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THE ONE DAY OF THE YEAR
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directed by Kevin Palmer
designed by Axel Bartz

THE FLOAT
by Alan Seymour
directed by Kevin Palmer
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THE THREE SISTERS
by Anton Chekhov
directed by Colin George
designed by Hugh Colman

ON THE WALLABY
devised and directed by Nick Enright
designed by Richard Roberts

THE MASTERS
- Ivor Novello and Noel Coward
  with June Bronhill, Dennis Olsen and Freddie Phillips
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SEASON TWO
(Artistic Director Kevin Palmer
Associate Artistic Director Nick Enright)

THE MAN FROM MUKINUPIN
by Dorothy Hewett
directed by Kevin Palmer
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by Joe Orton
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designed by Sue Russell

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by Martin Sherman
directed by John Tasker
designed by Richard Roberts

A MONTH IN THE COUNTRY
by Ivan Turgenev
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THE SHIP’S WHISTLE
or Guns and Gallops, Glory and Gold
by Barry Oakley
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designed by Sue Russell and Richard Roberts

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at
THEATRE 62

PERICLES
by William Shakespeare
directed by Nick Enright
designed by Richard Roberts

TRAITORS
by Stephen Sewell
directed by Nick Enright
designed by Richard Roberts

Lighting Design for all listed productions by Nigel Levings

MAGPIE
Theatre-in-Education
Director Malcolm Moore
COMMENT

EVITA!

On the last day of this month the most expensive stage show ever mounted in Australia opens in Adelaide. All in, the cash register will ring up production expenses beyond the one million barrier - though they are saying that up front it's somewhat below that. In London it cost £400,000 - that is $800,000 on present exchange rates - and that was almost two years ago.

To give some measure of its cost in relation to recent big shows, Evita is three times as expensive as A Chorus Line and twice as expensive as Annie (billed at its opening as the most expensive show ever). Commercial theatre managements are talking in the same terms, though on a smaller scale, as the Hollywood managements with their spews on Jaws, Starwards, Superman and Apocalypse Now.

Robert Stigwood, of Australian origin and now one of the biggest entrepreneurs in the world (J C Superstar etc) is the producer in association with our own big boys, the Adelaide Festival Centre Trust, Michael Edgley International, David Land and the Gwen Burrows Organisation. Stigwood, along with Hal Prince, the director, and no stranger to this country himself, Larry Fuller the choreographer and writers Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber, will all be there on opening night.

Despite largely expatriot entrepreneurial involvement, an American director and English writers, the show is in fact by no means another straight import. The set and costumes are being made in Adelaide and the company itself is all local talent.

The biggest entrepreneurs obviously have faith in the actors, singers and dancers we have after the success of such big musicals as Annie, with Jill Perryman and Hayes Gordon. Not even the title role is going to an overseas 'name'.

Jennifer Murphy is playing Eva Peron. When her name was first announced people scratched their heads and asked "who?". Though by no means yet publicly known she has been around the traps; she won the first final of New Faces, went on to sing with pop groups, act with the Genesian Theatre, do full time club work here and in London, and in 1977 she played in Godspell. Apparently when she first walked on stage - though heavily pregnant - Hal Prince threw his hands back against the orchestra and uttered the classic cry of "Here is a star!"

Two of the other principals are better known in the theatre world. Peter Carroll, who took Nimrod's production of The Christian Brothers to London, is in the taxing role of Peron - the titular power in Argentina; and John O'May is playing the part created by David Essex of Che Guevara - the closest thing, with such focus on the central figure in this musical, to a co-star.

Theatre has always been labour intensive, but even so the personnel statistics of this production are staggering. In addition to the four principals there is a chorus of thirty-six, made up of twenty-one singers and fifteen dancers, five children, a twenty-six piece orchestra and three stage managers. On top of this, thirty stage crew are required at each venue. Having seen the London production, I can vouchsafe that Evita requires such scale.

That alone makes it impressive - and though the general public is hardly au fait with the life of Argentina's first lady, the staging and Webber's haunting, minor-key music make it an overwhelming experience.

The company opening in Adelaide is only the fourth to mount Evita, after the West End, Broadway and Los Angeles, but before Chicago. Australia then, is only the third country in the world to see the show; does that mean we have now reached number three in the international theatre stakes? It is beginning to look that way.
**Men At Hoopla...**

"The greatest man on earth" was the considered judgement passed on the elderly Henrik Ibsen by the young James Joyce, and that is the title of the dramatic collage of the life and works of Ibsen that Hoopla has commissioned Murray Copland to compile and direct. The piece explores this estimate of the Norwegian dramatist, tracing the development of his ideas and his artistry through dramatised incidents from his emotional life, encounters with his contemporaries and acted excerpts from over fifteen of his plays. In the cast will be Margaret Cameron, Sue Jones, Gerhard Metz and Joe Spano.

Copland will be working with artist Mirka Mora to mount Euripides’ *The Bacchae* at the Playbox in July; the two worked together on *Medea* last year. Leading Australian composer Barry Conyngham has been commissioned to write extensive music for the production. *The Bacchae* will be performed, as in Euripides’ day, by an all-male cast, which includes Robert Bell as Agave and Peter Ford as Dionysus.

Lloyd O’Neill, a man who strongly influenced the direction of Hoopla since its inception, recently announced his resignation as Chairman of the company. Alan Hodgart, Director of Management Consulting services with Deloitte, Haskin and Sellers, chartered accountants, and member of Hoopla's Board, has been elected as Chairman. O’Neill described his successor as having a "talented and tough financial brain combined with a commitment to the arts - a great mix for a Chairman in the theatre."

**Ballet to China...**

The Australian Ballet will tour this year to South Korea and the People’s Republic of China. The Company will leave Melbourne on June 6 for Seoul where it will stage four performances of *The Merry Widow* in the 4,000 seat Sejong Cultural Center. The South Korean visit is arranged and presented by the Dong-A Ilbo; the AB last appeared in South Korea in 1968.

On June 16 they will leave Seoul for the first visit to the People’s Republic of China, where there will be performances of the full length ballet *Don Quixote* in Peking and other centres. The visit to China will be arranged and presented through the Chinese Ministry of Culture.

Peter Bahen, Australian Ballet Administrator, said the visit to China would be an historic event, and it is hoped that it will open up further cultural exchanges between Australia and China. This will be the biggest theatrical undertaking between these two countries to date. The AB will return to Australia on June 27 on the completion of this, its eleventh international tour.

**TIE Concensus?**

Is there an Australia wide consensus as to the aims, values and nature of Theatre-in-Education? Is there a universally accepted interpretation of the term? Probably not, for fourteen directors, delegates to the first Australian Theatre-in-Education Conference, found that the diversity of their work defied national definition.

The directors, representatives of companies in every state, attended a two day conference, funded by the Theatre Board of the Australia Council, in Adelaide on February 21 and 22. The meeting, convened by Malcolm Moore of the MAGPIE State Theatre-in-Education Company, attempted to thrash out fundamental issues affecting the profession.

Fundamentally what appeared to characterise TIE was its depth and diversity - as with all theatrical forms - and the necessity to search for innovation and extension. Issues of rationale, status, scripting and funding created dissension and unanimity - but concerns were isolated and a positive attitude towards "Getting My (Collective) Act Together And Taking It On The Road" emerged.

Trash - yes. Out - not yet. But certainly a communication was set up which left so much unsaid and nothing seen - research, observation, exchange of personnel and ongoing discussion could provide the answers. The proposed 1980 AYPAA (Australian Youth Performing Arts Association) national TIE study could well afford such opportunities.
Intelligent Entertainment

...When Aarne Neeme was appointed Artistic Director to Newcastle's Hunter Valley Theatre Company, before deciding on a programme for 1980, he laid down guidelines for the areas he felt should be covered within that programme. Neeme said he would be producing one classic, one Shakespeare, a musical, a new Australian play, a new overseas play and an established Australian work.

HVTC is just into their first season of the year, and with Molière's The Imaginary Invalid they have started off with the classic. Following that comes Williamson's Travelling North, with Carole Ray in her original role of Frances, and then Neeme will join forces with the University of Newcastle and their somewhat larger theatre to put on Henry IV with his core company of actors plus drama students.

He has chosen Brecht for his musical; The Threepenny Opera will follow an introductory season of Brecht on Brecht. Then comes Ayckbourn's Bedroom Farce and the year will finish with a locally written documentary on the closing of the infamous Star Hotel.

Aarne Neeme's aim this year is to establish and consolidate an audience of regular patrons for the whole range of theatre that modern repertory can offer. We will strive for intelligent entertainment towards an excitement, provocation and relevance in our work. We want to become a vital part of this region; a lively local professional company that gives identity to and gains identity from the community it serves. This season has been chosen to cover as wide an area of taste as possible and hopefully any one play will be seen in the context of the whole programme.

He will also be making the Civic Playhouse a more accessible venue with lunchtime entertainments, exhibitions and regular Sunday night performances quite separate to the programmed plays.

The next reading will be on April 20 of John J F Lee's Sarong Aussie, about an RAAF officer and his wife who make an unwilling return to Melbourne after tasting the lotus-eating delights of life on an airforce station in Malaysia.

To follow that is One Last Dance by Robert Hewett; a new farce about an old woman with an axe and a sense of humour, young professionals with no humour - let loose in the crazy '80s world of pills and egocentrism. John Sumner directs this for May 4.

And Judith Alexander, director of Tributary Productions, will direct Steve J Spears' When They Send Me Three And Fourpence on May 18. This is set in 1963 in a seedy St. Kilda dance studio where a sad, witty and charismatic man fights to bind his 'family' of students to him.

Barry Dickins

Banana Bender...Melbourne playwright Barry Dickins is this year Playwright in Residence with La Mama Theatre. His latest play The Banana Bender, is being produced there.

"The Banana Bender is a play on guilt. In it the central character, Lenny Jackson (played by Roderick Williams), rages towards the centre of catholicism, armed with quotes, fruit boxes, guilt and fiery madness. He is the quintessential uneducated, fruitpicking, roadside bard. He sees god in peapod and loamclod alike, but also he sees the devil in Tweed Heads. Lismore, Stanhope and finally, ultimately, Brisbane, too.

But there is his mother, Kath, formerly branch officer of the Tweed Heads Communist Party, a firm banana-athist. They waltz, sing, tapdance and try to do each other in with eight gauge shotguns. Then there is Ruth, a woman of the night from Grafton, who makes a midnight visit in a cab to Jackson's Banana Cooperative. She arrives with live crayfish and Moet champagne reeking of eau de cologne and various seafood. She is an amazing contrast to the seawas, moody, brilliant, depressed, grandiloquent Lenny.

They all have one colossal, crazy, fast-talking, yakketty yakketty yakketty yakketty night.

It's good to be working here at La Mama, and both performers (Ruth and the mother are played by Julien MacDonald) are completely professional; I think it will be a good show. We open on Good Friday and I have engaged the services of a Catholic priest from St Kilda to bless the production at the outset.

A huge electronic talking banana is being constructed from yellow flesh and will tower over the ticket entrance.
Raising Theatre..."I always say to my sons," said the amiable Robert Morley at the launching of the Australian World Theatre Exchange Programme on March 3, "there's safety in art. There's no safety in commerce any more."

He was commending to a large gathering of theatre and business people at the Sydney home of the Hungarian-born patron of the arts, Claire Dan, the joint work of the Cladan Cultural Exchange Institute, the Australia Council and the Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust. Morley went on to extol the arts as a more reliable means of social exchange than the Olympics, told Actors Equity it should move with the times, praised The Club for its audacity and impertinence and said if more things like that happened "you wouldn't be swamped with geriatrics like myself. You have never accorded to the actor in your country the status we accord to ours. You neglect the theatre at your peril. Put your money where it's safe. In the arts."

The programme was launched by the Minister for Home Affairs, Mr. Ellicott, who described the amalgamation. After the success of her Sydney International Piano Competition in 1978 Miss Dan had begun on a plan to bring theatre companies from Europe to tour. Concurrently the Theatre Board of the Australia Council and the AETT established their world programme for the export of theatre, of which the first task was the London season of The Club.

Now the whole programme will be run from the AETT offices by the director of the Cladan Institute, Anthony Steel. Productions will need to be individually financed and the programme is looking to foreign governments and private industry for aid. It will be good shopfront advertising and tax deductible; and with Miss Dan's famous drive it has a good chance of raising the status of our theatre in the way Robert Morley demands.

Griffins on the move... Last year Sydney's new Griffin Theatre Company ran for a month at the Old Kirk Gallery in Surry Hills with a production of Donlevy's The Gingerman. Then there was a co-production of Alex with the Theatre Of The Deaf at the Stables. Premiere performances of Australian writer John Stone's Discovering Australia and Renee Trouver were presented at the Orange Doors in Paddington. They also presented a moved reading of an adaptation of Brecht's Messingkauf Dialogues, working in conjunction with John Willett.

This year the Company has toured Orton's Ruffian on the Stairs and has opened a revival of David Williamson's The Coming Of Stork at the Stables Theatre. The Griffins have taken the lease on the Stables and intend to become a permanent presence in Sydney Theatre.

Jenny Laing-Peach has been elected artistic director and the Company are "squaring their shoulders and eyeballing the eighties."

Nimrod Regroups... Nimrod is beginning to return to its previous company structure; it once more has three artistic directors - John Bell, Neil Armfield and Kim Carpenter - following the departure of co-founder chairman Ken Horler after ten years with the company.

And a new General Manager has now been appointed - Sue Hill having been Acting General Manager since Paul Illes left for the State Theatre Company in Adelaide - Bruce Pollack. Mr. Pollack has just left his position as General Manager of the Leicester Theatre Trust in England. He is Australian, and prior to leaving for the UK in 1977, worked as an assistant to the director with the MTC. During this period he also worked as a freelance theatre consultant and advisor to the Victorian Ministry of the Arts on theatre building.

In 1977 Bruce Pollack became General Manager of the Phoenix Theatre, part of the Leicester Theatre Trust, and in 1979 became GM of the Trust, which comprises the Haymarket Theatre (700 seats), the Studio Theatre (130 seats) and the Phoenix Theatre (275 seats).
New Blood... Space Dump Performances is an ensemble of theatre workers who have come together to create New Blood - A Performance.

New Blood has been described as 'a fable for tomorrow' by Mike Mullins, whose Shadowline II played at the Pilgrim Theatre and Seymour Centre in 1979. With New Blood Mullins continues to develop a fresh approach to the elements of performance. There are, for example, huge back-drops along the theatre wall and the performing space, the 'stage', is eight tonnes of sand.

New Blood deals with a change in the face of Australian culture and the emergence of a new generation. It is a fable set today and moving towards tomorrow in a place where the glum shadow of nuclear clouds take out the sun. The main characters of the performance, the new blood, are the White Boy and the Black Boy (Aussie and Tom Morrow). They find themselves in turbulent times when there is constant and growing talk of war and duty and annihilation. They refuse to be conscripted or to fight and so they flee to the desert. But the desert is no haven; the boys are forced, both separately and together, to face nature herself. Says the aboriginal boy "it's not a question of whose side you're on - now it's a question of survival."

Performers in New Blood are Peter Flynn, Maureen McGrath, Michael Leslie, Bob Thorneycroft and Annie Byron. Silvia Jansons, whose last work was for Robyn Archer in Tonight: Lola Blau, is the visualiser for the piece; and the audio environment is created by Michael Carlos, who has scored such films as Storm Boy, Dawn and Odd Angry Shot.

New Blood is playing in a new venue - the Cleveland Street Performance Space, 199 Cleveland Street, Redfern.
NIMROD

Nimrod Upstairs
until Sunday 13 April

THE HOUSE OF THE DEAF MAN

John Anthony King
director John Bell
designer Kim Carpenter
Paul Bertram, Brian Fitzsimmons, Joseph Furst.
Vivienne Garrett, Deborah Kennedy,
Brian McDermott, Kerry Walker

Nimrod Downstairs
from Wednesday 16 April

CLOWNERS"ONIES!

director Geoffrey Rush
designer Caroline Jones
Gillian Hyde, Russell Newman, Geoffrey Rush,
Tony Taylor, Pat Thomson

Nimrod Upstairs
from Wednesday 23 April

LOUDS

Michael Frayn
director Neil Armfield
designer Eamon D'Arcy
Paul Bertram, Jennifer Hagan, Bob Maza,
John McTernan

Nimrod at The Old Vic, London
until Saturday 5 April

THE CLUB

David Williamson
director John Bell
designer Tom Bannerman
Jeff Ashby, Drew Forsythe, Ron Graham,
Ron Haddrick, Ivar Kants, Barry Lovett

Nimrod at York Theatre, Seymour Centre
from Tuesday 8 April

PETER BROOK’S C.I.C.T. COMPANY

14 PERFORMANCES ONLY!

UBU (in French)
Alfred Jarry
director Peter Brook

L’OS (in French)
based on a story by Birago Diop
by Malick Bowens and Jean-Claude Carrière
director Peter Brook
8, 9, 10, 14, 15 April at 8pm.

THE IK (in English)
based on Colin Turnbull’s book
The Mountain People
director Peter Brook
11 April at 8pm.
12 April at 2.30pm and 8pm.

THE CONFERENCE OF THE BIRDS (in English)
Dramatised by Jean-Claude Carrière after
Farid ud-Din Attar’s 12th century Persian poem
director Peter Brook
16, 17, 18 April at 8pm
19 April at 2.30pm and 8pm.

The tour by Peter Brook and C.I.C.T. has been made possible by the generous assistance of the
Association Française d’Action Artistique,
the Australia Council and by arrangement with
the Adelaide Festival of the Arts Inc.
WHISPERS
RUMOURS
& FACTS

By Norman Kessell

Seems my warning here last October that Sydney was in danger of losing its most successful theatre restaurant, the Music Hall, was only too well founded. As I write, it is almost certain George Miller, unable despite all efforts to reach any compromise with the authorities on fire safety measures, will accept an offer for the property. He told me he feels there is nothing else he can do. None will argue certainly not George Miller against the need for the utmost in fire safety precautions, but it is a pity there was no other way. Apart from the loss to the community, one of the most important avenues of employment and development of Australian actors, writers, designers and musicians will be closed off. North Sydney Council, for its part, acted with such determination I could not help wondering if something more than aldermanic righteousness was involved. So, unless there's an unexpected miracle, the Music Hall dies as it was born, with a production of that hoary old melodrama East Lynne. To paraphrase that play's most famous line: "Dead, dead, and there'll never be another." Or will there? Here's hoping.

I have always discounted the argument that critics should not review a show until it has had time to run in. The tension is there, no matter which night the critics attend as Bernadette Hughson a delightful Barbara Hare in the Music Hall's East Lynne, will tell you. She said the opening performance on February 8 was smooth and assured, but as the press night, February 20, came closer and closer the cast became nervouer and nervouer. Sure enough, on the fateful night, things went haywire. A spotlight that waited at the wings for a character who did not appear was the signal for a series of mishaps. With practised skill, the players ad libbed the scene into one of the evening's funniest moments. Had I been director Alton Harvey, I would have had the whole thing written immediately into the script!

The Ensemble Theatre hopes to make an early start on its rebuilding program, currently expected to cost just over $1,000,000. It is to be carried out in three stages and the theatre has launched a fund-raising drive for $200,000 for Stage 1. It has applied for a capital grant towards this on a one-to-one basis. The old boathshed could not have lasted more than another three years, anyway, but that apart there is urgent need for extra seating to make the theatre more self-supporting. Another reason for wanting to get a start soon is that expenditure to bring the old building in line with the new fire regulations would be money down the drain. Wisely, the theatre's new $13,000 air-conditioning plant was sited so that it can be incorporated in the new building.

On the production side, the Ensemble was happy to welcome back alumni Brian Young, who had been in Tasmania concentrating on his writing, to its current production of Happy Family, by English playwright, the late Giles Cooper. Another happy return was that of designer Yoshi Tosa. Happy Family performers are John Clayton, Jill Floyd, Ross and Hilary Larkum. Opening date: April 3.

On the other hand, Ensemblites were quite sad over losing the Stables Theatre, which it had operated so successfully as a shopwindow for budding writers, players and directors. As I hear it, the Griffin company will now use it eight months of the year, while owners Bob Ellis and Anne Brooksbank will present new Australian plays the other four months.

Composer Albert Arlen (The Sentimental Bloke, The Girl From The Snowy, Oh Gosh! etc.) and his singer-writer wife, Nancy Brown, left on February 20 for an extended world tour. In Monton, France, they will call on octogenarian former musical comedy star Marie Burke. Remember her back in the 1920s in The Cousin From Nowhere, Wildflower — in which choreographer-director Freddie Carpenter was a dancer — and Frasquita, in which Sir Robert Helpmann made his debut? The Arlens will also call on Marie's daughter, Patricia, a musical comedy star in her own right, who also lives in France, as Ampuss Var.

Members of the Australian Opera some eighteen months ago contributed generously to help send colleague Robert Gard's wife, singer Doreen Morrow, to the Philippines for treatment which quite possibly gave her a longer spell of life than her doctors here were able to promise her. And again, after she lost her courageous fight against the scourge of cancer on February 25, the company, led by John Germain and Cynthia Johnson, gave freely to help provide for the immediate education needs of the two Gard children.

Remember Tibor Rudas and the revues and pantos he staged here a few years ago? Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs was a hardy annual. He's still going strong in America, where he has just been made corporate vice president for the Resorts International Hotel in Atlantic City. He is also in charge of entertainment at the company's hotels in Freeport and Nassau, in the Bahamas. He has also branched out into promoting prize fights and other sports and is now organising a billiards tournament with $25,000 in prize money. He no longer has any connection with the Rudas Theatrical Organisation still active in Sydney, or with the dancing school that trains those supple acrobatic dancers who were always a highlight of his stage shows.

I hear the Sydney Theatre Company has commissioned John Romeril to write the book for the musical based on Louis Stone's early Oz novel, Jonah.

Doctors have ordered Jose Iturbi not to undertake any strenuous piano-playing tours. Makes sense. He's 84.

That new United Nations stamp commemorating the United National Decade for Women 1976-1985 was designed by Gloria Swanson.

