

# total theatre magazine

Celebrating and Promoting Physical & Visual Performance Volume 12 Issue 4 Winter 2000/2001

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## **We Are The Champions**

2001 London International Mime Festival

## **Out Of The Ghetto**

visions2000 Festival of International  
Animated Theatre

## **East is East**

Ratan Thiyam's Chorus Repertory Theatre

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# total theatre <sup>magazine</sup>

Celebrating and Promoting Physical & Visual Performance

VOLUME 12 ♦ ISSUE 4 ♦ WINTER 2000/2001

In October 1995 when I started working for what was then called Mime Action Group, I had no idea that I would last to edit over twenty issues of this magazine. Now, over five years later, it is with a mixture of sadness and excitement that I write my final editorial. Sadness, because I have enjoyed putting together the only publication that represents the field of physical and visual performance; and excitement, because I'm about to take the extended holiday that I've been promising myself for years.

During my years with the magazine I have seen some considerable changes in the sector. With companies like The Right Size, Theatre de Complicite, Improbable Theatre and Frantic Assembly crossing over into the mainstream, it can safely be said that the theatre industry as a whole has realised that there is more to theatre than text. Looking back over the issues I've edited, it's pleasing to see that a publication with such a small circulation has secured interviews with such internationally renowned theatre-makers as Eugenio Barba and Augusto Boal, and with home-grown talent ranging from Steven Berkoff and Ken Campbell at one end of the scale, to Franko B and Divine David at the other. It has been a pleasure for me to see so much great theatre during this time (in excess of four hundred shows would be a conservative estimate) - from puppetry to performance art, Butoh to Bharatnatyam, circus to contemporary dance, and many things in between. This issue, I hope, continues to reflect the diversity of work that comes under Total Theatre Magazine's broad umbrella.

I'd like to close by thanking all those who have assisted with the production of the magazine over the years. In particular, to all who have served as Editorial Group members and to everyone who has contributed to the issues I have edited. It is their commitment that makes the publication of this magazine possible. I'm hesitant to say good bye as I'm sure that I will continue to work within the sector in the future. But for those of you who know me personally, and also those that don't, please come and say farewell on Saturday January 20th at the Voice Box in the Royal Festival Hall after Total Theatre Network's AGM and the Critical Practice Debate that follows (see page 23).

**John Daniel, Editor**

Total Theatre Magazine is published quarterly by Total Theatre Network, the UK network for physical and visual performance. If you would like to submit news, views, letters or advertise in the Spring issue, please note that the copy deadline is March 7th 2001. The next issue will cover the period April-July 2001.



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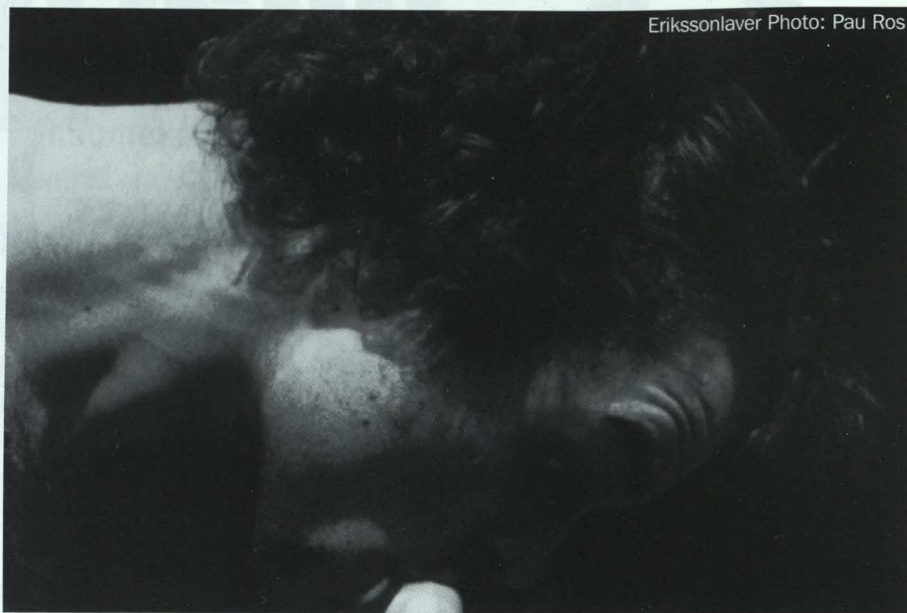
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# We Are The Champions

Erikssonlaver Photo: Pau Ros



For the past 25 years the London International Mime Festival has been championing the work of mime and physical theatre companies from across the globe.

