLAY RULES, TO LEAGUE SUPPORTERS, YOU'RE NOT ONLY PLAYING A GAME THAT RUNS BLOODY NUT ROIDES.

SHEEZUS, K, RUSTE BRUCE. HALF THE PLAYERS JUST DROPPED OUT OF THE BACK AND WENT UNDER A SEMI!

IN THE INTERESTS OF PRESERVING OUR WAY OF LIFE, I FEAR WE SHOULD FLOG OFF THE REST OF THE PROPS TO TRAMPS TIP AND LIQUIDATE THE PROCEEDS.

OH OF COURSE THEY TAKE THEIR ORDERS DIRECT FROM PEKING YOU KNOW, THE TEA URM IS REALLY A SECRET TRANSMITTER THATS WHY THEY STAND AROUND IT ALL DAY AT THE THIN EDGE OF THE WEDGE MY BOY, THE THIN EDGE.

OF COURSE THEY TAKE THEIR ORDERS DIRECT FROM PEKING YOU KNOW, THE TEA URM IS REALLY A SECRET TRANSMITTER THATS WHY THEY STAND AROUND IT ALL DAY AT THE THIN EDGE OF THE WEDGE MY BOY, THE THIN EDGE.

SO THEY TAKE THEIR ORDERS DIRECT FROM PEKING YOU KNOW, THE TEA URM IS REALLY A SECRET TRANSMITTER THATS WHY THEY STAND AROUND IT ALL DAY AT THE THIN EDGE OF THE WEDGE MY BOY, THE THIN EDGE.

OF COURSE THEY TAKE THEIR ORDERS DIRECT FROM PEKING YOU KNOW, THE TEA URM IS REALLY A SECRET TRANSMITTER THATS WHY THEY STAND AROUND IT ALL DAY AT THE THIN EDGE OF THE WEDGE MY BOY, THE THIN EDGE.

OF COURSE THEY TAKE THEIR ORDERS DIRECT FROM PEKING YOU KNOW, THE TEA URM IS REALLY A SECRET TRANSMITTER THATS WHY THEY STAND AROUND IT ALL DAY AT THE THIN EDGE OF THE WEDGE MY BOY, THE THIN EDGE.

OF COURSE THEY TAKE THEIR ORDERS DIRECT FROM PEKING YOU KNOW, THE TEA URM IS REALLY A SECRET TRANSMITTER THATS WHY THEY STAND AROUND IT ALL DAY AT THE THIN EDGE OF THE WEDGE MY BOY, THE THIN EDGE.

OF COURSE THEY TAKE THEIR ORDERS DIRECT FROM PEKING YOU KNOW, THE TEA URM IS REALLY A SECRET TRANSMITTER THATS WHY THEY STAND AROUND IT ALL DAY AT THE THIN EDGE OF THE WEDGE MY BOY, THE THIN EDGE.

OF COURSE THEY TAKE THEIR ORDERS DIRECT FROM PEKING YOU KNOW, THE TEA URM IS REALLY A SECRET TRANSMITTER THATS WHY THEY STAND AROUND IT ALL DAY AT THE THIN EDGE OF THE WEDGE MY BOY, THE THIN EDGE.

OF COURSE THEY TAKE THEIR ORDERS DIRECT FROM PEKING YOU KNOW, THE TEA URM IS REALLY A SECRET TRANSMITTER THATS WHY THEY STAND AROUND IT ALL DAY AT THE THIN EDGE OF THE WEDGE MY BOY, THE THIN EDGE.

OF COURSE THEY TAKE THEIR ORDERS DIRECT FROM PEKING YOU KNOW, THE TEA URM IS REALLY A SECRET TRANSMITTER THATS WHY THEY STAND AROUND IT ALL DAY AT THE THIN EDGE OF THE WEDGE MY BOY, THE THIN EDGE.

OF COURSE THEY TAKE THEIR ORDERS DIRECT FROM PEKING YOU KNOW, THE TEA URM IS REALLY A SECRET TRANSMITTER THATS WHY THEY STAND AROUND IT ALL DAY AT THE THIN EDGE OF THE WEDGE MY BOY, THE THIN EDGE.

OF COURSE THEY TAKE THEIR ORDERS DIRECT FROM PEKING YOU KNOW, THE TEA URM IS REALLY A SECRET TRANSMITTER THATS WHY THEY STAND AROUND IT ALL DAY AT THE THIN EDGE OF THE WEDGE MY BOY, THE THIN EDGE.

OF COURSE THEY TAKE THEIR ORDERS DIRECT FROM PEKING YOU KNOW, THE TEA URM IS REALLY A SECRET TRANSMITTER THATS WHY THEY STAND AROUND IT ALL DAY AT THE THIN EDGE OF THE WEDGE MY BOY, THE THIN EDGE.

OF COURSE THEY TAKE THEIR ORDERS DIRECT FROM PEKING YOU KNOW, THE TEA URM IS REALLY A SECRET TRANSMITTER THATS WHY THEY STAND AROUND IT ALL DAY AT THE THIN EDGE OF THE WEDGE MY BOY, THE THIN EDGE.

OF COURSE THEY TAKE THEIR ORDERS DIRECT FROM PEKING YOU KNOW, THE TEA URM IS REALLY A SECRET TRANSMITTER THATS WHY THEY STAND AROUND IT ALL DAY AT THE THIN EDGE OF THE WEDGE MY BOY, THE THIN EDGE.

OF COURSE THEY TAKE THEIR ORDERS DIRECT FROM PEKING YOU KNOW, THE TEA URM IS REALLY A SECRET TRANSMITTER THATS WHY THEY STAND AROUND IT ALL DAY AT THE THIN EDGE OF THE WEDGE MY BOY, THE THIN EDGE.

OF COURSE THEY TAKE THEIR ORDERS DIRECT FROM PEKING YOU KNOW, THE TEA URM IS REALLY A SECRET TRANSMITTER THATS WHY THEY STAND AROUND IT ALL DAY AT THE THIN EDGE OF THE WEDGE MY BOY, THE THIN EDGE.

OF COURSE THEY TAKE THEIR ORDERS DIRECT FROM PEKING YOU KNOW, THE TEA URM IS REALLY A SECRET TRANSMITTER THATS WHY THEY STAND AROUND IT ALL DAY AT THE THIN EDGE OF THE WEDGE MY BOY, THE THIN EDGE.

OF COURSE THEY TAKE THEIR ORDERS DIRECT FROM PEKING YOU KNOW, THE TEA URM IS REALLY A SECRET TRANSMITTER THATS WHY THEY STAND AROUND IT ALL DAY AT THE THIN EDGE OF THE WEDGE MY BOY, THE THIN EDGE.

OF COURSE THEY TAKE THEIR ORDERS DIRECT FROM PEKING YOU KNOW, THE TEA URM IS REALLY A SECRET TRANSMITTER THATS WHY THEY STAND AROUND IT ALL DAY AT THE THIN EDGE OF THE WEDGE MY BOY, THE THIN EDGE.

OF COURSE THEY TAKE THEIR ORDERS DIRECT FROM PEKING YOU KNOW, THE TEA URM IS REALLY A SECRET TRANSMITTER THATS WHY THEY STAND AROUND IT ALL DAY AT THE THIN EDGE OF THE WEDGE MY BOY, THE THIN EDGE.

OF COURSE THEY TAKE THEIR ORDERS DIRECT FROM PEKING YOU KNOW, THE TEA URM IS REALLY A SECRET TRANSMITTER THATS WHY THEY STAND AROUND IT ALL DAY AT THE THIN EDGE OF THE WEDGE MY BOY, THE THIN EDGE.

OF COURSE THEY TAKE THEIR ORDERS DIRECT FROM PEKING YOU KNOW, THE TEA URM IS REALLY A SECRET TRANSMITTER THATS WHY THEY STAND AROUND IT ALL DAY AT THE THIN EDGE OF THE WEDGE MY BOY, THE THIN EDGE.
Departments:
2 Comment
3 Quotes and Queries
5 Whispers, Rumours and Facts
6 Letters
46 Guide — Theatre, Opera, Dance

Spotlight:
7 Carol Burns — Suzanne Spunner
8 Youthful Dancers Make Box-Office Waves — David K Wheatley
9 Cooke’s Cordon Bleu Tours — Ray Stanley
10 Theatre of the Deaf — Ian Watson

Features:
11 A-Polo Gies for MTCee-at — Barry Dickins
12 From Theatre to Film — Christine Schofield
14 Sydney’s Lost Theatres Part One — Ross Thorne
17 TA Enquiry: Big Business and the Arts Pt 2 — Do we need A.R.T.S.? — Ross Thorne
35 Writer’s View: Roger Pulvers
36 Children’s Theatre: Children in Children’s Theatre

International:
33 Dances of Death in London — Irving Wardle

Opera:
39 Three AO openings; QLO duo; and Seymour single — David Gyger

Dance:
41 Wildstars — William Shoubridge

Theatre Reviews:
19 ACT
Wind in the Willows — Marguerite Wells
A Handful of Friends — Marguerite Wells

21 NSW
Tribute — John McCallum
From Laughing About the World to Living with the World/
The Caucasian Chalk Circle/Galileo — Mick Rodger
How Sleep the Brave — Anthony Barclay

25 QLD
Gone with Hardy/Travesties — Richard Fotheringham
A Man for all Seasons/The Merry Wives of Windsor — Jeremy Ridgman

27 SA
Departmental — Guthrie Worby

28 VIC
Miss Julie — Jack Hibberd
Uncle Vanya — Garrie Hutchinson

30 WA
Three Sisters/Gay Plays — Collin O’Brien

Film:
43 Dimboola/Sydney Film Fest — Elizabeth Riddell

Books:
45 The World of Theatre, Wit and Williams — John McCallum

48 Thespia’s Prize Crossword No.14
Happy Birthday To Us

Martin Sharp’s splendid cover for our birthday issue is as luring an invitation to the delights of TA as his clown’s face is for the fairground fun of Luna Park.

The magazine’s very existence is as bold as the primary colours of the design; its unequalled staying power is graphically summed up in the thirty magazine covers included. Trumpet blowing it may be to claim such records but, with the Government firm of Cringe, Cutback and Cutdown ever breathing down our necks, necessary.

The smiling and frowning profiles which Martin Sharp seems to stand not only for the traditional comic and tragic sides of theatre but indicate too the ups and downs of a three year effort to pull together in one publication the multifarious activities of performing artists across the nation.

In these years we have seen the demise of the Old Tote and against that the founding of the Sydney Theatre Company; the collapse of the old J.C. Williams and the irresistible rise of the Kenn Brodziak/Michael Edgely organisations and only the second and third Australian plays after a twenty year gap reaching Broadway — though neither lasted long.

If the State theatres look increasingly stolid, the first city second companies seem to be in a better position than ever to keep them on their toes. Brisbane is suddenly bristling with professional troupe; Hoopla despite all doom-saying has extended its place on the Melbourne scene; the Hole in Perth has a new director and administrator and in Adelaide the Association of Community theatres has become a real force, especially with the emergence of David Allen’s Red Shed and a critics’ gong for its efforts.

Three years has seen more ups than downs and more laughs than frowns. It is no small thanks to Theatre Australia that the range and diversity of the activity here is increasingly being recognised on the world cultural map.

Our existence wouldn’t have been possible without the loyal support of you, our readers; we invite your comment on the magazine and its future. In the meantime our thanks to all the people who have worked to maintain its vitality and wish ourselves A Happy Birthday.

“So,— Revue, mainly, eh Mr Bummings?”
ADELAIDE'S DRAW FOR SPONSORS

CHRISTOPHER HUNT, Director, Adelaide Festival.

“We have mounted a very big and fundamentally American campaign to raise funds for the Festival. It’s really on three levels: small individual donations in large numbers; relatively few large, outright donations that are not tied to any specific events; and large sponsorships as such, which involve plastering the names of particular firms over specific events, or an aspect of the Festival, or a series of concerts. This is what the Stuyvesant Foundation have done with their $10,000 for the State Opera’s ‘Death in Venice.

It’s too early to say what’s happening with the first one — we’re leaving the smaller ones till we’ve captured the big fish, but so far the campaign seems to have paid off for a number of firms, and it does become a bandwagon. I do think that Adelaide has a special prestige as far as the arts go; it doesn’t have that much to offer in economic and commercial terms, but it is in the interest of businesses trying to work in the area to promote the quality of life. And the arts and the life style that surrounds them can be used to encourage commercial sponsors to put in money.

Roughly speaking, the final promotion deficit for the Festival (after subsidy from the Australia Council) falls into three parts. One third is for administration and publicity which is covered by the private sector. We’ve approached people from time to time in the past but this time we think Dunhill were attracted because they could see the benefits in supporting the State Theatre Company — that is just from being associated with us — and we’re acknowledging them in our programmes and in our subscription brochures ‘Proudly sponsored by Dunhill’.

As Mr Malcolm Gray, Chairman of the Board of Governors of the State Theatre Company said ‘Without assistance of this nature from the private sector, it would be difficult to further develop the high standard of theatre which is earning the STC the reputation of being Australia’s leading drama company’.

MURPHY’S SENSUAL SIGNATURE

JANINE KYLE, Dance Co. NSW.

“Signatures, choreographed by Graeme (Murphy) to exploit the individual talents of the company, is a series of solos, duets and trios mixed together. It is a work for the whole company; it is lyric and happy, even the music, the piano etudes, is very sing-a-long. They will in fact be played on stage by Dennis Henning. Really, Signatures is a series of etudes by the dancers too, designed to cash in on the individualism of the company with their particular abilities, their jumps or lyricism, maximised depending on the music.

Scheherazade is a very different piece. It is from the Ravel Song Cycle (which is different from the Rimsky Korsakov version) and is music which has long been a favourite with Graeme — it is so sensual. It is only 18-20 minutes long, and what Graeme has composed is a work ostensibly for specific people — Janet Vernon, Sheree Da Costa, Ross Philip and Graeme Murphy himself. What he imagined was a feeling like that from a Gustav Klimt painting: the beautiful faces — black and white, pale and angular and with colour in a mosaic gold overlay.

The costumes are in the Klimt style too and are designed by Kristian Frederikson. I can vouch for their beauty for I’ve seen one. The set is a cavernous silk hanging, with dancers entwined in the silks (but still), so that again it looks like a Klimt painting. The ballet explores human relationships, those between women, men and women, and men, in the dances. There’s no real story line, just the mood of the sensuality of the music. It really is a mood piece.”

AMBIVALENT MARSUPIALS

BARRY OAKLEY.

“When we were in London, whenever I got homesick, I’d go to the little library in Australia House and look at the newspapers. Fraser, Whitlam, Hawke, Fraser, Whitlam, Hawke — a tight little self-enclosed world spinning round its own navel — it used to make me feel giddy, like peering down a hole into a cave.

Thus Sue, one of the characters in Marsupials, which the Melbourne Theatre Company are performing at Russell Street in September. This is just how I felt during my eighteen months in London: at home in a media and theatre metropolis, a more intense, articulate culture than my own — and yet estranged, because its ways weren’t mine. My sensibility, my style (or lack of it) had been shaped differently — and their upbringing would have taken most of me with them.

In Marsupials I’ve tried to explore this ambivalence — through a wife who wants to make a career in London and a husband who wants to stay where he is in Melbourne.

To articulate the changes in their relationship I’ve developed a kind of crystallised realism, which avoids the mundane imitation of life impediments of naturalism with the use of a sequence of short, sharp scenes, each focussing on a simple point or image, and each pointing the way to the next.”

CLASSIC AMERICAN DIRECTION

JUDY FERRIS, Producer, Ensemble Theatre.

“Long Day’s Journey into Night is an Ensemble production but one being presented by the Sydney Theatre Company at the Opera House. Our director, Robert Lewis, is coming from America especially to do this for us. He is a very distinguished American and a complete authority on O’Neill — he’s made a life time study of his work and directed many of his plays. He is also a noted teacher.

Hayes Gordon (Artistic Director of the En...
asked him if he would like to come out here but it was never convenient though it has been considered over the years. Robert Lewis follows the same teaching methods that Hayes uses and while he is out here he will also give two seminars (on 31 July and 3 August) directly aimed at actors and directors.

We were asked if we would do one of the famous American classics for the Sydney Theatre Company's season — Hayes is an American and we do a lot of American plays — and in discussion Long Day's Journey into Night seemed a good one to do. It hasn't been produced in Sydney since 1958. We have a cast that will include Patricia Conolly, Kevin Miles, Max Phipps, David Webb and Shauna O'Grady."

**NATIONAL BACK-UP FOR STREETLIGHT**

**JOAN AMBROSE, WA Correspondent.**

"The perennial problem for playwrights is — how to get the play on? In Perth the problem seems to have been more difficult than elsewhere. The playwrights are isolated, apparently closet writers, out of contact with one another and with no focal point of theatre in which to experiment and develop a public. But there are hopeful signs that the situation is about to change.

Ian David, playwright, now director and actor, has with Frank McKallister, Sally Crawford and Serge Tempolini, formed the Streetlight Company, and its first production is to be a play of Ian's called Art, a satire that looks closely at the Emperor's New Clothes Syndrome of the early '50s in America and they have been produced in Sydney since 1958. We have a cast that will include Patricia Conolly, Kevin Miles, Max Phipps, David Webb and Shauna O'Grady."

**TROCKADERO LIMERICKS**

**PATTI MOSTYN, Publicity.**

"When the laughter starts before the curtain goes up and continues through a programme of classical ballet — then Les Ballets Trockadero have hit town.

The 'Trocks' as they are known are a group of male performers who dance en travesti as ballerinas. They include an ex-US Marine, an ex-member of the Royal Dance Company of Iran and a research archeologist turned Company Manager. This is America's unique 'travesti' ballet; they wittily satirise the works of classical and contemporary choreographers to the delight of audiences everywhere, and they have been hailed as entertainment: 'par excellence'.

Their satire and parody in fact, serves only to make the rich heritage of Western dance priceless. Irrelevant as they may be, the company is now firmly established and they execute their short steps with great panache. The legendary Mallarme observed that the ballerina is a metaphoric writing poems with her body; the mixed metaphors of this company write some wonderful puns and limericks, but they are never funnier than when they are at their most subtle! From ballet to burlesque, their work is very good for that initial reaction to a script. Their satires and parodies are a very good night's entertainment."

**TRIBUTARY TRIPLE FIRST**

**JUDITH ALEXANDER, Director, Tributary.**

"Ron Elisha, a young Melbourne doctor and the author of In Duty Bound, is not a man of half measures. His first commitment to the MTC's playreading service was eight scripts, closely followed by a ninth. On March 27th 1979, the best of the nine, In Duty Bound, was given a private reading by the company and was extensively rewritten as a result. This was followed on Sunday June 17th by a public reading directed by John Sumner for our 'Readings for Playwrights' Tributary Programme.

The record attendance of 115 people to this reading indicates that, as we had suspected, the play was controversial. While the style is conventional, the handling of the subject matter is not. Provocative yet highly entertaining, it examines the turmoil created in a traditional Jewish family when the younger son decides to depart from custom and marry out.

Now In Duty Bound is in rehearsal and will be the opening production in the intimate new space of Athenaeum 2 on September 24th. I am directing the play, a sometimes daunting but mostly challenging and exhilarating experience.

A new theatre, a new playwright and a new play — it's an exciting triple first for Tributary and Melbourne audiences."

**TV/T.I.E. CROSS FERTILISATION**

**IAN DICKSON, Australian Film and Television School.**

"The idea of the conference (28 August to 1 September) is to get together people from as many fields as possible who deal with children — librarians, T.I.E. teachers etc — and try and bring them together with TV people in the areas of music, drama, dance, puppets and TV.

We shall bring in groups of about 50 children and the idea is to monitor the children's reaction to workshops in these areas. We shall have a video team there the whole time and the workshops will be screened from the video into the seminar so that people can see exactly what the children are doing and how they are reacting. We hope this will lead to a lot of cross fertilisation between the TV people and, in particular, the T.I.E. teams. Hopefully it will lead to some different TV programmes too, for the children and maybe different T.I.E. work too.

The idea is to find out just what children respond to. It is the act and how it is presented to them and how they react that is important — for instance dance often includes mime, and maybe small groups of dancers could be very effective. It is rumoured that Harriet Taylor's Filthy Children may be filmed and if this has the same effect on TV as it has on stage then it would be terrific."

**MULTI-PURPOSE READINGS**

**GRAEME BLUNDELL, Director, Hoopla.**

"There will be another season of rehearsed readings if not at the end of this year then certainly next. They are likely to become a regular part of our total programme in fact. We find them so good for that initial reaction to a script. You see, they're useful for the playwrights who see the play done but they're also useful for us and they are a very good night's entertainment. A couple from this year will probably be produced next year — Quadraphenia for instance. Yes, they're very worthwhile."

The last of the present series of readings, F F Pinto's Potipha's Wife will be held at the Playbox Theatre at 4.00 pm on Sunday, 12 August."

**OBITUARY**

**ROBERT QUENTIN**

Robert Quentin, one of the most influential figures in NSW Theatre of the past two decades, died at his Robertson home on July 7th.

After working for the Old Vic in London he was brought out by Hugh Hunt to act as the General Manager for the AETT Opera Co. In 1959 Sir Philip Baxter had him appointed as Senior Lecturer in the Uni of NSW English Department so that NIDA could be set up. Within a few years (in 1963) he began his major work of establishing the Old Tote Theatre Company, which after 15 years was to collapse just a year before his death.

He had transferred from the English Department to head the first independent Drama Department in Australia — with this being converted into a full chair in 1966. When he retired he was honoured with an emeritus professorship.

He was associated with many other institutions, including the Jane St Theatre, the ATYP and was the instigator of the NSW Drama Foundation which once generously assisted this magazine. We honour his memory.
Ray Stanley’s

WHISPERS
RUMOURS
& FACTS

“What are you doing at the moment?” has been my question to many actors and actresses recently. Almost shamefacedly they have replied that they are “guesting” in Cop Shop, The Restless Years, The Young Doctors, Skylways, The Sullivans or Prisoner. Why on earth are they so apologetic? At least it is work — and often better than the less than good stage productions they offer no apologies for appearing in.

It is not often a musical sparks off a sequel, particularly 20 years later, but that is what seems likely to happen with Bye Bye Birdie...And musical versions are being mooted for the most unlikely subjects: Anouilh’s The Waltz of the Toreadors (with music by Harold Rome), Fellini’s film Juliet of the Spirits (to be directed by Frank Dunlop), Phillip Barry’s old play Holiday (using mainly unpublished music and lyrics by Cole Porter, and even Much Ado About Nothing (to be called To Duh)!