Don't you hate show biz advertisements that fail to tell you how much you'll have to fork out? Of thirty six live show ads in a recent Sydney Morning Herald, nineteen omitted the price of the seats. Two neglected even to give the starting time of the show.
The first thing that strikes you about Julie Hamilton is her warmth and generosity. She cares so much about your comfort and welfare that, after one meeting with her, you feel as though you have made a new life-long friend. She exudes the same quality in her acting — unvarnished honesty. "I think the basic requirement for all acting," she says, "is truth, and if you're being truthful whether it be on stage, television or the big screen, then it will work." Julie's success in all three fields is proof of the pudding...

Born and raised in Adelaide, Julie was introduced to the theatre at an early age by her father, who had a passionate love for music and the stage. Opera, ballet, musical comedy and drama became an integral part of Julie's childhood.

Julie kept her dreams of being an actress to herself, fearing that people might not take her seriously; her father who might well have encouraged her, died when she was twelve. During high school Julie continued to haunt the theatre, and she befriended a young man who sold records at Allan Music store and who was developing into one of Adelaide's most prominent amateur actors — Dennis Olsen. Before long, Julie was appearing in amateur productions with him but, whereas Olsen would move to Sydney to study at NIDA, Julie stayed in Adelaide to study dental nursing. She signed up for an Arts course to prepare for a teaching career, but pulled out the day before she was due to begin, knowing that was not what she really wanted to do.

Returning penniless from a tour of Europe Julie worked at the Adelaide Hospital to earn enough money to go to Melbourne: Dennis Olsen had told her of a director, George Ogilvie, who was one of the best in the country and was now working at the Melbourne Theatre Company. Julie decided she would present herself to Mr Ogilvie and ask for a job, but before she had earned enough for the plane fare she heard that auditions were in progress for a South Australian tour of Pygmalion. She read for the director, Les Dayman...and won the lead role of Eliza.

"Where else but in a place like Adelaide, where they were just starting to make acting a profession, would a girl who'd always wanted to be an actress and never had the guts to tell anybody, and without any formal training, get a chance to audition and for her first role get to play Eliza? I mean, it's insane!"

Pygmalion played a short season in Adelaide (starring Edwin Hodgeman as Higgins) and toured the state for three months. Julie then acted as Narrator for the Marionette Theatre Company's tour of Queensland and South Australia before Peter Batey invited her, along with Les Dayman and Teddy Hodgeman, to form the nucleus of the first permanent South Australian Theatre Company.

Over a period of three years, Julie appeared with the Company in such plays as Let's Get A Divorce, The Queen and The Rebels, Little Murders, An Adelaide Happening, The Philanthropist and A Midsummer Night's Dream. With this solid experience under her belt, Julie felt it was once again time to search for George Ogilvie. She didn't have to travel far...Ogilvie became the next Artistic Director of the SATC. So Julie settled down for another few years with the Company.

In 1975, she decided to make the big move to Sydney for television and film work:

"I don't think I would have stayed so long in Adelaide except I'm a bit gutless; it was security and they were all my friends. I'm not very good at selling myself — not many actors are — and at least in Adelaide I was known. People might have thought, I'm sick to death of her', but they knew who I was! In Australia, probably because of the distances, you go to another city and nobody's ever heard of you. I really think we've got to stop that. Somehow we've got to know what's happening in the rest of the country because theatre people are a minority group anyway and we've got to support one another."

Shortly after her arrival in Sydney, Julie's agent sent her to meet ABC-TV producer Eric Tayler, who was casting Arena, a tele-play written by Michael Craig and starring John Meillon. The plum role of Meillon's wife was still open:

"My old mate John Hargreaves did a good stint for me...he happened to be having a drink with Eric and John Meillon, and Eric asked 'Have you ever heard of Julie Hamilton?' Of course Meillon hadn't, but Hargreaves had done Jugglers Three with me in Adelaide. He put in a good word for me and Eric took a punt."

A very successful punt, too. Arena led to more television work and then to
Julie's first film role, as the sympathetic journalist in The Fourth Wish, once again opposite John Meillon.

Julie made a brief return to Adelaide to play in David Williamson's A Handful of Friends later repeating her role for the MTC production. Television director Douglas Sharp was impressed by her performance in that play, and he offered her the lead role in an ABC play by Sonia Berg, No Room for the Innocent. Julie's portrayal of Alice Fisher, a mother of three children who suffers the emotional traumas of moving from the country to the city, won her the Penguin Award for Best Drama Performance of the year: "It was a terrific role, but very depressing to do, because the woman I played was in almost every scene and she suffers a total loss of confidence throughout until, at the end, she's virtually catatonic. I didn't even know I was up for an award! Douglas Sharp rang me from Melbourne and said 'We've got your award', and I said 'What award?' They'd already had the ceremony down there!"

Julie was invited back to the Melbourne Theatre Company to play Gina in The Wild Duck and Portia in The Merchant of Venice opposite Frank Thring's Shylock (Thring later pulled out of the production and was replaced by Robin Ramsay). Something of an old hand at playing Shakespearean heroines ("Back in Adelaide, when I was told Rex Cramp ish wanted me to play Isabella in Measure For Measure, I kept crying all the time — I was terrified!") Julie enjoyed her season as Portia, although her favourite role of all time is Rosalind in As You Like It, which she played in Adelaide in 1975.

One again television beckoned and Julie spent the next year as Tommy, John Gregg's hard-working assistant in The Oracle for the ABC. The role was less than demanding, and Julie concentrated on learning the intricacies of television production. Finally, after four years in Sydney, Julie was invited to play Prudence in Rex Cramphorn's production of Lady of the Camelias — her first stage appearance in her new home state. Mrs Sarti in Nimrod's Galileo followed, and then her third David Williamson play... Travelling North: "I think the Australian theatre owes so much to David. Having gone on tour with Travelling North and seeing that people want to see what David Williamson has written, that David is actually a Star Playwright, is very exciting, because a few years ago nobody wanted to see Australian plays. I really believe in respect being paid to our artists. I love to see people standing and screaming for Joan Sutherland and waiting to give her flowers and dolls, because she should be cherished. And David should be, too."

Until April 12, Julie will be appearing in Simon Gray's Close of Play, directed by Rodney Fisher, at the Sydney Opera House. Immediately afterwards, she features in her second play for the Sydney Theatre Company: No Names — No Pack Drill, directed by — wait for it — George Ogilvie. So Julie continues to enjoy what appears to be a charmed career, playing excellent roles consistently well, surrounded by loyal friends who, in many cases, are the cream of the country's talent: "I love acting as a profession and I love actors; it really bugs me when people write actors off as a bunch of spoilt egocentric kids. I think acting is a very fine profession. I like the idea of actually going out on stage with something to give and getting something back from the audience — that's communication."
Stephen Sewell—political playwright

by Jeremy Ridgman

If ever tangible proof were needed by a playwright that he had "arrived", then Stephen Sewell has it. Within less than twenty four hours his first major play, The Father We Loved On A Beach By The Sea, was "launched" by its publishers and his second, Traitors, opened at the Nimrod Downstairs. Two plays do not constitute an oeuvre - their author is only twenty seven - but a mature talent has been recognised which, combined with a profound commitment, is surely set to shake Australian theatre out of its politically moribund state.

It was suitable that the ceremony to mark the publication of Three Political Plays, which contains, besides The Father..., Spears' King Richard and John Bradley's Irish Stew, should have taken place on the stage of Brisbane's La Boite Theatre. All three plays had their premiere there, Sewell's tough, uncomprising piece kicking off in July 1978. More significantly, Sewell wrote the play soon after moving to Brisbane from the peace and quiet of Sydney and he owes its genesis to the political environment he found himself in. Politics there, he maintains are "closer to the bone"; one is more aware of perhaps having a police record, injustice, deceit and brutality are more overt. For a writer some three years out of Sydney University (a BSc in physics and mathematics) and weaned politically on the "last Twitches" of the Vietnam era, this uncomfortable exile was the perfect catalyst.

Not that Sewell had not already recognised the potential in theatre for exploring the complexities and contradictions of political reality. He had turned to playwriting because of a discovered facility with dialogue but more importantly out of a fascination with theatre as a form of "directed social activity". His first play, Kangaroo, he calls "an allegory on race", but it was in his second, A New Border, set in fascist Rome in 1922, that his perspective began to develop.

The Father... is not "about" Queensland, but it is certainly informed by the sensitivity to political extremity mentioned earlier. It is a study of right wing backlash, working class reaction and, above all, the conflict between political commitment and the ties of love, affection and self respect. In this latter respect it foreshadows the tighter, more objectively conceived Traitors, with its underlying dialectic of love and revolution. Objections have been raised to the apparent naivety of setting The Father... in an Australia of the future, complete with fascist takeover, and to its seemingly disconnected thread of Latin American politics. In fact, Sewell regards the Latin American experience, particularly that of Chile, as a potential scenario for our own political future. (Interestingly, Nowra's Visions makes a similar equation though on a different ideological basis.) Australia, he explains, depends on an export economy, is increasingly dominated by foreign multi-nationals and can expect an accompanying growth in authoritarianism: it is a more realistic perspective to regard Australia as an exploited nation than as a capitalist power in the American mould.

Sewell's involvement with Latin American politics is more than theoretical. He has established contacts with Brisbane's Chilean population and is currently writing a film script on the Chilean revolutionary movement.

In Traitors, Sewell has gone beyond what might be considered the personal obsessions of a committed playwright. Not unlike Trevor Griffiths' Occupations, it is an attempt to analyse the contradictions of post-revolutionary Russia. For Griffiths the bete noir is the nascent state capitalism which can justify a trade deal with Fiat in preference to aid for the Italian revolutionary struggles: for Sewell, it is Stalinism and its accompanying atrocities, according to him, and blind spot in socialist thinking. He wanted to present a coherent analysis of Stalinism as a particular historical phenomenon, dispelling the myth of its inevitability - a myth which might explain the hostility of western working classes to radical socialism.

Sewell's vision is a complex one, matching rigorous political analysis, based on dedicated research, with a deep sympathy for character, a strength remarked upon by a number of critics. Alrene Sykes, editor of Three Political Plays, also comments on "the unusual combination of fierce political feeling with compassion and understanding of the characters..." There is perhaps only David Hare who, in his later plays, has used this combination so fruitfully and who shares with Sewell a notable respect for the intelligence and human instinct of his female characters.

"Compassion and understanding"...such a concern with people in politics can only do the reputation of political theatre good.
by Adrian Wintle

Time has a habit of curing most things: the penalty of growing older is balanced by the fact of growing wiser, so that in process of time currently abrasive events soften and even tend to acquire dignity.

Some such statement seems necessary in any discussion of the Riverina Trucking Company, the Wagga-based professional theatre group now in its fourth year of existence, and, at the time of writing, about to launch its 1980 season under its third artistic director.

Within the volatile world of the theatre, three artistic directors in four years is perhaps less than extraordinary.

Terry O'Connell, the RTC's founder in 1976, introduced a bold artistic policy embracing standard repertoire; new, preferably Australian plays; rock musicals; and group-devised presentations. Thus Romeo and Juliet and Much Ado About Nothing, the latter utilising pin-stripe suits, snap-brim hats and Mafia overtones, were offset against a joyous Jesus Christ Superstar, a stunning Mates with a brilliant Sylvia from local lecturer/actor Colin Anderson, and an equally inspired Day in the Death of Joe Egg with O'Connell himself providing fine acting values as Brian. A string of other productions preceded these listed events, each bearing the stamp of an individual and magnetic theatrical mind. True, not every production achieved the summit, but in each case a superb vitality was present.

At the end of 1978 O'Connell left Wagga, succeeded in gaining a substantial grant from the Australia Council Theatre Board, and is currently directing the Music Box Theatre which operates out of Sydney's Seymour Centre. But Wagga did not lose merely an artistic director: virtually the entire Trucking Company at that stage deserted the rural scene to try their fortunes elsewhere.

The problem facing Damien Jameson, the RTC's second artistic director, was thus not simply to extend another man's vision, but to build up a group of personnel from scratch. In addition, Jameson somehow had to place his own personal stamp on the fortunes of the RTC while operating in a milieu compounded of local jealousies and comparisons, disquiet within the Trucking Company Board, and the overriding obligation to achieve a blend of artistically satisfying plays and box-office successes.

Jameson eventually looked set for a long run. His opening play in the 1979 season, Inner Voices, and his third production, Dusa, Fish, Stas and Vi proclaimed artistic direction of a high order. A Toast To Melba settled down to become an elegant and suave production, and Godspell was infectiously bright.

Just after rehearsals had begun for One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest Jameson left the RTC. Subsequent events probably lie outside the scope of this article and must wait for the softening of time. Cuckoo's Nest was in fact staged at another Wagga venue, while the Trucking Company, seriously depleted in male acting strength, brought in Ross McGregor to direct Female Transport, a production that swivelled uneasily between realism in set design, and with notable exceptions, awkwardness in acting effort.

In late January this year, the RTC's third artistic director, Peter Barclay, arrived in Wagga. Wisely, Barclay spent his first couple of weeks in the Garden City of the South sniffing out the scene and forming his own impressions.

Twenty-seven years old, Barclay, formerly assistant director at the Nimrod Theatre, told me he wanted the RTC to become "an innovator" expressing "the quality of life in the Riverina". He stressed that "Wagga shouldn't regard itself as second batsman to the larger capital-city companies", and to this end firmly believes the Trucking Company should introduce new works to the Australian theatrical scene.

Current Trucking Company personnel consists of artistic director, administrator, stage director and two professional actors. The company has already received funding of $18,000 from the NSW Government (down $3,000 on last year's allocation), and at time of writing had not heard the result of its application to the Australia Council Theatre Board.

Notwithstanding, Peter Barclay has already outlined initiatives for the RTC this year that include:

- increased activity in soliciting funds from the private sector to cover such costs as theatre programme production
- introduction of a regular series of acting classes conducted by Debra May designed for community participation
- a major three-week tour of the Riverina and South Coast of The Pariah Dog in May-June, with assistance from the Arts Council of NSW
- projected visits from other NSW professional companies, including the Murray River Performing Group
- introduction of community project aligned with regional festivals and events, under the direction of Gordon Beattie

Barclay's primary task in the first few months of his Riverina residency must be to re-establish faith in the RTC as a centre for vital professional theatre. If the quality of his groundwork can be matched by comparable theatrical standard, I have a hunch his task will be realised.

Time will provide the answer.
RTC
Riverina Trucking Company
Season One 1980

Play One
BOYS OWN MACBETH
by Graham Bond
and Jim Burnett

Play Two
THE PARIAH-DOG
by Mick Rodgers

Play Three
LOOK
by Joe Orton
BIG RIVER is a huge play. Each of the people writing below has chosen to emphasize a different quality, and they are all right. As Sandy Gore and Anne Fraser suggest it is a play rich with a sense of place and history. On the banks of a once great river ("I threw a branch of leaves into the river. They didn’t move. The river has stopped," says Adela) an essentially pioneer society is fading, to be replaced, as the children drift towards the cities, by - what? A new century, a new Federal Government and a new city life will provide some of the answer.

And yet the play, and the central character, Adela Learmonth, remain by the banks of the great river, looking for value and peace in the old world. There may, as Leslie Dayman suggests, be a feeling of optimism, yet there is also a faint hint of alarm at the prospect of the "squash court of city life." Here the feeling for place in the play becomes powerful. All of Alex Buzo’s later plays are set by water, but in the past it has been an ocean which slashes people on oyster beds, or swallows their stash, or kills them. Here it is a big quiet river which threatens to rise in flood, but recedes calmly back.

All this in a language and style which show a new development. Leslie Dayman’s comparison with Chekhov extends beyond the subject. Buzo has got to a point where he can give characters quite ordinary lines which resonate profoundly because of the context created. And the language, as John Sumner hints, is delicate, precise and evocative.

So the play demands attention and repays close watching. And yet there always seems to have been some sort of barrier to an open response to Alex Buzo’s plays, for the more self-conscious and convoluted, and less genuinely perceptive critics. The problem is that the easy style and lightness of touch which he has been developing in his recent plays seems to lull people into a false sense of security in their own prejudices. "How can you write a romantic comedy about serious issues?" some ask, and others, as the surface of brittle wit slips away: "Your plays used to be much funnier."

Perhaps it is that we are only really used to three styles in this country: the analytically naturalistic, the knockabout, broadly comic rambunctious, and the self-consciously avant-garde. A promiscuous stylist like Alex Buzo does not get the full attention he deserves from some reviewers. He does from audiences but they, of course, don’t count.
I have used the term "romantic" in describing both Makassar Reef and Big River. I did not choose this term to upset worthy citizens like the theatre critic Joel Garner - though that is a welcome fringe benefit - but because it suggests possibilities for drama beyond the manufacture of consumer goods for various conformists and pressure groups.

I was one of the more vocal proponents of urban Australian drama in the 1960s. The plays I wrote at that time were set in city streets (Norm and Ahmed), offices (The Front Room Boys) or home units (Rooted). This was part of a feeling that cities were where it was all "happening" and that the outback ethos was a misleading myth.

Now I'm not so sure. I think it was valuable to examine urban tensions for a while as so many pivotal characters were caught up in them, and it will be equally valuable to return periodically to those settings. But really is a bit of a dead end, and I think there has been one play too many about "relationships", organic, supportive, ongoing or otherwise.

There are other dimensions to our lives beyond the squash court of city life, and Big River attempts to pin down a few of those concerned with the force of history and growing up in what should still be called the new world. The focus for all this is the central character of the play, Adela Learmonth, daughter of a pioneer, branded on the thigh in early years, currently engaged in making sense of her life.

Big River is not naturalistic and is not a thesis, though Joel Garner will assume it is, and thereby miss most of the fun.

What is your view of Big River?
It's really been a very big play to work on. It's set in a very clearly defined list of situations. It starts with a funeral, that's the first act, then there's the second act which is a picnic, the third act is a ball, and then a fourth act, which is a sort of coda. But it deals with Federation - it's an historical play - and the fortunes of a family on the big river which is the Murray just outside of Albury. It is a very big canvas for Alex to cover.

It's been intriguing really to come to grips with the period with Alex's particular type of writing.

What is the background to Big River and the Adelaide Festival? How did it all get off the ground?
The first time I heard about it I was in the UK, a couple of years ago, 1978, and I had a ring from Alex saying that he'd been talking with Christopher Hunt about the possibility of doing a play for the Adelaide Festival of Arts for 1980 and that Alex would be interested in my directing it. He had talked to me previously about writing an historical play and I said it all sounded marvellous and I'd like to read the play because I like his work and I've done a few of his plays, so that was the beginning. But he hadn't written the play at the time. He had it in his mind, but he hadn't actually written it.

What are the specific problems involved with period plays?
Well, that's not how we behave today, is it? We didn't jet around in those days. We didn't rush around in those days. We gave more emphasis in our language to words, we actually used words in a more meaningful way, if you like. One of the more elementary things we've been considering in actually working a
play like Big River, is making full use of syllables (the
difference between saying words like government and family
today and in the 1900s).
We’re dealing with behaviour where people were actually used
to taking their time. This is just a very basic thing of period.
Trying to marry this up with the behaviour of a group of
pioneer settlers on the Murray in 1900 at the time of
Federation, of course has been a very interesting exercise. Only
the public will be able to tell us whether we’ve succeeded or
failed.
Do you think that Big River is a significant development in
Alex’s work?
Yes, I think it is. He certainly has an ability for writing very
good roles for women. I’ve often talked about Alex as being an
impressionist writer. This makes him a very difficult writer to
interpret and I think that he’s probably tried to do more in this
play. I think he has been thinking more deeply, probably more
so than in any other play I have worked on of his.
This is a new cast for you, isn’t it?
Practically, yes. I’ve worked with Sandy Gore before, and
many years ago with Maggie Miller. These are the only two
people out of the cast of ten I have worked with. I have not
worked with the stage management either, so it is practically a
brand new company altogether. Of course I’ve been fortunate
enough in working with Anne Fraser again, as the designer,
and of course I have been backed up by the MTC production
department, who after all, are invaluable to all the work we do.

Leslie Dayman

ACTOR

My first reading of Alex Buzo’s Big River left an interesting, if
perhaps irrelevant impression on me, which was to be reinforced
during subsequent rehearsals.
The play struck me as a sort of inverted Cherry Orchard.
Chekhov’s greatest play contains themes remarkably similar to
those of Big River - the passing of an era, the accompanying
disintegration of a family estate facing social and economic
change, and an intense “emotional network” binding the
characters. From this starting point, the plays move in opposite
directions, both in form and dynamic. The Cherry Orchard tells
of the despair and impotence of Ranevskaya’s household, the
victims of the changes being wrought. Trofimov’s famous
“premonition of happiness” scene sounds the only note to hope
for the future.

On the other hand, the Hindmarsh family of Big River are
assertive and ultimately display the necessary spirit and
commitment to solve their problems and re-establish themselves
in the world in the face of change.
The play is underscored with a feeling of optimisim about the
changes which the new century and nationhood will bring.
Even the particular character I play, Leo Mulcahy, is,
superficially at least, a Lophakin turned upside down. Both
men are from a lower social class and each has been involved
from youth in the fortunes of the declining states. But whereas
Lophakin, albeit with the best intentions, contributes to the
final demise of Ranevskaya’s estate, Mulcahy provides the “new
blood” and expertise to restore the fortunes of the Hindmarsh
family.