**ANNE-LOUISE RENTELL** gives the lowdown on what to expect this year



It's that time of year again. From January 13th-28th the London International Mime Festival (LIMF) presents the very best international visual and physical theatre in various venues across the capital. An eclectic mix of performance from internationally renowned companies such as Theatre du Mouvement, Fiat Lux and Derevo, to homegrown talent such as shunt and Spymonkey, the festival encompasses a wide range of work. There is puppetry and animation, circus, clown theatre, live art, a cross-section of any two or more of these forms, and there is text.

LIMF opens with the Russian company BlackSkyWhite's Bertrand's Toys at the Purcell Room (13th-17th January). Just one of several winners of a Total Theatre Award 2000 to be part of the festival, BlackSkyWhite provide a serious and surprising beginning to a fortnight of work which aims to challenge its audience's appreciation of physical and visual performance.

Animated theatre is well represented in the festival, with performances from the American puppeteer Basil Twist and the UK's own Stephen Mottram's Animata (both at the ICA),

and by Maybellene-The Living Fashion Doll at Hoxton Hall. According to Helen Lannaghan, co-artistic director of LIMF, Basil Twist is 'an extraordinary New Yorker'. He is also a third generation puppeteer who has created an entire show of abstract images and animated objects in a giant tank of water to Berlioz's Symphonie Fantastique (16th-21st January, ICA). 'It's like an animated film,' says Joseph Seelig, the festival's founder, 'or like watching a Kandinsky painting.' Basil Twist originally performed the show as a three-week run in New York in 1998. It was so successful it was

extended for a year and a half.

Maybellene - The Living Fashion Doll wowed Edinburgh audiences last summer. Only eighteen inches high, she brings The Road to Shangri-La to Hoxton Hall as part of the festival (20th-21st January). This is fifteen minutes of colour and sparkle which will, Joseph maintains, 'make you cry' and then, Helen adds, 'make you cheer'. Maybellene is programmed at Hoxton Hall at half-hour intervals to create a double bill with John Paul Zaccarini's circus theatre piece Throat, round the corner at Circus Space. Animation also finds its way into Zaccarini's show, when a lump of dough is kneaded and stretched into both vulnerable and violent representations of the human form. Similarly, dismembered body parts irreverently cavort within an open coffin in Spymonkey's Stiff - Undertaking Undertaking.

It is excellent to see two new, young and exciting British companies being championed in the programme. Also recipients of Total Theatre Awards in 2000, Spymonkey and shunt enjoyed huge success in Edinburgh. Now Spymonkey have the opportunity to perform for five nights at the Purcell Room (24th-28th January). 'We can bring Spymonkey to a whole new audience which they haven't had before,' enthuses Helen, 'and at this stage they probably couldn't get into the South Bank Centre off their own bat.'

Some members of shunt first performed as part of LIMF in 1997 in a previous incarnation as ta ta di di teatro. Now back with The Ballad of Bobby François, Helen is keen to encourage and support their work because, as she says, 'they've developed in such a major way and what they do is so brave'. Joseph calls them 'young British eccentrics'. 'It's nice working with people with their sort of ambition,' he says. 'They're quite uncompromising and they really do take risks. There is something about them that is almost delightfully old-fashioned, like something out of the 60s.'