Remember The Glitter Sisters? Well, their creator, Jon Finklayson, is now working on The Glitter Sisters’ Sisters. Opening date will be September 15 in Melbourne, and company manager Geoffrey Pfitzner currently is tying up details for a full round Australia tour to follow the Melbourne season. Anyone interested in booking the show should contact 165 Mary Street, Richmond, Victoria, 3121. (Tel: (03) 428 2279 or 662 3671).

Is it true Bartholomew John has landed the male lead in Evidia?....Understand there could be a commercial production of Steppard’s Night and Day If Diana Rigg or Jane Fonda can be persuaded to come to Australia....There is also a possibility we will be seeing Mollie Sugden (Mrs Slocombe in Up In One....) touring in a play which might (or might not) be Find The Lady....And there’s a whisper we could see Peter Allen in his Broadway show Up In One....But we definitely will have Derek Nimmo with us once more, this time in a new play.

Believe Caroline Gilmer is toying with the idea of doing a one-woman show called Sugar Babies....Wonder who will pick up the rights to the Broadway hit The Elephant Man; apparently it is doing such terrific business, there are standees at every performance....Sandy Paterson, who has handled the publicity for so many international stars, is now extending her activities with appointment as publicity consultant to Sydney’s Boulevard Hotel.

The night following the opening of the best Chekhov production I have ever seen in Australia (right up to the standard of the Moscow Arts Company version I once saw), I was looking forward to Hoopla’s Miss Julie, one of my favourite plays. But.....! Wonder whether it had the approval of Hoopla’s newest board director, Frederick Parslow.

Although it has been told many times, I do like that Mae West story concerning her comeback in the picture Sextette. Apparently the director rigged up a remote control device so that he could whisper the lines into his neck microphone, to be heard through a tiny transmitter in the star’s ear. All seemed to go well until, in the middle of a scene, in her well known drawl, Mae called: “Can anyone take a client from Doheny to Bel Air?”. Apparently a local taxi-firm’s radio had got mixed up with Mae’s ear-piece wavelength!

EURO HAIR CENTRE
Suite 511, 5th Floor,
381 Pitt St., Sydney.
Telephone: 233-4125

HAIRPIECES — WIGS — BEARDS —
MUSTACHES — SIDEBURNS FOR
THEATRE, FILM & TELEVISION.

Handmade in our own workshop
by experienced craftsmen.

COMPARE OUR PRICES
Telephone: 233-4125

YOU NEED
OPERA AUSTRALIA
ALL THE NATIONAL NEWS
INTERVIEWS WITH VISITING
PERSONALITIES,
BACKGROUND MATERIAL ON
BOTH NATIONAL AND
REGIONAL COMPANY
PRODUCTIONS.

THE COMPREHENSIVE
MONTHLY
OPERA NEWSPAPER
SUBSCRIBE NOW:
ONLY $5 ANNUALLY

To:
Circulation Manager,
Opera Australia
P.O. Box R361,
Royal Exchange, NSW 2000

I enclose my cheque for $ .........

Please send the next 12 issues of Opera Australia to:

Name
Address

Postcode

THEATRE AUSTRALIA AUGUST 1979 5
Dear Sir,
I have carefully considered the adverse critical reactions to my play, _A Manual Of Trench Warfare_, and feel disappointed that most critics have directed their attentions not to the matter of the play, but to its appurtenances.

It is not a play about war, or even, primarily, about men at war. Nor is it a play about homosexuality, least of all a crude attempt to shock. Nor is it a play about the Celtic heritage of Australia. Nor, for that matter, is any character in the play my mouthpiece. It is about the inability of Australians, in general, to allow their feelings, sentiment, and emotion free and natural play and expression. It is about the inability of Australians, as represented by Barry Moon, the young Australian digger, to cope with these aspects of human personality when they occur.

It is a flawed, first play; overwritten and in need of some structural modification, but it was not attacked mainly for these reasons. It was attacked, I feel, because its emotion and sentiment were naked and therefore confronting.

The fact that it was attacked in the way that it was illustrates, in my view, the thesis of the play.

Yours faithfully,
Clem Gorman

---

Dear Sir,

With reference to your list of Brecht productions in Australia, you might care to include the following (all in NSW):

3. 1972 _The Caucasian Chalk Circle_ Director: David Goddard, Repertory 200 also, the director for the New Theatre 1971 production of _Trumpe r and Drums_ was Noelann Gandon (not Nolan, as printed).

Best wishes,
David Goddard,
Killara, NSW

---

Dear Sir,

In thanking Julie Copeland for her generous review of _The Grand, Grand Final Show_, may I make three small corrections?

1) I never intended to imply that Australian students of drama should not study French farce or Shakespeare. On the contrary, I believe that a study of the forms from which our modern drama developed is essential for drama students. What I do believe, though, is that, if we’re to develop a genuinely _Australian_ drama, it’s essential to relate them to Australian culture — of which football is one part. In other words, drama students ought not merely to be learning from the traditions of European drama. If they want to make a theatre that has something to say to most Australians, then they ought to be learning from what most Australians enjoy.

2) Neither did I intend to imply that _Baal_ was produced as an “as exciting as a Grand Final”. I don’t believe we did. But I do think we produced a theatre that was exciting for people who find Grand Finals exciting.

3) Roberta Bunnin does not exist. The Roberta Bunnin who does play a central part, along with Ray Mooney and myself, in putting the football show together.

Yours sincerely,
Albert Hunt
Victorian College of the Arts
Melbourne, Vic.

---

Dear Sir,

In the June 1979 edition of _Theatre Australia_ you have listed Bertolt Brecht productions in Australia.

In addition to those listed, we advise that _The Caucasian Chalk Circle_ was presented by The University of Adelaide Theatre Guild in 1978, directed by Jim Vile.

We hope that this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,
John Edge
President
The University of Adelaide Theatre Guild

---

Dear Sir,

With regret, we would ask for mention of the passing away of one of Australia’s great theatrical personalities, Mr James Punch. The friends and workmates would like to pay tribute to one of Australia’s great Scenic Artists, Mr James Punch of Morley WA who passed away 15th May, 1979.

Yours faithfully,
R W Staples,
Robert Staples and Associates,
Scenery Makers,
Tuart Hill, WA.

---

Dear Sir,

COPYRIGHT ON SCRIPTS

Recently AYPAA produced a handy Directory of Play Scripts that endeavoured to describe the content and location of Theatre in Education and Puppetry scripts.

I have written to a number of Theatre Companies and to the Australia Council Librarian seeking copies of some of these scripts. My intention was to put them in the College Library for access not only by students and staff but by the many teachers who ring my Department asking for such things.

Most of the scripts are in typewritten form. In some cases a copy is sent free of charge; in many cases we have to pay photocopying charges to the place of origin, and fair enough too. In a few cases the Australia Council the scripts are made available on inter-library loan.

My problem is this: our Library will not hold scripts that have been photocopied as they claim this is in breach of copyright, and must have the author’s permission to reproduce (the script).

Were such permission obtained and someone to read the script then decide to stage a production, requiring multiple copies, they would not agree to it — for copyright reasons.

This is not a problem of rights of performance which seems to me quite clear and unambiguous. Have you any suggestions (through your columns) as to how this impasse can be overcome?

Best wishes,
David Hough,
Lecturer in Charge
Speech & Drama, Mt Lawley CAE, WA.

---
Carol Burns: A thinking person’s actor

Suzanne Spunner

I spoke to Carol Burns over a hasty sandwich lunch at the MTC workshops in South Melbourne between rehearsals for *Errol Flynn’s Great Big Adventure Book For Boys*. After the interview Carol and the rest of the cast were off to watch the man himself, in *Captain Blood*...For an actor in her early thirties — Carol Burns has had a remarkably consistent and varied career.

To date this year she has played the lead role of Franky Doyle in the Reg Grundy’s television production *Prisoner*, and has taken part in the ABC production, *The Oracle*. For MTC, she recently played the part of Louka in Shaw’s *Arms and The Man* — directed by Ray Lawler, and she is currently rehearsing for this Bruce Myles’ production of *Errol Flynn*.

Unlike many of her contemporaries Carol never studied drama formally but for this she has no regrets: “I was fortunate in that I worked with a number of different people who were all very talented, so I was able to glean from them what I wanted. I did an awful lot of reading of course, but I think the most important thing, is that I pick bones from other people. The different things which you learn in that way are appropriate at different times. I think basically I am an instinctive actor but I am also a very rational person so I will let happen what I want to, and then if I get stuck I will draw on any one of the different techniques that I have learnt about”.

Carol agreed that she was fairly eclectic but added that she sometimes worried that she was too intellectual: “It is the balance of passion and intelligence that makes a good actor, and if you go too far in controlling what is happening to you, you run the risk of stopping the spontaneity which gives you the magic in performances.”

I asked her if this meant that particular companies and directors had been formative in her career. Her response was a firm “Yes — The greatest director in Australia is George Ogilvie, and I had the good fortune to work with him for eighteen months in the South Australian Theatre Company — for close to six months we did nothing but workshops — on clowning, movement, improvisation — it was a terrific learning experience.”

At the age of twenty nine, realising that she had only worked for state regional theatre companies, Carol decided that it was about time that she did some television. Her first television work was five drama series with the ABC: “I am also very glad that I started there because they have time to work with you in rehearsals and you have time in the studio, and as you usually do mini series — say six parts — you’ve got a chance to investigate a character properly and learn the technique of the medium in which you are working. In the middle of the ABC series I did *The Mango Tree*. What was so good about that was that we were on location for a month in Rockhampton and Gangala, and as there is nothing else to do in those places but work, on the four days that I had off from actually filming, I joined the crew and they gave me a hat and I became fifth assistant to the director.”

Next year Carol will be working as an associate artist with QTC: “It is one of the best offers that could be made to an actor in Australia as I will be choosing my own play and my own part. So I am madly reading plays because when you suddenly get presented with the world’s literature to choose from, what do you pick?”

Carol stressed that it was important to realise the unique opportunities that working for the QTC had afforded her at the outset of her career: “When the QTC first started it was a very isolated scene and nobody from down south wanted to work there because nobody had ever heard of it. I was doing things like playing Lady Claire Gurney in *The Ruling Class* and *Juno and the Paycock* and, in the same year Lucy in *You’re A Good Man Charley Brown* — I had a most extraordinary range of parts to choose from and I had the opportunity to investigate the roles and do some of them moderately well, fail in others and be terrific with a few — and all without the pressure of it affecting what anybody else in Australia thought about me.”

“Yet they must have heard something about me because when I came down south I had some sort of standing as an experienced actor rather than as coming straight out of drama school. But in choosing plays for next year I am a bit frustrated because QTC have already done some of the great things like Hedda Gabbler and The Seagull and Streetcar Named Desire. I’m looking to newer writings, maybe Vivat Vivat Regina because either Elizabeth or Mary are great roles for a woman to play, and David hare’s new plays Plenty and Teeth and Smiles also interest me.

She acknowledged that there was a risk in choosing a star piece if you didn’t do it well you were asking for audience and critics alike to come down on you: “Because the emphasis of the Australian public doesn’t seem to be on watching actors work but on just being entertained, they aren’t interested in seeing an actor investigate a part. But in Queensland, I have had a public who did follow me and who were really interested in coming along and seing me in many different parts. That is an attitude which I think we as actors have a responsibility to promote in our public, so that they become interested in you as a craftsman and artist. The same attitude permeates criticism in this country — most of the time it’s merely a review of a particular thing. What it should be is a criticism of that play, that writer and that actor’s work in progress over the last five years; in other words, the particular should be put into some sort of context, because otherwise all you are doing is saying it’s worth five bucks if you’ve got nothing better to do in the next three weeks.”

I asked Carol if she had any longing to direct. She said that at present she was happy being an actress: “My overwhelming desire is to perform, so I would probably make people perform the way I saw a part rather than allowing them their way — that is the great thing in acting I think, to allow things to happen within a conscious intellectual framework. I think there is a great desire for the balance of that spontaneous/cerebral duality in an actor.” In the course of our talk Carol described herself as “not a glamorous person” and a “thinking person’s actor”. She is certainly the latter and fortunately eschews the former.
Youth ballet companies are too often children prettified for adulatory relatives. The Australian Youth Ballet is exceptional...

Youthful Dancers Make Box-Office Waves

David K. Wheatley

Quite the darling of the Brisbane cultural scene at the moment is a group comprising a modern day Pied Piper and 27 dancers, aged between 9 and 15 years.

The piper is Inara Svalbe, a graduate of The Australian Ballet School, a dancer with the Australian Ballet, J C Williams and the New Zealand Ballet Company, and a lady who is rapidly building a reputation as a choreographer in Queensland.

Dancing to a tune almost inspirational in its fervour are the members of her Australian Youth Ballet Company.

Inara Svalbe founded the company in July 1978. In those formative stages she gained the prestige of getting Sir Robert Helpmann and John Field, Director of the Royal Academy of Dancing as patrons for her company. Then when the final audition was held to select 27 dancers from the 227 who auditioned, Inara Svalbe was assisted by a very prestigious selection panel — Marilyn Jones, Gary Norman, Valmae Roberts, Ross Stretton.

The group first performed as a company at St. John’s Cathedral in Brisbane in November 1978. For this, Miss Svalbe choreographed Shining Child. She then took the company to various suburban shopping centres where they performed It’s all just for fun. That initial public reaction was sufficient for Inara Svalbe to take her plans a step further. The company went into rehearsal for an inaugural theatre season.

That first season in May at the Twelfth Night Theatre was a director’s dream. The critics wrote ecstatic reviews and vied with one another for superlatives. All the seats sold quickly. Hundreds were turned away. Not surprisingly, it was followed by a repeat season in June. Then came an added feather in the cap — an invitation for the company to perform in Aberdeen next year at an International Youth Festival.

“Pretty children! Pretty steps! Pretty costumes! It’s all good box-office.” More than one competitor for Brisbane dance kudos has used those or similar words to dismiss the success of the Australian Youth Ballet. Yet that is all too easy an explanation. What is closer to the truth is that Inara Svalbe has carefully blended a winning combination of box office appeal with clever choreography. After all, every dancing school recital ever mounted makes use of all those pretty attributes. But it cannot be used to explain away the success of the Australian Youth Ballet — after all, 27 dancers just don’t have sufficient relatives to make up those capacity audiences.

In the opening ballet, Dogon, Svalbe uses the music of Verdi to create a series of images representative of that great painter’s work. Of the three ballets, this was the strongest as far as quality was concerned. The second, Pastorale, set to Beethoven’s No 6, was a fairly predictable collection of peasants, nymphs and satyrs, while the third, Pastime with good Company was a gloriously costumed, uninhibited romp set to traditional English tunes.

Aside from the undoubted sheer talent of the young dancers, Inara Svalbe’s choreography was the most interesting aspect of the programme. “One of the problems of choosing ballets for children is that the themes must suit the age of the dancers,” Inara Svalbe explains. “Obviously you cannot have children performing in adult love stories. Another problem is finding choreographers who can work with children — who can cope with the limited vocabulary of steps.”

Inara Svalbe aims to develop that vocabulary — by extending the members of her company and presenting them with work that is more difficult than they would encounter in their normal class situation. Overall, the aim is to give these young dancers experience in the performing side of dance as a complement to their study of technique.

“Many of these children will not go on to join professional dance companies as they grow older. They will grow to be too tall, too short, too fat. The Australian Youth Ballet gives these people a chance to add performance skills to their study of technique.”

One could also add that the company will prove a valuable training ground for those who go on to become professional performers.

Their director has insisted on a professional approach to their work; that they learn to work as a company. There are no individual stars — all are members of a well disciplined team. Ultimately, Inara Svalbe would like to see the company expand its activities into other states, although she is the first to admit that there are many problems to be overcome before this is likely to eventuate. This aside, this will be a busy year for the Australian Youth Ballet. There is a country tour of Queensland planned for July, as well as another performance in St John’s Cathedral, and then new works for another Brisbane season later in the year.

And after that, all energies will be devoted towards getting to Aberdeen — and it would seem, given Brisbane’s present enchantment with the company, there will be plenty of support to help get them there.

After all, everybody loves a winner, and at the moment Inara Svalbe and her company of young dancers are slotted very firmly into that category.
Still young in the entrepreneurial stakes, Malcolm Cooke, protege of Kenn Brodziak, joins the big league...with commitment.

Cooke’s Cordon Bleu Tours

Ray Stanley

For a small, independent, commercial producer, in existence for only 18 months and not afraid to gamble on Australian properties, Malcolm Cooke is doing remarkably well.

Originally a school teacher, he played the juvenile in Thurber’s The Male Animal at the old Arts Theatre in Richmond, Victoria, for Joy Mudge and the late Philip Stainton, with Max Meldrum as lead, and in the early days he appeared in the Consider Your Verdict series.

“Then Kenn Brodziak, who was a good friend of mine, advised me if I really wanted to get into theatre it should not be on the performing side. In those days there was no security in it, little chance of development, the continuity of production wasn’t there.” Brodziak suggested if Cooke wanted to go into theatre, it should be on the management-production side, although even that was insecure.

That is how it really all started. As soon as his time with the Education Department was up, he commenced with Aztec Services as Brodziak’s personal assistant, and then became manager, general manager, and a director. He was with Aztec for nine years and says he learned everything from Brodziak. “I would describe myself as his protegee and I hope that my efforts make him proud of what he taught me. I certainly have modelled my independent company on the original Aztec Services, because Mr Brodziak created what was the most successful theatrical production company in the history of Australia. As a small independent with low overheads, he created huge profits for his shareholders.”

There were many highlights for Cooke in the years he was at Aztec. Almost the first was the Beatles’ tour, for which he was assistant tour manager. Then there was The Black and White Minstrel Show, which was enormously successful and ran for over two years. Perhaps his most exciting experience, though, was company manager to Marlene Dietrich, where probably he was closer to her than Brodziak himself.

After nine years Cooke left Aztec Services. “I was now an executive director, a shareholder, second on the ladder, and it was only a small independent company; the only other place I could go was to become joint managing director.” He put the proposition to Brodziak, saying he would be willing to be the junior and not actually have joint control. Brodziak, however, would not agree to this. In Cooke’s words, he was “a benevolent despot” who had sole say and control, and Cooke confesses that really this is the only way to run such an independent company.

So Cooke went to hairdresser, Edward Beale’s, as joint managing director, but still retained an interest in Aztec as a side line, and theatre as a minor interest. From time to time he would produce Aztec shows, such as the musical Two Gentlemen of Verona.

For the four years Cooke remained with Edward Beale, the business grew from four to eleven salons, making both partners wealthy enough to own Rolls Royces. Then a point was reached whereby they were in conflict over which way the business should proceed, resulting in Cooke’s selling out to Beale. Not knowing quite what to do Cooke took it easy for a year, and it was Mike Walsh who finally got him back into the theatre scene.

The latter had signed a contract with the Nine Network for The Mike Walsh Show, which has always been an enormous success. Walsh had long had an interest in live theatre, but not practical experience of it. “It was Mike who gave me the necessary stimulus and the feeling of not being on my own, because I do like working with someone. I like to be able to make all the decisions — but I like the feeling of support of having someone there to talk it all over with. Two brains are better than one.”

Cooke went off overseas and secured the Australian rights of The Kingfisher. On another overseas trip, in New York, he happened to meet Barry Humphries in the foyer of a theatre, and suggested it was time Humphries did another show in Australia. Isn’t It Pathetic At His Age became the first attraction to be jointly presented by Cooke and Walsh.

The Humphries show was followed by An Evening With Quentin Crisp, which Cooke now admits he handled wrongly. Crisp was over-promoted, so that people felt they had seen all he had to offer in television interviews, and the theatres in which Crisp appeared were much too large. Box office wise the show was a failure. The Kingfisher with Googie Withers, John McCallum and Frank Thring finally cast, exceeded Cooke’s expectations. Seasons had to be extended in Melbourne and Sydney and it went on to other unscheduled places and is to return next year.

Cooke is particularly pleased with the success of Robyn Archer in A Star Is Born. He had never seen her perform but had heard all about her and was interested when she approached him with the idea. “Now that we realise what a hit it is, we will probably expand the musical side of it and make it a bigger orchestra or band.”

“I do shows that I like”, stresses Cooke. “There is not time to get involved in shows that I’m not really interested in. I can physically only do X number of shows a year. I’d rather do shows that I believe in — that way I can sell them.” So he is most happy about Lillian Gish coming out for him in Lillian Gish and the Silent Movies.

As with Aztec Services, Cooke has a small staff: a Melbourne manager, a Sydney manager and two more office staff, plus people engaged for the duration of particular productions.

What sort of things can we expect from him now?

“You can expect a major musical next year, a return tour of The Kingfisher for those other states, and A Star Is Born in 1980 hopefully to tour the rest of Australia. I don’t believe there is a regular commercial theatre going audience any more. I believe there is an audience for an attraction and you must know what your attraction is and who the audience is.”

If there were no subsidies Cooke does not believe there would be very much theatre today; he has not applied for any himself, but admits his decision may change. “We now have the Adelaide Festival Centre and the Elizabethan Theatre Trust very much on the commercial field with the benefit of their grants. That makes it hard for individual independent entrepreneurs to compete. They’ve got public monies to put shows on with, but I have a very good relationship with both, and in a number of my productions the AETT has participated. That’s a nice way of having that blend of grants and Government monies.”

And what about that Australian musical Cooke is working on? He refuses to be drawn too much into it; “It is a major project that is underway and being worked on now”, he grudgingly says. “It will be another world premiere, but it will not be a little Australian musical; it’s a very major musical and will open in big musical comedy houses. It’s very exciting.”
Theatre of the Deaf

Ian Watson
Artistic Director

The NSW Theatre of the Deaf is in its inaugural year as a full time professional Theatre-in-Education Company. This is an exciting challenge and important development for the Company, but one it is more than ready to meet.

The Company had its origin in the early seventies under the guidance of the Adult Deaf Society of NSW (ADS) and, most especially, through the efforts of one of its Welfare Officers, Mr Nick Neary, a man with experience of deaf theatre in England. In 1973 the Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust brought the famous American National Theatre of the Deaf to Australia and several of its actors conducted workshops with members of Sydney’s deaf community, and an idea was born. The Adult Deaf Society combined with the Elizabethan Theatre Trust to set up the NSW Theatre of the Deaf in 1974 and employed an experienced theatre director, Adam Salzer, to coordinate its activities.

Under Salzer’s guidance, the Company grew from what could only be described as a social group to one which now services a very real need in the deaf community, as well as the community at large — mainly through the efforts of its Theatre-in-Education team. This development has been a relatively speedy one, but with judicious guidance, careful training and a large number of performances including several major productions at the Seymour Centre in Sydney, the Company has more than proven its ability.