Sandy Gore

ACTRESS

My association with Alex Buzo began in 1969 with the Jane
Street season of Rooted. The so called renaissance in
Australian drama was in its infancy - so was Jane Street and so
was I. The play was a huge success much to my surprise; for
like so many others at the time, I believed that Australian plays
had to be suspect.
At last count I’ve been involved with at least eleven
productions of new Australian works. We’ve all come a long
was since 69. After Rooted there was Tom. Coralie
Landsdowne Says No (a turning point for me as a performer),
Makassar Reef, and now, Big River.
It’s a monumental play and to my mind Alex’s best. Set in
Albury at the turn of the century, Federation and a National
Government are just around the corner. It’s the beginning of
the grape growing industry, we still have no capital city and
with the advent of the Railways - the life stream of so many of
the early settlers - the Murray river is dying. It is also a play
about the “pioneer” children; the second and third generations.
Do they follow in their parents’ footsteps and try to work the
land or do they move to the big cities of Sydney and
Melbourne and make new lives for themselves?
It’s a cliche - but a fact - Alex writes marvellous roles for
women, and the central character in Big River, Adela
Learmonth, is no exception. She is probably the most complex
character I’ve ever had to tackle. Rehearsals are almost done
and the exploratory process for all has been arduous.
A contemporary writer, an historical piece and dialogue which
must never be treated naturalistically; enormous energy and
control are essential. To do any new play for the first time is a
huge challenge, a precedent is set and forever after comparisons
are made. I find Big River both exciting and daunting and
being a great, great fan of Alex’s work, I can only hope I do
him justice.
So The One Day Of The Year is being revived by the State Theatre Company of South Australia from April 18 to May 10. The news takes me back to 1961 and its first professional production in Sydney...I was there on holiday, staying with actor Lewis Fiander.

It was an exciting evening at the Palace Theatre in Pitt Street. Alan Seymour's play was presented by the Elizabethan Theatre Trust, directed by Robin Lovejoy, with setting designed by Anne Fraser, and the cast consisted of Ron Haddrick, Rey Lye, Nita Pannell, Lew Luton and Judith Arthy.

Could Seymour's play, one wondered, complete a trio of outstanding Australian plays: joining Lawler's Summer Of The Seventeenth Doll and Beynon's The Shifting Heart? The audience's enthusiastic reaction left no doubt. And the climax came with a curtain call announcement that the play would be presented in London later that year.

Lewis escorted Patricia Conolly to the premiere, and afterwards she and other friends came back to his flat, where of course the play was heavily discussed. Lewis remained strangely silent.

When the others had left he confided in me.

"The Trust want to send me to London to play Hughie." He seemed surprised, confused. "I don't want to go — I want to remain here."

It was Neil Hutchison, executive producer of the Trust, who had informed him of the Trust's plans, but it was Elsie Beyer — the power behind the Trust in those days — who had made the decision. Lewis was her "white haired boy".

A couple of days later Lewis had an appointment with John McCallum: to audition for the role of Fagin in JCW's forthcoming production of Oliver!. When he returned to the flat he was annoyed. McCallum had seemed to like his audition, but said Lewis really was too young for the role. Bill Rees, JCW's permanent director, had sympathetically said: "Never mind Lewis — come back in ten years time!"

What irked Lewis most was that McCallum had got stuck into him, angry that he had come to the audition with the knowledge he could not play it anyway, as the Trust was sending him overseas. Hutchison had informed McCallum before talking to Lewis; it was useless for the young actor to say he had just heard it himself, that as yet he had made no decision.

As a matter of interest, a few weeks later Lewis played Shylock at matinees of John Alden's company's production of The Merchant Of Venice, and received much praise.

A fortnight after the Seymour play opening I sailed on a trip back to England. Farewell ing me on the wharf, along with Lewis, were two frequent visitors to his flat: his understudy (playing Hughie at matinees), and a little girl, recently out of NIDA, who had acted opposite Lewis in A Taste Of Honey. John Gregg was the understudy (so good in the ABC's recent The Oracle series). And the young actress? Her name was Robyn Nevin!

In London frequently I was queried about the Seymour play by an acquaintance who was the play's London agent. No London director had been decided upon, although it looked likely that Leo McKern would direct.

Haddrick, Pannell and Lye were certain to repeat their roles, but in London no one knew about Lewis, although I had already received news of his departure from Australia. It seemed he would have to audition for the role along with others, including Lew Luton who had played it in Sydney and had made his own way to England.

My agent friend asked me to suggest an actress for the girl's role. Patricia Conolly, now in London, seemed an ideal choice. Again, she would have to audition.

I was one of the small group on Waterloo Station — that included Ron Haddrick and Alan Seymour — to meet the boat train bringing Nita Pannell, Reg Lye and Lewis.

First off the train, Lewis behaved like an enthusiastic schoolboy. "I know all my lines," he said to Seymour. "We've been rehearsing every day on the ship." Also rehearsing had been actress Audine Leith, hoping to get into the London production.

Someone — whether Seymour or Haddrick I cannot now remember — took Lewis aside and quietly gave him the news: he would have to audition for the role for the London management.

The night before I set sail back to Australia I attended a dress rehearsal of The One Day Of The Year (opening two days later) at Joan Littlewood's theatre at Stratford East. Raymond Menmuir was the director and Kenneth Rowell the set's designer. Both Lewis and Patricia had been cast. Although the rehearsal was stopped occasionally, and pieces of dialogue and action repeated, that Sydney first night magic was all there.

The play was warmly received by the London critics — but did not transfer to the West End. Haddrick and Nita Pannell returned to Australia, Lye remained and has done useful work there since, as has Seymour. Patricia Conolly eventually joined the RSC, made her way to America and has done well there, occasionally returning to act in her homeland.

And Lewis Fiander, who had no desire to go to England in the first place, has remained there, returning only to repeat his London lead role in the musical 1776, later to appear in Same Time, Next Year, and going back to England disillusioned at not being offered more work in his own country. I often wonder how his career would have gone had he been cast as Fagin.
The Greeks

By Irving Wardle

On the first Saturday in February at the unawed hour of ten in the morning, the Aldwych Theatre was packed to the roof for the Royal Shakespeare Company's first performance of The Greeks, a ten-play trilogy on the Trojan War and its aftermath, from which the dazed spectators finally dispersed shortly before midnight.

To find any other British classical production on this scale you have to go back sixteen years to the RSC's English history cycle, The Wars Of The Roses, and on that occasion as on this, the adaptor-director was John Barton.

Barton's work on the English histories was in the company's natural line of Shakespearean fare, and derives entirely from Barton's personal obsession with the material - one of the great stories of the world which we have never found a satisfactory way of staging and which is largely unknown by the British public. The only solution, he decided, was to tell the whole story in chronological sequence, and to do so in a down-to-earth narrative style, wiping the slate clean of Victorian rhetoric.

Assembled mainly from Euripides, The Greeks is the first complete retelling of the Trojan myth ever to be staged: a safe claim to make as the ancient tragedians overlooked the war itself leaving Barton to plug the gap with Achilles, a brand-new classical tragedy extracted from the Iliad. Starting at the beginning of the world with a Hesiod-based Prologue, the cycle runs from Agamemnon's sacrifice of his daughter to Aulis to her eventual reunion with her brother Orestes seventeen years later.

Included in the fable are the murders of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra, the post-war dramas of Hecuba and Andromache, and the comedy of Helen - who, according to Euripides, yawned away the war in Egypt waiting for Menelaus to come and fetch her.

The text has gone through six drafts since Barton and the Greek scholar Kenneth Cavander began work in 1978. Great liberties have been taken to make the plays accessible to audiences who may not have heard of the Trojan Horse. Characters and speeches have been shifted from play to play, episodes rearranged, original explanatory material inserted, and ancient texts conflated. The Chorus throughout is played by women, thus involving a wholesale sex-change in the case of the Agamemnon. And in place of the elevated declamatory verse with which previous translators have sought to reproduce Greek meters, Barton and Cavander have limited themselves to a terse three-stress line and to language as bare as a stone.

Before rehearsals began last September, Barton had various thematic goals in view. He hoped that the cycle would come over as the story of a civilisation in decline: that women would emerge as the custodians of civilised values, and that the production would develop a bearing on the modern world through costume relating roughly to the period between the Edwardian twilight and the age of international terrorism.

In the event, with the exception of the Chorus (characterised as a ring of giggling nymphs gossiping about Olympian improprieties, and dropping lines like "Did you sail close to the coast?" which sound uncomfortably close to Noel Coward), these hopes have worked out with exemplary clarity and force. What Barton cannot have foreseen is the effect of the actors' personalities on the material. His original plan was to cultivate a fairy-tale simplicity, with playing style to match. But the final work is unavoidably the product of a sophisticated team, and it happens that by far the most powerful passages are those involving complex emotion and complex character.

The cycle falls into three parts, respectively concerning crime, punishment, and redemption: it is, as Barton says, "a coherent picture of something incoherent". The first part reflects a world of uncomplicated heroic values that undergo progressive corruption from the moment of Agamemnon's fatal decision to raise a wind for the Greek fleet at the price of his daughter's life. And the development of dramatic interest is co-extensive with the spread of corruption.

This is partly a matter of extending the characters' lives beyond the boundaries of a single tragedy. To see John Shrapnel's Agamemnon changing from the tormented man of honour in the first play to the petty bully, squabbling over a concubine in Achilles; or to see Billie Whitelaw's Andromache first as a distraught war victim, and then as a cheerful exile remarking "these things often happen" in recalling the slaughter of her husband and child.

As the last example suggests, one surprise is the appearance of laughter in
the most unlikely places. Some of the original material, of course, lends itself to comedy; such as the play of Helen which features Janet Suzman sun-bathing on a tomb, dousing herself in ancient Egyptian atomizers, and criticizing Aphrodite - "she's so vulgar" - in the baby-doll inflexions of Lorelei Lee.

But comedy also arises in places normally reserved for horror; as it does when Achilles' mother brings him the armour in which he is to die as if serving him a hot dinner; or as it does amazingly with Electra, whom Lynn Dearth plays as a grinning razor-cropped Baader-Meinhof girl, gleefully awaiting the latest death screams from the blood-soaked palace of Argos. "Any minute now," she says; and by the third repetition it has become a laugh line.

I would not deny that some of the emotional effects for which we most revere ancient tragedy are erased by this treatment. But any discussion of The Greeks must start with the acknowledgment that it succeeds as a spell-binding piece of story-telling. Beyond that, I would claim that the collaboration between Barton and his designer, John Napier, (who confines the entire work to a bare concave disc with the tragic doorway displaced to a side exit) has created a world that exists in and out of time, where terrorists brandishing sub-machine guns can believably share the stage with old soldiers in full classical armour. Whatever the reservations from classical purists, and they are rumbling away, classical production in Britain will be permanently affected by this huge and audacious work.

Ladies leading

by Karl Levett

On Broadway and Off just now it is definitely a Ladies First. Suddenly New York has a blossoming of leading ladies — all presented in shining star parts.

Janet Gaynor opened (and closed) in Harold and Maude, a stage version of the cult film that starred Ruth Gordon. Estelle Parsons is singing white-face as Good Queen Bess in Elizabeth and Essex, a new musical version of Maxwell Anderson's
Elizabeth the Queen. And Mary Tyler Moore is succeeding in dying nightly in *Whose Life Is It Anyway?*

But of more moment we have simultaneously before us, three leading ladies of the English-speaking theatre, Irene Worth, Joan Plowright and Uta Hagen.

Irene Worth has the title role in Edward Albee’s *The Lady From Dubuque.* This is Albee’s first effort since his 1975 *Seascape* and this time out Alan Schneider as director, a strong cast and in Ms Worth, a true leading lady. We’re back again in *Virginia Woolf* terrain, a suburban living room populated by three couples. With a familiar background of drinks and games we learn that the hostess is dying of a terminal illness. As one character calls it: “Your nice, average desperate evening.” The guests depart and the hostess is carried in pain to bed. From the centre of the house Ms Worth resplendent in a scarlet coat enters with her elegant partner (Earle Hyman). The pair silently assure us they have taken possession of the house. Act One curtains.

In the second act, Albee contrives to bring the whole crew together and the play comes wonderfully alive. He cleverly manages to combine the water and oil elements of *Virginia Woolf* and *Tiny Alice* and emerges with a moral parable that is, literally, a matter of Life and Death. To be sure philosophical pretensions abound, but Albee’s hand in mixing these diverse elements has a masterly theatrical touch and the result is consistently entertaining and intriguing.

And through it all there is Ms Worth as an angel of death anyone would welcome. She is the personification of grace, charm and style, reminding us how rare these qualities are on New York stages.

Joan Plowright is starring in *Filumena,* Eduardo de Filippo’s stage version of the 1964 Italian film. Originally directed by Franco Zeffirelli it seems there was Trouble on the Road and Laurence Olivier stepped in to take over the chores, in this, his wife’s vehicle. Ms Plowright has played this role for two years in London and won acting awards while doing it. So it would seem impertinent and probably irrelevant to suggest at this stage that Ms Plowright is miscast in the part. Yes, she does bring to the role great warmth and a winning emotional tone, dispensing with the trappings and going straight to its heart. But, oh, she is not very convincing as an Italian. There is something essentially phlegmatic in her pronunciations, something North Country. Ms Plowright’s accent coupled with the translation by Hall and Waterhouse make it seem that Naples is somewhere north of Nottingham.

In contrast Frank Finlay is pure stage Italian, but the performance is all flash and surface and makes you reconsider that perhaps Ms Plowright did it the right way.

The play itself is a comedy that creaks in every joint, and in this translation is without a vestige of wit. Although Olivier’s hand can be seen in a couple of lovely ensemble touches, this is essentially a piece of warmed-over pasta that hasn’t travelled well. We in New York see Ms Plowright so little that it is sad she has chosen to go slumming — and for so long.

Uta Hagen is also an actress we see little of. Her reputation has survived a fifteen year absence from Broadway. For her return she has chosen *Charlotte* by Peter Hacks, a two-character play that opened in East Germany in 1976. Ms Hagen and her husband, Herbert Berghof, who is also the director, translated and adapted the play from the German original. Ms Hagen is Charlotte von Stein, Goethe’s mistress, and the play is an ironical monologue to her silent husband concerning Goethe and their relationship.

To say that the piece is ill-chosen, is the understatement of the new decade. Whatever original charm the play might have had has evaporated; what is left makes for a repetitious, indulgent, one-note evening. Ms Hagen has not great vocal range and even less period sense. *Charlotte* is an ego-trip to boredom. A veil should be quickly drawn over the whole venture and for Ms Hagen a wish for better luck, and better judgement, next time.

Zoe Caldwell is another leading lady too little seen. However, Ms Caldwell’s role as director can now be viewed in a new off-Broadway comedy, *These Men,* which is about the relationship of two women roommates and their problems with men. Ms Caldwell easily handles nudity, profanity and tenderness in this deft little comedy by Mayo Simon.

A footnote for the observant: the material for all four leading ladies was provided by men.
By David Gyger

Historic Lucia - Sutherland’s triumph

For a number of reasons, this year’s summer holiday production of Donizetti’s Lucia di Lammermoor at the Sydney Opera House will inevitably go down in big print in the definitive history of opera in this country whenever it may be compiled.

It was literally historic, in a way, because it came exactly - well, to the month anyhow - twenty one years after the Covent Garden debut of Joan Sutherland in the role that has been more closely associated with her career as an operatic superstar than any other. Though why, having got so close to the actual date, the Australian Opera didn’t go all the way and premiere its new Sutherland/Bonynge Lucia on February 17 - even if it happened to fall on a Sunday - the commercial corner of my mind feels prompted to wonder publicly. Surely any financial penalties that might have been incurred in presenting such a performance would have been easily recoupable and more had it been promoted as a coming-of-age spectacular, or some such once-in-a-lifetime event.

Quite likely, on the other hand, there may have been advance trepidation (even if only subliminal) as to whether Sutherland could really cope successfully - let alone triumphantly - with the role twenty one years after the event.

After all, Lucia is supposed to be a sweet, sylph-like young thing who darts about the stage dementedly during the mad scene; who earlier in the opera can be successfully intimidated, even terrorised, by her non-too-admirable brother and forced into an unwanted marriage in defence of a not particularly venerable family escutcheon.

Tackling such a role is inherently perilous for any soprano of ample physical proportions let alone one who is more than fifty years old. Yet in the event all that didn’t matter; for the glorious voice, or very nearly all of it, is still alive and well; and the massive frame that used to lumber about so unconvincingly seems to have been endowed with the priceless ability to set the clock backwards, from year to year, in consequence of the constantly increasing skill of the remarkable brain that operates and controls the Sutherland scenario.

Admittedly, Sutherland had considerable assistance in the visual illusion department accruing from the services of the astonishing American makeup man, Charles Elsen, who transformed her real life features into just exactly the right face for the role: the sort of young face that makes it quite credible its owner is being continually terrorised, maybe even beaten and/or starved, as soon as she gets off stage.

Yet none of the above should be thought to belittle Sutherland the artist in any way; for the most remarkable thing about this year’s summer Lucia at the Sydney Opera House was that she emerged from them with her reputation unblemished and her copybook unblotted. They took the wind out of her detractors’ sails even as they prompted her fans to seek to outdo one another in the imagery of superlatives. And so they should have.

MORE THAN PERSONAL TRIUMPH

But this year’s summer season Lucia was much more than a personal triumph for Sutherland, significant as that was: it also encompassed the ensemble and the production itself, which was overall the most successful yet mounted in the Opera House concert hall. More successful even than Tom Lingwood’s Aida, on balances; for the way it transformed the hall, atmospherically, rather than just reinforcing and supplementing its inherent character.

The whole towering facade of the recently completed concert hall organ was masked out in black, rising to a mock-cupola overhead supported by fragmented columns fractured almost at ceiling level but leading the eye downward to a single portable column rising from stage level;
creating something akin to the visual effect of man-made stalactites and stalagmites reaching toward each other vertically across the performing area.

It was a considerable coup in itself for set designer Henry Bardon, augmented by a number of excellent meteorological effects: glowing clouds that moved across behind the ramparts, lightning flashes that were realistic enough, particularly in conjunction with the rather nice thunder effect, to be as thoroughly convincing a stage storm as one can imagine to reinforce the marvellously evocative score of Lucia.

And there was more to be praised on the design front too: Michael Stennett’s costuming was as evocative as Bardon’s sets, including some of the most deliciously disguising beards and changes of hair color yet wrought upon the male principals of the Australian Opera. Indeed, it was well nigh impossible to recognise any of the company’s stalwarts until they opened their mouths.

Particularly delicious was Henri Wilden’s mock-tup Arturo, blond-haired and clad in an effete baby blue suit, and even sporting lace-like frills on the top of his boots (!). Little wonder Lucia shrank away from him to embrace Edgardo, even felt moved to murder him outright on her way from him to embrace Edgardo, even bridal bed! But of course that is the sort of expression. I have already expressed approval of Henri Wilden’s Arturo; and this Lucia was blessed with an equally approvable performance from Robin Donald in the wholly unrewarding role of Normanno the forester — the poor bastard blamed quite unfairly by the chaplain Raimondo, at the very end of the mad scene, for precipitating the whole tragedy despite the fact that even Raimondo himself wasn’t entirely guiltless in the matter. (Mercifully, the brief accusatory conversation between them, which is anyhow an anti-climax dramatically in the immediate aftermath of Lucia’s spectaculorar coloratura form of madness, was deleted in this production.)

Clifford Grant turned in an excellent performance as Raimondo — one of his better with the AO to date — and Rosina Raisbeck was fine as Alisa, the only female soloist in the piece apart from Lucia herself.

And finally, of course, a very large share of the credit for the just about unequivocal success of this Lucia must go to conductor Richard Bonynge, whose understanding of the score is as nigh impeccable after all these years conducting it for Sutherland. He got the best not only out of a fine team of principals, but out of the Australian Opera Chorus and the Elizabethan Sydney Orchestra. All round, this Lucia was among the very best productions the Australian Opera has presented to date: it displayed the ensemble excellence of the company to its best possible advantage.

**NABUCCO — MORE EQUIVOCAL**

The other major offering of the month, a revival of Verdi’s Nabucco featuring the Sydney debut of Rita Hunter in the marvellously dramatic role of Abigaille, was a good deal more equivocal effort. The production itself has been around a long time: premiered at the old Elizabethan Theatre in suburban Newtown early in 1971, with Elizabeth Vaughan imported to play Abigaille, it was the second AO offering in the opening season at the Opera House late in 1973 and turned up in a concert hall version in 1978, though Tom Lingwood’s costumes have remained more-or-less the same and there have been no major changes in the visual tenor of his sets either, over the years.

Despite the often vocally exciting presence of Hunter, and the overkill implicity in casting Donald Smith in the bit tenor part of Ismaele and the rather marvellous performance all round of Margreta Elkins as Fenena, the whole effort was not exactly scintillating - at least on opening night.

Yes, there was a lot of noise: too much, to be honest. The enormous scale of Hunter’s voice seemed to provoke everyone else in sight to try to shout her down - in particular Smith and the Nabucco of the season, John Shaw. Indeed, the premiere of this Nabucco season was far less impressive overall than most AO premieres these days. It was a performance that never managed to
coalesce as theatre, one that lingers in the mind as a rather unifying display of competitive singing with minimal concern for the ensemble excellence that has always been the main claim of the Australian Opera to artistic superiority.

A fair share of the blame for this important failing must go in retrospect to the conductor and director of this series of *Nabuccos*, Geoffrey Arnold and Tom Lingwood - not for any positive sins they committed, but for their failure (or inability, which amounted under the circumstances, to the same thing) to demand more of some of their principal performers than merely singing the notes and showing off. Because on opening night there was a great deal more shouting than singing, and most of the principals did not emerge from the exercise in a very good light at all.

There were two notable exceptions: Margreeta Elkins' Fenena and Donald Shanks' perfectly acted Zaccaria, though he seemed to be suffering a minor vocal indisposition which meant it was rather less full-blooded in tonal quality than Shanks' usual performance. Though Elkins is not a vocally ideal Fenena - its tessitura lies too high for a mezzo to express - and quite rightly drew a generous round of applause at each of the three performances I attended during the season for her major innings of the night - the Act IV aria.

She also looked and acted the part quite strikingly even though it was an unfortunate juxtaposition that she happened to draw as Ismaele, for this series of *Nabuccos*, Donald Smith - who is a fair few centimetres shorter than she is - is the only tenor to have attempted the part. Sensitive production reduced this problem very considerably, though not capable of eliminating it altogether.

And some of the artistic kudos for these *Nabuccos* ought to go to the Australian Opera Chorus, which sang quite beautifully throughout - not only in the well-known prisoners chorus, but every time they were on stage. Quite rightfully, the choristers were well applauded - though I could have strangled the handful of over-enthusiastic patrons who cut short the end of the prisoners chorus at the matinee by bursting forth with applause before the singing had stopped.