Whilst employing the obvious theatre spaces at the South Bank Centre, BAC, the ICA and Hoxton Hall, the festival is also investigating more diverse performance spaces. shunt will be performing the Ballad of Bobby François at The Drome, a club beneath London Bridge Station (21st-28th January). Their permanent home is a railway arch in Bethnal Green, so they're not strangers to experimenting with different sites and actually went out and found the venue themselves. For Helen and Joseph it's a bonus for the festival because it's taking performance out of traditional theatre spaces and putting it into venues which young people frequent and in so doing, they hope, reaching a broader and perhaps new audience.

The Spanish avant garde performer La Ribot is back with the third part of her project Still Distinguished, which also utilises an unusual venue for the festival. La Ribot has

also thrown out the concept of a conventional theatre to experiment with an open space, namely the South London Gallery (15th-21st January), where there are no seats and the audience move with her performance.

The Russian company Derevo return for their third year as part of LIMF with The Rider, which can be seen at the Queen Elizabeth Hall (19th-21st January). Created midway between The Red Zone and Once, The Rider falls somewhere between the two stylistically. This is strong clown theatre which claims your attention with its ability to shift between the poetic and the epic.

Intrinsic to the festival programming are retrospectives of Tadeusz Kantor's work to accompany Ariel Teatr's A Little Requiem for Kantor (23rd-25th January, ICA) and Jacques Lecoq's work at his Paris theatre school. Film adaptations by Duncan Ward of three of Kantor's most significant theatre works will be shown alongside two documentaries about the director at BAC (26th-28th January). 'I think Kantor is one of the first experiences people had in this country of theatre from Eastern Europe,' explains Joseph. 'His was a very influential company. Lots of the work you see on stage is mesmeric but there is a lot of repetitiveness which doesn't work on film, so the Ward films are heavily adapted and edited. It is important for this work to be shown because there is a whole generation of people in visual and physical theatre now who never saw the original work.' Also showing at the Cine Lumiere at the French Institute are two forty-five minute documentary films by Jean Noel Roy of Lecoq at work with his students (13th January).

For those who ask the same question every year, there is mime in this year's festival. Theatre de l'Ange Fou come from the Decroux school of corporeal mime and have taken a text by French writer Jean Tardieu as their starting point for Entangled Lives, playing at Hoxton Hall (26th-28th January). Theatre du Mouvement, now in its 25th year, has been a major influence in the development of contemporary mime and visual theatre company. The company's latest show, Le Chant Perdu des Petits Riens, comes to the Purcell Room for two nights (22nd-23rd January). The French company Fiat Lux perform their wordless show Nouvelles Folies at the Purcell Room (19th-21st January), and Hayley Carmichael and other members of Told By An Idiot present a selection of wordless works-in-progress at BAC (23rd-25th January).

For those short of cash, there are various free events. You can catch the Belgian duo Danny and David Ronaldo in the foyer of the Queen Elizabeth Hall (19th-21st January). Members of a Belgian family that has been involved in circus and theatre for six generations, David and Danny present old and new circus routines for all the family. Also on the



shunt, The Ballad of Bobby François



Spymonkey, Stiff - Undertaking Undertaking

South Bank, this time in the foyer of the Royal National Theatre, Manchester-based Whalley Range All Stars present its latest and most ambitious project, Head Quarters, to audiences of ten people at a time throughout the afternoon on both Saturdays in the festival (13th & 20th January). For circus lovers, the Circus Space Cabaret returns again as part of this year's festival with a programme that includes John Paul Zaccarini and the ping-pong ball popping Erikssonlaver, all performed under the watchful eye of compere Flick Ferdinando (27th-28th January).

In addition to these performances and film screenings, mime enthusiasts also have the opportunity to attend Total Theatre Network's 10th Critical Practice Debate, which this time considers the role of the director in physical and visual performance (Voice Box, Royal Festival Hall, 20th January, 3pm). The panel of speakers will include Didier Guyon (Fiat Lux), Anton Adassinski (Derevo) and Cal McCrystal (Spymonkey). Angela De Castro also runs her How To Be A Stupid Workshop as part of the festival. This two-day introduction to clowning takes place at her Why Not Institute at the Arts Educational School (20th-21st January).