Earlier this year (1979), Adam resigned from the Company and I was appointed as the new Artistic Director in April. It is now up to me to continue the fine work Adam has done and to build on the foundations he has laid to consolidate the Company and provide the impetus for its further growth.

The Theatre at present consists of two companies: the full time professional company made up of two deaf actors, one deaf actress, a hearing actress and a hearing production manager/actor; and a larger part-time semi-professional company consisting of fifteen deaf actors and actresses.

The first company tours schools, performing one production for primary schools My House Is...Your Garbage Bin — a play commissioned by the National Parks and Wildlife Association dealing with the problems of pollution, conservation and feral animals; and another for secondary schools, Actions Speak Louder Than Words — a play concerned with communication, centred around the idea of an audition for a film without words and showing, in a humorous way, how physical actions be they mime, gesture, sign language, body language or whatever, often communicate more than the spoken word. This concern with visual, as opposed to verbal, communication is quite obviously a large part of the company’s work and in both plays a part of the production time is set aside for workshops which involve the children and allow them to explore visual as a means of communication.

This is quite apart from the intensive workshops conducted over an hour and a half wherein one of the actors works with a group of up to fifteen children and explores, in depth, the possibilities and range of visual language.

Meanwhile, the larger company is geared to performing for adults, be they in the deaf community, or the community at large; and over the years has mounted productions such as Five Flights To Freedom, Of Rogues and Clowns, The Dreamer, Lies My Mother Told Me, King Lear, many of which have been performed at major venues such as the Bondi Pavilion and the Seymour Centre in Sydney.

Both companies obviously share much in common, not the least of which is their broad audience appeal; and attribute that ensures their productions are seen by an audience that is in the main, a hearing audience. This being the case, serious consideration is given to the sound track of all their productions, be it in the area of special sound effects, and/or original music. To this end, the company employs a part-time musical director, Struan Smith, who works closely with the writer, director and actors on each production. Struan’s wealth of experience and his particular affinity with the deaf, their style of acting and their method of working, has proved an invaluable asset in complimenting the uniqueness of the deaf theatre.

Deaf people have many problems directly related to their particular affliction, however as with many others who suffer a sense impairment, the other senses develop a compensation factor. One aspect of the deaf is their heightened awareness of, and experience with, visual and visual communication. The Deaf Theatre allows them an avenue whereby they can give other deaf people and, most especially, the larger community of hearing people an insight into this unique talent.

We live in a visual age and theatre — most especially in Australia, excluding a few important exceptions — is in a rut. The theatre needs new ideas, new impetus and who better to provide that need than the very people whose world is totally visual — the deaf. Deaf actors have an approach to theatrical language which the theatre of the 1980’s cannot ignore; with a combination of mime, gesture and movement they create a whole world, but significantly, this does not necessarily mean the world of a Marceau, where dialogue is forbidden, but one in which dialogue is married with a form of communication that strips the verbal to its bare edge of poetry — a theatrical form that combines movement and dialogue into a new language all its own.

At present the Company works almost exclusively within schools and the deaf community taking time to consolidate its formation as a Theatre-in-Education company, however in the latter part of this year and in 1980 we hope to expand our repertoire and once again perform to adult hearing audiences. This does not mean our Theatre-in-Education work or our commitment to the deaf community will be less; both these areas are vitally important to the theatre and the community in general (for example, later this year we are hoping to be able to employ a writer-in-residence for our TIE work). If, however, we are to realise the potential of the company and the debt it owes the greater theatre community we must move toward a major state company, if not a national company, committed to the unique form of theatre that only the deaf can instigate.

The Deaf Community is justifiably proud of its theatre, a theatre that has allowed them to share with other deaf people and express to hearing audiences, their talent and common humanity. But nothing remains static, we have many challenges ahead, for the deaf and the hearing actors who work with them — but the Company looks forward to those challenges in the 1980’s.
I have been associated with La Mama theatre and the APG theatre and the gutter (one of the few remaining venues still relatively free of party favour and programming or political bias, but, of course, it won't be long before there are gutters-in-the-round, thrust gutters, proscenium arch gutters, a bit like guiley traps, I guess, the way things are going) for a little over five years, and have played to very poor houses in all these localities indeed; but nothing will equal my experience last October, when I played a drunken seadog in Barry Oakley's *The Ship's Whistle*, when, as that seadog, I played to seven people in the Front Theatre of The Pram Factory. Actually, there were only four, but it being my grandmother, Gertrude Dickins' birthday, I had taken her and her two sisters, Bess and Mabel, all 90 not out, to the play that night, for a treat. A treat it was, and they thoroughly enjoyed themselves, and were very happy with me, thinking I'd brought them to a runthrough, not having enough dough for a proper performance.

In the second last act, during the blackout, I lost my teeth. I was obliged to go hunting for them on my hands and knees with a box of matches, but we did the play on a traverse-system, and they'd been run over by two tons of sweaty actors on wheels, so I did the last scene gummy, at which gumminess my nan and her two sisters laughed good naturedly, also gummy. They were too old to clap the curtain call, and after the performance I drove them home to their cottage in Thornbury, and we all had some date buns and cups of hot tea.

Now, I love The Pram Factory, for many reasons, mainly for the wonderful fact that they exist, that there is nothing like them anywhere at all, and that they promote and support ratbags like me. But the place has changed my life, and my mind (always partly suspect) is now a total wipeout. I hereby cite a typical programme, or collective meeting, with some slight theatrical exaggeration (to make a good story a better one); but not much.

**A Collective Diatribe**

(or a Comedy Without Manners)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1st Character:</th>
<th>What about promotion for The Fools' Shoe Hotel?</th>
<th>Unless we promote, we die in the arse.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2nd Character:</td>
<td>Who cares?</td>
<td>Don't be sexist.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dickins:</td>
<td>I care.</td>
<td>You got an arse, haven't you? (Exit Dickins)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Character:</td>
<td>Get ****.</td>
<td>Get ****.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chairperson:</td>
<td></td>
<td>I'll second that.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st Character:</td>
<td></td>
<td>Who wants a number?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Character:</td>
<td></td>
<td>The chairperson smoked it all.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Character:</td>
<td></td>
<td>Get ****.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Character:</td>
<td></td>
<td>Where's Peter Corrigan?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th Character:</td>
<td></td>
<td>Drunk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6th Character:</td>
<td></td>
<td>Where's his stage design?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Character:</td>
<td></td>
<td>With Timlin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Character:</td>
<td></td>
<td>Where's Timlin?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th Character:</td>
<td></td>
<td>With Corrigan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6th Character:</td>
<td></td>
<td>Where are both of them?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Character:</td>
<td></td>
<td>With Dickins.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th Character:</td>
<td></td>
<td>Where are all of them?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Character:</td>
<td></td>
<td>Drunk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Character:</td>
<td></td>
<td>Where's Romeril?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chairperson:</td>
<td></td>
<td>You are Romeril.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Character:</td>
<td></td>
<td>Can we talk about Fools' Shoe?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Character:</td>
<td></td>
<td>What's the point?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Character:</td>
<td></td>
<td>It starts tonight.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Has anybody bought a view-finder yet?  
No, and I'm not sure I'll get one. I'm told they're the mark of an inexperienced director, so I've cancelled my order.

Well I'm prepared to admit my ignorance... I thought I might get a gold plated one to hang around my neck — with certain autographs on it.

Fellini, Godard???

You could put notches on it — one for each of your films!

It's nine o'clock on a drizzly Sunday morning and a small crowd of eminent Australian theatre directors is huddling together outside the Australian Film and Television School, waiting for the watchman to open the door.

It's the third day of a weekend workshop train theatre directors in the techniques of film production and direction. About once a month nine of them get together in Sydney for seminars and practical sessions, preparing them to direct their first films, later in the year.

Rex Cramphorn, Graeme Blundell, Ken Dwyer, Aarne Neeme, Nigel Triffit, George Whaley, Malcolm Robertson, Richard Wherrett and Mick Rodger were chosen from seventeen applicants for the course. There are obviously a lot of people in the entertainment business with their feet on the stage and their eyes on the screen.

At their first weekend seminar in April they met the producers, and in May, they're learning from the technicians. By the end of the year they'll be making twenty minute films for

CHRISTIN

From

Continued on page 34.

KEY

1. Mick Rodger 6. Kerry Dwyer
2. George Whaley 7. Rex Cramphorn
3. Aarne Neeme 8. Richard Wherrett
4. Graeme Blundell (Nigel Triffit - also of)
5. Malcolm Robertson (the course - does not appear in the photo)

Photo: Peter Holderness
CHOFIELD reports on eminent theatre directors crossing the line

Theatre to Film

commercial cinema release.

It's a course initiated by Gil Brealy, organized by Julia Overton and funded by the Australian Film and Television School and the Australian Film Commission, with support and extra finance from a wide range of laboratories, equipment hire firms and production houses within the industry.

In 1977, Gil Brealy put forward a proposal that the Australian film industry could be benefited by using the experience and expertise of theatre directors, especially in the areas of scripting and performance. When he set out to raise finance and support for his proposed course, he found resistance from within the industry. It wasn't until Ken Watts of the Film Commission gave them backing and financial support that Gil and the AFTVS were able to put the proposal into action.

GEORGE WHALEY: It's the splendid sort of opportunity that we must not blow. The two assumptions on which the course was set up — that what the film industry needs is people experienced in working with actors and on new scripts; and that the theatre can provide them — are arguable, but I'm glad I'm one of them. It won't set us up as film directors, and probably to serve our apprenticeship we should do more than the one short film at the end of this course. I believe that the actor is the centre of the film and theatre industry, and having worked as a film actor I know the sort of rough deal an actor gets there. It's not always a case of actors being mishandled, but of too short rehearsal time etc, but theatre director's major work is with scripts and actors, and perhaps we can make that side of it more efficient.

It's easy to see why there would be resistance to the scheme, from an industry in which almost every gaffer and best boy is a frustrated director, working his, or her, way up from the bottom. And those who have made it to the director's chair aren't willing to make room for someone who walks in with a gold plated view-finder and government money papering his way. Very few people who have worked their way up The Hard Way are inclined to feel generous toward someone who has Had It Easy. Even those who had it easy in their day seem to have forgotten the help they had to get started and they resent yet another scheme to bring in more people to compete for jobs. Why don't they stay behind the footlights and let the real film makers get on with the business of trying to crack the American market!

But perhaps Gil Brealy is right, or at least has found a partial solution to the continuing inadequacy of Australian films. It seems that film makers, or at least many of their producers, base their creative decisions on statistics, rather than on real knowledge. They tend to go for end results; imitating the superficial ingredients of success, rather than looking beneath the surface to see what it is that appeals to people's emotional needs.

It takes a certain amount of clairvoyance and empathy with people, to understand what is going to grab them and make them want to see a film. Movie going is an emotional experience. But it seems that most films made in this country lack emotional involvement. First, the emotional involvement of the people making them, resulting in a lack of emotional connection with the audience. Our films are like us; mean in spirit. Hollow films.

REX CRAMPHORN: It solves the problem that I've been trying to solve for years. I went to America to do a similar course, but it didn't work out. It's so hard to make the transition from film to theatre; no one believes you can do it until you have the product. We're getting the best people in all fields to talk to us, but of course the practical work is the best. We probably won't end up in a position to operate a camera etc — all it can be is an introduction to the technology — but we will know enough to talk sensibly and most excitingly have the opportunity to make our own film.

Avoiding or suppressing all expression of feeling is a national characteristic. We squash all emotions, until they burst out now and then in a small display of violence, usually behind the

Continued on page 32.
Sydney has lost dozens of theatres over the past 180 years. Here TA continues its occasional series by the acknowledged authority on Australian theatre buildings.

Ross Thorne: The First One Hundred Years

SYDNEY'S LOST THEATRES

In the last 180 years Sydney has seen, in what we now call the Central Business District, some two dozen locations of theatres, excluding the Opera House complex. On two of these sites there are now new theatres, the only remaining commercial houses still existing from Circular Quay to Central Railway, from Darling Harbour to Hyde Park. These two theatres, the Royal and Her Majestys (formerly Empire) deserve and will receive a more detailed description in a future issue of Theatre Australia.

The first lost theatre was not Sydney's first theatre for continuous commercial performances. It was, according to David Collins, built by "some of the more decent class of prisoner". It was opened on 16th January 1796 by the convicts who had "fitted up the house with more theatrical propriety than could have been expected, and their performance was far above contempt". It is generally known as Robert Sideway's theatre, he being either the prime mover in its establishment, owner or manager.

There is not complete agreement to its siting. Bells Row (Bligh Street), or High (George) Street near Jamieson or Hunter Streets are given by various authorities. Occasional performances were held until the arrival in 1800 of Governor King who objected to the alleged abuses which resulted from its establishment. (E.g. Convicts stole from houses while the occupants were attending the theatre.) Costing one hundred pounds it would have been a rather primitive timber slab-sided small hall or shed with perhaps a stepped floor; behind the pit there would be the "front box" over or behind which commenced a gallery.

The first "permanent" theatre to be built had a remarkable history by any standards. Originally built as the second level of a brick four storey grain warehouse in 1826 by Barnet Levey, the

Royal Victoria Theatre, Pitt Street (1838). Perspective reconstructed from contemporary sketches.
from the theatrical entrepreneur, Wyatt, there were a number of actors who took up theatre management for periods in the capital cities and occasionally toured the country. Samson Cameron was known in Sydney, Hobart and Melbourne, and Conrad Knowles also travelled frequently. The last-named was to take over the Australian Olympic Theatre in Hunter Street soon after its proprietor received a first theatrical licence on January 25, 1842. The short life of this theatre (six months) was the beginning of a line of circus-amphitheatre type buildings culminating in the Hippodrome built by the City Council for Wirth Bros., circus entrepreneurs, in 1916 (rebuilt as the Capital cinema in 1927/8).

The Australian Olympic Theatre was little more than an elaborate tent draped inside with decorative fabric and lit by gas. Around the circle used for equestrian events was a pit (stalls) and boxes; a small stage was tacked on to the perimeter, all much the same as the first enclosed amphitheatre built by Philip Astley in London in the late 18th century.

Knowles returned to the Royal Victoria but another actor-manager, Joseph Simmons, attempted to break Wyatt’s monopoly at the “Vic”. He opened a one level theatre, probably in a small warehouse, in Market Street in May 1843. By July, after installing a second tier of boxes, the proprietors were insolvent. The Royal City theatre remained licensed for plays and entertainments until May 1850 but performances, if any, were rarely advertised. It was occupied by a furniture warehouse which vacated the premises for one week only in 1856 for the purposes of “Grand Musical Entertainments”.

From mid-1843 the theatrical monopoly remained with Wyatt and his successors at the Royal Victoria, with the exception of a few circuses and halls and hotels being used for musical and general entertainments, until 1855 when Wyatt built the Prince of Wales (more recently known as the Theatre Royal) in Castlereagh Street. His former “Old Vic” as it became affectionately known, was a very important theatre in Australia. It was the first large theatre, having a handsome three storey Georgian style facade to the fronting hotel; the auditorium was Regency style, still with doors in the proscenium but with four distinct levels of audience until 1865 when it was reconstructed more spaciously with three levels. The stage was large, being extended to a depth of 100 feet a few years after its opening. Fire destroyed it in 1880, leaving Sydney with three playhouses: the recently rebuilt Royal in Castlereagh Street, a poor, cramped theatre in York Street and an even smaller one in King Street at the York Street corner.

The theatre in York Street was commenced by John Malcolm as an unroofed circus for “horsemanship, tumbling and rope dancing” in the yard behind the Adelphi Hotel in 1850. The patrons were protected in grandstand type accommodation appended to the rear of the hotel. Success allowed this accommodation to be extended around the sides of the performing surface which was roofed at the same time in 1857.

In the next year a stage was added thereby causing a name change from the Royal Australian Circus to the Royal Australian Amphitheatre. By 1854 Malcolm had leased it as the Theatre Royal Lyceum after the arena had been covered to form a pit. The lessees however suffered insolvency and Malcolm was back again in 1856 providing equestrian performances. In the same year it returned to human theatre with Gustavus Brooke, later one-time partner of George Coppin, treading the boards in his tragic roles. The building had been reconstructed completely providing three levels of accommodation. But in 1857 it returned to becoming the Olympic Circus, then there followed a season of it being a ballroom.

Its chequered career continued thus with a variety of uses and name changes (Adelphi in 1869, Cafe Chantant in 1871, Theatre Royal in 1872) until the title of Queens was settled upon it in 1873. Two years later it was refitted for the opening of Struck Oil with J.C. Williamson and his wife Maggie Moore. Their four month season at this theatre was to inaugurate for Sydney the 100 year old association with the entrepreneurial organisation affectionately known as The Firm.

The Queens was condemned as a hazard to human life and closed in 1882. Half of block towards the harbour there existed from 1879 the city’s first Sydney Opera House, initially titled The Imperial Opera House. The small auditorium was in a very austere building above a series of lock up shops fronting King Street. Upon its opening the Sydney Morning Herald welcomed the lack of a gallery: “stamping about and the showers of playbills and more objectionable things which we have experienced in other houses are impossible here”.

It was used for musical comedy and as an overflow house; Coppin’s company moved into it briefly when fire forced it out of the Victoria in 1890.

Part two of this look at Sydney’s lost theatres will be appearing in the September issue.
the dance company brings you its most comprehensive season ever

...and the box office is open now

TICKETS
on sale now at Mitchells Bass Agencies (235 7988) and Sydney Opera House (2 0588)
Prices: Adults $8 50, A.E.T.T., Friends of The Australian Ballet $7 50, Students/Pensioners $5 50 • Party Bookings (10 or more) $6 50
Book for 3 PROGRAMMES AND SAVE
Adults $22 50, A.E.T.T., Friends of The Australian Ballet $19 50, Students, Pensioners, $15 00, party bookings, $18 00.

Drum Theatre Sydney Opera House August 10 to September 1

PROGRAMMES:
Programme 1
Carmina Burana • Signatures • The Perils of Pauline
Aug 10, 11 (Mat & Eve), 13, 22, 23, 28.
Programme 2
Sheherazade • Designs Kristian Fredriksen • Random Harvest • Scintillation • Signatures
Aug 14, 15, 16, 17, 25 (Eve), 27, 29, 31
Programme 3
Glimpses • Regale • Toccata pas de deux
Sequenza VII, Signatures
Aug 18 (Mat & Eve), 20, 21, 24, 25 (Mat), 30, Sep 1 (evening).

Qantas supports the dance company

Photo Branco Gaica

WANT TO SUPPORT THE DANCE COMPANY?

Photo: Franco Gaica
DO WE NEED A.R.T.S.?

What is A.R.T.S.?

"Arts Research Training and Support Ltd (A.R.T.S. Ltd) a permanent National Non-profit Organisation Sponsored by the Private Sector to assist the Arts in Australia."

"In June 1977 The Myer Foundation published a report titled Building Private Sector Support for the Arts — a review of the economics of the Arts in Australia with recommendations relating to private sector support. A group of fifteen business and other people, from throughout Australia, had worked in a voluntary capacity to prepare the report...The report identifies three areas where the private sector could help the Arts in Australia:

1. Research and Consultancy: by bringing commercial problem solving approaches to the Arts and its major institutions.
2. Management Training: by helping arts executives to develop their finance, marketing and administration skills.
3. Support and Sponsorship: by guiding (but not acting on behalf of) artists and arts groups in seeking private sector funding and assistance in kind...."

"In August 1977 A.R.T.S. Ltd was incorporated in New South Wales....Dr Timothy Pascoe, who had designed and supervised the original report in a voluntary capacity, and subsequently carried out the interim feasibility assignment, was asked to become the National Director of A.R.T.S. Ltd."

A.R.T.S. Ltd First Annual Report.

How Does A.R.T.S. function?

In August 1977 the Utah Foundation agreed to fund the legal and other establishment costs of A.R.T.S. and its operating expenses to the end of 1977 — $28,000. From August '77 to June '78 A.R.T.S. received $43,544 in donations and $54,183 payment for "charges and reimbursement of expenses for research, consulting and administrative training". It valued its "costs of services donated to the arts and administration" at $29,444.

The First Annual Report states "We made no charge for our counselling...the donations we receive from our own supporters make it possible for us to start them (artists, art groups) on their way free of charge.

"We do not raise money on behalf of artists or art groups. We want them to learn how to do it and we want them to establish their own, ongoing relationships with donors.

Is A.R.T.S. creating the constant business problem of the middle man? Are the services of A.R.T.S. equal to $14,100 difference between donations to the company and "services" provided for arts organisations, when the entire $43,544 of donations could perhaps have been channelled directly to arts organisations? Is A.R.T.S. necessary?

Who is Timothy Pascoe?

Dr Pascoe is extremely well qualified in the areas of economics, commerce and business administration; his qualifications include a Ph D, and MBA from Harvard, and it is on this basis that he is well set up as a management consultant. But in what way is he particularly qualified in the arts field? He describes himself as having "a good layman's knowledge of the arts" and in the field of arts administration itself "once produced and directed a play at college".

Dr Timothy Pascoe. Photo: News Limited.

Arts organisations have often used ordinary management consultants in the past, with some success. Does Dr Pascoe's company have anything in particular to offer to the arts? Does it make sense for A.R.T.S. to be the recipient of money earmarked for the arts from the private sector?

What has A.R.T.S. done?

1. Research and Consultancy: "A.R.T.S. offers commercial research and consultancy skills to arts organisations and funding authorities."

A.R.T.S. has undertaken various reports for Government bodies like the Governors of the Adelaide Festival Centre, the Arts Development Division Premiers Department SA, Trustees of the National Gallery of Victoria and the Victorian Ministry for the Arts. These organisations are charged the full cost of research and consulting; Dr Pascoe and A.R.T.S. take the attitude that "with these major institutions there is the capacity to pay"; he also says generally "if they're paying money they'll pay more attention".

For the Victorian Ministry for the Arts, an A.R.T.S. report undertook to "identify key issues...concerning the current availability and future allocation of arts resources in country areas of Victoria". The final report came up with a series of questions about the arts in country Victoria, which Pascoe describes as setting up a structure on which the Ministry can build its approach; but it must then find its own answers to the questions the report raises. A member of the Victorian Ministry for the Arts noted that "many of the problems raised in the report have been known to the Ministry for some time in its own experience."

Is the value of such a report questionable? Is A.R.T.S. specifically qualified to carry it out? Is it possible that such a company — the only company that calls itself an Arts Management Company — is taking work from local companies who may be better equipped to comment on such specific and local issues than an outsider? Is such a company preventing arts funding organisations from maintaining their own research and support channels?