It was a major joy of the other two *Nabuccos* I saw during the summer season that the last cadence was held nearly forever - till it was just the echo of a sustained hum dying away melodiously into nothing. Once the spell of the instant had been broken, of course, there was no going back; and the whole matinee audience was deprived of a great musical pleasure by the thoughtlessness of a few fandoms.

Hunter, Shaw and Shanks all sang better at the later performances than on opening night; and Arnold seemed to gain considerable confidence and with it much greater control of the proceedings. Clearly he is a developing conducting talent that will be an appreciating asset for the AO in the years to come.

**MAGIC FLUTE — AGEING**

The other AO offering of the month, a revival of the 1973 Copley production of Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, which was premiered before the Queen in the opening season at the Opera House, is beginning to show its age a little: not so much in the guts of the realisation itself as in the lack of freshness and spontaneity - one wouldn't yet quite call it ennui - that has crept into several of the individual performances.

It had been out of the repertory for the repertory for a couple of years prior to this year's summer revival, and quite a few members of the opening night audience had fairly clearly not experienced its gimmickry before: at least the laughter at the Australian animals during Tamino's aria, and Papageno's readily admitted cowardice in the ordeal scenes, and Graeme Ewer's high camp Monostatos, was as generous and apparently as spontaneous as ever.

Too much of the orchestral playing was decided ragged on opening night, partly perhaps the penalty of the proportionally greater effort that no doubt went into preparation for the opening of the new *Lucia* a week earlier. Likewise, many of the comic punch lines were delivered with noticeably less conviction than of yore. Still, there were a number of fine individual performances.

Glenny Fowles' Pamina, for instance, was refreshingly free of the signs of vocal strain that marked much of her singing last year, married only by the occasional flawed high note. And it was perfectly lovely to look at, gliding about the stage with the aura of purposeful purity that is the essence of the character.

After his major successes in the past couple of years in heavier roles, such as Rodolfo in *La Boheme* and Alfredo in *La Traviata*, Anson Austin hadn't quite fully made the transition back to Mozart and his Tamino was tentative vocally as well as dramatically. Ewer's Monostatos, Neil Warren-Smith's Sarastro and Cynthia Johnston's Papagena were as reliable as ever.

Rhonda Bruce had a worrying first innings as the Queen of the Night, but more than atoned for that by coming up with quite a thrilling second aria. Bruce Martin, a newcomer to this *Flute*, was a thoroughly full-voiced and satisfying Speaker.

But the individual personal triumph of the revival was John Pringle's Papageno. He has been sharing the part with Ronald Maconaghie, of course, right from the premiere season of this *Flute*; but with the departure of Maconaghie from the full-time ranks of the AO Pringle has become senior Papageno by default (some performances later in the year will be taken by John Fulford, who replaced Lyndon Terracini when he left the company a few months ago).

In previous years, Pringle has always lost out just a little to Maconaghie in this particular role: this summer, for the first time, he seemed to have made it absolutely his own - different in detail from Maconaghie's interpretation, but just as valid and human and comic. A little less happy-go-lucky and jolly than Maconaghie; a more thoughtful birdcatcher, but every bit as good-humoured and -above all - a deeply human one.

The AO's *Flute* has two more series of performances this year, in March-April in Melbourne and in August-September - again at the Sydney Opera House. Hopefully, all the loose ends will have fallen into place once again by the time those performances come up and it will have recovered completely from the tentativeness of the Sydney holiday season.

*David Gyger is editor of Opera Australia.*
LAZAR is a nervous optimist with a varied troupe in perpetual motion about the backblocks seeking a little cultural uplift in a jaded world.

LAZAR is usually worried about truth, life, love and dandruff; is baffled by the continuing capacity for chaos, disorder and personality problems of his troupe. He believes firmly that most people have a good act in them.

In this episode the troupe is formed, taken across the wasteland to the little town of Outskirts, a community of ambitions, indifference, suspicions and comfortably inescapable tedium.

The show is a monumental fiasco, through no fault of any but its component parts.

It is a certain expression of an unconquerable spirit.

*CAPTAIN LAZAR was first published in the National Times
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A.E.T.T. - The Theatre Trust making it all happen in Australia!
The combined talents of puppeteer Richard Bradshaw, cartoonist Patrick Cook and singer/songwriter Robyn Archer have launched *Captain Lazar and his Earthbound Circus* on the world.

They are inviting audiences to "gasp at the spectacular cast of dozens" in their puppet cabaret for the Marionette Theatre of Australia, which was seen first at the Adelaide Festival in the Space, and then in the Sydney Opera House Recording Hall.

Captain Lazar will be known to readers of the *National Times* where he sprung from the inspired pen of Patrick Cook: "He just evolved. He started off as spot gags — a not quite super hero. He acquired other characters as he went along, and so he had to have a strip. He started taking over whole pages of the *National Times*. Then, after a while, I think they didn't have any more full pages. I've used him since in cartoons. But working on this, I've had more scope for him."

That is putting it mildly. *Captain Lazar and his Earthbound Circus* has just about everything from a whale to a haloed Hand of God. Five puppeteers, working the puppets from underneath with rods for their arms, will scarcely have a moment to catch their breath as the saga unfolds.

For anyone familiar with the minds of Cook, Archer and Bradshaw at play, a comment from Bradshaw should serve as an introduction: "There is not one minority in society that will not be offended by this show. Even normal people are going to get a bashing."

It is not a puppet show for children. "You'll laugh, you'll cry, you'll leave your children at home and you'll be so glad you did," says the publicity blurb.

Fortunately I took a tape recorder when I went to talk to them about their creations. The resulting tape sounds like a Goon Show, with subtle, low-key interjections from Cook, an almost uninterruptible flow from Bradshaw — occasionally assisted by whatever puppet he had at hand — and hoots of laughter, spiced with the occasional song, from Archer.

"Captain Lazar is born," Bradshaw announces. "He is briskly educated. We see him and a friend on a seesaw, discussing their futures and the problems of life.

"Lazar asks the friend what he is going to be when he grows up, and the friend says 'Rich. What are you going to be?' And Lazar says 'Much better informed'. This other kid says 'Pigshit'."

Cook continues: "The rest of the show is basically proving that point. There's plenty of guilt and apprehension and a fairly good circus — it should bring life and joy into the hearts of people who aren't particularly interested."

Trevor Wittgenstein, lately of Dresden, is brought forward to be introduced. He is a Professor of Applied Dyslexia and he has a whale in his ventriloquist act.

Then there is Little Hiatus and the snake —
"she dances for men" — and the Cantaloup Brothers, who don't seem to be able to get it together up on the trapeze, Brian the Giraffe King, the Siamese Clowns, the Mighty Quinn with his team of huskies, a white cockatoo that sings Gilbert and Sullivan and Mother Bojangles, who tapdances on the heads of her two pet seals.

The arrival of the formidable Morton Barman on the scene should send a ripple of recognition through the audience. As Bradshaw and Cook point out, he does resemble a prime minister who is not unknown to the people of Australia. "But that is entirely accidental, a passing resemblance."

Morton Barman is a Master of the Ethnic Arts and he has a koala act: they form living pyramids. "He whips the koalas around a bit. They don't really like him," says Bradshaw. "Lazar didn't want to hire him at first," adds Cook, "but Barman says he will put the koalas down unless he is taken on strength."

Another participant might also strike a chord of recognition: "He is a very imposing looking figure who might have been a surgeon — a dog surgeon, I would think, a surgeon of curs. This figure, whom we don't identify, has already been in public relations and he arrives with a letter of introduction from a friend in the Commonwealth Employment Service, offering to be the ringmaster — which, in fact, he is employed to be."

All of which brings us only as far as the end of Act I, ending on a rousing song, "The Lure of Entertainment", in which the audience is to be held spellbound by the circus feats of daring: "Fear and wonder make them think there's more to life than life."

In the show, it is played by a group of four musicians who make up a jug band, euphonium, guitar and vocals, fiddle, mandolin and percussion. For the interview, Archer produced the combined effect, with the addition of a sound like a cocky being squeezed.

Act II introduces the town of Outskirts, which is celebrating its annual Oxalis Festival — "it's the only thing that grows there" — and probably the least tasteful character in a show characterised by inspired tastelessness.

He is the town's only hero, now no more than a head on a trolley hung about with medals, and he has a message for the local children: "War did kids like you a lot of good".

Eventually, we get to see the circus — or what the snake has left of it — and hear a few more songs. "Love is to lust as tomato sauce is to sausage rolls". I don't think you could say it all ends happily ever after.

But with any luck, there should be a happy conclusion to what will be nearly two years' work in getting the show together, an idea suggested by Di Manson, publicist of the Marionette Theatre of Australia, manager of Archer and friend of Cook.

None of it could have been achieved without the puppet-making skill of Ross Hill, who has created extraordinary personalities from Cook's minimalist line drawings.

"While I was only drawing the Captain in profile or full face, Ross manages to make the two consistent, to flesh them out and make them three-dimensional," says Cook.

"Ross is brilliant at making puppets," adds Bradshaw. "It is one thing to make a sculpture from a drawing, and another thing to make it work — which he does."

This puppet cabaret has also brought another dimension to Cook's creative skills. He has written an occasional article and some revue items for students to perform at the Ensemble Theatre, but the story and dialogue for the Earthbound Circus is his first real theatre project.

Only one question remains: is Richard Bradshaw looking more and more like Captain Lazar? Will the resemblance grow until, one day, Bradshaw will also have risen to the status of not quite super hero? Only time will tell.
CAPTAIN LAZAR WAS AN ONLY CHILD, DESPITE HIS BROTHERS AND SISTERS. HIS FATHER, A PHOTOGRAPHER, WAS LISTED AS MISSING DURING THE WAR...

CAPTAIN LAZAR WAS A FASHION PHOTOGRAPHER, IN BEGA...

AND HE WAS A FASHION PHOTOGRAPHER, IN BEGA...

HIS PEERS PUZZLED HIM AS A CHILD...

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO BE WHEN YOU GROW UP ?

RICH

RICH

AND LATER ON...

SLY DOG! HOW ARE YA ?

FOR SELF-PROTECTION HE WAS FORCED INTO THE ENTERTAINMENT BUSINESS. ONE DAY THE TROUPE RECEIVED A SUMMONS...

LAZAR, THE PEOPLE WORRY ME, THEY NEED A LAUGH

GET INTO THE STREETS, TICKLE THE RIBS...LIGHTEN THE LOAD...

OFF THEY SET...THE FLYING ZUCCHINI'S STAGED A STREET MARCH IN BRISBANE...

MOTHER BOJANGLES WAS PUBLICLY HUMILIATED BY SHOP DETECTIVES...

BRIAN THE GIRAFFE KING STAGED A BREAKDOWN IN HOLIDAY TRAFFIC WITH SIX KIDS

WHILE THE CAPTAIN CONFRONTED PUBLIC SERVANTS, AFFECTING NO ENGLISH

PAUSING ONLY TO DROP A LOAD OF LAUNDRY AND FRUIT UNDER A BUS, HE REPORTED BACK

THEY'RE ALL ROLLING AROUND THE STREETS...HOW ARE YOU GOING TO GET THEM BACK TO WORK ?

BACK TO WORK ?

BACK TO WORK?

AS LONG AS HE'S LAUGHING WITH THEM

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THE CREATORS

PATRICK COOK Author/Designer

was born in Weymouth, UK in 1949. He arrived in Australia in 1950 and again in 1956 and again in 1975. His cartoons were first published in Sunday Review (which became the Review and then Nation Review) whilst still at Sydney University. He worked briefly as a book editor with a publishing company and then as a freelance contributor for Cleo, The Bulletin, Forum, Men Only, Nation Review and anyone he describes as susceptible. He joined the National Times and later, the Financial Review in 1976, where he remains to this day, writing occasionally as well as drawing. He has done some book illustrations and has two collections of his cartoons published — Coming Soon (Currency Press) and Dancing in the Desert (Sun Books). He drew cartoons for Robyn Archer's Kold Komfort Kaffee at Nimrod and for Jeannie Lewis' concert, Maroubra to Mexico. He is currently involved in regular broadcasts with the Sydney radio station, 2GB.

Cook's work is described by his colleagues:

"Patrick has an overriding and overpowering urge to make wisecracks: it's the larrikin streak." LEUNIG.

"Cook got here in the nick of time. Australia hardly seems to exist and there seems to be no-one running it. Cook, sailing down the coast of political mutterings and aimless optimism, may well have discovered it." PETTY.

ROBYN ARCHER: Composer/musical director

began singing, accompanying herself on guitar, while still at school. At the University of Adelaide she expanded her musical interests to encompass jazz, blues, folk, rock and country and also became involved in drama, revue and children's theatre.

After graduation she worked the Adelaide and Sydney club circuits as a soubrette-singer-comedienne.

Her association with the work of Bertolt Brecht began in 1974 with the role of Annie in Seven Deadly Sins for New Opera, S.A. Since then she has been described as perhaps the finest performer of Brecht's songs in the world.

She has performed in The Threepenny Opera (1975); Jacques Brel is Alive and Well and Living in Paris, The Lamentable Reign of King Charles the Last (1976) and Never the Twins. In 1977 she played in To Those Born Later at the National Theatre, London.

Since her return to Sydney she has worked in street theatre programmes, devised and performed in Kold Komfort Kaffee (1978) and A Star is Torn (1979) and most recently toured nationally in Tonight: Lola Blau (1979).

She has recorded five albums (The Ladies' Choice; The Wild Girl in the Heart; A Star is Torn; Tonight: Lola Blau and Rough as Guts) and written or devised seven music theatre pieces, including Songs from Sideshow Alley which was commissioned by and premiered at this year's Adelaide Festival. In addition, she maintains her own recording and publishing companies.

RICHARD BRADSHAW: Director

has been performing his acclaimed one-man show, Richard Bradshaw and his Shadow Puppets since 1969. Since then he has been hailed internationally as an exciting innovator in his field. In 1976 he was appointed Artistic Director of the Marionette Theatre of Australia, for whom he has written Roos (1976), a play for rod puppets; directed Hands, in the style of black theatre; directed Alitji in Wonderland (1977) for shadow puppets; written segments for ABC-TV's The King of Bungawallop (1978); written and directed Whacko The Diddle-O! (1978) and devised and directed Puppet-Power for our Schools' Company in the same year.

He has had two plays published — Bananas, which was performed at the Nimrod in 1977, and The Fourth Wall. His shadow puppets were featured in the first series of The Muppet Show.

Last year Richard took his one man show to London and Belgium; adapted and directed The Mysterious Potamus which has since played in Tasmania, Victoria, ACT and Queensland as well as Japan and the Philippines and assembled the World Of Puppets exhibition, which broke all attendance records in the Sydney Opera House's Exhibition Hall.

During 1980 Richard will be adapting aboriginal legends for another show in schools, which he will also direct (Top End Tales); will direct a new version of The Magic Pudding and will visit the World Puppet Festival in Washington, organised by the international association of puppeteers, UNIMA, of which he is a Council member.
THE COMPANY

PUPPET MAKER

ROSS HILL

As a student he presented a marionette series on a local television station. In 1973 he joined the Tasmanian Puppet Theatre and worked on fourteen productions with them, some as Head Puppeteer. During that time he produced and directed a thirteen-part Television series titled Adventures of Paddy. He has also worked with Peter Oldham's Performing Puppet Company and worked for three years, often as director, in children's television. Ross built the puppets for the South Australian Theatre Company's Uncle Hector and the Bohemians (1978) and spent three months in Europe and Russia. Back in Sydney in 1976 he worked on the construction of puppets for Theatrestrings' The Grand Adventure, performed his own cabaret show and started work with the Marionette Theatre of Australia. Last year, with The Mysterious Potamus, he gained the satisfaction of the complete puppeteer — from making the puppets to performing with them. He has worked with Patrick Cook's designs to make over forty puppets for Captain Lazar and His Earthbound Circus. In 1980 he will build an entirely new rod puppet cast for The Magic Pudding.

SET DESIGNER

RUSSELL EMERSON

was born in Sydney in 1951. He left school in 1967 and went to work for ICI, where he completed an apprenticeship as a Scientific Instrument Maker. In 1975 he returned to study at the University of New South Wales and his drama course there provided him with the opportunity to combine his industrial experience with an interest in art and the theatre. Since then he has designed and built sets for many shows, including Ran Dan Club and Theatrical Illusion for Rex Gramophone (1976); Outpost and Keeping Time for Toe Truck (1979); stage managed The Cyclops (1979) and assisted with the construction of puppets for the Marionette Theatre of Australia's production, Forever Mountain. Last year he also worked as production manager on Mike Mullins' Shadowline II and designed and constructed sets for UNSW student productions Right You Are If You Think So and Private View.

THE PUPPETEERS

ALLAN HIGHFIELD

was born in 1951 and first worked with puppets assisting Walter Jaeger on a schools tour in 1972. He studied acting at the Independent Theatre and at the same time developed his interests in writing, music and cartooning. Puppetry seemed like an opportunity to indulge all those interests at once, and so he auditioned for the Marionette Theatre of Australia in 1975. He started work with the company on The New Tintokies which toured for a total of eighteen months. He came back from the Asian leg of that tour to start work with Richard Bradshaw on Roos and Hands. In 1978 Allan received a grant from the Theatre Board to stage a production of his own puppet play, Eye of the Dragonfly, which he put on in the May school holidays at David Jones and subsequently toured to schools and community centres. Allan designed and made all the puppets and wrote the story, music and songs for Eye of the Dragonfly. Last year he performed with the company in The Mysterious Potamus and co-wrote and presented (with Michael Creighton) a weekly puppet segment for Channel 9's Super Flying Fun Show.
GEOFF KELSO

was born in Perth in 1952.

He graduated from the Acting Course at NIDA in 1975 and immediately returned to Perth to join the National Theatre Company, where he performed in Savages; Kaspar; The Last of the Knucklemen; A Man For All Seasons and The Trial.

He wrote and directed his own play The Insect at the New Dolphin Theatre in 1976 and played Lenin in Travesties and Ivan in Inner Voices, for which he collected the National Professional Theatre Award for Best Actor (WA) and Best New Talent (WA), 1977.

He inspired and directed a mixed-media art event Ping Pong Eats Winthrop Hall and followed with an experimental one-man show called Ronnie Teeth’s Gum Jungle Club for the 1978 Festival of Perth.

Since moving to Sydney he has been writing and performing the 2JJ radio serial Dr Poo and occasionally performing solo, or with Lance Curtis.

GARY KLIGER

started acting at school in Melbourne, and maintained his interest throughout a university law course.

In 1974 he took part in the Greek Theatre Project’s production of the Orestes Trilogy at the Pram Factory in Melbourne (the first presentation of the entire trilogy in Australia) and has also worked there in Troilus and Cressida. He has acted for Carlton’s legendary La Mama Theatre (Endgame); at Melbourne University in Venice Preserved and Chicago, Chicago, and at Hoopla in The Propitious Kidnapping of the Cultured Daughter.

He has also worked in film, radio and television. Last year, while working at a day job in the insurance industry, he performed in a stage adaptation of Homer’s Iliad.

Captain Lazar And His Earthbound Circus is Gary’s first puppet production and he finds it an exciting challenge for an actor to make his puppet characters live and breathe.

JUDE KURING

began acting at school and continued through a degree at Monash University and the establishment of her own small toy-making business.

In 1972 she bowed to the inevitable, joined the APG and, in the two and a half years with the company performed in shows like Betty Can Jump, Mrs. Thally F, The Joss Adams Show, He Can Swagger Sitting Down, One of Nature’s Gentlemen, Dimboola, A Night In Rio and Other Bummers (for which she also made puppets); and Bastardy, for which she was nominated for an Erik Award as Best Actress. She also re-wrote, designed and directed Night Flowers at La Mama and then left for seven months in Europe.

She returned in 1974, to Sydney and the title role in Nimrod’s production for the Adelaide Festival, Coralie Lansdowne Says No. She also began an association with Grahame Bond and Garry McDonald which involved her in various television and radio exploits.

She spent a season in 1976 with the State Theatre Company of South Australia (which included the title role in And Miss Reardon Drinks a Little) and concurrently co-wrote, produced and directed the smash-hit feminist musical The Carolina Chisel Show.

Her film credits are extensive — Bruce Petty’s Kazzam International, The Singer and the Dancer (1975), Journey Among Women (1976), Temperament Unsuit (1978) and The Journalist (1979). Her most recent television appearance was in Prisoner as Noeline Burke. Her credits as writer and director continue to grow.

At the Adelaide Festival in 1978 she performed with Peter Schumann’s Bread and Puppet Theatre, and met Philippe Genty and Richard Bradshaw and culminates a long-time interest in puppets and puppetry in Captain Lazar And His Earthbound Circus.

LINDA RAYMOND

studied Architecture at Sydney University and from 1977 became involved with those famous Architecture Revues which have, in the past, spawned major Australian talents like Grahame Bond. She sang and acted in revues and was involved in the formation of a guerilla theatre group called Bozar, whose resident playwright was Tim Gooding. Linda went to the University of New South Wales to study drama and at the same time began singing around local folk clubs.

In 1978 she understudied and contributed script ideas for ABC-TV’s Wayzgoose. In 1979 she the New Theatre’s The Radioactive Horror Show. She then joined the Marionette Theatre of Australia’s Schools’ Company and has toured Puppet-Power and Forever Mountain through most of NSW, South Australia, and Tasmanina in the last eighteen months. She also performed in The Mysterious Potamus throughout Australia, as well as in Japan and the Philippines.

In 1978 she understudied and contributed script ideas for ABC-TV’s Wayzgoose. In 1979 she was involved, with John Summers, in establishing The Toucan Club in Glebe as a performing venue. She sings folk and jazz whenever she has the time, and also writes her own songs.
THE CAPTAIN LAZAR BAND

TERRY DARMOODY:
wiz born in North Sydney in 1946.
In 1964 he formed the now-legendary Original Battersea Heroes Jug Band for whom he sang and played jug, and he stayed with them until 1973.
In 1974 he joined Uncle Bob's Band, which took him to Melbourne in 1977. Since then he's been in a maniacal jazz band (Les Swing and the Modernes); a humourous Rhythm and Blues band (The Fabulous Nudes); and an acoustic Country and Western quintet (The Gents) as well as working as a solo singer; disc jockey (3CR) and actor *Failing In Love Again* at the APG.
His current ambitions are to be Bob Dylan, Elvis Costello, Bertie Wooster and St. Aloysius, to write songs, learn music and draw comics.