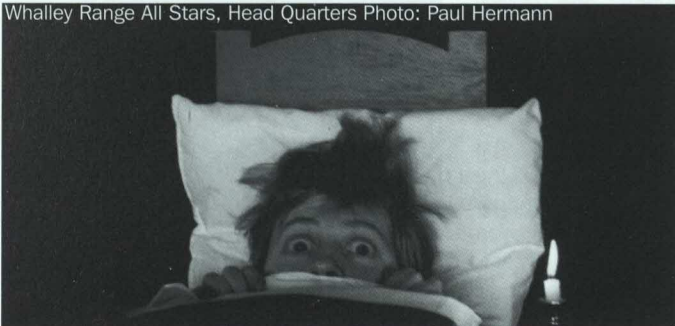
Conjuring up the image of a white-faced Marcel Marceau in striped shirt, 'mime' has connotations which have worked against the festival's own use of the word since its inception 25 years ago. LIMF has always aimed to promote a form of theatre that doesn't need the baggage of language but doesn't completely disregard it. In this sense, mime as it is commonly understood - that is Marceau's mime with his creation of illusions with no props, music, text, or anything - is the purest definition of this form. It is not, however, the only definition, despite constant challenges from the festival's detractors. As Joseph explains: 'Marceau invented a particular style of non verbal performance, he became incredibly famous with it and it then became recognised as representative of the art form. So when people think of mime, they think of him - but it's more than him, he is just one style.'

It's a battle they fight every year to convince the public that mime is more than Marcel Marceau, but it's also one that the London International Mime Festival continues to win due to sheer determination and good programming. It is important to note that the festival's average audience percentage is 82 per cent. Helen explains: 'We take it on the chin every year but that's OK because we know ultimately that we're right and that there is a reason for why we're here and that reason is good work which we know is beyond all the jokes and jibes. We just champion the work and we've stuck with the name in the face of everyone questioning it.'

You know the saying, if it ain't broke don't fix it, and 25 years and 23 festivals later, they have to be getting something right. Pick up a programme and book your tickets now. ■

To book tickets for performances in the London International Mime Festival, call the following box office numbers: Queen Elizabeth Hall/Purcell Room 020 7960 4242; ICA 020 7930 3647; BAC 020 7223 2223; The Drome 0870 906 3711 (First Call); Hoxton Hall 020 7739 5431; Croydon Clocktower 020 8253 1030; Circus Space 020 7613 4141; Cine Lumiere 020 7838 2144/46; South London Gallery 0870 906 3722 (First Call); Total Theatre Network 020 7729 7944; Why Not Institute 020 8987 6661.

Whalley Range All Stars, Head Quarters Photo: Paul Hermann



## MY THEATRE

### Steven Wasson & Corinne Soum Theatre de l'Ange Fou



Photo: Roberto Aguilar

**What did you see the first time you went to the theatre?**

- (CS) At four years old I saw the marionette theatre at Parc Montsouris in Paris.  
(SW) A production of Major Barbara.

**What recent performance has particularly inspired you?**

- (CS) The Government Inspector directed by Steven Wasson in Bologna.  
(SW) My own work with my company.

**What productions will you never forget?**

- (Both) Wielepole, Wielepole by Tadeusz Kantor.

**Which performer, alive or dead, makes you laugh the most?**

- (CS) Peter Sellers. (SW) The Marx Brothers.

**Who is your favourite playwright?**

- (CS) Jean Tardieu. (SW) The poet Francis Brabazon.

**When was the last time you cried during a performance?**

- (CS) Seeing Baryshnikov dance at Sadler's Wells.  
(SW) I never have.

**Who is your favourite performer?**

- (CS) Steven Wasson. (SW) Corinne Soum.

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

- (CS) Louis Jouvet. (SW) Orson Welles.

**Which contemporary theatre director's work do you most admire?**

- (Both) Etienne Decroux.

**What does the term 'physical theatre' mean to you?**

- (CS) Simply the ability to be expressive with the body.  
(SW) All theatre is physical, just some a bit more so.