2. Management Training: "A.R.T.S. Ltd runs seminars and courses to help senior arts executives sharpen their general management skill."
Michael Fitzgerald, who attended the course for the Australia Council, thought that overall it was an excellent idea given the shortage of enough practice. The people who attended were theatre and arts administrators, but felt that this so widely divergent in terms of experience that too long, and there was too much theory and not while for others it was preaching to the senior, and the lecturers — though some were selected for suitability.

Another seminar arranged by A.R.T.S. was one day seminar for managers of arts magazines. Dr Pascoe says he was approached by the Australia Council for $10,000 for joint promotion and community groups for financial and other sponsorship of their activities.

What, then, is the role of A.R.T.S. in bringing together business and the arts? Two link-ups which are a direct result are that the Myer Foundation will almost certainly be helping a group of aboriginal dancers; and that Horner has drawn Hoopla a free cartoon to help raise funds for new seats in the Playbox. When asked at the small magazines seminar what advice he could offer, what approaches he could suggest, whether he would participate in future discussions, Dr Pascoe said no, he was only there to bring them together. “I am a catalyst”. Is such a catalyst necessary?

Is A.R.T.S. Ltd simply a catalyst, and is it necessary in the current arts situation? Can the arts afford to sustain a middleman that has popped between the private sector and their hopes? Are the grants going to A.R.T.S. adequately passed on in value, or money, to the arts themselves, or would as much or more go directly to them without outside interference?

There is no doubt that the commitment of Timothy Pascoe and the others involved in A.R.T.S. is great, and genuine, but it is debatable as to whether such work is suitably channeled under present circumstances. Certainly there is a need for greater communication and mutual dependence between the worlds of business and the arts, but is it satisfactorily done by forcing the arts into waistcoats and braces?

The situation could arise where A.R.T.S. is providing the private sector with an appropriately named, but safely respectable, purse for a conscience-salving handout, and government funding bodies with an equally respectable and suitably costly shoulder on which to slough off insistent problems.

Dr Pascoe says “we’ll run for as long as we get positive feedback; if we’ve done all we can in five years’ time we can go out of business.” A healthy attitude from his side, but A.R.T.S. may become a temporary panacea to which people with funds could become addicted. It might be too late when it is seen that the price of comfort was depriving the arts body of its blood.
An undoubted success

WIND IN THE WILLOWS

MARGUERITE WELLS

Wind in the Willows. The Jigsaw Company, at Childers Street Hall. Canberra. Opens 1 May. Director, Peter Wilkins; Lighting Design, Ken McSwain; Scene Artist, Yvonne Sutherland; Stage Manager, Julie Wood; Music composed and played by Linda Berry;
Adaptation by the Company.
Mole, Amor Payne; Rat, Camilla Blunden; Badger, Steve Payne; Toad, Michael White; Weasels, robyn Alewood, Clare Duffy; Oter, Linda Berry.

The strength of Wind in the Willows is not in its plot. Mr Toad’s fads for boats and gypsy caravans and fast cars are certainly the funnest incidents and the Battle for Toad Hall is certainly the most exciting, but they are not the heart of the story; Wind in the Willows is an environmentalist’s novel. The things that really matter in the book are Mole’s unconquerable spirit, whose tunnels stretch to the very edges of the Wild Wood. Only Mr Toad has lost his place in the natural order, and he is as neurotic as they come and gets himself and his friends into all kinds of trouble by his insistence on messing in the affairs of men.

Behind it all, ruling the whole great scheme with his music, is the Piper at the Gates of Dawn, Pan, the spirit of Nature who watches benevolently over the animals’ world, and keeps it from harm.

Striped of all this, the plot goes a lot faster. Mr Toad is cast into jail for car-stealing, he saves himself and makes his way home to find that the Weasels have taken over Toad Hall; he and the Rat, the Mole and the Badger give the Baddies a good drubbing and win Toad Hall back.

The Jigsaw Company’s adaptation had so much action that it kept the undivided attention even of the young of the television generation. But it kept their attention in the way Bugs Bunny does; the play itself was stark and two-dimensional, full of incident and lacking the love and mystery and understanding which were the strength of the novel. Most importantly, the Battle for Toad Hall became simply a battle of the Goodies against the Baddies, fought for selfish reasons instead of being part of a natural struggle for survival.

Wind in the Willows has so much to teach, and none of it was in the script for this production. But it was everywhere in the music. If the Piper at the Gates of Dawn had heard Linda Berry playing her own music he would have snapped her up at any price to write his scores for him and act as locum tenens when he was feeling off colour. With pipe and piano and triangle and cake tins and dried wattle and drum, and the discarded string-board of an old piano, she made such eerie rustlings and thumpings and ringings and ripplings that she supplied all the magic and wonder that could have been wished for in the script. Her music was as wild and sweet and random as the wind in the casurinas.

Undoubtedly there are children who dislike fantasy as there are adults who do. Undoubtedly also Wind in the Willows is highly emotionally charged, and removing the awe and romance from it could be seen as a praiseworthy exercise in debunking. Australians like debunking. Most Australian plays which succeed here are down-to-earth, no-nonsense pieces of life-is-real-life-is-earnest-debunkery. As Senda Akihiko said in Theatre Australia last year, Australian Theatre lacks WONDER. Wonder and bunk are not the same thing.

The only real fantasy left in the script was the fact that animals were talking and acting just like people, but technically, the production was full of minor miracles. The river was a brilliant blue cloth runner stretching from wing to wing. Flapped by two pairs of hands invisible in the wings, it rippled and flowed, and then it rose on its side in flood (still rippling), to swallow the boat and the Rat and the poor Mole who couldn’t swim. The almost luminous forest backdrop which changed from a bright field to the tangles of the Wild Wood, with several layers of gauze panels for getting lost in and hiding behind, worked excellently, and was full of mystery. Later, with windows projected into it, the backdrop was the Great Hall of Toad Hall. The whole showed extraordinarily good co-ordination of lighting and set design. Mr Badger’s make-up and the make-up of the singularly obnoxious head weasel were particular triumphs.

Characterisation tended to be a bit shaky, because the characters are defined in the original by their relationship to their environment, and the goodness of heart that they showed by leaving their homes for Toad’s sake. None of this went into the script, so the actors and the director did not have a great deal to work on. Nevertheless, the music, the set and the lighting contributed to much fantasy, and the plot so much adventure, that the production was an undoubted success.
Witty but mundane
A HANDFUL OF FRIENDS

MARGUERITE WELLS


Stage Manager: Pat Davis.

Russell McAlister, John Loy, Warwick Ongley, Lyn Manwaring, Sally Marshall, Frances Dowling, Mark Marshall,
Wendy McAlister, Pat Davis.

Watching a Williamson play, I always have the uneasy feeling that I'm not supposed to be in a theatre at all; that I should be at home, watching it on television. There is, after all, no satisfactory way of presenting these fairly real Australians living fairly real — albeit kinky — Australian lives. It was therefore an inevitably unimaginative and orthodox production. Part, at least, of the reason for the plum-in-the-mouth delivery, was that in moving about "real" living rooms, sorting papers and shelving books and putting on records, one has to concentrate so hard on getting the right trivial business in the right place — and there has to be plenty of trivial business because all of the interesting action of the play is in the lines. It is a strikingly non-visual play.

People really do seem to enjoy seeing themselves, or (preferably) people they know, ridiculed or glorified or simply analysed on stage. I can never rid myself of the suspicion that this is because we have no insight into our own lives unless we see them deliberately thrust before us in the form of a work of art. We then sit back and watch a trenchant analysis of contemporary society, which is not really so trenchant, and which wouldn't be needed at all if only we kept our eyes open, as we wander through the world. I can't help thinking, as I watch Australian Lounge Room Comedies like this one, that the stage was meant for grander, wilder, blacker, more brilliant things than this; for things that exhilarate and uplift the imagination.

This was not a boring production. It was not funny; it was not unfunny; it was not uninstructional or incompetent. But it was mundane, because the play was mundane, and the play was mundane because the audience was mundane and that is how everyone seems to like it.
A confidence trick
TRIBUTE

JOHN McCALLUM

Tribute is a confidence trick in the tradition of Tea and Sympathy and The Boys in the Band. It uses a touching subject, generally believed to be important, to deceive a normally discriminating public into accepting bogus sentimentality as true feeling, and arch, artificial philosophising as insight. The play tries to claim credit for the genuine feelings aroused by the subject, but offers nothing of its own.

It is about a really nice guy who makes everyone feel happy when he's around, but who completely fails to care for or commit himself to the loved ones, who feel, justifiably, that they have some special claim on his affections — in particular his son. The news that he is dying of cancer enables him to mend his ways at the eleventh hour — on the night of the performance in fact, which is framed as a tribute for his birthday. The audience plays his friends, the principal characters give touching speeches and tell amusing anecdotes, and at the end he and his son kiss and make up.

In fact it is the audience's generosity which finds this subject in the first place. So intent is the author on manipulating their sentiments from moment to moment, that often the thread is lost completely. In the search for moments of Joyful Affirmation of Life, Moving Revelation from the Past, and so on, any truth is lost. The psychologising is utterly phoney because it is designed to tug at the audience's heartstrings rather than reveal the characters.

The weakest character is the son, whose extreme and violent reactions to practically everything on stage seem to be caused by nothing at all. It is like playing the passions of the Macbeths over the fact that he won't mow the lawn. That some of the moments do work (like the son's trying to understand his father in the only way he can, by photographing him) and that in this production an able cast manage to make many of the gags work (no mean achievement) only underscores the overall poverty and self-indulgence of the script.

The confidence trick is compounded by the casting of a much-loved performer, Bobby Limb, as the father. When I saw the play, an awkward and slow performance drew a standing ovation at the end — a tribute in itself to the power of such a star to make a play like this a worthwhile experience in the theatre.
MICK RODGER

From Laughing About The World to Living With The World.
Berlin, 22nd July 1978.

Starring Ekkehard Schall with Karl-Heinz Nebring at the piano.
Director, John Gaden; Set Design, Alan Lonsdale; Costumes, Kim Carpenter; Lighting, Nigel Levings; Stage Manager, Sharon Ruschke.

In Sydney, at the moment, we have two major productions of Brecht classics running at the same time and a unique performance by Brecht's son-in-law who is the leading actor of the Berlin Ensemble. It all seems like a subversive socialist plot to rid Australia of the Berliner Ensemble. It all seems like a detestation of Brecht's plays which made out of Brecht's plays what he appeared to be — and with more pace the style would become more appropriately brittle.

The charm and geniality of John Gaden's Galileo served the style of the production very well but for me (and this is a matter of individual taste) the production lacked irony. It rendered Brecht's uncompromising text into a period tale, a la Robert Bolt, about a quirky philosopher. Irony is the major step along the way to realising Brecht's uncompromising text into a period tale, a la Robert Bolt, about a quirky philosopher. Irony is the major step along the way to realising

I hope the Nimrod will not

Staging & scenery builders
Lighting special effects
Stage props
Soft hangings

THE PERFORMING ARTS BOOKSHOP
Telephone: Patrick Carr [02] 233 1658
Well cast, well paced and very well acted

HOW SLEEP THE BRAVE

ANTHONY BARCLAY

How Sleep the Brave by Philip Mann. The Ensemble Theatre, Sydney. Opened mid-June 1979. Director, Gary Baxter; Designer, Brian Trevers; Licut Commander Harvey, Max Collen; Engineer Lieut. Parkes, Colin Taylor; Sub. Lieut. Gordon, Michael Ross; Midshipman James, Patrick Dickson; Leading Seaman Carlow, Stephen Browne; Bosun's Mate, John Hayman; Ordinary Seaman Noble, Anthony Martin; Ordinary Seaman Martin, Gary Daniels. (Professional).

How Sleep the Brave, Philip Mann's interesting drama of naval 'history' tinged with speculations psychological and ultimately metaphysical, was the first production in January's Festival of Sydney Playwrights — that most successful venture at the Stables (see my review in TA March '79). Now it has been placed at the Ensemble for a major season — complete with new director Gary Baxter, replacing Stanley Walshe, and a new cast, with the single exception of Gary Daniels. Among the other changes is apparently a comparative drop in audience size, though I only have this on hearsay, which if true is rather sad.

Mann is a dramatist of considerable range, one who can take the ordinary and shape it powerfully to the point where we have to reapply our easy perceptions and labellings of behaviour. He is not, perhaps, among the best of local writers — the younger John Summons (Lamb of God), currently playwright-in-resident at the Ensemble, strikes me as being more talented. But that is not a point to be pursued here.

Although the play is based, at least on the literal level, on the actual disappearance of a naval patrol vessel in World War II, it is clear that Mann is not interested in its explosion itself. Rather the metaphors of wartime tensions and violent behaviour serve as a backdrop for exploring human nature — sexuality, authority, religion, acts of violence and distorted love. It is a universe peopled mostly by weakness and irrationality which surely crack the facade of order and strength.

At the centre of this universe is Noble, a lost child of raw physical strength, blind anarchistic behaviour, desperately seeking LOVE. We learn of his horrendous past — including homosexual rape — and the play ends with his almost psychopathic belief in a benign universe...moments before the ship explodes.

Each of the other characters embody some facets of a universe explicity inexplicable: Harvey (weak, intolerant) Gordon (proper, limited), James (blindly religious, sexually deprived), Martin (the shallow narcissus), Carlow (broken spirit, piping a monotonous but haunting 'Amazing Grace'). It is interesting how Mann compels us to an enlightened uncertainty. The play's philosophical weight falls on Parkes (in two short narratives); he is shrewd, knowing, tolerant...but he is no Ancient Mariner, even he suggests that we only enlarge our experience, we do not reach a final vision.

The production itself is a credit to Gary Baxter. Well cast, well paced and very well acted. The cast did take a little time to get their sea legs, so to speak, but then the play settled down to a compelling evening of theatre. Anthony Martin's Noble was for me the highpoint in a very fine production. I do hope it gets the audience it deserves.
COMPUTERISED TICKETING SYSTEM
FOR ADVANCE TICKET SALES
Australia's largest group of box offices for the entertainment and leisure industries with more than 70 outlets in three States.

congratulates

Theatre Australia
Now entering its fourth year as the only national magazine for the performing arts in Australia.

N.S.W.
Phone: Bob Brooks, Joy Brooks, Michael Bain, John Pitch.
(02) 235-7347 212-4748 235-7988

SOUTH AUSTRALIA
Phone: Kevin Earle, Michael Coad.
(08) 51-0121

VICTORIA
Phone: Ern Clarke, Peter Graham.
(03) 63-9911 63-9914

BASS MARKETING SERVICES PTY LTD P.O. Box 147, Wahroonga, NSW, 2076. Jim Wilson (02) 487-2331

SUBSCRIBE TO

Theatre Australia

The only national magazine of the performing arts
Features and reviews of Theatre, Opera, Dance, Film and Records, a National Guide and lots more...

Attractive deep blue binders with gold blocked lettering to hold your Theatre Australia's volume by volume. Each holds twelve issues.
1 binder $6* 2 binders $11* *Plus fifty cents postage and handling.

T SHIRTS
Display your enthusiasm for the performing arts with these bold t-shirts. Special price only $5.50.
*Plus fifty cents postage and handling.

Only $21.00 post FREE for twelve issues Or Buy two and SAVE even more. — a gift subscription to Theatre Australia is a present that keeps on coming. $40.00 for two.

ORDER FORM FOR BINDERS & T SHIRTS

Please send □ 1 binder for $6 □ 2 binders for $11

Please send □ Small T shirt □ Medium T shirt □ Large T shirt

Special price only $5.50

Please print your name and address in panel above. I enclose cheque/Money order/Bankcard for $...

MAIL TO: THEATRE PUBLICATIONS LIMITED
80 Elizabeth Street, Mayfield N.S.W. 2304

*Plus fifty cents for postage and handling.
Superlative sets unsatisfactory
GONE WITH HARDY
TRAVESTIES

RICHARD FOTHERINGHAM

Gone with Hardy, by David Allen. The Queensland Theatre Company SGIO Theatre, Brisbane, June 7 - 30. Director, John Krummel; Designer, Fiona Reilly; Judith Fisher, Reginald Gillam, Trevor Kent. (Professional).


The most obvious similarity between the QTC's Gone With Hardy and the TN Company's Travesties is that on walking into each auditorium I was immediately presented with a superlative set design gracing the stage. The next similarity is that on leaving each auditorium I was ruminating that the set was partly responsible for my dissatisfaction with both performances.

Jennifer Carseldine's Dadaist set for Travesties should be preserved as a work of art in itself. It's a very funny collage of the artistic ideas of Arp, Ernst, Modigliani and Magritte, and as someone remarked, it was great to look at when the play got boring. Which was part of the problem. Stage sets are not independent of the text; they have to create atmosphere, reinforce dramatic structure, and help actors to do things. The opening scene of Travesties for example depends for its comedy and its meaning on having the atmosphere of a sober library in which bizarre things start to happen. Put the same actions in front of a bizarre set which is both drawing room and library and the effect is blurred. The play furthermore is not an easy one to follow, and structurally an all-purpose set with tables and chairs used for both settings further blurs the shifts in time and place which occur as Henry Carr wanders through his erratic memories. And for the actors Stoppard specifically requests an upstage centre set of swing doors to create bold surprising entrances. Replace these with a pivoting door which swivels slowly and awkwardly, and this effect is lost.

John Milson's production attacks the play with all the energy his young cast can muster, but in the tumble of words and thick accents many sentences became incomprehensible (and it's a text I know well). By the interval I imagine that the uninitiated theatregoer would be utterly bewildered. Things became less hectic after the first hour, thanks mainly to well controlled performances from Suzanne Roylance as Cecil and Bruce Parr as James Joyce, but the play itself gets dangerously thin after the interval in describing Lenin's views on art, and it was only when we got to the Gallagher and Sheen parody that both play and production romped happily home. Geoff Cartwright was an intelligent if youthful Henry Carr, but had neither the vocal flexibility to make all the jokes work nor the emotional range to make the savage moments (particularly Carr's memories of trench warfare) effective. Travesties to me is a harder, clearer, funnier play than this production suggested.

Across town at the QTC Fiona Reilly's imitation music hall stage was a fine setting for David Allen's story of young Stan Laurel and the girl from Bundaberg. The trouble here was the script, which is negligible, and the atmosphere of the SGIO which was too big and cold for the three hardworking players to fill. Edward Gordon Craig's towering pillars were never realised because there were no theatres big enough; in the SGIO it's almost impossible to avoid reducing actors to ants. The acting and direction were not markedly worse than the Nimrod production last year (in fact Judith
Fisher was better; the difference was the space. In the cozy intimacy of Nimrod downstairs three actors could fill out the deficiencies of the script; inside the big blue whale of the SGIO they couldn't. The set failed to reduce the playing area to human proportions (mind you few sets do), the trio looked like minnows, their singing wasn't strong enough, and the play disappeared.

**Political whitewashing and disinfectant**

**A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS**

**THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR**

**Jeremy Ridgman**


If the regular patrons of Brisbane's Arts Theatre failed to make the connection between Thomas More's refusal to acknowledge his king's marriage and the political situation on their own doorstep, then the fault is by no means their own. *A Man For All Seasons*, that over-rated Ripping Yarn of pageantry and high moral integrity, might have had much to say on the theme expounded by Luther King in his letter from Birmingham Jail, that it is morally imperative to disobey an unjust law, were it not implied throughout — and here that most embarrassing of "hail fellow-well-met" narrators, the Common Man, is much to blame — that all we poor simple folk can do is watch from the sidelines as those privileged enough to be in power wrestle with their conscience.

It would churlish however to allow reservations about Bolt's simplistic hagiography to obscure the excellence of this production. Ian Thompson spins the yarn with economy and precision and, apart from some over-dependence on punctuating blackouts, gets the most out of a script that is more rhetorical than dramatic. In a mature and confident cast, Ian Grealy's Cromwell is splendid, a steely foil to David Robinson's bluff Norfolk. Thompson's own performance as More (More mark 1 having been exiled at short notice to Queensland's far north) is measured and understated, striking an intriguing balance between avuncular domesticity and tough determination, between the man and the figure.

Shakespeare himself was fairly adept at political whitewashing; witness his canny handling of the Plantagenets and of More's own sovereign. It was apparently also to satisfy the whim of Elizabeth that he was prepared to have Falstaff, his great comic creation, jump through the hoops of a second-rate love intrigue. When La Boîte's programme announces this fact (in less uncompromising terms) and adds that *The Merry Wives Of Windsor* was also written in haste, it almost sounds like an excuse. This comedy is a deceptively hard nut to crack; its dialogue, though prose, bristles with abstruse wit and intricate syntax and Graeme Johnson's cast falls desparately short of rendering it comprehensible. The cardinal sin, of simply not knowing what one is talking about, seems to have been committed with a vengeance and only Gregory Silverman's Doctor Caius shows any sign of atoning for it.

Most of the resources and energy have gone into the costumeing of the play; indeed, the set, a split-level catwalk, seems designed to turn the evening into a fashion parade. The costumes have obviously been researched and made with care but suffer from an almost clinical freshness. Realism in historical costume is seldom dramatically necessary; *authenticity* is. One needs the sense that even Brecht in his later productions began to be aware of, that costume is an extension of character, that it should be both metaphorically and literally "lived in". Here, even Falstaff, ducked in the river by the scheming wives, returns conveniently wrapped in a blanket, with not even a smattering of Thames mud on his pristine boots. "The Deadly Theatre", remarked Peter Brook, "takes easily to Shakespeare". I'm afraid the mixture offered here is as deadly as disinfectant.

---

**NIDA**

THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF DRAMATIC ART

at the University of New South Wales offers three-year full-time courses for the professional theatre in:

**ACTING**

**TECHNICAL PRODUCTION**

**DESIGN**

There is also a one year post-graduate STUDENT DIRECTORS course for people already experienced in professional, university or amateur theatre.

Applications (closing October 2, 1979) are invited for all courses beginning March 1980.

Auditions and interviews will be held in all capital cities in Australia during November and December, 1979.

Applicants may apply for assistance under the Tertiary Education Assistance Scheme.

Apply now to:

The Director,

NIDA, P.O. Box 1, Kensington 2033.

Tel: (02) 663-3815

---

“**Theatre Australia**, it's good to be involved with you in the production of your excellent magazine, so we thought we'd take this space to wish you a very happy birthday, and a prosperous forthcoming 12 months”

**Vaughan Douglas**

Printers

2 Dale Street, Brookvale, N.S.W. 2100

Telephone 93-0351
Theatre/SA

DEPARTMENTAL

GUTHRIE WORBY

Departmental by Mervyn Rutherford. The Stage Company at Balcony Theatre, Adelaide, SA. Opened June 7 - July 1, 1979. Director/Designer, Brian Debnam. Cook, David Hursthouse; Spartan, John Noble; Pyers, David Gianagan; McIlveney, Ron Rodger.