ANDREW de TELIGA
was born in 1951 and has been playing the guitar for ten years. He studied music theory and four years ago began to study violin. He plays acoustic, electric and slide guitar, violin, mandolin, viola, dulcima — in fact, if it has strings he can play it. He can composed many songs and instrumental pieces and has toured and recorded extensively with artists as diverse as Robyn Archer, Jimmy and the Boys and Michael Driscoll.
His interests in music are just as diverse, ranging from rock to classical and traditional folk — his current passion is Celtic music.

PETER DEANE-BUTCHER
was born in Sydney in 1957.
He collects and plays odd instruments, in such memorable bands as the Barrelhouse Jook Band; the Possum Trot School Exhibition Band; and In the Shade of the Old Apple Trio and Hokum-on-Somble. He too has worked as a disc jockey (for 2MBS-FM's widely-respected folk show, *Burn The Candle Slowly*).
He doesn't list disco amongst his musical favourites and has an ambition to be Australia's national archivist of jug music.

SUE BRADLEY
was born in Oxford, UK in 1954. She began playing trumpet at the age of seven (switching to tuba at fifteen) and emigrated to Australia in 1970. Her performing background has been in many Melbourne music groups and bands, mainly orchestral and brass ensemble, trad jazz and jazz-rock. Her most recent involvements have been with the Melbourne Brass Choir, The Gents (with Terry Darmody) and The Real Mighty Whacko Bonza Wimmin's Circus.
Sue plays bass guitar in addition to the brass and also teaches trumpet, horn, trombone, tuba, clarinet, sax and flute.
ATHENEUM THEATRE

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead
by Tom Stoppard
Directed by Bruce Myles
Designed by Peter Corrigan
Commences March 26
An eccentric comedy said to be the first play in theatrical history with a pair of attendant lords in the lead.

RUSSELL ST THEATRE

Hamlet
by William Shakespeare
Directed by John Sumner
Designed by Peter Corrigan
Commences April 30
The enthralling narrative of a prince who is summoned by a Ghost to bring vengeance on a murderer... denies his beloved and kills her father... is monstrously confronted by his mother's incest.

A DOLL'S HOUSE
by Henrik Ibsen
Adapted and directed by Ray Lawler
Commences July 2
The classic story of Nora, wife of Torvald; her awareness of her responsibility to herself as an individual—a woman in a hypocritical society dominated by men.

BRENNEN COFFEE
by Rainer Werner Fassbinder

SHAKESPEARE
The Sadist
by Wolfgang Bauer
Directed by Bruce Myles
Designed by Peter Corrigan
Commences May 5
A brisk account of true-life mass murder, and a canny spoof on cultural pretentiousness—these plays are the work of two of the most prominent dramatists from the exhilarating German theatre of the 1970's.

As We Are
Devised and performed by Beverley Dunn
Directed by Don Mackay
Commences March 31
A remarkable solo performance, Beverley Dunn has selected an Australian anthology that will make you laugh and cry, think and understand.

A BOY FOR ME, A GIRL FOR YOU
by Ian Nash
Directed by Judith Alexander
Designed by Steve Nolan
Commences July 7
How do neglected parents cope with life once their grown children have left home? This is a new and most unusual play by Australian writer, Ian Nash.

THE MAIDS
by Jean Genet
Commences August 18
A rare opportunity to enter the world of Jean Genet—one of this century's most brilliant and individual writers. Passion and lyricism, ritual and fantasy blend to provide a rich and uncommon theatrical experience.

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A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE MARIONETTE THEATRE

1965
The Marionette Theatre of Australia (MTA) was formed by The Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust as the national touring company with Peter Scriven as its Founder/Artistic Director.

1965-75
Productions included the famous Tintookies, The Magic Pudding, The Water Babies, The Explorers, Little Fella Bindi, and The Return of the Magical Tintookies. Highlights of these years were performances at Expo '70 in Osaka, a six-month tour of twelve Asian countries and a return visit to Japan.

1976
The renowned Australian puppeteer, Richard Bradshaw, was appointed as Artistic Director.

1977
Bradshaw's productions for the Company were Roos, for rod-puppets, Hands, in the style of black theatre, and Alitji in Wonderland, an Australian adaptation for shadow-puppets of the classic Lewis Carroll story.

1978
New productions were Wacko-the-Diddle-O, a revue-style show, and Puppet-Power, a Schools' Company production. Roos and Hands toured to Malaysia and the Philippines. The Company produced The King of Bungawallop for ABC children's television.

1979
The MTA was established as an independent Company Limited by guarantee. The major success of this year was the MTA's production of The Mysterious Potamus, which played in Hobart, Sydney, Canberra and Melbourne as well as in the Philippines and at the Asian-Pacific Puppetry Festival in Tokyo, where the show was televised to peak viewing audiences. An exhibition of puppets mounted by the Company was so successful that the Sydney Opera House has invited us to present another exhibition in 1982. An adaptation of a Japanese tale, Forever Mountain, was the MTA's addition to its Education Programme.

1980
The MTA's first adult production, Captain Lazar and his Earthbound Circus will open at the Adelaide Festival and tour afterwards to other cities. The cartoonist, Patrick Cook, has written the show, to be directed by Richard Bradshaw, with music by Robyn Archer.

An exciting new version of Norman Lindsay's The Magic Pudding will tour nationally and a third schools' production about Australian Aboriginal legends will be added to the Company's repertoire.

1981-2
Three new shows will be produced annually to cater for the MTA's categories of audience: youth and general public, school-children and adults.

By 1982, the Company aims to operate from its own theatre in Sydney while continuing to perform at the Opera House. It will also continue its extensive touring programme.
Now many people ask, why did I choose this line of work? They all suspect advantages, they contemplate the perks.
But I am here to tell you that such jobs are heaven sent. (MUSICIAN INTERJECTS FROM PIT: "Any job’s heaven sent these days") I’m talking ’bout the lure of entertainment...

Now, people are a bloody awful lot. They don’t appreciate the things they’ve got. You have to belt them into shape, so they produce a grin. You have to entertain them to pump their adrenalin. You’ll never do it in their TV lounge. You have to make ’em grovel, make ’em scrounge, Beguile ’em with a Big Top, make ’em itch with discontent That’s the Lure of Entertainment.

See, folks these days believe that life’s lost all sense of surprise, So you have to give ’em something that delights their jaded eyes. The spectacle and colour and thrills you find inside the tent Oh, that’s the heart and soul of Entertainment.

If you want to make these bastards all applaud You’re never going to do it by cheap fraud, It has to be the real thing when Renaldo hurls the knife, Fear and wonder, make ’em think there’s more to life than life. Their lives are mean and horrible and vile You make them all forget it for a while. Wild fauna, dazzling skills, sad clowns their hearts will rent, I’m talking ’bout the Lure of Entertainment.

Put that sparkle back into their eyes, They’ll be little kids who’ve won a prize. Of all the things the Pope won’t ask you to give up for Lent, It’s the Lure of Entertainment.
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DANCE

By William Shoubridge

Dance Week

At this year's Festival of Sydney, the organisers, for reasons known only to themselves, decided not to hold the usual Dance Week in the Town Hall, instead, most of the companies performing were relegated to daytime performances at Hyde Park or else a short season in the Cell Block theatre in Darlinghurst.

At the latter venue, Sydney's One Extra Dance Group and Melbourne's Australian Contemporary Dance Company gave a week long season along with their daytime commitments, and the solo performances at the Town Hall were given over to a five hour marathon of the so called New Dance courtesy of the Queensland Contemporary Dance Theatre and the Dance Exchange.

In terms of material and thought it could have been an engaging evening's entertainment; in the event it was a protracted, flagellant five hours of boredom and pretension.

As I wrote in an article in this magazine last year, the Dance Exchange is a small open-ended group of modern dance devotees and practitioners who only perform when they think they have something worthwhile to show, and even then it is performed without much in the way of publicity and explanation, as if they didn't even want an audience and would be much happier dancing for themselves and their band of converts.

Certainly Australia does need an acquaintance with the latest trends in post modern dance and any group than can give us that with a degree of professionalism is to be welcomed, but I think the field is loosing whatever audience it may have hoped to attract with its atmosphere of mute self-concern, condescension and arcane rituals.

If one goes to this sort of dance expecting to be entertained, well, one is out of luck. These dancers go about their formulations (it's the right description) with such grim, joyless determination and serene unconcern for an audience's comprehension that one feels alternatively bored, outraged and downright indifferent. Alienation is all in this style, and apart from any human interests, which as we all know don't really have to play any great spotlight part in dance, the very heart of the choreography - ie the movement - is starting to look very tired, time-worn and repetitive.

There are some estimable names on the roster of creators; Graeme Murphy, Don Asker and Leigh Warren, for example. Most of the works are early pieces from those choreographers, made quite a few years ago before the authors went on to...
bigger and better things, Murphy to his own company and Asker off to the Nederlans Dans Theatre. It is because of this that these works tend to change strangely as the years progress, until at times I feel the creator would hardly recognise his own work. This will happen in due course with any dance piece, as a new cast will dance it in different ways, but the ACDC seems to me to have tampered somewhat with the actual material in the ballets.

CHOREOGRAPHIC WOOLGATHERING

This was most apparent in Leigh Warren's Trombeau-Twitter-Truckoff, a ragged piece of choreographic woolgathering when I first saw it, but which now has almost disintegrated completely. As it stands now, the work is a strand of simple classroom exercises performed with a throwaway method of attack. Its opening and closing movements are run-of-the-mill solos and group union bend stretch, set to some wallpaper music by Mike Oldfield and Tangerine Dream. Just like the music, the ballet dissolves from the memory as soon as it is over.

Ron Bekker's own ballet Emanations created with the assistance of painter Roger Kemp, started off well, but somehow managed to swallow its own tail and lose all sense of logic, progression and form. It is also rather vacuous. Bekker's choreographic vocabulary is seemingly comprised of overwrought, intricate intertwinnings that may look impressive but don't naturally develop out of what has gone before. He is another one that I wish would relax and look at his choreographic attempts with a cool, dispassionate eye, if only to see how showy and unguarded they are.

The main problem that the ACDC will have to overcome is its lack of image. As much as I dislike saying it, the company is "just another dance group" without anything unique or personal to define it. It is for this reason that I doubt that they will ever get the substantial subsidy that they're asking (all things being equal). The kind of jobs they are performing are adequately supplied to Melbourne by the Australian Dance Theatre, and the ADT has the full professional resources to do the justice to such works. If the ACDC does want to make a larger impact on audiences and the funding bodies, it has got to carve out a niche for itself, become a company that is totally different in outlook and one that is doing work that isn't being done by any other group in Australia.

ONE EXTRA

Sydney's One Extra Dance Company has not yet reached such a position, but it now seems also to be resting on its laurels and wandering aimlessly around from one style to the other, using whatever choreographers come its way, without realising that perhaps their dancers (who leave a lot to be desired in terms of technique) aren't comfortable performing them.

This came over loud and clear during their shared Cell Block theatre season with the ACDC and more recently at their March/April season at the Stanley Palmer Culture Palace. There are times when I wonder if director Kai Tai Chan actually likes dance at all, so often is he at pains to downgrade its importance as a component of expression.

It's something that has begun to creep into the One Extra's programmes over the past year. I remember fondly Chan's social drama tract Family Portraits. That work was a closely honed piece that used movement, dance and simple gesture in a constantly interactive way to expound the drama, joy and hidden frustrations within an inner city Australian migrant family. Chan's major work for the Cell Block season Colonial Songs, was a wild mish-mash of clowning about, singing, chatter and half-hearted dance supposedly meant to show up the way Australian sexist society manipulates and uses its women. Ho hum, it's not merely that we've seen it all before and with far greater impact than in this feeble "panto", but that it is performed with an irritatingly smug sense of consciousness-raised virtue.

In terms of movement, the work doesn't exist. The steps are meaningless, because Chan empties them of content and forces them to substitute as an anonymous semaphore of illustration tacked on to the larger design of his "drama". But even then it doesn't work because the drama itself changes gears all the time, careening wildly from send up and buffoonery, to serious didactic theatre and ending up like a leagues club cabaret.

His major piece for the Stanley Palmer season was called Between The Lines, and it literally was that, mainly because a lady speaking some doggerel about getting old said so. This poetess went on about missing one's lover, doing the ordinary everyday things everyone does and meanwhile reading between the lines the onslaught of old age. If that wasn't enough, a male wandered gloomily about the stage dropping long sticks onto the floor in a row while the female dancer (Caroline Lung) danced a few puerile contortions between them; get it? Between The Lines was not entertaining for its dance values because it was devoid of them.

The other pieces on the programme, Graeme Watson's Doors and Julia Blakie's One Breath Away were striking and powerful because neither choreographer distrusts dance as a medium of communication and neither of them fiddled about with extraneous bits of business or obscured their discourse with "effects".

The One Extra Dance Company used to be unique in the way it worked and communicated, now it too shows signs of becoming just as amorphous and disparate as the Australian Contemporary Dance Company.

The One Extra has got to take stock of itself, ask itself if it really wants to utilise dance at all and build up its dancers and choreographers into a team that doesn't keep breaking up and moving away, and thereby necessitating a constant need to absorb, amoeba-like, anyone or any idea that happens to come its way.

If the company doesn't do this then before long it too will become "just another" dance company.

Consistent high standards

JOSEPH CONRAD/DA/ASHES


Director, Ken Boucher; Designer, Russell Brown; Stage Manager, Paul Hunter; Lil Birtles, Rosemary Wright; Carol, Louise Fraser; Samson, Colin Willis; Conrad Sid, Ian Fletcher. (Pro/Am)

Da by Hugh Leonard. Fortune Theatre Company, Playhouse, Canberra ACT. Open February 20, 1980. Director, Pamela Rosenberg; Designer, Peter Harris; Production Manager, Valentine McKelvey; Charlie Now, John Scholes; Oliver, Pat Galvin; Da, Tom Farley; Mother, Pat Hutchinson; Charlie Then, Paul Corcoran; Drumm, John Paisley; Mrs Pryne, Edith Thompson; Yellow Peril, Maggie Cody. (Professional)

Ashes by David Rudkin. Fortune Theatre Company, Playhouse, Canberra ACT. Opened 7 July 1978. Director, John Paisley; Designer, Peter Harris; Production Manager, Valentine McKelvey; Colin, Don Mamouney; Anne, Belinda Davey; Doctor etc, John Scholes; Receptionist etc, Pat Hutchinson; Jennifer etc, Tamara Ross. (Professional)

The dearth of good theatre in Canberra this summer which threatened to become a drought has passed. Imports of talent seem to have worked on the blood of local directors to inspire three productions of a consistently high standard. Only exceptional artists can breath life into ephemeral material however, and it was the quality of the plays which ultimately defined the theatrical experience: Da is a pedestrian piece, so despite Pam Rosenberg's all but faultless direction, we remained earthbound; David Allen's new play sets a more ambitious course, but its flights of imagination are puzzlingly inconclusive - an amusing excursion which led nowhere in particular. Rudkin's Ashes on the other hand, its relentless dissection of the trauma of childlessness, is a very fine play indeed, and John Paisley's production transported us to its exhilarating if desolate heights.

As the editor noted in his review of the Old Tote production (T4 July 1978) Leonard's play "arouses expectations of a stature it never achieves." This sums it up. The play never seeks to rise above the mundane level of mildly amusing entertainment and affectionate portraiture. An autobiographical exploration of the author's relations with his father, it has no real conflict nor develops any theme of consequence. Vestiges of conflict are perceptible in the narrator's ambivalence towards his 'Da,' but the latter, at least in Tom Farley's performance is such an endearing mixture of prejudice, servility, kindness and charm that his foster son's blustering exasperation seems arbitrary and petty. We become intimately acquainted with the foibles of two characters, but they're both of limited interest. The play ultimately strikes one as a vehicle for the actor playing Da, and while Farley conquered the audience within seconds of his entry, the whole seemed too lightweight and lopsided.

"A brilliant new comedy by a great new writer" was how David Allen's new play was heralded and high expectations were aroused. It is certainly as good as his previous plays with consistently witty dialogue and one remarkable characterisation; its impact was undermined by the schematic nature of supporting roles and by two structural flaws.

A buoyant, libidinous, middle-aged, working-class English woman, Lil Birtles has recently migrated to Australia with her genial, uncomplicated husband, a butcher from Salford eccentrically preoccupied with the romance of nautical adventure. They have parted company, leaving her to pursue literary studies, an English lecturer and a proclivity for fantasising. The action consists of her efforts to bed the reluctant young academic, a caricature whose crudity was all the more salient beside Ali's agile and technically flawless, an undoubted if not unqualified success.

It's a captious critic who'd quibble about the stature of David Rudkin's Ashes: this forbidding study of the desolation of childlessness rises above most contemporary dramas like the ramparts in Kozintsev's King Lear. Yet it has pitfalls: its long convoluted soliloquies are extremely difficult to sustain. Moreover Act 3, with its discursive detour into the politics of Northern Ireland, threatens to destroy continuity. John Paisley's production was as forceful, spare and perceptive as the writing. Rudkin's musical underscoring was largely ignored, allowing the text to speak for itself. But he was fortunate in having actors who could rise to meet this challenge. Act 1 with its indignities and degradations, was underplayed, so that the blows of fate, when they come, were all the more powerful. Don Mamouney's Colin was above all subtle: the vulnerability and helplessness of all men oppressed by arbitrary and malevolent forces was visible through a brittle carapace of intellectual toughness and determination. The great obstacle of Act 3, the peroration on Ireland, was masterfully negotiated. John Scholes' five roles were all skilfully differentiated, yet sufficiently alike for us to realise that, for the suffering couple, all bureaucrats, doctors and would-be saviours are so many soulless automatons. Even these achievements paled beside Belinda Davey's consummate interpretation of Anne. Her identification with the role was obviously intense, yet the unfolding of the epic spiral through anguish and despair down to the nadir of hopelessness was a model of control; never was the formidable vocal technique she canmarshall over. Pardon the superlatives, but this was one of those rare occasions on which the mysterious power of drama was patent.
CLOSE OF PLAY

by Lucy Wagner


Director, Rodney Fisher; Designer, Shaun Gurton; Lighting, Keith Edmundson; Stage Manager, Fiona Williams.

Jasper, Frank Thring; Daisy, Ruth Cracknell; Jenny, Janice Finn; Margaret, Jennifer Hagan; Benedict, John Gaden; Henry, Ronald Falk; Marianne, Julie Hamilton; Matthew, Andrew Tighe.

It is debatable as to whether Frank Thring is an appropriate substitute for God but he certainly gives a presence to the catalytic but silent role of the father in Close of Play. Simon Gray, in conversation with director Rodney Fisher about the play, apparently said, "If you cannot talk to God you can sometimes talk to your father", and that seems to stand as the structural basis for Close of Play.

Jasper (Thring), a distinguished academic, sits throughout the piece in an armchair in the drawing room of his large suburban home on a day of family reunion, and is the passive recipient of confessional revelations from his sons and daughters-in-law. The parallel of father figure with God is established through the apparent need of the characters to reveal and apologise for their misdemeanours - "Sorry Daddy"; and "Thank you God and thank you Gramps" says Marianne (Julie Hamilton) "for my Henry". But the impassive Jasper never makes a word or gesture of forgiveness, nor even of interest. If he is not Nietzscheanly dead (as some interpret), the begetter of this familial microcosm is indifferent to their activities and so renders them futile in a meaningless world.

In spite of the over-precise structure of the play, the picture drawn is an effectively depressing one. The eldest and favourite brother Dick has been killed on a motorbike, but his neurotic widow and fey only son are on an outing from his boarding school; Henry, the middle - and at first sight normal - son finds his doctor's life so mediocre that he no longer feels anything for his reproductively prolific wife or demanding patient/mistress; and Benedict who feels himself not only last, but least, has become an alcoholic fantasist in a BBC career, and married to a remote novelist wife. There is also Daisy, cousin of the long-time deceased mother, who has always acted as housekeeper, but is in fact secretly married to Jasper.

Although the language allows the characters to be played, in the main, naturalistically, the metaphors running through the play are heavily underlined. The central image is one of transience and decay; human waste - Dick's body, novelist Maggie's abortions, Benedict's drunken vomiting at Dick's funeral, the toilet training of Henry and Marianne's toddler and, the final straw to Daisy, the full potty left on the table, the contents produced "for Gramps"; and the circular message of the doors - Dick's coffin sliding through doors, doors admitting and releasing the registry office wedding parties at Jasper and Daisy's marriage; doors opening from school to the world, Daisy sending muddy children round to the back kitchen door.

And so Shaun Gurton's set is dominated from behind by an immense structure of opaque glass doors, through which shadowy figures can be seen approaching and departing, playing football and walking, flanked by transparent passages to bedrooms and kitchens from whence people emerge and return as though from some active, inter-relating life to the compelling sterility of this confessional.

In spite of its title and strongly allusive quality, Close of Play comes to no conclusions. The picture of the afternoon is painted in with the lives that make it up, and when the canvas is full the painter stops. It is made up, not of the delicate brushstrokes of nuance, but of heavily symmetrical blocks of colour which are uncompromisingly oppressive, but lose power in their over simplified contrasts.

So we have the two remaining brothers, John Gaden's Benedict a witty (when drunk), exuberant neurotic with an
The title suggests a night with Jeanie Little, but this was, in fact, a “rock melodrama” (come back Polonius, all is forgiven), about a thirties cabaret troupe called “the Depression Darlings”. At least, the second half of the show was about them. It wasn’t immediately obvious from the title that what we had here were two separate shows. Before interval, there was Other Victims, a series of songs about hapless characters in post-war Australia — a “rock ockera” perhaps?