**What would you do if you didn't work in theatre?**

- (CS) Write. (SW) Live in India.

**If you could send one message to Chris Smith, what would it be?**

- (CS) I'd ask him if he's ever heard of the work of Etienne Decroux.  
(SW) Create a theatre expressly for mime.

**What would you do with the Dome?**

- (CS) Transform it into a humanitarian centre for refugees and the homeless.  
(SW) Turn it into an efficient hospital.

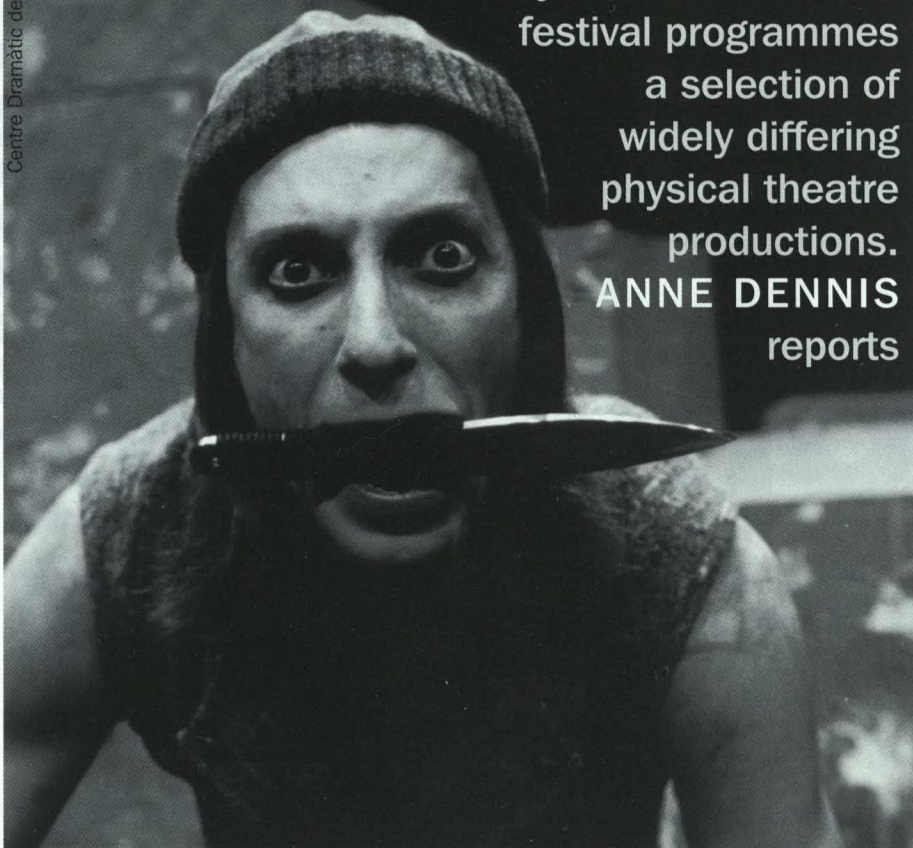
Theatre de l'Ange Fou perform *Entangled Lives* at Hoxton Hall from Friday 26th to Sunday 28th January at 8pm, as part of the London International Mime Festival (box office: 020 7739 5431). Contact the company by e-mail: [company@angefou.co.uk](mailto:company@angefou.co.uk), or visit [www.angefou.co.uk](http://www.angefou.co.uk).

# Choreography of Violence

For the past three years the Catalan town of Reus has hosted the COS International Festival of Mime and Gestural Theatre. For ten days in November the festival programmes a selection of widely differing physical theatre productions.

**ANNE DENNIS**  
reports

Centre Dramàtic del Vallès, El Baró i La Leprosia



The site of the up-and-coming COS International Festival of Mime and Gestural Theatre (Festival de Mim i Teatre Gestual de Reus) is Reus, Spain; a fashionable, yet unhurried, Catalan town that boasts a long history of cultural activity, supported by its agricultural and trading wealth. It is a superb site for a theatre festival. Recently, two glorious fin de siècle theatres have been renovated and the entire town centre has been turned into a pedestrian-only area of cafés, shops and plazas - all enhancing the town's modernist architecture.