With eleven people in the audience the Stage Company actors might have been forgiven for merely going through the motions. It is a sign of their conviction that they gave an energetic and well drilled performance. This, combined with the momentum of Mervyn Rutherford's play yielded an event which should have attracted more attention and support.

Departmental is described as a "comedy-thriller about corruption in the police force" (Perhaps that kept people away!).

The description is misleading. The play is no celebration of life. It is not comic in its world view, nor thrilling in its contrivance but, like David Williamson's The Removalists, it reveals with black humour the limitations of institution-prone individuals in whose hands power is a lethal not legal weapon. Like Williamson's play also, its most interesting observations are made through the development of a character who has the ability to turn threatened violence back on itself and transform menace into mayhem.

The play investigates investigations. Its story is simple. A cash box had been stolen from a police station. Two constables are suspect. Both are innocent, but official suspicion elicits a guilt reflex from one and a perverse adherence to regulations from the other. Two inspectors plan, execute and bungle the routine "Departmental". They assume that it is their job to "get" someone rather than find out about the theft. There is a neat paralleling of upper and lower echelon characters: Cook with Pyers; Spartan with McIlveney. The tensions released reveal private aspects of the lives of three of these "public" characters, but little about the fourth.

In a quite startling way, this fourth character, McIlveney, is slowly manoeuvred by the playwright to the centre of the play. The one about whom we know the least exerts the greatest fascination. Why? Because he will not break under pressure, when all the others have broken. And yet, by the end of the play we know all we need to know about him. He is a model cop who loves to screw the force.

The play is built around the moment at which Spartan begins to suspect that he will not break McIlveney and falters in his belief in himself. At this point the Director must decide whether the play is about winners or losers. If it is to be winners, then McIlveney becomes the driving force. If losers, Pyers, Spartan and to a lesser extent Cook, retain the attention. The easy choice is to pursue the threesome and flirt with McIlveney. It is easy because Pyers. Cook and Spartan are empathetic characters — natural victim, perpetual spectator, tall poppy. We know them, and actors Gianagan, Hursthouse and Noble made them more than life size. They yield minor and manageable horrors: a senseless suicide (as Pyers cracks), and departmental disgrace. The net result in dramatic terms, is implosion, and we can be sorry but safe. This is what happened.

The difficult choice is to pursue McIlveney and investigate the "winner's" psychosis. Ron Rodger saw the potential in this choice and worked hard to create an unwholesome excitement and anticipation of a freak climax. Despite his efforts, the development of plot, pushed single-mindedly by the other characters, swamped his bid for focus, and McIlveney remained a bizarre outsider, an agent of death rather than death's epitome.

This basic decision determined the quality of many other actor choices. For example, David Gianagan (Pyers) wore his service revolver, the instrument of disaster, like a wound. This kind of telegraphing was, like the production itself, honest but somewhat predictable.

Yet there was a clue to the full potential of both play and production in the skeletal setting — a two level structure with rostrum supports bared. Here was a clear, economical statement which declared the merits of a presentational rather than representative approach. The environment was alienating. McIlveney alienated. Together they might have exposed the anatomy and psychology of violence and the shorings of "upstairs" authority. They weren't given the chance, for the production was busy pursuing its effects.

For all this there was enterprise, challenge and a risk in the choice of the play. If the Company continues to take risks in programming, production and interpretation, then hopefully the time will come when there are more people at its performances than seats to accommodate them.

Left: John Noble — Spartan. Right: David Hursthouse — Cook.
Theatre/Victoria

Not an unmitigated triumph
MISS JULIE

JACK HIBBERD
Miss Julie by August Strindberg. Hoopla, Playbox Theatre, Melbourne Vic. Opened 29 June 1979. Translator, Director, Roger Pulvers; Designer, Robert Hansen; Movement, Wendy Robertson; Stage Manager, Yvonne Hockey. Jean, Terence Donovan; Miss Julie, Julie McGregor; Kristen, Maggie Millar.

In reading Strindberg's Miss Julie I have never been quite able to grasp the reasons for its high reputation. Usually I have found Strindberg's working of the material too patent, more explicitly stated than implicitly evoked. For the contemporary reader the play can also become all but melodramatic. There is a little too much assumption about Miss Julie's honour, and that of her class, so much so that it is rather difficult to view as catastrophic her declassé bang with a menial. The force of the aristocratic code never seems terrible enough on stage to warrant Miss Julie's destruction.

Roger Pulvers' production of Miss Julie elects to take the steam out of it all. Instead of the concupiscent warmth of a midsummer's eve we have all the chill of the arctic circle. Instead of an urgently randy Miss Julie we have a quarter-thawed and retracted figure, deprived of both volatility and mobility. Pulvers has also chosen to play down the more obvious class distinctions (Kristen the cook looks like a governess), presumably to concentrate on matters more fundamental.

Such a bold interpretative approach needs to replace that which has been abandoned, and risks conflict with much of the play, of alienating itself from the life of the work. Where repression is the order of the interpretation, dramatically it seems necessary that something be repressed — sexuality, hate, envy, the impulses of the individual self. We need to be aware of the soil beneath the ice, the chaos behind the form.

The perils of Pulvers' idiosyncratic look at the play were compounded by a highly absurdist set (kitchen furniture inverted and enlarged) and the weirdly naturalistic effect of much of the acting. Within limits, a coherent stylisation was required, not a set of baffling and contradictory conventions.

As a part of all this, I found a puzzling disparity in the styles of performance. Julie McGregor's Miss Julie, which appeared to bear the chief burden of the production, was constrained to the point of tentativeness and chargelessness. One wished the actress had been allowed, or allowed herself, to unfold expressively and theatrically, to butt up against and test the strong shapes of the production.

Terence Donovan's Jean, on the other hand, was relatively rhetorical and rich in decorative touches, possessed of an energy that became almost bizarre when set beside the catatonia of Miss Julie. The resultant lack of connection between the two characters made it hard to believe that they would fornicate together, except as some kind of experiment. Maggie Millar, in the small part of Kristen, looked most at home in her performance, strongly filling the delineations of her role, and paradoxically the most aristocratic figure of the evening though lowest in the pecking order.

Robert Hansen's design, while attractive enough in itself, did not knit with the production. Its visual statements — the inversion of reality and the turning-of-the-tables on the upper classes — though well executed failed to elude an arbitrary effect.

Thankfully this Miss Julie adopted a fresh experimental strategy, something in stark relief to the stock readings we are routinely served up. Regrettably the venture could not be hailed an unmitigated triumph.
Provincialism in Melbourne

UNCLE VANYA

GARRIE HUTCHINSON

Uncle Vanya by Anton Chekhov. Melbourne Theatre Company, Athenaeum Theatre, Melbourne. Opened 26 June 1979. Director, Bruce Myles; Designer, Tanya McCallin; Lighting, Jamie Lewis. Serebryakov, Edward Hepple; Yelena, Elizabeth Alexander; Sonya, Sandy Goer; Marya, Mary Ward; Vanya, Simon Chilvers; Astrov, David Downer; Telyegin, Anthony Hawkins; Marina, Julia Blake; Yefim, James Shaw. (Professional).

There is no playwright more popular year after year in Melbourne than Anton Chekhov. And for good reason. His accounts of provincial life suit a similar view of Melbourne life very well. Both Chekhov and Melbourne often remind me of Buñuel: unable to move, however much they might speak about it, till occasionally exploding in a dreamy sequence of destruction. Other people are busy though. Chopping down trees. Progressing.

Provincialism as a state of mind is the motivating force behind the action of Uncle Vanya. But whilst it is a precise dissection of a certain class at a certain time, Uncle Vanya in performance makes an ironic comment on the urban yet provincial town that it appears in. One of the defining characteristics of the provincial is the feeling that if only “x” would happen then things would be great. If only I had the money. If only he loved me. The Prof and his gold digger wife may go away, but Sonya will be saying “if only” — if only she were younger, or Astrov richer, or she more capable of passion.

And Uncle Vanya himself, the man who worked for 25 years to keep the estate in order to pay for the Prof’s researches and writing? The arrogance of the Prof in trying to sell off what Vanya thinks is his and Sonya’s drives him to melodrama — the funny, unsuccessful attempt on the Prof’s life.

To bring all this off without boring the audience to tears is difficult. So often productions of Chekhov are treated with such moody reverence that the only outcome is sleep. However descriptive they might be, they are also critical and therefore at least a bit funny. Directors sometimes seem content to create mood by allowing actors to wallow in well composed sentences.

To a certain extent all this is true of Bruce Myles; Uncle Vanya: the pace is slow and even. The pauses and sighs are given weight. The shoulders slump. The actors seem as enervated as the characters they play. But I liked it well enough, particularly the more active second half.

The performance that did impress me was that of Simon Chilvers, for whom Uncle Vanya might have been written. It is the kind of role he does extremely well; gentle, wistful, dumbly passionate and in the best possible way almost inarticulate. That is, the gesture, grunt, sigh, half a word, breath, work for him better than some of the other actors’ intently articulated upwardly inflecting speeches. His sentences fall quietly away to silence.

But for all the strengths of the play, it felt mostly like a presentation without a discernible point of view. The designer, Tanya McCallin, did array an open stage with some birch trees, but if the environmental issue (the end of the world, and we can’t do anything about it) was what this play was about, then it lost me. Because it isn’t about that at all.
Perth — commercial classic and some excellent fringe

THREE SISTERS

GAY PLAYS

COLLINS O’BRIEN


On the commercial front we had Alan Ayckbourn’s Bedroom Farce which seemed to me to stand up well enough in this antipodean version when compared with the original I saw at the National in London. Why the National bothered commissioning West End comedy which is commercially viable in its own right escapes me, but perhaps they are proving they are not snobs.

The Playhouse presented Chekhov’s Three Sisters, by which I have to confess I found myself unmoved. Of course Chekhov is notoriously difficult to do well or even emotionally consistently, which is partly what sent Stanislavski off on his search for the wellspring of good acting. The first time I saw the Olivier production of Three Sisters with the Svoboda design at the Old Vic it was riveting, but the second time oddly gave no charge...so is it “back to the drawing board, Constantin”, I wonder? But I think in the case of the Playhouse some reasons can be suggested.

In the first place the tendency was to play the characters’ fears and frustrations directly “out front” so to speak. Surely the realism in Chekhov, his closeness to reality, is that people try to present a front to the world, to build an image for others (and for themselves), to keep some dignity and sense of self and purpose; and it is through this persona that the terrors and disappointments show. To play them directly is to play the subtext. Let me cite two examples. If you play Olga as a frustrated schoolteacher there is no tension and nowhere for the actor to go. Similarly Vershinin is not only an incurable romantic who goes in for rather waffley philosophising about what will happen in two or three hundred years, but a Battery Commander with the military bearing and aura of command that the position carries. With the smaller roles (Koulighin and Ferapont for instance) the choice was to play too close to caricature. It was as though the various characters’ problems had been teased out before curtain-up (even perhaps before the first rehearsal) and the resultant case-studies presented. The clue to Chekhov is perhaps in a comment in a letter to his friend Suvorin: “Let us be just as complex and as simple as life is. People dine and at the same time their happiness is made or their lives broken.”

Someone suggested to me that the pace was too slow. This is a common misconception when the pace is not so much slow as too even. Here the longer speeches had not been thought through and even, yes, orchestrated. The changes in tone and rhythm and in emotional direction came across as too gratuitous. Add to this three weeks rehearsal (I’m not one of those who think any play can be done in three weeks) with actors who do not form an ensemble and who do not get enough chances at the great realistic playwrights of weight, such as Ibsen and Chekhov, and there we are.

To the fringe. Three excellently written, directed and acted gay plays late night at the Hole in the Wall for Gay Pride Week. Two Dialogues for the Desperate (monologues, actually, blossom) and a longer two-hander The Privacy of Patients, all by Kiwi playwright Michael Heath, astutely directed by Colin McColl and well acted by Andrew Smith, Sarah Smith and Ross Coli. The Playhouse have reopened the Greenroom, but not with financial backing, only with charitable good graces from the staff. It is let out for experimental work on a do-it-yourself basis. The first venture, by the Streetlight Theatre Ensemble, was Ian David’s Art, A Casual Revival in Fruit. It suffered from his acting in it as well, and there being no director. Surely if the Playwrights’ Conference has taught us anything it is that a writer fresh to the theatre needs the help of hard-nosed theatre people, professional directors, actors and even a dramaturg to hone and shape his work. This presentation suffered from lack of shape, direction and cohesion, and I think Mr David would have got much more help and useful information for the future by sticking to being the playwright, however frustrating that might be.

Lastly, the people responsible for the West Australian Institute of Technology Theatre Arts course have started to run a monthly Sunday night presentation of the work of their students, usually in the form of two one act plays. The first I was invited to give us an excellently directed (by Julia Moody) version of Megan Terry’s Calm Down, Mother, with some sterling performances as well. In June we had Peter Kenna’s Mates creditably done, and a quite stunning production of Howard Brenton’s Christie in Love, rivettingly acted by Frank Johnson, Chris Greenacre and Donald Smith; as good performances as I can remember seeing from students in a long time, quite up to what we see professionally elsewhere at times. The play was directed with great power, skill and timing by Steve Jodrell and Thomas Moos. It is good to see in these times of economic crisis, when the arts are likely to take an early knock, that some very real, committed young talent is emerging, and getting a chance to strut its stuff.

AUSTRALIA COUNCIL LITERATURE BOARD PLAYWRIGHT IN RESIDENCE

The Literature Board invites joint applications from playwrights and theatre companies (T.I.E. and professional) for assistance under its playwright in residence program, 1980.

Subsidies are usually determined on a 3 : 1 basis and range for a period of one to six months.

Guidelines and application forms may be obtained by writing to the Literature Board, P.O. Box 302, North Sydney 2060.

Closing date for applications, which must be made on the appropriate forms, is 30 September 1979. Applications received after this date will not be considered.

Theatre/WA
Dear Sir,

Firstly I would like to thank the many musical lovers who have written and contacted me announcing their support for my proposal for the establishment of an Australian Musical Theatre Company.

Secondly, I apologise to Mr F Van Straten for my misspelling 'Collins' Inn' — my typing mistake and not that of the splendid Theatre Australia typographer.

Thirdly, and in answer to Mr W Oakes, — I have nothing but unbounded praise for the Amateur Musical Societies and I am fully aware of the constant success most of these hardworking societies enjoy — all of which simply proves my point — the general public want musicals and will even troop off to the local musical society to catch the latest production.

The establishment of the First Australian Music Theatre Company — and I promise you it will be established — will provide the cream of the talent from these amateur societies (and there is as mountain of it) with a proper training ground, a chance of permanent employment within the structure of an efficient and totally professional musical company working under some of the best directors in the world and national recognition of their untold talent.

Mr Oakes, thank God for the amateur musical societies — without them the art of the musical would have died in this country years ago — may they go on forever!

Yours faithfully,
NOEL FERRIER,
Sydney NSW

Let's hear it for the Musical!

Dear Sir,

As your critic Richard Fotheringham has put my credibility on the line, in his 'crit' of my play 'Breaker Morant' (your May Edition), I feel compelled to reply. What he says about the play is, literally "his business" and I have no complaint there, but when he writes that I should have been "a little more concerned with the complexity of the truth" that is another matter.

As he writes that I ignore "the recent evidence that all three were guilty as charged" I presume he means historical truth.

Perhaps it is a symptom of the propaganda that is so strongly thrown at our consumer society that your critic presumes that "new evidence" is better that old.

The fact is that the Trooper Silke diary did not show any new evidence that indicated that Morant shot women and children. I presume your critic has taken this information for a misleading article in "The Australian" which inferred Morant was involved in these atrocities; when in fact they happened prior to Morant joining the carbiners.

As mentioned twice in my play, Trooper Silke turned King's evidence. He did this to save his own neck and therefore I consider it reasonable to accept that his "new evidence" is not to be treated without suspicion.

Your critic says also that I "ignore the recent evidence that all three were guilty as charged". This is not true, they were, as stated in the play found guilty of the first two charges only (a strong plea of mercy recommended by the Court) and NOT guilty of the third charge.

However, I assure Mr Fotheringham that I did go to some length not to "con" my audience. I did attempt to base my play on sound foundations and because there is sure over the years to be more new evidence etc, etc, I am glad he has given me the opportunity to place on record my stand when writing the play.

I was writing a play and not a thesis, I do not pretend to have written without impartiality, if I have taken any latitude — outside space, number of cast, etc — then it has been to give an account that is drawn, from the "Australian camp" and therefore is biased. In short it is a version of "The Breaker" by his Australian contemporaries. But as a writer yourself, Mr Fotheringham, which would you choose to write about, David or Goliath?

So be it, the very passion, the sense of a man attempting to find justice in this world rests dramatically on the play taking this view. To give an audience the experience of witnessing a person attempting to overcome what he or she sees as an injustice has always been one of the great strengths of theatre. To make myself clear, I am not just referring to theatre, with Courtroom drama; but rather to all plays that deal with tragedy. So in the process we witness fear, insensitivity and ignorance shaken before us in such a way that we are disturbed. As a playwright I cannot make any other apology to Mr Fotheringham than that I might have done it better.

As for 'Breaker' Morant, I assure Mr Fotheringham that if anything I have had to restrain considerably his somewhat Victorian romanticism because he would not have seemed credible to a modern audience for criticism. For example, I quote part of a letter of his to Major Lenehan, the Australian Commanding officer in the Boer Campaign:

"My dear Major, — Hell to pay, isn't it! You are alright and will live to go hunting again. If anything happens to me, write to my governor, and my girl (— N Devon). Also see Bulletin people in Sydney town and tell 'em all the facts. How Hunt was shot by the Boers and how I carried on — same as he would have done had I been shot that night at Viljoen's. Had I tumbled into Boer hands I would have gone on while I had a cartridge left and then used the butt, and then have been wiped out. That's what I'd expect if I had fallen into Boer lines — wouldn't have groused either — it would have been just part of the programme — war. But it is damned rough treatment (this from our own British (?) side..."

Certainly Morant was far from a saint, and indeed let me make it clear that dramatically I had to show human flaws in him: this human quality that is so important if audiences are to feel any sympathy. However, I feel confident that he was not just the murderer that some of those that enjoy playing our national pastime of cutting down tall poppies are now depicting him. I wrote this play in the hope that the subject would receive the public airing it deserved, but let us not now throw out the baby with the bathwater. Yes, let us, as you suggested Mr Fotheringham be "concerned with the complexity of the truth", which means we must remember there are no truths in History, but rather opinions only. Morant did not believe himself guilty, or, at least, not the most guilty, and I cannot help but feel there is some salvation in that.

Yours faithfully,
Ken Ross
Little Hampton, SA

Dear Sir,

We are located in the centre of the city. (In fact we are the only independent Art Gallery located in the centre of Sydney.) We felt that we should do something because of this. So we have organised a series of musical recitals to be held at lunchtime on Wednesdays from 12.30 for one hour every three weeks. Every three weeks we open a new exhibition in the Gallery and so we have planned our recitals to coincide with the changing exhibitions. We wanted to give people the opportunity to have a break in the middle of the day, to bring down their lunch, and to listen to the music and enjoy themselves. It also gives an opportunity to younger musicians to play. We have already held a couple of these recitals (The Larrinkins, played for us, Australian traditional folk songs, and Keith Harris played a recital on mandolin and domra). So far the recitals have been well attended and much enjoyed by those who came.

We wanted to let people know about them. We would like to ask more people to come and join us.

Yours sincerely,
Eileen Chamin,
DIRECTOR, MACQUARIE GALLERIES.

A gift subscription to Theatre Australia is a present that keeps on coming!
FROM THEATRE TO FILM (Continued from page 13)

rolled up windows of our cars. If we are avoiding it in our lives, we will avoid it in our art.

I once heard someone say that Australian films avoid climaxes; they cheat on the promised culmination. We build up the expectation of fulfillment, but when it comes to the crunch, the climax happens behind a closed door, or yesterday, or to someone else. Or, as in a classic example, the climax is presented in a written postscript to the film that rolls up on screen with the final credits. Oh Caddie, we waited for two hours to see what happened to you and then we were fobbed off with a couple of sentences.

One traditional safety valve for feeling, is the theatre. Of course theatre is also a traditional ground for the self indulgent excesses of elitist groups, but to some degree, sensitivity has to be there, because the contact with the audience is immediate. You don't have to rely on box office takings to judge the success of your attempt to communicate and entertain, you can feel it.

Someone who works in the theatre for a long time learns not only how people respond, but how to manipulate that response. My favourite story about Buster Keaton is the one about his discovery of the slow take. When he was a kid, he and his parents had a vaudeville act and as part of the act, Buster was kicked around by his father. Joe would kick and Buster would cry. It didn't get many laughs until Buster realised that if he waited for the count of three before he howled, the audience fell in the aisles. So it went, kick, one two three...WHAAA! and the climax happens behind a closed door, or yesterday, or to someone else. Or, as in a classic example, the climax is presented in a written postscript to the film that rolls up on screen with the final credits. Oh Caddie, we waited for two hours to see what happened to you and then we were fobbed off with a couple of sentences.

One traditional safety valve for feeling, is the theatre. Of course theatre is also a traditional ground for the self indulgent excesses of elitist groups, but to some degree, sensitivity has to be there, because the contact with the audience is immediate. You don't have to rely on box office takings to judge the success of your attempt to communicate and entertain, you can feel it.

Someone who works in the theatre for a long time learns not only how people respond, but how to manipulate that response. My favourite story about Buster Keaton is the one about his discovery of the slow take. When he was a kid, he and his parents had a vaudeville act and as part of the act, Buster was kicked around by his father. Joe would kick and Buster would cry. It didn't get many laughs until Buster realised that if he waited for the count of three before he howled, the audience fell in the aisles. So it went, kick, one two three...WHAAA! and the audience loved him.

RICHARD WHERRETT: It's a crash course and I find it very stimulating for that, although it's overwhelming in a sense when one is inundated with technical details one can't take in initially. Apart from the fact that I've just embarked on a new phase of my career, and won't in the near future be able to take time off to do film work, I'd like to become part of the film industry and make some movies. One needs a familiarity with the medium technically speaking and it's naïve to say you only need to communicate what you want to a good crew. The course is providing just what we need — it's wonderful.

Another theatrical genius who is better known as the text book father of film, was Sergei Eisenstein. And it wasn't that he abandoned theatre in favour of film, he continued to work in both media for his entire life.