The opening number set the tone: “Some say the sun is going to shine (this without irony in Australia!) but we know we’ve heard that line before; we know what’s in store.” The audience might have guessed that this was the original idea, padded out mechanically, so the characters were comic grotesques.

A Family Reunion (intentionally) infuriatingly prosaic and baby-minded Marianne, admitting to murderous feelings about her children while becoming outraged at Maggie (Jennifer Hagan)’s cool admission of abortions and adherence to intellectual rather than physical productivity.

The confessional monologues make the work, above anything, a challenging vehicle for actors and Rodney Fisher’s company without exception makes the very most of the opportunities. Gaden turns smoothly from drinking-out, abject husband to expansive drunk, and in his eery reappearance convinces as a regressive child becoming dominant husband. His performance fits perfectly with Jennifer Hagan’s impeccably-timed, sardonic Maggie, whose veneer is cracked by the revelation that Dick encouraged her writing only to end their illicit affair.

Ruth Cracknell as Daisy also gives full reign to the comedy of the put-upon housekeeper, but retains the necessary enigmatic quality which allows her to lead the company in the one non-naturalistic, blue-lit chorus scene of the play. Her revelation here of Jasper’s and her wedding initiates a collective intoning about the revelation here of Jasper’s and her wedding, which encouraged her writing only to end their illicit affair.

Although the play lacks lightness of touch in its structure and imagery, and serves only to point up the already heavy-handed symbolism.

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Part two, The Depression Darlings, revealed things were no better in the thirties. A troupe of six entertainers, culled from the ranks of the poor by the dastardly Rubira brothers, were to perform for our delectation. The good wine had obviously been kept until last which made me suspect that this was the original idea, padded out with Other Victims to fill an evening.

From the moment the audience entered a predominantly black and white, smoky, auditorium, the emphasis was on effects. Two dazzling white follow spots cut through the smoke to reveal the tail-coated gangster — a song about the tail-coated gangster — the tails were made by our presenters. There was a feeling of menace in the air; melodramatic menace. The cringing troupe were treated with brutal violence and there was the mandatory young virgin in danger of rape. The six singers performed in turn and one, an ex-prostitute, sang of her seduction (!) by the wicked producer who had promised to make her a star. As the song ended, the microphone faded, until she was singing unamplified and unaccompanied. Valerie Bader made the moment work well, but the effect was immediately undercut by the producer’s comments: Charles: Very moving. I was so moved, I almost went.

Maurice: I did!

This was typical of the show and symptomatic of an uncertainty about just how Terry O’Connell, both writer and director, wanted his audience to react. Modern “black comedy” often calls up a complex response marked by the uneasy laugh, but melodrama is a much cruder beast. The production oscillated between playing the melodrama for all it was worth and trying for more complex effects, and the result was that much of the show failed to convince. A singer was dragged from the
stage and the next song and dance routine was punctuated by her screams as she was beaten. In a different context, one remembers a similar scene in Cabaret; it could have been very effective, but it was difficult to take her plight seriously and the result was that the screams simply spoiled the song.

The singers then appealed to the audience for help and explained they were forced to perform against their will. (Was this the point? Was their situation a symbol of capitalist exploitation?) They finally turned on their producers, shooting one and knifing the other, and a member of the audience cheered in true Music-Hall fashion, but it wasn’t a response the production had encouraged. What did it want? The Depression Darlings was Cabaret (Stephen Thomas as Maurice Rubira even looked like Joel Gray) out of The Rocks; Horror Show by Rock Follies (the echoes in some songs were striking), but unlike Cabaret it didn’t tell us much about life in the thirties. Were the audience really supposed to take seriously a final song that suggested the poor would come for help and explained they were forced to perform against their will. (Was the echoes in some songs were striking), but unlike Cabaret it didn’t tell us much about life in the thirties. Were the audience really supposed to take seriously a final song that suggested the poor would come for help and explained they were forced to perform against their will. The Management has had to contain the play within a fire-proof box; fortunately, however, this suits East Lynne, which because of its great popularity in Victorian times travelled far and wide, often playing in a “fit-up theatre” like the present one.

But then spectacle has no place in this melodrama which puts morality before machinery. East Lynne is about an erring heroine, Lady Isabel Carlyle, who leaves husband and child — the worthy Archibald and poor Willie respectively — for that cad Sir Francis Levison. After a time in the house of shame, where she is “bilked, bothered and bewildered”, Isabel resolves to return to East Lynne. There, employed as a governess (and her the daughter of an H’Earl!), disguised in dark specs, Isabel is once more with Willie, who dies without acknowledging her maternity. “Dead, dead and never called me Mother”. The famous lines which tended to get lost in the play’s extensive history, have been reinstated in Mr Miller’s original script.

The scenes of death and betrayal, of repentance and remorse, were there to excite Victorian passions and set them on the path to righteousness — righteousness via titillation, that is. We can hardly expect such emotional tearjerkers to be played straight today, but nor do I applaud the director’s dereliction of the play’s poignancy, the very soul of East Lynne. Among other things, the French Maid’s doubling as frail, sweet William makes a cheap joke of what should have been handled with greater sophistication. This is not a criticism of Gaye Poole who makes a fine Suzanne the maid, but of Alton Harvey who divides his time, not altogether satisfactorily, between playing a creditable villain as well as the director of the piece.

Each scene is played as if it were the only one of the evening. There is a sameness, even a monotony, of the pacing and the timing throughout. There is no sense of development, crisis and resolution. The result is flatness; no dimension, no atmosphere, no feeling.

Some relief is found in certain performances. Johnny Johnstone, although only briefly seen as Music Hall Chairman and Lord Mount Severn, is endearing, and knowledgeable of how to play his part and the audience at the same time. A lesson to some others. One would have thought that Lyn Lovett could have found more enjoyment in the despised spinster Aunt who has “I told you so” written all over her face. But Miss Lovett was content to act as monochromatically as her make-up. Mal Carmont fixed his upright husband to a Cheshire Cat’s grin: no easy task being blandly good, and he manages quite well. Christine Cameron has a lot going for her as Lady Isabel, especially her plaintive voice and looks, but she unfortunately fell short of being believable. More the production’s than the actress’s fault I think. Michael Freundt was convincing as Richard Hare, on the run from the law, just as Bernadette Hughson really succeeded as Barbara his pretty sister.

The programme doesn’t give a design credit, so I don’t know who to congratulate for the pleasant but chastened traditional setting, which the Management have no reason to make excuses for. A piano painted on the backdrop makes for some good comedy when it is “played” in accompaniment to some of the songs. Unintentional laughs, however, arise from the flimsy backdrop’s billowing in emotional sympathy with some of the more frantic exits and entrances. There is a very funny running gag in the flower arrangement, which kept being knocked over but hung by its anchorage refusing to spill its contents.

An indifferent production this East Lynne. At all events the Music Hall at Neutral Bay is a national treasure and must not be allowed to disappear. To have lost the Elizabethan is misfortune indeed, and to lose a second major theatre in the Music Hall would look very much like carelessness. Thanks Oscar.

Scenes not scenario

EAST LYNNE

by Barry O’Connor


Director, Alton Harvey; Musical director, A Vincent Jones.
Musical Hall Chairman, Lord Mount Severn; Johnny Johnstone; Mr Dill, PC 49 Earp; George Leppard; Miss Cornelia Carlyle, Lyn Lovett; Joyce, Diane Smith; Archibald Carlyle, Mal Carmont; Lady Isabel Carlyle, Christine Cameron; Richard Hare, Michael Freundt; Barbara Hare, Bernadette Hughson; Sir Francis Levison, Alton Harvey; Suzanne, Little William, Gayle Poole.

East Lynne has returned to the Music Hall for a limited engagement. Twenty years ago George F Miller Esq opened his first music hall in Melbourne with a production of Ellen (better known as Mrs Henry) Wood’s vintage melodrama.

Now in 1980, the current revival might prove to be the swansong of the Neutral Bay Music Hall. Fire regulations, which threaten the Music Hall with financial impracticalities, could force the closure of a kind of theatre which is unique in Australia and the world at large.

Even now the hand of austerity is visible in the absence of Tom Lingwood’s lavish sets, the reviving stage and spectacular effects of Miller’s salad days. The Management has had to contain the play within a fire-proof box; fortunately, however, this suits East Lynne, which because of its great popularity in Victorian times travelled far and wide, often playing in a “fit-up theatre” like the present one.

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"The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brains of the living" — Karl Marx, The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte.

As a programme note to Traitors it reads, despite its grave ironies of reference, as a weighty talisman. But this proves not to be the case. Sewell's Traitors is a remarkable piece of theatre — all the more so when viewed against the contemporary political scene which seems resolutely determined to find a common denominator in mediocrity. Sewell confronts Marx's nightmare with an integrity that is as tough in its thinking as it is richly dramatic. It is raw on the nerve but never naive, precise in idioms; passionate in its statement but not without an aptly sensed humour; it is demanding and, in the best sense, uncompromising. That Sewell is so articulate is as much an actor's delight as an audience's pleasure. The APG demonstrated this last April with Kerry Dwyer's premiere. Nimrod have restored the vitality of Downstairs with this very capable production by Neil Armfield, featuring superb performances from Michele Fawdon and Barry Otto.

The backdrop of history to Traitors is Stalin's rise to power 1926-27. Lenin's death in 1924 prompted a bitter struggle for power within the Party — the key figures, of course, Stalin, Trotsky and Zinoviev. Sewell, as his extensive programme notes make clear, focuses on the issues involved in this struggle, a struggle in which ideological stance and pragmatic decision merge in irreconcilable conflict. Sewell points to two broad interrelated issues. Firstly, the failure of Marx's (predicted) spectre of Communism to haunt Europe into Revolution had grave economic consequences for the socio-political future of under-developed Russia — consequences fraught with difficulties that would deeply effect the individual and the State. Thus, Lenin's NEP, ultimately gave way to Bukharin's economics ("Socialism at a snail's pace") with which Stalin threw in his lot.

Secondly, the question of how much dissension and opposition could be tolerated within the young Party as it formalised itself into "stable" Government. Naturally enough much of this discussion concerned itself with the future of Russia, Party and Communism. The fear of counter-revolution was sufficiently great that in 1921 Lenin, with Trotsky's support, pushed a motion through the tenth Party Congress banning the formation of opposition groups within the Party. This increased eventually the scale of operation of the GPU. Sewell retains the original name Cheka — the embryonic KGB.

I think slowly is an operative word for Traitors for, ignoring its prologue/epilogue time shift to 1941, the play does move slowly towards its immensely powerful third act. In this Neil Armfield has found just the right pace — no mean feat when one considers that in the hands of a clumsy director the work could dissipate and rely on shock tactics to renew interest. Armfield's sure command of the work was nowhere clearer than in his initial pacing of scenes to allow an atmosphere variously laconic, humorous, warm but ironically sinister. Memorable were the train scene, Anna's first night in Leningrad, the reunion between Krasin-Lebeshev. This relaxed approach to the powerful torture scenes of Act Three struck this reviewer as a perfect balance of irony and humour. Armfield's sub-text probing was similarly, and correctly, restrained, drawing us into the atmosphere of the work for its electrifying and high paced final act. In this it struck me that several reviewers have misjudged the "realism" of the torture scenes. The stark, film-like juxtaposition of Krasin's torture of Rubin to his love-making with Anne was one of the best pieces of theatre seen in many a month. Bill Haycock's blandly coloured, all-purpose set — railway station, street, room — was an excellent aid with Murray's very effective lighting. Michael Barkl's soundtape though fine in itself did not seem to be sufficiently integrated into the production.

The acting was excellent. Colin Friel's Rubin, the stubborn non-pragmatist subjected to Krasin's torture, delineated naive seriousness with the ultimate humiliation quite superbly. Fawdon correctly stole the evening. Fawdon's Anna, a woman caught between the implications of her own feminism and her political radicalism, was strong, deliant, romantic, alive. Anna is the play's most complete character and draws the play's threads together: she is the most sympathetic of Sewell's creations. Barry Otto's Krasin was nothing short of superb: "worldly", humane, hopefully trapped, defeated. Otto is more and more inclined to a Poundian style of criticism after watching the consistent work of Otto over the last year...to effect Barry Otto, damn-your-eyes, sir, is a damn fine actor.

In this period of organ grinders, monkeys and the like Traitors comes as vitally refreshing work.
Desperate exercise and unique talent

UP IN ONE
CRAIG RUSSELL

By William Shoubridge

Two shows in Sydney, coincidentally at the same time, Peter Allen’s *Up In One* and *Craig Russell and Friends*, were both ostensibly aimed at the general public, who in fact did flock to them, but were palpably focused at the tastes and humours of the “gay” audience.

Both shows rejoiced in camp bitchy humour, torch songs, flip presentation and plenty of glitter and pizzaz in performance. The “camp” set shrieked and whooped its approval and the “straights” applauded mildly, albeit with an air of daring-do. Campery has always relied on the theatre, and the camp world has always used it as an outlet. It is a known fact that a fair slice of Sydney’s theatre, dance and opera establishments would collapse altogether were it not for the gay patronage. Sometimes this campy theatre becomes an end in itself because of the hermetically exclusive in jokes or the “those who know... know”, according to Peter Allen.

Most of the time, however, it is the vociferousness of the gay audiences that makes shows like the aforementioned so tiresome, or essentially the “gay” first night audiences whether or not they are of the homosexual persuasion. I often wish I didn’t have to attend first nights of shows like this, everything is tits and teeth, people of moderate creative talent are labelled “genius”, and most aggravatingly, the applause “claques” are out in force, their self-congratulatory whoops proclaiming “you knocked ME out” rather than “I think YOU are wonderful”. Later on in the run when these frenetic clappers are diminished and the more restrained audiences appear, the reactions are more reliable.

Peter Allen obviously basked in the adulatory first night Sydney reception for his show *Up In One*, milking the applause, and flicking his lounge-lizard mockeries around the theatre like so many bread pellets. Yet, for all the frenetic coloured streamers and silver lame coats, the show is dead. Everything is so overproduced that one ends up clapping merely as a sign of appreciation for all the hard work gone into manufacturing the effect.

It strikes me that Mr. Allen is much more palatable on the turntable than on the stage. Live he gets winded quickly, he goes flat when he doesn’t go sharp and his piano playing leaves much to be desired. Even some of those lovely ballads that get ample room to blossom on record are gradually pumped up into yet another high decibel stage bombshell; it spoils them.

A lot of the blame for this Radio City, Music Hall aproach can be laid at the door of the director Craig Zadan. He never lets up; we just know that each snippet of repartee is just another breather before the next assault. The band gets illuminated behind Allen every so often to show what they can do, the projections never cease and Miss Murphy Cross a competent Broadway hoofer does a couple of songs and dances to not very much effect. The duets between her and Mr. Allen swing predictably between the skerrick/cute and the brassy/sophisticate without much territory between. The production is simple-minded.

So simple-minded, in fact, that one in the end tends not to take cognizance of the songs and their hidden depths at all, it is a desperate excercise on the part of Mr. Allen to astonish us and to get the best of a good thing before he ends up in the back of the rack.

I really cannot see what the fuss about Peter Allen as a stage performer is all about. If the late-night, Manhattan crowd have proclaimed him as their Crown Prince, as the programme note informs us, well they are even more fatuous than I thought.

Craig Russell on the other hand doesn’t try quite so hard, his own personality rarely comes to the fore, he is selling the caricatures of great ladies of the movies and the cabaret and we can take them at face value, literally.

It is a unique talent of his that can change from the facial and vocal mannerisms of a Carol Channing to an Ethel Merman in a split second. It is a special ability that can make one’s flesh creep at the reincarnation of a crumbling Judy Garland before our very eyes, or the cruel taunt at an aged and arthritic Marlene Dietrich redolent in furs.

But it is a demanding talent, mimcary, and before the night was through, Mr. Russell was failing. Bette Midler was a feeble attempt, and Barbra Streisand started to sound like Peggy Lee.

Yet for all that, I enjoyed it. I enjoyed a “drag” artist who relied on his own vocal talents rather than miming ridiculously to a tape, and I enjoyed a distinctive talent who works on that talent solely, and doesn’t try to stretch his appeal beyond its natural limits.
Sardonic edge blunted

THE THREEPENNY OPERA

By Jeremy Ridgman

When the TN Company established themselves last year they began with a stylish, biting production of Brecht and Weill’s Happy End, presaging exciting things to come. Is it to benefit from the success of that production or to establish a TN house style that John Milson has kicked off in 1980 with The Threepenny Opera? Whatever the reason, one worries about the extent to which this infinitely more complex and penetrating musical has become established as an audience pulling standby, and wonders whether the decision does not point to some of the pitfalls in coming out of the same trap twice.

One misses above all the assertive, unifying design of Happy End; indeed, no designer is credited in the programme. The set is an unhappy mixture of fairground booths, neo-Dickensian street corners and scaffolding towers from which the players observe the action and occasionally throw comments, jeers and whistles. The staging manages to conquer much of the intractability of the Twelfth Night stage, particularly in the use of a music-hall style catwalk thrown across the theatre between orchestra pit and audience, from which many of the songs are delivered. But we are still forced to peer into the depths of the upstage area, as it were down the wrong end of a telescope, to pick out Geoff Cartwright’s sadly underdeployed narrator.

Many of the players from Happy End are here again, and in similar guise. Harry Scott shed his Chicago alias to reappear as Mack the Knife, and despite the strength of his performance, especially his commanding presence and his stylish singing, does not convey the maturity or the sheer dangerousness of the character: Mack is after all a veteran of the Boer War and numbers rape among his crimes — no romantic lead! This, and other softenings of the characters such as Michael McCaffrey’s caricature East End Jewish Peachum are evidence I believe that the tough, sardonic edge in the play has been blunted. Philip Prowse’s decadent, punk orientated production at the Citizen’s Theatre, Glasgow and Wal Cherry’s reference to Australian politics in his South Australian production are recent examples of how this edge might be retained.

The TN company is a vital one, with an average age, I should imagine, of about twenty one. Perhaps because of the illness of Pat Thompson and the fact that John Milson himself was on stage playing Mrs. Peachum, that vitality has dampened by a noticeable lack of general confidence. Only Duncan Wass and Sally McKenzie give performances of great merit. Wass is one of a number of young actors who have been around Brisbane for some time, but have suffered from the southern star syndrome in the parts they have been given at the state theatre. The subtlety of his performance as Tiger Brown, itching with embarrassment at unwittingly shopping his old pal, should not be underestimated. Sally McKenzie, like one or two others in the cast, has been brought by Milson from La Boite, justifying totally the new policy of exchange of directors between the two most progressive theatres in the city. It is the image of McKenzie as Jenny that one takes away from the show, particularly of her rendering of the Pirate Jenny song, delivered stock still in a gravelly voice and with absolute conviction.
Dangerous simplicity

MEAT

By Susan Vile


By Susan Vile/State Rep

Amin came to power and can hardly claim acquaintance with the mighty even while there.

The ‘story’ is already well known; Amin is the familiar figure of news media, feature films, and impersonations. Less familiar is ‘Major’ Bob Astles, the enigmatic Britisher who inspired hatred by black and white alike as head of Amin’s Murder Squad. Somewhere between these two there lies a play. The one, an ambitious young African soldier; the other a working-class Englishman, repelled at first by the colonial hypocrisy of his fellow countrymen, to become afterwards an unrelenting fascist of twisted bitterness. Yes, there’s a play there somewhere. But as long as the two are Amin and Bob Astles (or, as David Allen called him, Geoffrey Dutton), and as long as the author is tied to documented information for his material, then the play’s real concern must remain a closed secret between the protagonists themselves.

It was a case where the documentary form worked against the interests of the play. The scope became limited by fact. People at interval were muttering, “I knew all this before”. Imagination has been stifled and flattened into what is now cliche. If, on the other hand, David Allen had combined documented fact with personal experience and set his play in an unnamed African country with fictitious characters, he could have given his imagination freedom to explore issues and relationships in a structure informed not by history but by thematic coherence.

As it was, Meat suffered from gawkish construction. The action arose from a macabre “slides from my overseas trip” evening, with Dutton reliving photographs before reluctant visitor, Pauline, from a nearby Sydney flat (spot the Australian connection?), whose reluctance and evident repugnance at Dutton’s “exhibition” did not, however, prevent her from staying for a full two hours’ viewing.

A thankless role this, squamish one minute, threatening murder the next, and spent for the most part of the evening in darkness on the kitchen set. Wendy Madigan played her with laudable sincerity.

Henry Salter, in contrast, did little with Dutton, a role of far greater potential interest. Playing only for extremes of brooding sullenness or violent aggression, he gave barely more than a pallid repeat of his more successful performance last year in Dickinson. Opposing him as Amin, Peter Dunn had the most difficult task of all: how to avoid impersonation, with uneven dialogue, thin characterisation and no make-up. All praise to him that he was able for more than a few moments to make me forget he was white (something none of the other “black” characters achieved).

But, hampered by the inflexibility of a strong accent and stiff movements, he offered a dangerously simplistic view of Amin, a view reinforced by the writing.

Perhaps it was as a result of textual weakness that the clarity and visual sense seen in previous productions seemed this time to have deserted director David Young. Not only did he over-use a cumbersome (and noisy) revolve stage, but the play as a whole lacked evidence of a guiding hand. David Kirk, in a brief scene with Peter Dunn, was able to shape the material for a while, but, in general, scenes were seldom relieved from an overall dullness.
HOBSON'S CHOICE
by Colin Duckworth

If Harold Brighouse has succeeded only in creating a realistic picture of a rather slummy part of Manchester in 1880, his play would simply warrant inclusion in The Playhouse of Museum Pieces. But he achieved very much more than that (no doubt, unwittingly), fully justifying the National Theatre’s revival of the play in mid-sixties, and Frank Hausser’s production at the MTC. Parochial though it may seem, with its bleak setting in shop, cellar and back room amid the gloomy drizzle of Salubrious Salford, Hobson’s Choice can now be seen as a reduction to simple, commercial terms of the subject-matter of Lear, The Merchant of Venice, L’Avare and Le Pere Goriot - just as Ubu is a reduction to basics of historical tragedies such as Macbeth and Richard III.