And if you want to know how to construct a solid emotional graph for a film, read Constantin Stanislavski's advice to the actor. But leave your prejudices about Strasberg and Brando behind.

So, maybe Gil Brealy is onto something with his course to familiarise theatre people with the mysteries of film talk. Nearly everyone of the nine people taking the course expressed a long held ambition to get into film, but they felt they'd never had the opportunity, or had been intimidated by the mystique of film and its technicalities.

GRAEME BLUNDELL: The work so far has been mainly things I'm familiar with (having made 14 feature films and done television work as an actor) but it's still useful to consolidate. It's been a concentrated look at the technical side, marketing, post-production, distribution and exhibition, contractual and legalistic aspects, alongside with the simple teaching experience. An odd thing is that we are probably more secure as theatre directors than film directors are, with the state the industry's in — "Dimboola" closing after three weeks, and "The Night the Prowler" after two. A contradiction I've noticed in the course itself is that arguably the future of the industry is in poor film, the low budget 16mm, and the best film directors have come from that area. But the course concentrates completely on commercialism and a mythic internationalism which gives a slight tension. But it's fascinating to learn this new language, this shorthand code.

The course appears to be designed to equip these directors with a superficial knowledge of film techniques and then throw them in at the deep end, by directing a short film which will be shown commercially as a support attraction with a feature. It's a bit like sending someone off to Africa with a first aid kit in one hand and a book on How to Speak Swahili in the other and asking them to convert the natives. It's not an easy task. There's much more to understanding film than just knowing what "crossing the line" means and what lenses to use.

But the deep end is the best place to learn to swim, because your survival depends upon it. These directors are not unknown beginners, they have well established reputations and a strong motivation to succeed in this new form of expression.

Graeme Blundell looked around at the others, during a break on the weekend and said that most of them had started in theatre at about the same time and he guessed that, like him, they felt restless and in need of a change.

For most of them, their beginnings were in university dramatic societies and their careers in theatre just followed as a development of that extra curricula interest. The Australian film industry hadn't yet resuscitated itself when they were establishing themselves professionally and they weren't many openings for well educated people with degrees in television. So, they stayed in theatre; a haven for intellectuals with artistic ambitions.

AARNE NEEME: There's the old problem of moving into the film world; someone has to ask you, and let you learn on the job; or you need the money to do a film of your own; or you'd have to toss in your job and go and work in the industry maybe as something like a props boy — which none of us can afford to do. So this is really fantastic and I'm loving it.

Until now, only one person has managed to combine a career in theatre with an active interest in film. Jim Sharman came out to the workshop on Sunday morning and talked to his peers in theatre about what it is like to "cross the line" into film. After three days of listening to producers talking about budgets and scheduling, technicians demonstrating cameras, lights, and microphones and editors, designers and directors, it was relaxing to listen to someone who had actually done what these people are about to do; learn a new craft.

Sharman says that when he began work on his first films, he kept reminding himself that film is after all, just shadows on a sheet. He didn't feel his lack of knowledge was an impossible handicap, he simply asked "How do you do that?" He told a story about another naive new director who was trying to bluff his way through without admitting his ignorance and was tricked by the film crew, who told him he needed a "special unit", which turned out to be a super eight camera in a box.

He says "everyone has to invent cinema for themselves"; to learn and grow through a process of discovering the possibilities of the medium for themselves. But, even though certain things can only be learnt through experience, there are basic lessons that can be picked up from other people, to help prepare one for the experience. Listening to Jim Sharman is one of those basic lessons. He has clarity of mind and vitality of expression that make him interesting and valuable to listen to.

MALCOLM ROBERTSON: To me it's a development that is overdue in the Australian film industry. In England, Europe and America the stage has had a kind of influence on the history of film and this has not happened in Australia — except of course for Jim Sharman — therefore we've lost part of our heritage. Theatre has been terrible for 27 years, but look at America and see its greater co­relationship between theatre and film. Film has always been part of me and now I'm getting an understanding.

As usual, the people handling the money would wince, but as Sharman says, "time is the biggest enemy to good films". One of the first things to go when time and money are being
The RSC's four-pronged Russian season is now under way with a pair of productions to gladden the hearts of Kremlinologists and Tsarist exiles alike. The first re-enacts the last stand of the gallant Whites before the Bolshevik annexation of the Ukraine; the second shows a humble Soviet citizen being driven to attempted suicide and ringing the Politburo to declare his low opinion of Marx.

Neither of these works reaches the English stage via the Russian underground, but on the contrary, from the State theatres of the revolution. The first, Mikhail Bulgakov's The White Guard, was for long in the repertory of the Moscow Art Theatre where Stalin allegedly saw it no less than fifteen times. The second, The Suicide, is the work of Nikolai Erdman, author of the satiric smash-hit The Mandate, a factor which provoked an unseemly rush between Stanislavsky and Meyerhold to gain the rights to its sequel. It was Meyerhold who won the first round, but after 18 months of rehearsal his production of The Suicide was banned by the Central Licensing Board. The play has never been seen in the USSR, and although its author lived on until 1970 he never wrote another play.

These two fine texts come as a sharp reminder that the history of the Soviet stage is not simply a story of revolutionary directors. The White Guard (1926) is a generous neo-Chekhovian testament to the artistic freedoms that were available in the years of the New Economic Policy. Erdman's play (1932), in content no less than in name, is a last cry of outrage before the arts were put to silence: in the words of Nadezhda Mandelstam, 'not for nothing was the best play in the Soviet repertory called The Suicide.'

As The White Guard has been around West European stages for a good forty years, I shall not dwell on Barry Kyle's revival at the Aldwych beyond noting its success in reconciling the Chekhovian family scenes (like the Three Sisters entourage 20 years on) with the politics and barbarisms of the Civil War; and singling out the role of the clumsy cousin Larisok as another triumph for the RSC's delectable clown, Richard Griffiths.

The Suicide, by contrast, is unknown territory, and on the strength of Ron Daniels's Stratford studio production its two-play author emerges as a major European dramatist, at least on a level with Max Frisch or Vaclav Havel, though the aptest comparison was made by Gorky who called him "our new Gogol."

The Suicide tells the story of an unemployed "little man", Semyon Podsekalnikov, who is living in penury on his wife's earnings in a cramped apartment he also shares with his gargantuan mother-in-law. With his grandiose schemes for striking it rich by teaching himself the tuba, Semyon comes across as a Soviet Tony Hancock. This impression gets even stronger once word gets around that Semyon is contemplating suicide and a succession of well-dressed visitors begin besieging his door: spokesmen of the intelligentsia, the arts, the church, and other discontented groups who want Semyon to kill himself on their behalf and leave an accusing note behind, as "nowadays only the dead may say what the living think."

The flattered Semyon agrees and attends a slap-up banquet in honour of his forthcoming heroic gesture. All very well, except that he cannot quite bring himself to pull the trigger, and the banquet is followed by a mock-wake and a mock funeral during which Semyon - changing in a flash from a martyr to a pariah - arises from his coffin to announce that all he wants is a quiet life and a living wage; plus the right "at least to whisper, life is hard. Comrades, I beseech you in the name of millions, give us the freedom to whisper: you won't even hear us."

In terms of farce mechanics, the piece is in the Feydeau class: quite an achievement when you consider that its belly laughs are extricated from misery and terror. Mechanically, it adopts the classical satiric position that no abstraction is worth as much as a living man. But beyond that, its satire cuts with a double-edge like that of Dead Souls. Erdman demolishes the intellectual and clerical parasites as ruthlessly as any Party apparatchik could require, while at the same time subverting the regime that has cast them in the role of parasites. The whole comedy is poised on the brink of expressionist nightmare: a balancing act which informs every part of the Stratford production from Roger Lee's Dostoyevskian Semyon to the set which evokes the Gulag bureaucracy through a labyrinthine back wall of thirteen doors. Erdman's whisper has found the right whispering gallery.

Aside from Bill Bryden's rock adaptation of Michael Herr's Dispatches at the Cottesloe studio (a show betraying British envy for the glamour of Vietnam), there are two main house National Theatre productions to report. Simon Gray's Close Of Play (Lyttelton) follows Butley and Otherwise Engaged as another Totentanz round the coffin of the intellectual establishment; this time in the form of one of those jolly family reunions where, by degrees, every member of the party is torn to shreds before the evening is out. As soon as John Standing collapses from a pillar of the BBC into a vicious, infantile drunk, it is simply a question of filling in the detail so far as the others are concerned. The novelty of the play is that it all happens under the glazed stare of the father, an old professor who has inflicted a British higher education on his children with such unhappy results. He may or may not be dead. But Harold Pinter's production will be remembered as the show that starred Michael Redgrave in a one-line part.

The Olivier Theatre, meanwhile, has put its shirt on another rarity, Schnitzler's Undiscovered Country in a corrosively English version by Tom Stoppard. Another Totentanz, this time from Freud's Vienna, this one revolves around the deadly amours of Friedrich Hofreiter who has made a fortune out of electric light bulbs in the brief intervals between one adultery and the next. The piece begins with the suicide of one rival; and ends with his piqued killing of another in a duel. In between there is intrigue, scandal, games of tennis, plus an Alpine interlude in a hotel entirely staffed by the manager's illegitimate progeny.

My problem is that I did not believe a word of it. Peter Wood's production is a sumptuously knowing generalisation on Viennese decadence, rather than a portrait of particular people in particular circumstances. But on its own terms, with art-nouveau summer scenes perched on the edge of funereal woodland, Alpine baroque (with a gilded lift that goes up and down), and mountaineers swirling through dry-ice mists, it is a resplendent and superbly confident occasion which also sees the overdue return of John Wood - fast, funny, and spicing it all - to the British stage. With Wood, and John Dexter (now rehearsing As You Life It for the Olivier) both back from America, things are looking up on the South Bank.
If it offends everyone, where is Linzee Smith? Royal Park, Gladesville, like a bust. What about a whip-around. Don't be sexist. Where are the new Romerils? Going that bad. There's no such thing as zucchini. Offend women. Linzee Smith said that. What's a bump out? Is this a bust? Bums on seats, so what? Perhaps it's good. That pretentious white hair. Over again, in Arabic. Max Gillies. For the performer's soul.

Or Renting...
The Platters; The Queensland Theatre Orchestra — Q.A.C.; Phyllis Diller: The Twenties and All That Jazz — Q.T.C.; Marcia Hines in Concert: The Drifters; Mike McClennan — Q.A.C.; "The Nutcracker" The Queensland Ballet; Kamahl; Malambo Latino — Q.A.C.; Reg Varney; Philippe Genty Puppets — Q.A.C.

Just Some of Townsville's 1979 Attractions

Our programming policy is excellence in diversity. Attractions are now being considered for our 1980 season. If you have the product we will buy it — or help you sell it! For further information contact John L. Lang, Director, Townsville Civic Theatre, Box 5181 M.S.O., Townsville. Telephone (077) 71-4188.

Continued from page 12.

4th Character: If it offends everyone, perhaps it's good.
5th Character: Linzee Smith said that.
6th Character: Where is Linzee Smith?
4th Person: Must be time for the bump-out.
3rd Character: What's a bump out?
Chairperson: Isn't this a bump-out?
4th Character: No, it means to get rid of the stuff, you cretin.
5th Character: Like a bust.
Chairperson: Is this a bust?
5th Character: Don't be sexist.
4th Character: Where are the new Romerils, the new Williamson's?
5th Character: Royal Park, Gladesville, overseas, or dead.
6th Character: Romeril's going that bad he's picking zucchini.
5th Character: Zucchini offend women.
4th Character: Let's do The Hills' Family Show again, in Arabic.
5th Character: Play the milkbar circuit.
3rd Character: What we need is another Max Gillies.
4th Character: As long as he's a woman.
5th Character: Bums on seats, so what, man?
3rd Character: Success is trite, it's been done before.

Continued from page 32.

Provide a complete design service
Build sets for: Theatre Parades Conventions Commercials Films
Make props and costumes Hire Lighting and Sound Equipment Fill all staffing requirements

STAGING CONSULTANTS Pty Ltd
9 Hordern Place, Camperdown 2050
519 4177
WE'LL SET YOU UP

(Enter Robertson) I sold Dickins' car, here's my five bob.
Chairperson: Better bring that up at the Executive Meeting, Tim.
Timlin: Come on, five minutes before the bottleshop closes.
Chairperson: Buzz off, you filthy drunks. Where's that joint?
(Exit Timlin, Dickins, Robertson) Timlin: There seems to be a rift somewhere.

As Aarne Neeme says, "there's no word for success is trite, it's been made before."

and a cask.

Continued from page 12.

discussed in pre-production, is rehearsal time. Perhaps these theatre directors, having worked in a field where rehearsals are often the most creative periods, will be able to bring some of their good habits with them into film work and make time and money available for rehearsals. That is, not just going over scenes, but working with and preparing actors and investigating the depth of the script. Putting sensibility onto the screen.

The transition from theatre to film may not be without its problems and this training course can be no more than a familiarisation period, but it is a beginning, an impetus for these directors to make the transition. And perhaps the cross fertilisation will produce a strong and healthy off-spring, to revitalise the film industry.

As Aarne Neeme says, "there's no word for making it, in my dictionary."
Roger Pulvers is a playwright and director. His eleventh play to be produced in this country was Bertolt Brecht Leaves Los Angeles, performed in June at Hoopla in Melbourne. But he is also a translator, from Polish, Japanese, Russian, and Swedish. Among his many translations are novels by Inoue, plays by Witkiewicz, poems by Miyazawa and Galczynski, and numerous short stories. In 1977 he was invited to Warsaw by the Polish Writer’s Union to translate a play by Teresa Lubkiewicz-Urbanowicz. Most recently, he has directed Miss Julie, in his own translation, at Hoopla.

Roger Pulvers

I’d like to think that all drama is a kind of translation — that the words of a play we write even in our own language are not those we use off stage. Words in a play are translated onto the stage, and they re-create a sound world of their own. Words on stage have their own grammar and particular meanings, and the stage itself is their context.

Perhaps this is one thing Gombrowicz means in the above quote from The Marriage. Henryk is referring to the language of a dream. The entire play is the re-creation of a dream. But, in a dream so it is on stage, the logic of the language — the form of the piece — has an internal order. The play makes sense only if the viewer is drawn into that order. If another logic, a logic of the outside, is imposed on the play, the play then fails for the particular viewer who isn’t getting into it.

What are the particular problems of translating plays, as opposed to poems or novels? What levels of expression should a translator choose for the English equivalent, when translating into English? What attitude should be suggested to actors so that they can use the translated text in the most playable, effective way?

Translating plays is a good deal harder than translating other forms of writing, I think. With a novel, you need not worry about finding words that have to be spoken. Even the dialogue in novels need not be made speakable, as the reader only reads it to himself. Much of the dialogue of novels is stilted in the original anyway. With Yukio Mishima, for instance, the spoken parts are preciously crafted, and they should appear so in translation as well. A great exception to this would be Celine, whose words were purposely written to imitate speech. But, in general, you sit translating a novel and toy with the prose, reconstructing the original style with a greater freedom.

Translating poetry requires a different skill, that of distilling the essential feeling of the original and finding one singular mode of English expression to communicate it. Many poets have translated other poets, and in some cases the poem may even improve, so that, you might say, something is lost in the original.

What about the theatre? There are specific tasks. Each character in the translation should have his own linguistic personality. So often, translators of plays unwittingly render all the characters bland, because they don’t consciously strive to differentiate between them. The result is that the play sounds too monotonous, as if all the characters were speaking with the one voice of the playwright. I’m now translating Gogol’s The Inspector General. Gogol’s language is so rich and off-beat, and each of the many characters has a ‘word personality’. If I don’t capture this variety, the result will be a folksy mishmash.

Another problem is in the stage directions. If the original is a piece of European drama, then we can largely assume that the characters’ physical responses will be similar to ours. If the playwright writes, “Gertrude throws up her arms in despair”, the translator should translate it as such. We throw up our arms in despair too. (It’s a director’s and actor’s prerogative, of course, whether to use this on stage.) But, in translating a Japanese play there may be a problem. Human responses are often cultural, rather than instinctive. One country’s naturalism is another country’s surrealism. A Japanese, for instance, points to his nose when he’s referring to himself, not to his chest. A wave of the hand back and forth may indicate a gesture of refusal; a chopping gesture means ‘excuse me’. Any Japanese audience immediately recognizes these. But to a western audience they communicate nothing, or perhaps something quite different.

Here is where the translator has to act as director and make a choice. Do you leave it and invite confusion; or do you pick out a similar gesture from among our cultural responses? If, at any rate, the actors end up choosing to communicate to a western audience and use gestures that mean something to us, then they run the risk of looking ‘non-Japanese’. It’s tricky. My personal preference is for the latter — because I don’t believe in theatre as a display of anthropological information, but as a vehicle for emotional communication.

Then there is the heaviest problem of all — accent, tone, and dialect. I once translated a Japanese novel whose main character was a French priest who spoke fluent Osaka dialect. How to get that comic flavour in English? When I was working on Miss Julie, I keenly felt that peculiar language of Jean, the valet. In Swedish he is part of the lower class that aspires to climb; and often his language jumps from the vulgar to the pretentious.

What level, or levels of diction should be chosen for a character? Let’s say a character says, in the Japanese original, in an extremely colloquial manner, “Goddam you, you make me puke. You fat-headed slob!” If the original had just that amount of colour, then an American translator might translate it precisely like that. But, if an Australian actor said that on stage, he’d be ridiculed for speaking his Japanese...
character like some hick from Creeky Falls, Iowa. "You bloody make me chunder. Prawn-head!" Now that captures all the flavour of the original too, but then why is Mr Yoshida talking like a vacuum-cleaner salesman out of Dubbo?

So what do you do? Most translators water down the original to make it 'universal', and we get, "You make me sick to my stomach, you stupid simpleton!" The meaning is all there, but the character has lost some of his...character.

I don't pretend to have the answer to this. Each decision should be made on its own merits. But, to water down the original makes for bland, Velveeta-cheese-like consistency in stage speech.

When my translation of Betsuyaku's Elephant, a play about the real effects of Hiroshima on Japanese society, went on in New Zealand, one of the critics turned slightly mad over the language. (If you think our critics are bad, just cross the Tasman.) He couldn't accept the fact that Japanese swore, and that they acted as normally as we supposedly do. The play's characters didn't conform to his image of Japan, an image plastered pink with petals, and riddled with Zen. The problem for him, I feel, was in the translation, which tried to present the Japanese characters as real humans — not his phoney Japanese — who were talking from the stage to a western, in this case New Zealand, audience.

But however natural and colloquial a translator should try to be in reconstructing dialogue, he should likewise be careful not to overuse precious dialect. Here there is a distinction between accent and dialect. An Australian actor should speak in an Australian accent and tone; and a translator should seek to re-create the original speech rhythms in an Australian way. We must have an Australian school of translation. We must speak our Chekhov and our Gogol or our Betsuyaku to Australians. Too often, actors try to imitate what they think are 19th century Russians, when it is, in fact, impossible for an audience to know what those Russians spoke like; and furthermore, it is irrelevant to the performance. (There can, of course, be the odd exception to this, as when a comic actor puts on a Russian accent for a particular effect.)

But when the language turns to dialect, it should be used with care. Recently the APG presented a highly interesting Australian play called Traitors, set in the period of the purges of the late 1920's. Although the play was originally written in English, it has that quality which I tried to talk about in the first paragraph: it translates a world onto the stage and carries its own line of meaning.

It was great that the actors spoke in the Australian accent, even pronouncing the Russian names in this way. But take an expression from the play, "You'll go to the Black-bloody-Sea". Linguistically I think this is called *tmesis*; and I think it's only done in Australian and Cockney. In this play, it jars. It is at this point that I began to say to myself — Russians don't talk like that. It's a feeling I want to avoid. Who cares what Russians talk like: the play is in English, here in Melbourne. But the use of rare dialect calls attention to itself. Tone, Australian. Accent, Australian. But dialectal peculiarities should generally be avoided in translations, or in plays that depict non-Australians.

All these are perhaps technical problems. The biggest problem of all is that our theatres are largely using bad, untheatrical translations. These translations offer only partial communication to our audiences. They give the impression, from the stage, of old-fashioned, stiff Europeans. They force our actors into rigid caricatures when it is unnecessary. They set up European classics as super-culture orthodoxies. They intimidate audiences.

If I could ask for one thing it would be that Australian playwrights do some translating, and that our major theatres not just take some English or American academic's translation as holy writ. Every large theatre should have a writer attached who works over an old translation. In large European theatres this job is an essential one. If the writer can't read the original, he can consult native speakers.

Williams set out to translate Miss Julie, I first read all the English translations. I found them all stilted. I didn't want actors putting on verbal street-jackets, paring about a stage speaking a bizarre variety of Swedish-English translaciones. I found little vibrance in the translations. A translation's foremost quality is actability. That's actability here and now.
Children's Theatre: A series to mark The International Year of the Child.

John Ratter has been active for many years in amateur, semi-professional and professional theatre in Adelaide with particular involvement in alternative theatre groups. He is a graduate in Drama from Flinders University, SA, and taught drama at Secondary School level before joining the Troika Theatre-in-Education Team. He has written a number of children's theatre scripts and was appointed Director of Troika in 1979.

Children in Children's Theatre

I have often heard children called the most difficult audience in the world. Certainly theatre for children for most actors is a step on the ladder only. Whether that is because of the lack of status attached to the field or due to its lack of success with children — or both, I am not sure.

Why lack of status? Unless this is a reflection of children being far less important in our society than adults, despite what everyone says for the International Year of the Child (see article by Chris Westwood in Theatre Australia, March 1979). The lack of status may relate to the lack of success. But why is this so, given the widely recognised facts that children have a wonderful dramatic sense and incredible ability for total imaginative involvement? In fact children can be, or rather are, the best audience in the world and the most satisfying. But they are not good passive consumers of theatre. Nor should they be. Nor should we make them be — the "audience of tomorrow" concept.

However they are not necessarily the easiest audience or at all satisfying for those who make insufficient room for them. It is precisely the child's strong sense of everything that is really important in theatre that makes theatre for children so difficult if this is not considered.

For children demand involvement — real, actual, participatory involvement (at least to some extent) and to be a passive consumer is almost unbearable torment.

Hence the constant lectures to children on "how to be a good audience", the constant punctuation of sounds intended to demand silence, the fidgeting, the background hiss of threats of dire retribution that so often characterise children's theatre performances. How many actors can cope with children calling out? How many regard it as an interruption and ignore it? What cost to the performer to include it, use it, change things around because of it?