When Henry Horatio Hobson’s wife died, her domination was replaced by that of his three daughters. At least, that is how he sees things. They are opish, and the one thing he cannot abide is oopishness. They see themselves as exploited (he does not pay them for working in his boot and shoe shop) and frustrated (he will not allow them to marry because it would cost him money for “settlements” and deprive him of cheap labour). This setting, overtly domestic, is profoundly political when viewed in the light of Imperial Britain in 1880: father-figure (Emperor, Empress, Queen Victoria) refuses freedom to daughters (subjects). But the seeds of revolt have been sown (by eldest daughter, Maggie) and grow fast because of father’s lack of love.

Lovelessness characterises all the relationships in Hobson’s Choice, and this absence of any compassion turns into a comedy what could have been middle-class tragedy. All behaviour is viewed as transaction and manipulation.

The manipulator supreme is Maggie, who comes over in June Jago’s strong performance as pure Laurie Lee out of D H Lawrence: one of those hard, bony-faced, no-nonsense, ambitious women as indigenous to the mills and dales of the north of England as are their pubs-crawling, weak-minded menfolk. For all his bluster, Hobson is weak. Simon Chilvers made him a convincing self-made man, and even elicited some sympathy for Hobson when detailing to his uneasy prospective sons-in-law the bossing-about he has had to put up with from their future wives. But the final scene of Hobson’s discomfiture, downfall and capitulation to Maggie lacked nuance and conviction.

Maggie is a female Pygmalion. Her creature is Willie, a poor worm of a fellow who makes fine shoes in the cellar. Her conquest of Willie is nothing less than an annexation to the advantage of both parties. Douglas Hedge provided a most satisfying character portrayal, moving from downtrodden humbleness to well-dressed confidence with a delicate sense of gradation, culminating victoriously (to great applause) in his becoming the new master of Hobson’s business. Maggie proudly realises that the months of schooling she has given him - teaching him to write on a slate uplifting sentences such as “There is always room at the top” and “Great things come from small” - have borne fruit. She has made a man of him.

Frank Hauser’s production succeeds through its down-to-earth lack of sentimentality and authentic creation of atmosphere. If the northern accents sounded stilted, at least they never slipped. Hugh Colman’s naturalistic set was perfectly adequate, apart from the lavishness of Hobson’s living-room, which looked more like plushy Restoration Parkville than seedy Victorian Salford.
The material is familiar, and Brenton exploits the familiarity to develop a highly detailed world of "raging", violence, tenderness and claustrophobia. His accents are harsh. The pressures on his characters are extreme and unrelenting. Though there are moments when some glimmer of understanding or some brief moment of personal equilibrium is achieved, these tend to be lost in an ever-rising tide of acrimony and frustration.

The play is a bell-jar, of sorts. Jack has divorced Judy because he loathes the marriage/money/sex equation, and most of the first half is given over to well-worn routines of violence in a re-hash of their twenty years together.

It is set within the confines of Judy's flat - a hostile and anonymous space in which issues of personal liberation quickly degenerate into taunts, barbs and sadomasochism. An open pen-knife lies on stage most of the time.

Fay Mokotow's Judy is thirty-nine, abrasive, ambivalent and already partly destroyed by her own impulses to self-mutilation. Later, she is joined by Sally - a caustic and cynical youngster, who moves into the flat and becomes her accomplice on a campaign which takes them on manic, neon-lit holidays, and into the world of drugs and New York singles' bars.

Both women are portrayed as brittle, articulate and punch drunk, and their relationship veers erratically from a tired worldly wisdom to brief passages of real compassion and understanding.

But the most striking passage of the play occurs in the second half when Jack (Wilfred Last), recounts his experiences as a "mid-husband" on a deserted road in Canada.

At the Pram Factory, Sore Throats is played rather fast. Directors Wilfred Last and Richard Murphett work with a bald and confrontational style that is exaggerated by a small stage and a stark, minimal set. They have made no attempt to imitate London accents, and none to soften the casual violence, the ambiguities or the contradictions of Brenton's script.

In the end, their Sore Throats is demanding and mostly black theatre which offers little in the way of respite from its commitment to the harsh and often ugly struggle for identity and survival.
**Small space acting**

**CARBONI**

**THE JAIL DIARY OF ALBIE SACHS**

By Garrie Hutchinson


Bruce Spence and David Downer are two of Melbourne's more respected actors: they are both performers who put-in, however idiosyncratic their performances might be. The differences and similarities in the ways they cope with small space, close-up acting are interesting because Spence and Downer are "graduates" of the two major acting traditions extant in Australia at the moment.

David Downer comes from the NIDA Tote Eng Rep MTC school of acting—which is not to disparage it at all. The trained actor (whatever we might think about the training at any of the tertiary acting institutions) is as essential to our theatre as a Williamson hit.

This actor now provides a relatively unplummy voice, but one capable of assuming a tinge of this place or that or swearing or declaiming. He provides a level of physical activity that can fight bareknuckle, or crack foils in ruffles in an Elizabethan pavilion. He can play the gay, dress in drag, carry spears, go down a flag. He also set himself the discipline of using only Carboni's words, which has led to a slightly scatty account of the events.

The differences in style start, obviously with the text. Both plays are adaptations of factual works of prose. The one, John Romeril's adaptation of Rafaello Carboni's account of the Eureka Stockade, the other David Edgar's of Albie Sachs' South African prison diary.

Romeril isn't interested in making us believe we are emotionally there at Eureka, he wants us in a "brechtian" kind of way, to have the facts as Carboni experienced them, and to decide for ourselves to come down on the side of truth and justice. On Carboni's side, on the side of Australian nationalism, and the grill of the Eureka flag. He also set himself the discipline of using only Carboni's words, which has led to a slightly scatty account of the events.

The text then requires the actor to give an objectified performance, not a performance to make us believe we are really there. We know, from the ambience of the theatre, that Spence and the crew are believers, but we also know from the design of the show, and from the first time Spence gives one of his huge character-breaking grins that we are in the presence of an actor acting. He adopts gestures as they fit the words, not in an effort to create a consistent, growing character-in-the-play. He changes cadence from Italianate to Irish-Australian to his own where the speech as written down by Carboni changes. He is not attempting the reality of the smell-the-sweat-feel-the-violence school of close up acting. He is an anti-naturalistic actor.

This is directly opposed to the naturalistic mode of close-up acting. In Albie Sachs, the writer demands, and the actor provides, an attempt at the experience, being written and performed. In this case the feeling of being gaol in solitude under the South African 90/180 internment laws.

This play even demands, in an effort to get the audience to really feel, that we sit in silence for two minutes whilst the actor does nothing.

Prior to this, he has talked at some length about how we cannot experience what he, representing the real Albie Sachs has felt. He has shown us the sorts of things he (Albie) did, he has sweated on us, exercised in front of us, ruminated for us.

But, as we cannot really experience what the actor experiences, as the actor cannot substitute for Albie Sachs, so the real Albie Sachs (and this is the point of the play) cannot, as a white, have the same experience as the blacks. Whilst Albie was enduring solitary, the blacks were being tortured with sleep deprivation, and when he moves on to that they are being murdered. Such is the fate of the even the most earnestly experimental of white liberals. They can never become the other.

Theatrically, this is a most interestingly disconcerting point. Because we, the audience cannot, no matter how much the actor sweats, experience anything for him. Even if we abolish the fourth wall of proscenium theatre, we still cannot stand the lights of the arena.

David Downer, in Albie Sachs, is acting (well) for all he is worth.

Great acting in a conventional theatre is a special convergence of energy, commitment, skill and passion that is powerful enough to make the theatre smaller. That is why it is so rare, and so much easier in small open space arenas.

And that, the acting from Spence and Downer, was what I enjoyed most. The direction of both shows was a bit paceless, though the evenens. the climaxlessness, probably ought to be laid at the door of the writers. There simply wasn't enough happening. In Carboni's case the big event, he missed out on (the actual Eureka battle) happens between scenes, and that, added to the flat 19th century prose, and the limitation Romeril imposed on himself (no one's words but Carboni's) just don't give enough information, enough understanding.

And in Albie Sachs, prison life in a play about solitary confinement and its effects and in spite of the additional characters is not a rich subject. Albie Sachs' reactions and ruminations too, are not greatly enlightening.
Questions of war, exile and national identity are never far below the surface of Roger Pulvers’ work, perhaps because for this American born Australian playwright they have constituted the problematic in his own life. In his most recent play *Australia Majestic* the setting is the Second World War and a hotel in Victoria which has been transformed into a US army hospital.

When he chooses to, Pulvers can write naturalistically with great felicity, however this ability is an artful guise and must be closely watched for naturalism is rarely his intended effect. Thus in *Australia Majestic*, the confrontation between the two American soldiers, the Australian orderly and the German internee couple, while it has considerable ramifications in terms of the individual characters and their motivations, it is ultimately a confrontation between national types and ideologies. However it is precisely because we believe in the clashes at a personal level, that we accept and understand the symbolic transformations.

The transition from the particular to the general works best when the individual sinews are strongest. Thus Herman the Australian orderly and Klaus, the German, because they are so finely drawn as individuals are most able to bear the weight of the generalisations they ultimately embody; whereas the Americans and the German doctor were shadowy as individuals because they were overdetermined at the outset and tended therefore to dissolve under the same weight of generalisation.

This problem was exacerbated because John Arnold as Herman and Robin Cuming as Klaus gave the clearest and most subtle performances, but equally it was not simply a matter of the increasingly less comfortable performances by William Gluth, Gene Van Dam and Jacqueline Kelleher - they were only registering and compounding the confusion of the writing. The director, Malcolm Robertson was faced with the task of restraining Gluth’s and Kelleher’s performances so that the play was not swamped with significance too soon, but the tension that resulted disrupted the surface and cut against our ability to comprehend and attend to the other level at the centre of the work.

By comparison John Arnold’s performance was stunningly understated; as Hermann he was laconic and naively impressionable to the point of convincing us that natural innocence and a certain sort of stupidity went hand in hand. In the second half when he returns from the little war-time action that he has seen, we realise just how malleable and culpable his ignorance was, and in the final stages of the play we see him transformed from embryonic fascist to fascist in embryo and just beginning to assert his new found and dangerous selfhood. The transformation from the local dope to the incipient demagogue is so terrifying, because we feel we have colluded in the endorsement of his earlier Austral innocence. Equally important is the realisation that the Americans cannot be blamed as the corruptors of our youth; they were merely the catalysts of the change.

A further problem for me arose out of the staging; the Upstairs Playbox space was too small and claustrophobic, it cramped the largeness of the issues and made more obvious and disturbing the discomfort of Gluth and Kelleher’s performances. On a larger stage and played in the round the short fragmented scenes and the constant exits and entrances could have been effected more smoothly because the action would have been freed from what in this production was, conventionally naturalistic staging.

Comparing *Australia Majestic* to Romeril’s *Dudders* which also dealt with the wartime domestic invasion of Australia by American servicemen, Pulvers makes it abundantly clear that the issue is a lot more complex than silk stockings and chewing gum. Perhaps because he has a less vested interest in believing in our innocence Pulvers is able to reveal us to ourselves most sharply.
Raw material lacking

**PRIVATES ON PARADE and COP OUT**

by Collin O'Brien


Director, Stephen Barry; Designer, Tony Tripp; Choreography, Barry Screaigh; Musical director, Derek Bond; Lighting, Duncan Ord; Stage Manager, Christine Randall.

Major Flack: Bill Kerr; Acting Capt Dennis, Tim Brooke-Taylor; Sgt Major Drummond, Leslie Wright; Sylva Morgan, Penny Downie; Flight Sgt Cartwright, Frank Johnson; Corporal Bonny, James Beatle; l. Corporal Bishop, Glen Hitchcock; Young Love, Richard Williams; Private Flowers, Alan Fletcher; Lee, Ivan King; Cheng, Barry Screaigh.

(Professional)


Director, Robert Faggetter; Designer, Alan Murphy; Stage Manager, Leonie Smith.

Salli Jones, Maggie Wilde West; Linton Doyle, Rod Hall; Randolph Dyson, Michael Loney; David Fletcher, Jay Walsh; Barry Gleeson, Glenn Swift; Ben Marton, Don Smith.

(Professional)

The impression I gained from the premiere Royal Shakespeare Company production of Peter Nichols' *Privates On Parade* was, alas, only confirmed by seeing the Playhouse's version, their contribution to the Festival of Perth. Meant perhaps as the Playhouse's version, their contribution to add up to little better than a cross between *It Ain't Half Hot Mum* and *South Pacific*. From the TV series it derives "outrageous" camp-in-uniform of the "fuck you Freddy where's my eyeshadow" genre; from *South Pacific* comes a rather more sinister strain, with a blend of sexism and racism: the Suzy Wong syndrome, the prostitute-with-a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) characterised by wide (though slant) eyed a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) with a blend of sexism and racism: the Suzy Wong syndrome, the prostitute-with-a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) characterised by wide (though slant) eyed a-hearty-of-gold (Asian version) with a blend of sexism and racism: the Suzy Wong syndrome, the prostitute-with-a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) characterised by wide (though slant) eyed a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) with a blend of sexism and racism: the Suzy Wong syndrome, the prostitute-with-a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) characterised by wide (though slant) eyed a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) with a blend of sexism and racism: the Suzy Wong syndrome, the prostitute-with-a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) characterised by wide (though slant) eyed a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) with a blend of sexism and racism: the Suzy Wong syndrome, the prostitute-with-a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) characterised by wide (though slant) eyed a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) with a blend of sexism and racism: the Suzy Wong syndrome, the prostitute-with-a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) characterised by wide (though slant) eyed a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) with a blend of sexism and racism: the Suzy Wong syndrome, the prostitute-with-a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) characterised by wide (though slant) eyed a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) with a blend of sexism and racism: the Suzy Wong syndrome, the prostitute-with-a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) characterised by wide (though slant) eyed a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) with a blend of sexism and racism: the Suzy Wong syndrome, the prostitute-with-a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) characterised by wide (though slant) eyed a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) with a blend of sexism and racism: the Suzy Wong syndrome, the prostitute-with-a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) characterised by wide (though slant) eyed a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) with a blend of sexism and racism: the Suzy Wong syndrome, the prostitute-with-a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) characterised by wide (though slant) eyed a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) with a blend of sexism and racism: the Suzy Wong syndrome, the prostitute-with-a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) characterised by wide (though slant) eyed a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) with a blend of sexism and racism: the Suzy Wong syndrome, the prostitute-with-a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) characterised by wide (though slant) eyed a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) with a blend of sexism and racism: the Suzy Wong syndrome, the prostitute-with-a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) characterised by wide (though slant) eyed a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) with a blend of sexism and racism: the Suzy Wong syndrome, the prostitute-with-a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) characterised by wide (though slant) eyed a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) with a blend of sexism and racism: the Suzy Wong syndrome, the prostitute-with-a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) characterised by wide (though slant) eyed a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) with a blend of sexism and racism: the Suzy Wong syndrome, the prostitute-with-a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) characterised by wide (though slant) eyed a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) with a blend of sexism and racism: the Suzy Wong syndrome, the prostitute-with-a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) characterised by wide (though slant) eyed a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) with a blend of sexism and racism: the Suzy Wong syndrome, the prostitute-with-a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) characterised by wide (though slant) eyed a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) with a blend of sexism and racism: the Suzy Wong syndrome, the prostitute-with-a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) characterised by wide (though slant) eyed a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) with a blend of sexism and racism: the Suzy Wong syndrome, the prostitute-with-a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) characterised by wide (though slant) eyed a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) with a blend of sexism and racism: the Suzy Wong syndrome, the prostitute-with-a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) characterised by wide (though slant) eyed a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) with a blend of sexism and racism: the Suzy Wong syndrome, the prostitute-with-a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) characterised by wide (though slant) eyed a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) with a blend of sexism and racism: the Suzy Wong syndrome, the prostitute-with-a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) characterised by wide (though slant) eyed a-heart-of-gold (Asian version) with a blend of sexism and raci...
A trinity of solos

A MAN OF MANY PARTS
KATHERINE MANSFIELD
THAT'S THE WAY TO DO IT

By Cliff Gillam

Director, Ray Omodei; Stage Managers, Helen Godcke, Richard Hartley; Songs, Martin Freidl.
Noah Hope, Neville Teede.

That's The Way To Do It by Chris Harris and John David. Festival of Perth Octagon Theatre. Opened March 5 1980k.
Director, John David; Designer, Cecil Moreau; Manager, David McCormick.

Stage Management, lighting, Kym Newell, Mark Squires; Direction assistant, Jean Betts.
Katherine Mansfield, Cathy Downes; Voice of Middleton Murry, Paul Holmes.

The Actor, the Writer and the Puppeteer are each, in their own way, shapers of substitute worlds, creators of brief universes which turn out to be our own transfigured by a compelled belief in the magic of shaping itself. These three furnished the subjects for the three plays “for solo performer” featured in this year’s Festival. Taken together, the three plays and their performers offer a series of interpenetrative perspectives on the dialectic of creator and created, that mystery of entry into a renewed creation which is theatrical magic.

Neville Teede, as Noah Hope in Jack Hibberd’s A Man Of Many Parts had the immensely difficult task of creating the role of an actor minutely “created”, (and thus minutely constraining) by a writer, while Cathy Downes the actress literally “created” the writer Katherine Mansfield in her The Case Of Katherine Mansfield. And Chris Harris the writer, in creating Professor Powell and his issue, puppeteers down the centuries, as the perfect role for Chris Harris, actor, incidentally supplied in the loaded simplicities of his puppet Noah’s performance an oblique illumination, a reverse image of Hibberd’s godforsaken Noah, posturing like a complex Punch in a booth made from memory and desire, the puppet of his need, our need, for the magic of a show.

Neville Teede’s performance as Monk O’Neill in Hibberd’s first monodrama A Stretch Of The Imagination inspired Hibberd to the creation for Teede of A Man Of Many Parts and a role, in Noah Hope, (second-rate actor “resting” in poverty and bed-sitting room loneliness, locked in a struggle with threatening madness), which demands supreme virtuosity, a technical mastery and a sensitivity bordering on the impossible. The confessions, ruminations, meditations, memories, gossip, rages and despair of Noah Hope, B Psych (split) Dip Thesp (Grimsby), constitute an extended voyage by Hibberd in search of even more fabulous species of ambiguity than those locked up in Empson’s zoo.

Writing in places at white heat, Hibberd sails into the space between the mirrors of Reality and Illusion, where the Actor lives, and asks of the actor playing Noah that he choose unerringly, moment by moment, just how far back in the dizzying perspective of images of himself is the one he must become to keep the ship on true course. And if this were not enough to ask, Hibberd demands also an extraordinarily vigorous physical workout. Aided no doubt by Raymond Omodei’s finely discriminating and intelligent direction, Teede proved to have reserves of stamina adequate to both tasks, though I felt that towards the end of what turned out to be ninety continuous minutes of such
demands, he faltered somewhat. (I was surprised to learn after the opening night performance that some twenty minutes of Hibberd's original script were excised from the production, since the play as given seemed to me ten minutes or more longer than it need have been, and it seemed also as if this unnecessary length was responsible for the slight flagging in T...
MARIETTA REPLIES

Dear Sir,

Norman Kessell (March issue) would have been left with rather less egg on his face if he had only gone to the bother of getting at least some of his facts right before attacking my paragraph on the Sydney Theatre Critics Circle Award in the Weekend Australian Marietta Column on January 19.

He is quite wrong in stating that "naughty Marietta from the start opposed the National Critics Circle, (and) refused to join it..."

The fact is that I was a foundation member of the music section of the National Critics Circle and even became its chairman. Later I resigned after becoming convinced that the music section, at least, was a waste of Australia Council money. One of my objections was that so few Sydney music critics had seen all the outstanding performance that it became a case of choosing from among those that had been witnessed by all, rather than selecting from among the best.

Mr. Kessell also snidely accuses me of "scooping" the announcement of the 1979 award winner two days before the official statement. What I wrote was: "Who will win the Sydney Theatre Critics Circle Award on Monday? The favorite seems to be Doreen Warburton, director of the Q Theatre... But she has formidable competition in many of the other nominees" which I then listed. That's speculating, not announcing.

Norman Kessell then finishes his attack most tastefully by taking his incorrect statements and using them to make a side swipe at my character. I only hope he likes eggs.

Yours sincerely,

Maria Prerauer
Arts Editor
The Australian

INDIGESTIBLE PIRATES

Dear Sir,

One man's meat may give another violent indigestion, so I must add a note of dissent to Norman Kessell's glowing comments about Pirates At The Barn (TA February). I attended the Nimrod production at Clark Island with three small children and unlike those "doting grandparents" in Kessell's review, I didn't get the pleasure of watching the children's enjoyment, because they didn't enjoy themselves much.

There were several reasons for this. Kessell talks of the amphitheatre "comfortably accommodating" the audience, but on the burning hot day we were there, it offered little shade. Nimrod thoughtfully provided cardboard sunshades, but they seemed barely adequate. In terms of comfort sitting on dirt for more than two hours doesn't rate very high, but unlike the Festival of Sydney shows we'd attended in Hyde Park earlier in the week, there were no cushions provided.

And so to the play which Kessell found "as fresh and pleasing today as when first presented." I found it slow moving, clogged with ponderous exposition and explanation which obviously bored the kids. The first half contained little use of the "audience participation" noted by the reviewer and, as he suggests, much of the campy humour went straight over the kids' heads. He talks of a "much more compact production" than Ken Horler's famous Treasure Island, but that is putting the best construction on it. This production was downright static and many of the young audience were correspondingly restive. I doubt whether the parents and grandparents who had to explain to their young charges that they couldn't go home yet because this was an island and you had to wait for the ferry, shared Norman Kessell's obvious pleasure.

One last word. Kessell didn't mention the ferry ride at all, yet for my money it was the best part of the show. On the outward journey we were joined by two pirates in full costume. This reduced one of my lot to abject terror, but he won her heart when he stopped drenching the passengers with his water pistol and let her soak him instead. There followed boisterous exchanges with RAN sailors as we passed Garden Island and rousing choruses of "What Shall We Do With The Drunken Sailor" (the show itself had no singing). I wouldn't say the ride alone was worth the price of admission, but I suspect it is what the kids will remember.