Alternatively, how often is participation limited to a gratuitous kind of calling out, the making of a sound, or minor physical movement? Theatre for children can — and should — involve children far more than it does at present, and involvement in a real way, including allowing the children to be physically involved and doing, at least at some stage. Performances can then never stagnate, or do so far more slowly. The actors can experience the enormous satisfaction that children's own contributions can make, and we have theatre based on a far more real and immediate relationship with its audience, which children demand anyway — if given half a chance.

It is remarkable to me how often in children's theatre and theatre-in-education that content totally contradicts the message of the form, eg content that complains of authoritarianism in a form that expects children to sit passively and "behave" themselves — or involves them as participants but in a highly directed authoritarian way — as puppets in fact.

In Troika Theatre-in-Education, participation and involvement is a major commitment. Not gratuitous or because it is fashionable, but real because it is both essential and exciting. Also the possibilities for learning that can occur in this context become far more effective and enjoyable as the children imaginatively live through and directly experience the theme of the programme or performance.

It is a mistake to judge this work by the standards of adult theatre. Clean, finished performance is impossible and undesirable. The skills involved are different. Acting skills are essential but much more low key than in adult theatre. Mime, for example, need only be as good if not necessary to communicate. Technical accuracy is unimportant, in fact it may be a positive hindrance if you are trying to be involved with children rather than perform in front of them — a dazzling exhibition of mime technique immediately makes you the performer again.

This is no excuse for bad performance when good performance is needed. But the skills relate less to projecting a characterisation and more to being a character, to the quality of belief and the flexibility of the imagination, to the ability to improvise and think quickly, to a knowledge of your audience and how such factors as shape and colour may affect them, to an ability to promote interaction and understand questioning, to what you are as a person rather than your ability to project the...
Children assisting the characters collect 'food' and make a 'campfire' — from *The Rise of the Rainbow*. Photo: Troika.

actor's mask (which actors often hide behind when having to relate to children).

Theatre at present mirrors the consumer society. Children, and people generally, have to be brought in to the theatrical event far more closely. The message from children has implications for adult theatre also.

Actors must learn to start really relating to their audiences instead of what passes for relating at present, which is basically projecting at. And people stay away in droves. But there is enormous possibility!

---

**Children's Theatre continued.**

---

**Birthday Wine Offer from Penfolds & Camperdown Cellars**

Penfolds Bin 231 .......... Per Unit $1.85  Per Doz $22.20
Penfolds Bin 389 .......... Per Unit $3.23  Per Doz $38.76

Details on Back Cover.

---

**the STABLES THEATRE presents**

**MUZEEKA & COP-OUT**

**AUGUST 2ND**

**ENSEMBLE-AT-THE-STABLES**

**MUZEEKA:** Meet Argue, his wife, his life, hear his vision, his plan to beat the system, his failure, his trip to the prostitute and much more in this story of a nation at war. Rest of Broadway Play 1967-68 season.

**COP-OUT:** A brilliant satire in which you will meet — the cop — the girl, Brett Arrow, Larue, Gardena Gertie, Larue's brother Gib, follow Arrow's search for Mr. Big and who the hell is "Wheels" anyway? ... that's all folks!

---

**the STABLES THEATRE**

10 NIMROD ST., KINGS CROSS

---

**BOOKINGS AT ENSEMBLE — 929-8877 — MITCHELLS BASS**

**OR AT THE STABLES — 33-3817**

---

**FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 14**

**TO SAT OCTOBER 20**

**LONG DAYS JOURNEY INTO NIGHT**

by EUGENE O'NEILL

With guest American Director ROBERT LEWIS for the Ensemble Theatre

One of the great family dramas of the contemporary American theatre.

---

**FRI OCTOBER 26**

**TO SAT DECEMBER 1**

**THE VENETIAN TWINS**

by CARLO GOLDONI

Directed by JOHN BELL for the Nimrod Theatre

A zany slapstick comedy with DREW FORSYTHE as both twins.

---

at the

**OPERA HOUSE DRAMA THEATRE**

Bookings: MITCHELLS BASS, GRACE BROS, OPERA HOUSE

Phone Bookings: 20588 EXT 381
Three AO openings; QLO duo; and Seymour single

Three openings on three consecutive Wednesdays from June 6 marked the commencement of this year's major season in Sydney — one brilliant success all round, followed by a fine star turn underlined by inadequate support, followed by a very mediocre disaster. The second, a revival of Verdi's La Traviata, floundered despite an excellent Violetta from Joan Carden, mostly because she was not vouchsafed the male support she needed and deserved. The third, a revival in German of an original Abduction from the Seraglio in English that had been very successful, was almost a disaster.

It is easy to dismiss Puccini's La Fanciulla del West — I consciously revert to the original Italian title because it is so Italian in feel as to defy being taken seriously in any other context — simply because of some of the glaring incongruities of its plot, which progresses from the embarrassingly sentimental through the melodramatically absurd back to the embarrassingly sentimental. It has a good deal more than its fair share of nuttinesses — injuries who quip Oogh (Ugh translated into Italian), purported goldminers in the Wild West who sing the Negro-flavored refrain Doo-dah-doo-dah-dey as they dance the highland fling with each other, a miner who breaks down in public and sobs out loud for the life he has left back home.

But most of these nuttinesses are concentrated in the opening minutes of Act I, in the mere atmosphere-establishing stage of a performance. Given the right conductor, a good chorus and orchestra, which turned in a fine reading of a conventional cowboy western morality — a convenient scaffold for the execution that was happening on the nearest table. Perhaps he sang the part more beautifully and surely than then now; but after a shaky start, this year, he produced an abundance of marvellous Puccini sounds. Yet it would have been nicer, particularly on opening night, had he vouchsafed the odd glance at Minnie during her impassioned manifesto over her presence at all.

In the other main role of the piece, John Shaw was an impressive sheriff — particularly in the spectacular fur coat he was given to wear in Acts II and III. He also sang and acted very well; Rance is one of his most successful roles.

Director Robin Lovejoy deserves great credit for his attention to detail in the presentation of the host of minor characters; and all this, in the performance department, was set against the excellent design stints of Tom Lingwood. Though the first act set was only moderately successful, the other two were brilliant; the second act with the cabin occupying only about half the stage width, surrounded by the trunks of giant redwoods so the blizzard could be seen as well as heard as it waxed and waned; the third, with a miner's hut and sluice maintaining the atmosphere of the piece and providing a convenient scaffold for the execution that was forestalled just in the nick of time.

And finally, it was all brought together by Carlo Felice Cillario and the Elizabethan Sydney Orchestra, which turned in a fine reading of a fascinating score which was to prove in the event the best all-round performance of the first month of this year's major Sydney winter season.

The Traviata which came next was disappointing not because of Joan Carden's realisation of the major role but because of the nature of her support. Partly this was the fault of the production, which is big and glittering and far better suited to the more extrovert Violettas of Kiri Te Kanawa and Joan Sutherland, who preceded Carden in the role.

Carden was manifestly ill right from the start, a frailish girl within whose body the seeds of death are already clearly gnawing away; yet she was quite a compelling heroine who could have been immensely successful in the right context. It deal more femininity and sheer vocal beauty, but in this role she was quite marvellous.

The hero of Fanciulla, Dick Johnson, has long been one of Donald Smith's best roles — it was memorable in the last Australian production, in 1968, from the moment he shambled into the bar of the first act and turfed his saddle onto the nearest table. Perhaps he sang the part more beautifully and surely then than now; but after a shaky start, this year, he produced an abundance of marvellous Puccini sounds. Yet it would have been nicer, particularly on opening night, had he vouchsafed the odd glance at Minnie during her impassioned manifesto over the old barrel containing the miners' gold dust; as she declared her determination to defend the hard-earned capital of the mining camp with her life, if necessary, Smith lounged nonchalantly half way across the stage, barely acknowledging her presence at all.

The hero of Fanciulla, Dick Johnson, has long been one of Donald Smith's best roles — it was memorable in the last Australian production, in 1968, from the moment he shambled into the bar of the first act and turfed his saddle onto the nearest table. Perhaps he sang the part more beautifully and surely then than now; but after a shaky start, this year, he produced an abundance of marvellous Puccini sounds. Yet it would have been nicer, particularly on opening night, had he vouchsafed the odd glance at Minnie during her impassioned manifesto over the old barrel containing the miners' gold dust; as she declared her determination to defend the hard-earned capital of the mining camp with her life, if necessary, Smith lounged nonchalantly half way across the stage, barely acknowledging her presence at all.
was said she did not have the same quality of support as Kiri and the other Joan had when they sang Violetta in this production — the Alfredo of Anson Austin and the Germont pere of Robert Allman.

Henri Wilden's Alfredo was a far more Italianate sound than we have heard from him before, but was still too white of tone, all but unvoluptuous; and his acting was still as ever. Likewise Gregory Yurisich's Germont or, later in the season, Erik Badcock's: both were promising stabs at the part, but neither came within miles of the paternal authority and sonorous vocal beauty of Allman.

The third opening of the season, a revival of The Abduction from the Seraglio incomprehensibly hurtled into German from the much more sensible English in which it made its debut in 1976, was a pale shadow of the original in just about every respect. Only Donald Shanks (Osmin) remained from the original contingent of principals, and none of the changes were for the better. The reconstructed sets were done on a shoestring and looked it; only the small contingent of German-speaking members in the audience got anything like all the jokes despite some fine miming which got better as the season progressed.

Glenny Fowles' Constanze was rather too tentative, particularly early in the piece — almost as if she were quailing at the terrors of her friendship difficult big aria, Martern Aller Arten, which comes in the depths of Act II. Once that (admittedly formidable) obstacle was out of the way, she seemed at the same time to relax in the part and to gain the strength of stage character necessary to project it across the footlights effectively.

Paul Ferris' Belmonte was superbly acted and sung, if a little small of voice; at the matinee 10 days after opening. John Serge, however, was harsh vocally and seemed so engrossed with the conductor and what was going on at the rear of the stalls that he scarcely had a thought to spare for anyone else on stage. It was an interesting novelty to see Anson Austin, the original Belmonte of this production, in the character role of Pedrillo; yet his is not a character tenor at heart, and it was something of a waste to put him into this particular role at the expense of Graeme Ewer, who created Pedrillo in this production with considerable distinction.

Rhonda Bruce, this year's Blonde, suffered from the twin handicaps of having to follow in the footsteps of June Bronhill in the role, and having to get across in German the fun lines Bronhill could merely speak in English. Once she had settled in, though, she was a quite excellent Blonde — conveying through explicitly clear acting a considerable amount of the wit and fire of the character.

And Peter van der Stoik's Pasha Selim was as convincing of manner and authoritarian of voice as before — a magnificent portrayal which even survived with dignity being perched atop a truncated torso of a flight of steps, in the final scene, that led nowhere and would have given many an ordinary mortal a severe attack of vertigo.

Visually, in other ways too, this year's production was quite different from the original: only the costumes and the odd prop were the same, the original sets having been destroyed by fire. And though Kristian Fredriksson's intricate backdrop and forecloth of colorful Turkish squiggles was marvelously evocative at first glance, it grew rather oppressive as the evening wore on, all but unrelieved as it was by significant change during the three acts — or even the addition of the modicum of props that were such a great asset to the original. Gone, worst of all, were the two lovely towers centre stage for the abduction itself; replaced by feebly inward-opening panels in the side scenery that had almost no visual impact at all.

Finally, this year's Seraglio — which will be seen shortly in Brisbane, also in German — was a revival that suffered greatly from what seemed to be almost wilful vandalism of an excellent original.

Which rather depressing prospect for Queensland opera lovers can be tempered a little, perhaps, by fond recollection of the excellent overlapping season of Humperdinck's Hansel and Gretel and Donizetti's Lucia di Lammermoor presented recently in Brisbane by the Queensland Opera Company. Both productions achieved an overall level of excellence considerably above my previous experience of the company — an excellence all the more remarkable because only one guest soloist was imported for the season (New Zealand's Anthony Benfell, who was an excellent Edgardo to Phyllis Ball's quite exceptional Lucia).

The two productions made a thoroughly satisfying pair, if an unlikely combination at first glance: in addition, they are a pair well suited for joint production by a company of limited resources, for Hansel and Gretel has just about no chorus and only one male principal and Lucia has lots of chorus and — apart from Lucia herself — only one rather minor female principal role.

The great individual performance triumph of the twin season was Phyllis Ball's Lucia: of course, it was not perfect, but it abounded with oceans of sheer beautiful vocal lyricism and was well acted. Wisely, Ball did not attempt the spectacular vocal calisthenics so easily tossed off by a Sutherland or a Sills; but after a few worrying moments in her opening, fountain, aria, she had no trouble achieving what she attempted.

Conductor Graeme Young maintained firm control of the proceedings. James Ridewood's designs were easy to look at and appropriately evocative, and John Milson's production was straightforward and clear. I particularly liked the visual effect of the famous sextet, with all protagonists rooted frozen to a nicely prearranged pattern of spots, spott from above as they variously expressed their individual innermost thoughts. No doubt the lighting designer of the QOC, Jamie Henson, deserves kudos for this.

The individual star of Hansel and Gretel would probably have to be deemed designer Peter Cooke, for his resourcefulness in dealing with the considerable demands of staging a fairy tale complete with flying witches, exploding ovens, gingerbread children coming to life and fairies descending from another world. But one must not slight the competence with which the Queensland Theatre Orchestra coped with the large, Wagnersian-style, score, or the dedication with which John Curro conducted; or the nonsense direction of John Thompson.

Margaret Russell's Hansel displayed increasing vocal prowess and dramatic skill combined with the superbly convincing boyish appearance that made her such an outstanding Siebel in Faust late last year. Gloria Eiser's witch was a nice mixture of smarmy irrationation and fearlessness. Luise Napier's Gretel was a good effort without creating a very positive impression in memory. Margaret Noonan was a nicely authoritarian mum with a liberal dose of compassion not far below the surface, and Arthur Johnson a convincing dad.

Finally, I must mention the revised version of Barry Conyngham's music theatre piece about the convict Bony Anderson — now titled just that, though it was originally staged in Melbourne last year as The Apology of Bony Anderson. This piece was presented at Sydney's superbly appropriate Cell Block Theatre for a brief season late in June by the Seymour Group — and was once again a triumph for virtuoso actor/singer Lyndon Terracini as well as the composer.

William Passmore's set consisted of a huge pipe scaffolding clothed in what appeared to be burlap, reaching nearly to the ceiling of the gutted stone prison, and encompassing a lair for Bony at mid-height as well as a rampart over which a police officer (Stephen Yalouris) could appear as required to deliver the lines of authority. The production was grippingly directed by Michael Beauchamp and tautly conducted by Vincent Plush in charge of a small group of musicians who were also required to act as pseudo-chorus at various critical points.

It will be no surprise to those who have experienced Terracini's work as Henze's El Cimarron or in Maxwell Davies' Diary of a Mad King or who saw him as Bony in Melbourne, to learn that this was a gripping individual performance — the sort of work that deserves a good deal wider audience than can be attracted to such an inherently stately venue as the off-the-beaten track Cell Block.

Terracini has proved himself to be a useful Mozart, Britten and Donizetti performer; but his great star potential lies in works of the Bony Anderson ilk — where he can fully utilise not only his conventional vocal and dramatic talents but his wiry, athletic physique and his ability to convey deeply felt violence, terror, anger and madness.
WILDSTARS — subliminal Rite of Passage?

The Australian Dance Theatre’s Wildstars is the company’s first venture into a single full evening length work. They set the ball rolling last year, of course, when they premiered Poppy, and it is interesting to note that Ballet Rambert have just opened their full length evening work based on The Tempest choreographed by Glen Tetley.

Most of these works however are in a purely single strand narrative style. Murphy’s Rumours this year and now Wildstars are exercises in non-narrative narrative, full length evening pieces without a hide bound plot structure.

There was concern in some quarters (including my own) that perhaps Jonathan Taylor, the choreographer of Wildstars, had been shoehorned into attempting something like this by the ADT board of directors since the Dance Company had been so successful in taking the plunge with Poppy and Rumours. This, it would seem is not the case. Mr Taylor, on seeing a performance last year of Momma’s Little Horror Show thought that the entire technique was a complete vindication of his idea of dance and theatre.

Momma’s Little Horror Show was visual, non cerebral, entertaining and disturbing. What it suffered from was a lack of any intellectual or even aesthetic backbone in any distinctly perceivable form. Nigel Triffitt, the director and co-designer of that production marshalled a thoroughly diverting and inchoate pageant of images and symbols but passed the buck of structural comprehension onto the audience (without any justification for doing so in my opinion).

Much the same sort of thing has happened in Wildstars his dance collaboration with Jonathan Taylor for the ADT. The audience is more or less told, “make up your own mind; ferret out your own themes; then and only then will the work be really powerful.”

To me, that is a cop out, a sign of lackadaisical thinking and loss of nerve. To leave all the donkey work to an audience is to leave the piece open to any number of interpretations, some of them irredeemably divergent from what the work is actually about.

I have no doubt that in the natural course of events Wildstars will be changed, adapted and improved. It seems that this is one of Jonathan Taylor’s ways of working, one only has to instance the way that his earlier Flibbertygibbet was expanded and developed from a small jokey thing into a quite substantial piece of entertaining dance comedy. Yet, on present evidence, I don’t think that there could be much improvement made in the structure of the work, nor any readjustment of it, which would make it make palpable sense on a first viewing.

Jonathan Taylor is on record as saying that he thought his collaboration with Nigel Triffitt to be ideal, in that Mr Triffitt would come to him with ideas and visions and that he (Taylor) would whittle them into choreographic form. Personally, and again on present evidence, I don’t think the collaboration was entirely ideal.

For a start, Mr. Triffitt admits that he doesn’t like dance so it would therefore be fair to say that he has no understanding of how it works nor any appreciation of dramatic structure for dance. Time and time again in Wildstars this dichotomy grates on the nerves. The dance and the dancers have said everything that there is to say in the emaciated story and are subsequently left wandering around waiting for Triffitt, the music and the flashing lights to catch up. Therefore what excellent moments of movement there are in the work are diffused by extraneous and vacuous padding.

The whole thing is staged as a series of epigrams about the Wholeness of Man and the creeping schizophrenia that assails him on his path to realization. It is made even more disparate by being chopped up into bite-sized morsels that fit in with some of Mr Triffitt’s favourite rock music (Brian Eno, Genesis etc).

If the Dance Company had the nous to
commission Carl Vine to write the entire original music for *Poppy*. I fail to see why the ADT with its more extensive financial resources couldn't have done the same. Epigrams are all very well, they can be punchy, terse and to the point, but in *Wildstars* they aren't, they are far too heavy handed and overlong (or else too short and underdeveloped) and take themselves far too seriously. The structure progresses by a series of only to be faced with a blowed up projection of (underdeveloped) and take themselves far too seriously. The structure progresses by a series of kicks and jerks.

After the curtain has lifted and the fog of incense engulfed the stalls, we glimpse the Man (Alain Israel) rising up out of the primeval mud (Alain Israel) rising up out of the primeval mud and *Hokusai's The Great Wave*. This, I presume is meant to symbolise the chaos and turmoil that now assails the mind of Man. Israel is later joined by his alter ego (Joe Scoglio) who is meant to be the impersonation of the violent, savage and destructive side of the Man, who is appealing, gentle and expansive. The two of them later are joined by two females, Roslyn Watson and Julia Blakie, who personify respectively the loving and giving side of the Man's beloved, and the mocking, taunting aspect. So we have two men and two women locked in a double duality who have to elaborate this trite moment of love that the Man and his Beloved have shared.

Towards the end of the evening the Alter ego (Scoglio) is laid to rest after a sacrificial battle of exorcism with the Man, while the Man is lifted centre stage into a Neon Mandala, a veritable orgasm of flashing lights that leave him framed there like Da Vinci's famous sketch of the Perfect Proportions of Man, while he is surrounded by the entire cast clad in karate outfits (don't ask me why) who gaze up at him like the group at the foot of the Cross. The curtain then falls in another fog of incense and the evening is over.

Such description is course bald in the extreme and hardly does justice to the ins and outs of *Wildstars* as a whole, but it was frantically grasped at in the watching in an effort to make some sort of valid sense of what was happening.

Many members of the audience didn't or couldn't make any sense of it and were naturally enough stumped and totally confused, but for some vague reason still enthusiastic.

What is the greatest concern here, in talking about *Wildstars* as a dance event, is the fact there have been so many good ideas diluted with showbizzy effects and bits and pieces which effectively smothered the choreography. It was by and large a sad waste of a good choreographer and some excellent dancers.

Nonetheless the entire company of the ADT works cohesively, there are no loose ends and no coverings up, most impressive of course was the central quartet of Alain Israel (always alert, sinuous and well etched as a body on stage, if not a personality), Joe Scoglio, Julia Blakie and Roslyn Watson.

All four of them tried so hard to make the piece hang together as a sort of subliminal Rite of Passage, but the fuzzy minded thinking behind the dramatic structure effectively put the kybosh on any sense of flow and logic. Only those three lyrical sequences between the main protagonists supplied any innate choreographic interest or sense of control.

They were the signal achievement of Jonathon Taylor, hitherto given to either very fast electric patternings or else comic ditties. If it were possible I would certainly like to see those three moments placed on their own as "Three scenes from *Wildstars" at the next Ballet Festival later this year.

But I'm afraid that if the ADT brings *Wildstars* to Sydney as is their plan (the AETT that is) there will have to be a substantial rethinking of the entire work and a lot of those irritating effects will have to be thrown out if it is to stand on its own two feet.

*Wildstars* is meant to be a dance theatre piece, not a slice of mind's eye theatrics. Apart from anything else the ideas behind those effects are terribly old fashioned. If Mr Triffitt is so interested in mingling lighting, sound and dance together in totally new ways I suggest he take a look at the Alwin Nikolaus Dance Company. He will then see just how far behind the times he really is.

---

**Mona Workman**

Makers of fine quality wigs, hairpieces, beards, moustaches, side levers. Made to Order.

- Wigs for hire for commercials at reasonable rates.
- For Film, Stage & TV.

Tel: (02) 31-9628
1st Floor, 108 Oxford Street, Paddington N.S.W. 2021
DIMBOOLA — pretty basic

Jack Hibberd's *Dimboola* seems to have been filmed in much the same spirit as that of its originator when he put it together in the innocent early seventies — innocent because it was easy then to raise a laugh among suburban lefties at the spectacle of such folk rituals as bucks' parties, kitchen teas, small town weddings, intrusive drunks, people getting their clothes off and visiting Englishmen who say *Ostralia*. The joke was probably never intended to go through the slow wearing-down of a film treatment.