Derek Peat,
Sydney, NSW.

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THEATRE SEATS

Enquiries are invited from persons or organisations wishing to purchase by tender quantities of up to 500 Theatre Seats currently installed in The Arts Theatre, 53 Angas St., Adelaide. Contact the Secretary, Miss V Kennedy on 08-212 5777.
BOOKS

Unreality on the screen

Peter Finch: A biography, by Trader Faulkner (Angus & Robertson)
America in the Dark: Hollywood and the Gift of Unreality, by David Thomson (Hutchinson, rrp $17.60)
The Changing Face of Music, by Hugo Cole (Hutchinson, rrp $21.60)
Szigeti on the Violin, by Joseph Szigeti (Dover, Tudor Distributors, rrp $4.90)

One of the most striking things about a film of Peter Finch, if you watch it these days, is your knowledge that he is dead. He was an actor of such directness and humanity on the screen that the thought of his mouldering corpse suggests a great deal about the experience of film as a medium. The fact that the actor whose humanity you feel so strongly in the cinema is dead, is a mere extension of what you always know when you watch a film: that in spite of its photographic, technical realism — it deals with images which are in a basic and important sense unreal. Movies can take dreams, fantasies and ideals and invest them with an everyday realness, because of the intuitively understood realness of photography, which is utterly bogus. As David Thomson argues in America in the Dark, when this power is at the service of an industry such as Hollywood was for a large part of this century, it becomes quite dangerous. Plato wanted to exclude poets from his Republic because, through the power of their art, they could make lies — fiction — look like truth. He would have been really worried about movies.

America in the Dark is a provocative book. Like much of the writing which film seems to inspire it is often smart and sententious — full of pop sociology and clever generalisation. And yet it is also full of insight and convincing argument. It suggests, indirectly, that film in the hands of the Hollywood studios has fundamentally confused dream and reality for the imaginary mass audience which the "industry" demands for its survival. Thomson argues that it is a sociological phenomenon, rather than an art, but he also implies that it is an existentialist philosophical reflection of our times. He says that it is as if, as a theatregoer in 1895, you were to go to the theatre expecting a sociable evening, with actors and friends, and got there to find a sign saying you would instead sit, in effect alone, watching changing images of light on a screen. Think how disappointed you would be. The actors' desertion of their audiences has led to a shift of fiction, or drama, away from the real. Movies are still terrific of course, but they can be dangerous if they're all you've got.

With Peter Finch there is an added strangeness in that he seems to have been all act. For me he will always be Dr Daniel Hirsch from Sunday Bloody Sunday, and yet it is hard to reconcile this mature, gentle man, supporting his patients while the film lets his personal problems appear only gradually, with the wild boy Finch portrayed by Trader Faulkner in his biography, Peter Finch. Finch never seems to have let the maturity and sensitivity he shows on screen interfere with his personal life. Though undoubtedly kind, generous and a highly serious actor, he comes across, in this book, as an innocently selfish boy. In spite of an egotistical, often cruel, way of behaving, particularly with his endless stream of women, he appears as oddly attractive, largely because of his obvious sincerity and naive romanticism.

He led a romantic life, or had it forced upon him. Rejected by his family, learning to beg as a boy in India, a young derelict in Sydney, then a struggling stage actor — he began the career for which he is now known only in his late thirties. Faulkner argues that his film career was mismanaged. He accepted the wrong parts, and was for various reasons not offered the parts which could have made him an international star much earlier. When he died in 1977 he was on the verge of a new period which could have made him one of the greats.

Faulkner's biography of him, although desperately in need of a good editor, is very readable. It is sympathetic and friendly without being sycophantic. It relies heavily on interviews with all of the various personalities who worked with him, which often leads to repetition and chronological confusion, but it gives an interesting portrait of a man who lived a very simple life which promised more than it delivered. Finch delivered in his acting.

Hugo Cole's The Changing Face of Music is an intelligent (and expensive) book, which suffers by attempting too little. In spite of disclaimers in the preface it reveals the fundamental conservatism and insularity of many people involved in highbrow music. To someone familiar with such a self-analytical world as theatre, or even film or literature, the naiveties of this book seem luxurious. Yet if musicians are as complacent and secure in their traditions as the book implies, then they may need such simplistic analysis of their social and professional roles. Otherwise it is rather self-indulgent.

Szigeti on the Violin is a reissue of a specialist work, which it is beyond my power to review constructively. I can only pass on Joseph Szigeti's proud injunction, the preface to all his analysis of technique, that There is No Substitute for Perfect Intonation.
ACT
THEATRE

CANBERRA REPERTORY (47 4222)

CANBERRA THEATRE (49 8211)
An Evening with Kevin Johnson. April 22.

FORTUNE THEATRE COMPANY
Playhouse (49 4488)
Lunch-time theatre: Out At Sea by Mrozek. April 2-18
Visitor From Hollywood by Neil Simon, April 21 - May 22.

PLAYHOUSE (49 4488)
Rotorua Maori Theatre. To 3 April.

Canberra Philharmonic Society: No No Nanette. April 30 - May 10.

Canberra Opera Society: The Threepenny Opera by Brecht and Weill. April 30 - May 10.

One Extra Dance Company. April 2-16.

CONCERTS

PLAYHOUSE (49 4488)
Winter Singers Recital. April 11, 12.

For entries contact Kyle Wilson on 49 5111

NSW
THEATRE

ARTS COUNCIL OF NEW SOUTH WALES (357 6611)
School Tours: Pinocchio, drama for infants and primary; Central and Far West until April 18.
Sontegara, a renaissance musical ensemble for infants, primary and secondary; metropolitan areas until April 12.

Adult Tours: Flexitime by Roger Hall; directed by Don Mackay with Paul Karo, Anne Phelan and Peter Cummins. Statewide until April 20.

AXIS THEATRE PRODUCTIONS
(969 8202)
Court House Theatre, Taylor Square:
Ockers in Orbit by Robert and David Landsberry; directed by Malcolm Frawley; music by Gary Smith; with Susan Asquith and Curt Jansen. Throughout April.

Agincourt Hotel, Broadway:
Tinsel and Grottel by Rick Maier and Malcolm Frawley; directed by Malcolm Frawley; with music by Sandra Ridgetwell. Throughout April.

ENSEMBLE THEATRE (929 8877)
Was He Anyone? by N F Simpson; directed by Max Phipps; with Lucy Charles, Maggie Dence, Jon Ewing, Hilary Larkum, Bronwen Philips, Charlie Strachan and Greg Radford. Into April.

FIRST STAGE THEATRE COMPANY
(82 1603)
The History of Theatre in Dramatic Form by Gary Baxter; directed by Chris Lewis; with Angela Bennie, Anthony Martin and Gary Baxter. Touring to schools throughout April.

St James Playhouse:
Whose Afraid of Virginia Woolf? by Edward Albee; directed by Gary Baxter. Schools performances throughout April.

Bankstown Entertainment Centre:
Waiting for Godot by Samuel Beckett; directed by Gary Baxter. Schools performances throughout April.

FRANK STRAIN'S BULL N'BUSH THEATRE RESTAURANT (357 4627) That's Rich a musical review from the turn of the century to today; with Noel Brophy, Barbara Wyndon, Garth Meade, Neil Bryant and Helen Lorain; directed by George Carden. Throughout April.

GENESIAN THEATRE (55 5641) The Deep Blue Sea by Terence Rattigan; directed by Nanette Frew. Until end April.

HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE (212 3411) Find The Lady by Michael Pertwee; directed by Shaun Gurton; with Mollie Sugden, Gordon Poole, Audine Leith and Myra Noblett. Until April 12 with possible extension.

HUNTER VALLEY THEATRE COMPANY (26 2526) The Imaginary Invalid by Moliere; director Aarne Neeme. To May 3.

KIRRIBILLI PUB THEATRE (92 1415) Kirribilli Hotel, Milson's Point The 1984 Show by P P Cranney; directed by Richmond Young; music by Adrian Morgan; with Danny Adcock, Margie McCrae, Peter Corbett, Ross Hohnen and Laura Gabriel. Throughout April.

LES CURRIE PRESENTATIONS (358 5676) Colony, a programme of folk songs and sketches describing colonial Australia devised and performed by Colin Douglas and Tony Sutor for infants, primary and secondary; NSW country throughout April.

MARIAN STREET THEATRE (498 3166) Rum for your Money, a new Australian musical based on the book by David Nettheim and music by John Kingsman and John McKellar; directed by Alastair Duncan. Commences mid April.

MARIANETTE THEATRE OF AUSTRALIA (2 0588) Recording Hall, S.O.H. Captain Lazar and his Earthbound Circus written by Patrick Cook; directed by Richard Bradshaw; with music by Robyn Archer. Until April 19.

MUSIC HALL THEATRE RESTAURANT (909 8222) East Lynne by Mrs Henry Wood; directed by Alton Harvey; with Alton Harvey, Bernadette Houghsen, Mal Carmont and Christine Cameron. Throughout April.

MUSIC LOFT THEATRE (977 6585) Caught in the Act, a variety review produced by William Orr; with Queenie Paul, Darryl Stewart, Myke Parker and Peter McGowan. Throughout April.

NEW THEATRE (519 3403) Brown Pelican by George Sklar; directed by Kay Nicholls; with David Ives, Alan Docker, Peter Cowan, David Kerslake, Tim McKenzie, Judy Mahoney, Christine Logan and Carmel Muloin. Until April 19. New production commences end April.


Clouds by Michael Frayne; directed by Neil Armfield; with Jennifer Hagen, John McTernan and Paul Bertram. Commences April 23.


Seymour Centre: Ubu by Alfred Jarry; directed by Peter Brook and presented by the Centre for International Theatre Creations, Paris. April 8, 9, 10, 14 and 15. The Ik based on The Mountain People by Colin Turnbull; directed by Peter Brook and presented by the Centre for International Theatre Creations, Paris. April 11 and 12.

NSW THEATRE OF THE DEAF (357 1200) The "Shhh" Journey for primary schools and Actions Speak Louder Than Words for secondary schools; both directed by Ian Watson; with Nola Colefax, David London, Colin Allen, Bryan Jones and Rosemary Lenzo. Metropolitan area throughout April.

PLAYERS THEATRE COMPANY (30 7211) Children by A R Gurney Jnr; directed by Graham Correry; with Dinah Shearing, and Michael Long. Commences April 16.

Q THEATRE (047 21 5735) Absent Friends by Alan Ayckbourn; Pennith until April 12, Orange from April 15-19 and Bankstown from April 23-26. THE ROCKS PLAYERS (660 6254; 6203) 153 Glebe Point Road, Glebe A Midsummer Night's Dream by William Shakespeare; directed by Bill Pepper. Throughout April.

Toad of Toad Hall by A A Milne; directed by Julia Dunsmore. Commences April 5. RIVERINA TRUCKING COMPANY BOYS OWN McBeth by Grahame Bond and Jim Burnett. To April 12.


SHOPFRONT THEATRE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE (588 3948) Free drama workshops on weekend; includes playbuilding, mime, dance, puppetry, design, radio and video. Shopfront Caravan touring country towns, and schools with Childmyn and The Tale Play created by the cast and directed by Errol Bray.

Youth Theatre Showcase: Alas for Shakespeare devised and directed by Errol Bray and performed by Shopfront Caravan. April 11, 12, 18 and 19.

Gulliver's Travels based on Jonathan Swift and devised and performed by the Australian Theatre for Young People. April 25 and 26.

SIDESHOW THEATRE COMPANY Hippodrome Theatre, Goulburn Street Lulu original concept by Michael Matou based on Wedekind; directed by Michael Matou; with Fifi L'Amour, Kevin English, Bernadette Ludwig and Simon Reptile.

SPEAKEASY THEATRE RESTAURANT (662 7442) That's Showbiz produced and directed by Alan Lane with Garry Ginivan, Diane Murray, Peter Noble and Susan Jaye. Throughout April.

SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY (2 0588) Drama Theatre S.O.H. No Names...No Pack Drill by Bob Herbert; directed by George Ogilvie; with Mel Gibson and Noni Hazlehurst. Commences April 15.

Recording Hall, S.O.H. I'm Getting My Act Together and Taking It On The Road by Gretchen Cryer and Nancy Ford; directed by Richard Wherrett and Terence Clarke; with Nancye Hayes, Geraldine Turner, Judy Morris and George Spartels. Commences April 25.


Pyjama Tops by Maurby Green and Ed Feilbert; with John Inman. Commences April 22.

DANCE

THE AUSTRALIAN BALLET (2 0588) Opera Theatre, S.O.H.

Programme I - Symphony in C choreography George Balanchine. Music Georges Bizet; Scheherazade choreography David Lichine; music Johann Strauss II. Until April 12.

Programme II - Raymonda choreographed by Nureyev after Petipa, music by Glazunov. Commences April 15.

REGENT THEATRE (235 7988) Berlin Komische Oper Ballet Swan Lake by Tchaikovsky. April 5, 8, 9, 10, 12 & 14.

Jeux de Cartes, choreographed by John Cranko, music by Stravinsky; Youth Symphony choreographed by Tom Schilling, music by Mozart; Evening Dances choreographed by Tom Schilling.
music by Schubert and La Mer choreographed by Tom Schilling. music by Debussy. April 11 only.

For entries contact Carole Long on 357 1200/909 3010.

**FOR ENTRIES CONTACT CAROLE LONG ON 357 1200/909 3010.**

**QUEENSLAND THEATRE**

**ARTS THEATRE (36 2344)**

*The Sleeping Prince* by Terence Rattigan; director, Jason Savage; with Jan Thomson, Jennephe Debenham, Jack E Brown. To April 26.

**BRISBANE ACTORS' COMPANY** (221 9511)

at the Cement Box: *Vanities* by Jack Heifner; director, Bruce Parr; designer, David Clendinning; with Elizabeth Falconer, Jennifer Flowers, Kay Perry. To April 12.

**LA BOITE (36 1622)**

*Angel City* by Sam Shepard. April 11 - May 10.

**POPULAR THEATRE TROUPE (221 5900)**


Cape York: Michelle and Mike Jackson


**TN COMPANY (52 7622)**

*Alex or the Automatic Trial* by lan Watson; director, John Milson; with Geoff Cartwright and Sally McKenzie. To April 12.

Errol Flynn's *Great Big Adventure Book* for Boys by Rob George; director, John Milson; with Geoff Hiscock and Judith Anderson. April 17 - May 10.

**TOWOOOMBA ARTS THEATRE (30 1300)**

*Julius Caesar* by William Shakespeare; director, David Addenbrooke; with Murray Foy, Robert Ketton. Ken Imison. Townsville April 1-12; La Boite, May 13-17; New England University May 30 - June 3.

**TOWNSVILLE CIVIC THEATRE (72 2677)**

*Bees Hey* by Peter Iliffe Puppets. April 7-10.

**QUEENSLAND BALLET COMPANY (229 3355)**

*Push comes to Shove*, compiled by Robert Osmotherly. On tour in Central West with Qld Arts Council.

**QUEENSLAND OPERA COMPANY (221 3861)**

*The Marriage of Figaro* by Mozart. On tour, South East Qld with Qld Arts Council.

**HER MAJESTY'S (221 2777)**

Australian Opera: *Falstaff* and *La Traviata*. April 25-May 3.

**QUEENSLAND TELEVISION THEATRE (30 5177)**


**THE SPACE (51 0121)**

Sydney Theatre Company: *I'm Getting My Act Together And Taking It On The Road* by Cryer and Ford; director, Richard Wherrett; with Nancye Hayes and Geraldine Turner. To April 19.

Perth Festival Production: *That's The Way To Do It* written and performed by Chris Harris and John David. April 22 - May 3.

**STATE THEATRE COMPANY (51 5151)**


**THEATRE GUILD ACTING CO**

Old Town Hall Theatre: *War Poets*, an anthology. 10 am, April 22-30; 8pm April 29, 30, continuing into May.

**TROUPE (31 0764)**

At the Red Shed: *Coppin and Company* by Doreen Clarke and David Allen; director, David Allen. To April 5.

**CONCERTS**

**ADELAIDE TOWN HALL**


ABC Concerts: Adelaide Symphony Orchestra with guest conductor Ezra Racklin and guest soloist Andre La Plante. April 17, 18, 19, 22.

French Chamber Orchestra, La Grande Ecurie au Chambre et le Roi; conductor, Jean Claude Malgrois. Includes Bach's Coffee Cantata played in period costume. April 28.

For entries contact Edwin Relf on 223 8610.
Dwight Brown Theatre, Rosny College. April 9-12. Then touring to Launceston, Burnie and Devonport.

SALAMANCA (23 5259)
Touring schools in North and North West Tasmania including Flinders Island. *Minamata, Drink The Mercury For Upper Primary and Secondary; Man Friday and Our At Sea for Secondary. TASMANYA PUPPET THEATRE 923 (23 7996)

*Kullenner, the Last Tasmanian Tiger* by John Lonie (from MAGPIE); puppets by Axel Axelrad; director, Peter Wilson. For Infants and Primary.

The *Saga of Punch and Judy*, a contemporary version of the traditional bawdy Punch and Judy. For High Schools and Colleges; adapted version available for adults and pub shows. Saturday morning shows at Salamanca Market.

THEATRE ROYAL (34 6226)
Theatre Royal Light Opera Company. The *Black and White Minstrel Show*; director, Sonny Jose. April 11-26.

For entries contact the Editorial Office on (049) 67 4470.

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**VIC**

**THEATRE**

ALEXANDER THEATRE (543 2828)

ARENA THEATRE (24 9667)

Extensive community-access drama classes.

ARTS COUNCIL OF VICTORIA (529 4355)
*Flexitime* by Roger Hall; director, Don Mackay. Touring NSW (country) and Tasmania. To May 3.


Modern Mime Theatre, Michael Freeland. To May 9.

AUSTRALIAN PERFORMING GROUP (347 7133)

COMEDY CAFE
With Rod Quantock and co.

COMEDY THEATRE (663 4993)
*Spice Milligan and Friends*

CREATIVE ARTS THEATRE (870 6722)
*Who What When and Where?*, *Jingo Jumbo* and *It's Only A Bit Of Green Glass.*

Schools touring

FLYWING TRAPEZE CAFE (41 3727)
*Failing In Love Again* — songs from the show by Jan Gornal and Libby Drake. To April 5.

*Slipped Disco* with Alan Pentland and the Shirraz.

HOOPA THEATRE FOUNDATION (63 4888)
Playbox Downstairs: *Comedians* by Trevor Griffiths; director, Malcolm Robertson; designer, Sandra Matlock; with Bud Tingwell and Bill Zappa.

Playbox Upsairs: *Up In The Jeep* by David Allen; director, Murray Copland; designer, Jennie Tate; with Carillo Gantner.

HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE (663 3211)
*Son Of Betty* starring Reg Livermore; director, Peter Batey; with the Wellington Be制度 Band.

LAST LAUGH THEATRE RESTAURANT (419 6226)
*The Whittle Family With The Lot,* To April 5.

Bent Brass (USA) from April 11.

LA MAMA (350 4593)
*Banana Bender* by Barry Dickens (playwright in residence). To April 27.

MELBOURNE THEATRE COMPANY (654 4000)
Russell Street Theatre: *Big River* by Alex Buzo; director, John Sumner; with Sandy Gore; designer, Anne Fraser. To May 31.

Athenaeum Theatre: *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* by Tom Stoppard; director, Bruce Myles; designer, Peter McNae, April 17 - May 10.

McNae, April 17 - May 10.

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<th>HAYMAN THEATRE (350 7026)</th>
<th>Theatre-go round: <em>The Caucasian Chalk Circle</em> by Bertolt Brecht; director, Tony Nicholls.</th>
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<td>HOLE IN THE WALL (381 2403)</td>
<td><em>Joseph Conrad Goes Ashore</em> by David Allen; director, Edgar Matalie. To April 26.</td>
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<td>NATIONAL THEATRE COMPANY (352 3500)</td>
<td>Playhouse: <em>Travelling North</em> by David Williamson; director, Stephen Barry. To April 12.</td>
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DANCE

WA BALLET COMPANY

* Catherine's Wedding, Concerto Grosso, The Visitor, Spirals; artistic director, Garth Welch. North West Tour with WA Arts Council. 

CONCERTS

THE CONCERT HALL

ABC Concerts: WA Symphony Orchestra with University Choral Society; conductor, Georg Tintner. April 2.

WA Symphony Orchestra with Idil Biret (piano); conductor, David Measham. April 11.

WASO with Tamara Herman (recorder); conductor, Gerald Krug. April 12.


For entries contact Joan Ambrose on 299 6639.
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THESPIA'S PRIZE CROSSWORD NO. 22

Name...........................................
Address ........................................

1. The Arab in repose faces facts (7)
5. One on the way up around the member - a royal (7)
9. Scottish son, deity and I collaborate in handicraft (7)
10. Related to a soft, delicate note (7)
11. Resort for the board and superficial, we hear (7, 8)
12. Thin little lizard wanting in finish goes to state capital (8)
14. Talks on readings in French literature (8)
17. You follow the aim in the fruit with the swinging body (8)
18. Noted car used for herding cattle? (6)
24. "It's worse than being the ......." (Waiting For Godot) (7)
25. Deviously ensnare Ms Buttrose with this composition (7)
26. Softly uplifts and commends (7)
27. Drains the fear, without a grand exorcism sacrament initially (7)

Down
1. The Pharaoh who sends stuff in four directions (7)
2. Grant the Scot a musical instrument to listen to (9)
3. Get angry, for example, about a rodent (5)
4. He believes in the first (6)
5. Game in which a cleaner lords it over a little man (8)
6. Violator could in fact be a short, poor performer (9)
7. A link one might find on the beach (5)
8. Put one's clothes on again for satisfaction ... (7)
13. .... As neat Sue makes one sick (9)
15. Backpedalling and writing poetry again (9)
16. Drink up and lie in after a short hour in the outskirts (8)

The first correct entry drawn on April 25 will receive one year's free subscription to Theatre Australia.

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