It is probably beside the point, but *Dimboola* will do nothing to further the fortunes of the Australian film industry. It will not bring down the ruling heads of the Victorian and NSW film corporations, which funded it, but neither will it do them any good. Nor will it enhance the reputation of John Duigan who directed it. His first film, *Mouth To Mouth*, was a remarkable achievement, especially if it is remembered that it cost only $129,000. He is said to have had $350,000 to use on *Dimboola*, which was produced by the Pram Factory (Melbourne) and shot effectively by Tom Cowan.

The stars are Bruce Spence, familiar and acceptable, and Natalie Bate, an interesting actress with a delicate, sensitive face who raises the role of Maureen well above the general tenor of the proceedings. Some familiar figures from stage, films and television appear including Max Cullen, Terry McDermott, Max Gillies, Bill Garner and Tim Robertson. Chad Morgan, a country singer who looks and acts like Edgar Bergen's Mortimer Snerd, is also present with a song about a jealous rival who tries to cut his didgeridoo in half.

*Dimboola* can best be described as pretty basic. It is difficult to speculate from whence and where the producers expect to find an audience.

Sydney Film Fest — Greater Union Finals

The two most imaginative, skilful, diverting — if you like, simply entertaining — films which made it to the Greater Union Finals at the 26th Sydney Film Festival were *Morris Loves Jack* and *Size 10*. The first took out the prize in the Fiction category but the second got nowhere, except for a highly commended mention by the visiting film critic Derek Malcolm, who "almost", he said, chose it for the Rouben Mamoulian Award. His final decision was for *My Survival as an Aboriginal* which had already been chosen best in the Documentary category.

The latter has strong emotive appeal and is beautifully photographed by Marthar Ansara, but remains a filmed "situation" with a single point of view. *My Survival* was put together by Essie Coffey from her own experiences with Martha Ansara, who co-produced and co-edited as well as photographed, and was funded by the Creative Development Branch of the Australian Film Commission. It is interesting to note that Ms Ansara also photographed James Ricketson's little film on migrant children's friendships, *Roslyn and Blagica* (consolation prize — scripted by the very talented Sonia Hoffman). It features Kris McQuaid and John Hargreaves, with help from Bill Hunter and owes a lot to these gifted people, but everybody connected with the film — Erica Addis, who photographed it, Dascha Ross for sound, and Norton and McKusker for music — has to be congratulated.

*Size 10*, a feminist film in the best sense — no shouts, no whining — is almost entirely the work of Susan Lambert and Sarah Gibson, who share production, direction, scripting, photography and editing with financial support from the Creative Development Branch of the AFC. The theme, light but pointed, is that a woman's body — desirably size 10 — is mostly seen as separate from her personality. The script strikes a smart, delicate blow at this belief.

Other finalists in the Greater Union Awards were *Shuniets*, produced, directed and scripted by Tim Woolner, which sells a sometimes incoherent but colourful story of life in the railyards; *Flax* by Joel Peterson from the School of Art at the Tasmanian College of Advanced Education; *Sweet Tooth Scharotti*, a joke which failed to come off; *Labyrinth*, a drama that failed to come off; *The Outing* and *The Way She Moves*, the first by Denny Lawrence and the second by Geoff Bennett. Both are technically excellent but predictably plotted and heavy with mannerisms.
Join the Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust and get THE BEST THEATRE TICKETS—AT A CONCESSION PRICE

If you haven’t ever thought about joining the A.E.T.T. perhaps it’s time you did. The A.E.T.T. offers film and theatregoers a remarkable service for just $15 a year.

THEATRE CONCESSIONS Discounts are available for most theatres on a regular basis. You can save up to $10 on a double ticket.

FILM CONCESSIONS You can save $2.00 on a double ticket at a wide range of films (except W.A. at this stage).

TRUST NEWS Our regular newsletter (separate editions in each State) bring you news of forthcoming attractions and of special Member concessions.

EASY BOOKING With each Trust News come your booking coupons which allow you to book for the major attractions announced in that edition directly from home. Your booking coupon comes back to the Trust and we see you get the best seats available.

PREFERENTIAL BOOKING FACILITIES Members usually read about forthcoming attractions in Trust News before they are advertised in the press. So Members can book before the general public and receive prime seats.

Quite a service we think you’ll agree. So don’t delay. Make out your cheque for $15 (made payable to the A.E.T.T.) right now and send it to the Trust office in your State.

A.E.T.T.—The Theatre Trust making it happen in Australia.

New South Wales: P.O. Box 137, Kings Cross, Sydney 2011 Phone: 357 1200
Victoria: Princess Theatre, 163 Spring St., Melbourne 3000 Phone: 662 2911
Queensland: S.G.I.O. Theatre, G.P.O. Box 1618, Brisbane 4001 Phone: 221 9528
South Australia: 31 Oxford Terrace, Unley, S.A. 5061 Phone: 272 0085
Western Australia: 41a Irvine Street, Peppermint Grove, W.A. 6011 Phone: 384 7317

TO: A.E.T.T. Membership Department in your capital city

☐ I wish to become a Member (Subs $15 for two people)

☐ I wish to become an Associate Member (Subs $5)

I am under 18 years — date of birth __________

I am a full time student at ______________________

Mr. Mrs. Miss ________________________________

Address ______________________________________

Postcode _______ Tel (day) __________ (night) __
A lot of faith is now put in education. Actor training seems to be becoming almost as important as acting. Schools and colleges of advanced education and universities offer courses in all aspects of drama, theatre and the media. The idea of a broad liberal education backed up by practical experience is giving way before the diplomas, degrees and certificates which promise specialised instant careers.

At the moment in tertiary institutions, however, there is a special sort of drama student who has not had the benefit of the upsurge of high school theatre studies. When the secondary theatre courses begin to filter through, universities and CAEs can begin to expect students with some grounding, but at the moment most students' knowledge of drama is restricted to high school literature courses, and they have scarcely even been to the theatres. Teachers not only have to start from the first principles, but often get students to unlearn the prejudices and preconceptions acquired in literature courses.

These slightly old world British reflections on drama teaching are provoked by Robert Corrigan's new text book The World of the Theatre, which is, in fact, terribly American, and obviously written specifically for an American college market. Its greatest virtue is that it attempts to explain theatre as a performing art to the sort of students referred to above. It is wide-ranging and up to date, and very enthusiastic about its subject. For some tastes, and for many teachers, it will seem unbiased and appreciative to a fault. Corrigan obviously loves all theatre (and all types of theatre) more or less indiscriminately (although he isn't too keen on the Living Theatre's audience involvement). The student who takes all his slightly mystical enthusiasm at face value will be in for some disappointing evenings in the theatre. I will confess that some performances I have seen fell slightly short of allowing me to "confront the mysteries at the root of human existence".

Many drama teachers will want to let their own enthusiasm work for them and infect the students, but this book is still very good introductory reading, as long as the Americanisms are explained. (The pivotal role of the producer and the profit motive are not as applicable here.) It discusses generally the nature of "the theatrical event" and then the specific roles of actors, playwrights, designers, directors and audiences in turn. There are lots of illustrations and quotations marked off from the text which can be looked at by themselves.

Dr Laurence Peter's Quotations for Our Time (Hutchinson, rrp $19.60) is a delightful dictionary of "Gems of Wit, Brevity and Originality from Minds Ancient and Modern". It is an idiosyncratic collection, but Peter (of the Peter Principle fame) has a wide ranging and comic interest and erudition. The quotations are arranged according to subject, and cross-indexed, so it is very easy to find a suitable saying for anything. I offer one example for readers who are inclined to take this magazine too seriously — from William Archer: "One of the first and most important things for a critic to learn is how to sleep undetected at the theatre."

The World of Tennessee Williams, edited by Richard F Leavitt (Hutchinson, rrp $25.20) is a collection of ephemera and memorabilia from Williams' life and career — photographs of a house which might have inspired the setting for such and such a play, that sort of thing. Williams himself warns the reader off in his introduction: "In the course of his professional lifetime a writer is called upon to write some things sometimes that strike him as being somewhat superfluous; and this Introduction does strike me that way...I am an avid collector of memories, yes, but not of memorabilia." Nuff said.

There are other books about which I cannot say a great deal, except that if you are interested in the subject you will be interested in the book. Patricia Loughlin's Marilyn Jones (Quartet, rrp $12.50) is a biography of "Australia's own ballerina", who has inspired a generation of budding young dancers. Duke Ellington in Person (Hutchinson, rrp $17.60) is "an intimate biography" by his son Mercer Ellington, who lived and travelled with him. Also from Hutchinson are Joan Fontaine's autobiography No Bed of Roses (rrp $14.95), Booston Herdon's book about the idealised pair of lovers Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks (rrp $19.70) and an introduction to the world of ballet and dance by Margot Fonteyn A Dancer's World (rrp $15.40). Film Review 1978-79, edited by F Maurice Speed, is both an excellent reference and a pleasant book to browse in. There is also a new edition of the standard dictionary of ballets, Balanchine's Festival of Ballet. I gather these last six books can all be obtained on special offer through this magazine, and are no doubt all well worth buying.

We have moved
But there's still no business like ...
SHOWBUSINESS BOOKSHOP
now at our new enlarged premises
1ST FLOOR, 20-22 MCKILLOP ST.,
MELBOURNE 3000.
PHONE (03) 67-2308 Ext. 10.


CONTACT VIN FOSTER FOR PROMPT ATTENTION
AUSTRALIAN OPERA (231-2300)
Opera Theatre:
The Queen of Spades by Tchaikovsky; Conductor, Richard Bonynge; Producer, Regina Resnick. Falstaff by Verdi; Producer George Ogilvie. Simon Boccanegra by Verdi; Producer, Michael Beauchamp. Jenufa by Janacek; Conductor, Charles Mackerras; Producer, John Copley. In repertoire through August.

DANCE COMPANY OF NSW (358 4600)
Drama Theatre:

ENSEMBLE THEATRE (929-8877)
Chapter Two by Neil Simon; Director, Hayes Gordon; with Sharon Flanagan, Ken Kaserman, Suzanne Horley and Greg Radford. Throughout August.

FRANK STRAIN'S BULL N' BUSH THEATRE RESTAURANT (357-4627)
Thanks for the Memory by Samuel Beckett; Director, William Orr; with Lee Young and Ann Emery. Until 4 August. Ron in Wonderland, a new review by John McKeall and Ron Frazer; director, Bill Orr; with Ron Frazer. Commences 8 August.

NEW THEATRE (519-3403)
Events While Guarding the Bofors Gun by McGrath; director, Wayne van Heekelen. Until early August.

Rustic Bulges by Summer Locke-Elliott; director, John Tasker. Commences late August.

NIMROD THEATRE (699-5003)
Upstairs:
Travelling North by David Williamson; director, John Bell; with Frank Wiston, Jennifer Hagan, Carol Raye, Graham Rouse, Henri Sleps, Deborah Kennedy and Julie Hamilton. Commences 22 August. Downstairs:
A new play by David Allen about D H Lawrence and his time in Australia; director, Neil Arfield. Commences 3 August.

NSW THEATRE OF THE DEAF (357-1200)
School tours throughout metropolitan area: My Home is Your Garbage Bin for primary schools and Actions Speak Louder than Words for secondary schools; director, Ian Watson.

PLAYERS THEATRE COMPANY (30-7211)
Bondi Pavilion Theatre
The Taming of the Shrew by William Shakespeare; director, Graham Dixon. Throughout August.

Q THEATRE (047-21-5735)
The Department by David Williamson. At Penrith until 5 August, Parramatta August 12, Bankstown 15-18 August.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST by Oscar Wilde. Commences Penrith August 29.

REGENCY THEATRE (61-6967)
The Two Ronnies with Ronnie Corbett and Ronnie Barker, until 18 August.

PETER PAN (25-2052)
Wagga.
Godspell, director, Damien Jamieson. 10-26 August.

ROCKS PLAYERS (358 6780/328-7638)
The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui by Bertolt Brecht; directed by Anthony Barclay, throughout August. In repertoire with Lulu an adaptation of Wedekind's Earth Spirit and Pandora's Box; director, Allan Kingsford Smith. Commences 17 August.

A.C.T.

ANU ARTS CENTRE (49-4787)
Fools' Gallery
Alice in Wonderland adapted by the company director, Carol Woodrow. 16 August to 5 September.

Humanities Research Centre Drama Year
A number of performances and playreadings in:
Recent Australian Drama. Convenor, Dr Margaret Williams, Dr Marlis Thiersch. 27-28 August.

New Drama in English. Convenor, Mr Roger Pulvers. 29-31 August.

CABARET THEATRE (49-7609)
Canberra Philharmonic Society
My Fair Lady by Lerner and Loewe. Producer, Lois Adamson; Musical Director, Don Whitbread. 2-4 and 7-11 August.

Sacred Cow — Glittering Austerity Burlesque starring Reg Livermore. 20-25 August and 27 August to 1 September.

PLAYHOUSE (49-6488)
NIDA
The Beggar's Opera by John Gay. 31 July to 4 August.

Scout Association of Australia Canberra Gang Show. 10, 11, 15-18 August.

REID HOUSE THEATRE WORKSHOP (47 0781)
Jigsaw Company
Nono's Nose
The Empty House
A programme about roles (as yet untitled). Schools in the ACT.

THEATRE 3
Canberra Repertory
The Reissuable Rise of Arturo Ui by Bertolt Brecht. Director, Ralph Wilson. 1-18 August, Wednesday to Saturday.

For entries, please contact Marguerite Wells on 49 3192.

N.S.W.

ACTORS COMPANY (660-2503)
The Glass Menagerie by Tennessee Williams; Director, Rodney Delaney. Until 24 August.

ARTS COUNCIL OF NEW SOUTH WALES (357-6611)
School Tours: Blinky Bill, a childrens play for infants and primary; metropolitan area until 17 August.

Dance Concert Ltd. Folk dances for infants, primary and secondary; South Coast until 17 August.

Adult tours: While the Bils Boils devised by and starring Leonard Teale as Henry Lawson; until 17 August.

Alex Hood, folk singer; Central West and metropolitan areas until 24 August.

COURT HOUSE HOTEL (969-8202)
Oxford Street, Taylor Square.
Tinsel and Grotto! by Rick Maier and Malcolm Frawley; director, Malcolm Frawley; Music, Sandra Ridgewell. Fridays and Saturdays throughout August.


MUSIC LOFT THEATRE (977-6585)

THEATRE AUSTRALIA AUGUST 1979
**SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

**ICKON THEATRE COMPANY**
Sheridan Theatre, Mackinnon Parade. Directed by Kevin Murphy. To 12 August.

**TASMANIA**

**QUEENSLAND THEATRE COMPANY**
15 August - 8 September. Directed by James Kirkwood; designer, Fiona Reilly. 15 August - 8 September.

**TASMANIA CENTRE**
480-9382

**TASMANIA DANCE THEATRE**
Presently touring schools: The Playground Play for High Schools. The Quest for the IYC for Primary Schools.

**QUEENSLAND CENTRE**
479-0555

**SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY**
692-0555

**PERFORMING GROUP**
(347-7133)

**AUSTRALIAN THEATRE COMPANY**
120Gouger Street.

**COMEDY THEATRE**
663-4993

**FLYING TRAPEZE CAFE**
(347-7133)

**POPULAR THEATRE TROUPE**
TASMANIA (23-5259)

**TASMANIA**

**QUEENSLAND THEATRE COMPANY**
(347-7133)

**TASMANIA THEATRE**
(24-9667 or 24-1937)

**SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY**
692-0555

**SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

**STAGE COMPANY**
(23-6111)

**QUEENSLAND CENTRE**
429-1630

**QUEENSLAND THEATRE COMPANY**
(221-5177)

**BEST OF THE BEST**
Tour of Gippsland with programme of inter-schools, libraries, and community centres. TIE Team for tertiary colleges.

**QUEENSLAND CENTRE**
479-0555

**SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY**
692-0555

**QUEENSLAND THEATRE COMPANY**
15 August - 8 September. Directed by Brian Frield; designed and directed by Peter Tulloch. Company Two. Touring lower secondary schools.

**COMEDY THEATRE**
663-4993

**SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

**THEATRE ROYAL**
(23-6111)

**TASMANIA CENTRE**
479-0555

**QUEENSLAND THEATRE COMPANY**
(221-5177)

**VICTORIA**

**QUEENSLAND THEATRE COMPANY**
(221-5177)

**YORK THEATRE**
PS Your Cat is Dead by James Kirkwood; director, Richard Wherrett; with Robin Ramsay, George Sparrels, John Paramor and Penny Donnie. 8-25 August.

**SHOPFORT THEATRE**
(588 3948)

**QUEENSLAND BALLETT COMPANY**
(229-3355)

**DANCE EDUCATION TOUR** in schools. 1-11 August and 27 August - 1 September.

**QUEENSLAND ARTS COUNCIL**
(221-5900)

**MALAMBO LATINO** by Ernie Gray; directed and designed by Peter Tulloch. Company Two. Touring lower secondary schools.

**SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

**SOUTH AUSTRALIA THEATRE COMPANY**
(221-5177)

**VICTORIA**

**ARTS THEATRE**
(36-2344)

**QUEENSLAND ARTS COUNCIL**
(221-5900)

**MALAMBO LATINO** by Ernie Gray; directed and designed by Peter Tulloch. Company Two. Touring lower secondary schools.

**HER MAJESTY'S**
(229-3355)

**DANCE EDUCATION TOUR** in schools. 1-11 August and 27 August - 1 September.

**QUEENSLAND BALLETT COMPANY**
(229-3355)

**YORK THEATRE**
PS Your Cat is Dead by James Kirkwood; director, Richard Wherrett; with Robin Ramsay, George Sparrels, John Paramor and Penny Donnie. 8-25 August.

**SHOPFORT THEATRE**
(588 3948)

**QUEENSLAND BALLETT COMPANY**
(229-3355)

**DANCE EDUCATION TOUR** in schools. 1-11 August and 27 August - 1 September.

**QUEENSLAND ARTS COUNCIL**
(221-5900)

**MALAMBO LATINO** by Ernie Gray; directed and designed by Peter Tulloch. Company Two. Touring lower secondary schools.

**SOUTH AUSTRALIA THEATRE COMPANY**
(221-5177)

**VICTORIA**

**QUEENSLAND ARTS COUNCIL**
(221-5900)

**MALAMBO LATINO** by Ernie Gray; directed and designed by Peter Tulloch. Company Two. Touring lower secondary schools.

**HER MAJESTY'S**
(229-3355)

**DANCE EDUCATION TOUR** in schools. 1-11 August and 27 August - 1 September.

**QUEENSLAND BALLETT COMPANY**
(229-3355)

**DANCE EDUCATION TOUR** in schools. 1-11 August and 27 August - 1 September.
LA MAMA (350-4593 or 347-6085) 
A Non Event by Lloyd Jones. Friday- Sunday, Cure-all.

Boys Errol Flynn' s Great Big Adventure Book for LA MAMA (350-4593 or 347-6085) 
Thurs-Sunday, 16 August-2 September.

Tributary Productions. James; designer, Anne Fraser. To 15 September.

Suddenly at Home by Francis Durbridge. 
Kyneton, 24 August.

Don Giovanni, Mozart; conductor, Richard Maguire. PERTH CONCERT HALL. 
In concert 3 August. Schaals' Audience development programme. For entries contact Joan Ambrose on 299-6639.

TheMan from Muckinupin by Dorothy Hewett. World Premiere. Director, Stephen Barry. From 30 August.

WA ARTS COUNCIL TOURING PROGRAMME. 
South West: Tortoiseshell Theatre Co. Goldfields' National Theatre TIE. Lloyd Noble, Puppeteer.

THEATRE AUSTRALIA AUGUST 1979

Guide

July 10 August. Werribee, 20 August; Kyetton, 24 August.

LAST LAUGH THEATRE RESTAURANT (419-6226) 
The Circus Show. Circus Oz presents the Great Cure-all.

LA MAMA (350-4593 or 347-6085) 
A Non Event by Lloyd Jones. Friday- Sunday, Cure-all.

Chimera written and directed by C Ryan. Thurs-Sunday, 16 August-2 September. Calling for Help by Peter Handke. 10.00 pm, 16-19 August.

MELBOURNE THEATRE COMPANY (654-4000) 
Russell Street Theatre: Errol Flynn' s Great Big Adventure Book for LA MAMA (350-4593 or 347-6085) 
Thurs-Sunday, 16 August-2 September.

Atheneum Theatre: 48
Don Giovanni, Mozart; conductor, Richard Maguire. PERTH CONCERT HALL. 
In concert 3 August. Schaals' Audience development programme. For entries contact Joan Ambrose on 299-6639.

Get a gift subscription — and SAVE!

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Australia:
$21.00 Post Free for twelve issues. 
$36.00 for two subscriptions. 
$25.00 for institutions.

Overseas:
Surface mail A$30.00 
Institutions A$35.00 
By air 
New Zealand, New Guinea A$50.00 
U.K., U.S.A., Europe A$55.00 
All other countries A$70.00 
Add $12.00 for institutions to air mail rates.

Bank drafts in Australian currency should be forwarded to Theatre Publications Ltd., 80 Elizabeth Street, Mayfield, N.S.W. 2304, Australia.

The first correct entry drawn on August 25th will receive one year's free subscription to TA.

Last month's answers.

Across:

7. Dramatist seen on a beautiful hill in France (8)
9. Poet about love on a ship (6)
10. Instrument conveys that there is nothing in honour (4)
11. Dial a wrong comic actress (6,4)
12. Sounds as if this chest might have an infection (6)
14. Fortitude is curiously moist (sic) (8)
15. Next to the insect hovering around chap (6)
17. Be in connection with a clamour about a small girl (6)
20. I return to the fray to prepare fortification (8)
22. Classify again at the holiday place (6)
23. Backdrops for pushbikes in scenic views? (10)
24. “Yond' Cassius has a ______ and hungry look” (Julius Caesar) (4)
25. Honour Paul! (4)
26. Old lady and Leslie surround the bewildered officer — no wonder he feels threatened (8)

Down:

1. About the sailor's globe — take it in again (8)
2. What we exhort the lady with the helmet and trident to do (4)
3. Counterfeiter concealed in trunk bound for Germany (6)
4. Poet of variety and number (8)
5. Electrifying musicians? (10)
6. "... but now they rise again' with twenty mortal murders on their..." (Macbeth) (6)
7. Toast I crunched to confront a religious man (6)
8. Render paste fleas soundly unconscious (4,6)
9. Put off by action in which Lawrence and the bishop are involved (8)
10. Sped back and judged fifty to be related (8)
11. Appeared to be joined with stitches, we hear (6)
12. Might go to the border in chaos (6)
13. Continue eradicating accent from brief (6)
14. Secure a philospher, we hear (4)

For entries contact Les Cartwright on 781-1777.