The Reus public enthusiastically receive the festival, which is now in its third year. Because of its manageable size, real commu-

nication is possible between participating companies (both international and Catalan) and the town's various spaces and cultural facilities - its schools, museums and theatres; and between students of physical theatre from Barcelona's Institut del Teatre and local street artists, etc..

The festival is thematic. The theme of this year's festival was Stage Combat. Lluís Graells, COS 2000's artistic director, explained that the objective was to 'demonstrate and explore the art of the choreography of violence'. Along with the theatre performances there were lecture-demonstrations by fight directors from Paris and London, and demonstrations in the street of theatrical fencing, Butoh and Capoeira. A

short course for the 'Gestus' students at the Institut del Teatre in Barcelona was given by British fight director Richard Ryan. (This group of students was at the festival reworking their masked version of Gelderode's *The Blind*, in collaboration with the Reus musical ensemble Simfin.) The city's museum presented an exhibition of photos, costumes, theatrical weapons, props, etc., entitled 'Fight and Theatre'. Most of the productions addressed the theme in some way.

The festival opened with Swiss company Mummenshanz performing *Next* and closed with Yllana's new *Rock and Clown*. There was a balance of companies - big and small, established and emerging, young and old. Certain companies, whose work directly complimented the theme, seemed to point the way forward. I think specifically of Derevo's *Once*, Baubo Teatre Moviment's *Combatimento*, Centre Dramàtic del Vallès' *El Baró i La Leprosia* (*The Baron and the Leper*) and a clown version of Genet's *The Maids* by Reus's own *Natural Clown Killers*. Avner *The Eccentric* (USA) was there, cropping up everywhere: like Chaplin, one just never wants him to stop.

Catalonia has a well-known tradition of physical theatre, with companies like *Commediants*, *La Fura dels Baus* and *Tricycle* (to name a few). There is now a new generation of actors appearing on the physical theatre scene, many coming out of the 'Gestus' department of the Institut del Teatre. They are very distinctive, highly-skilled and are experimenting with a vast range of performance possibilities. It is impossible to categorise their work: Clown? Dance Theatre? Pantomime? Street Art? One can only say that they are very open to dramatic risk.

In the future, I should like to see the use of the festival's theme expanded; leading to further discussion and comment around what has been seen, represented and understood within the structure of the event. For example, this year the subject of human conflict in dramatic context could have been examined with more depth.

The next COS Festival will take place in Reus in November 2001. The main focus of the festival is All Saints Day (November 1st), when the streets are given up to popular Catalan theatre: dragons, devils and fireworks. The theme of the 2001 festival will be Pantomime. When I tried to push Lluís Graells for a hint of what he has up his sleeve, he answered, 'That is for the actors to discuss and define'. When I suggested that surely this was a question of history, culture and language, he smiled wryly. I think he is inviting a polemic! ■

For further information on COS 2001 contact Lluís Graells, Artistic Director, IMAC, Carrer de San Joan 27, 43201 Reus, Catalonia, Spain. e-mail: imac@reus.net.



Lennie & Morris

Leikin Loppu

# It's Not Unusual

Camden People's Theatre (CPT) has provided a launch pad for many emerging physical theatre companies through its Sprint Festival of Physical, Visual and Unusual Theatre. LYNNE KENDRICK, the associate director of CPT, outlines the venue's programming policy

Unless you're one of the lucky few to be honoured with a LAB award on your first application, or are filthy rich, finding venues for your work in London can be an expensive commitment. Apart from the very well regarded BFVT at BAC, there are not that many opportunities for up and coming physical theatre companies and solo performers to showcase their work.

In the hope of press coverage, an arts board assessment, and an audience of Time Out readers, physical theatre companies often break the bank by hiring an expensive London venue. Even a sell-out run rarely balances the books; theatre does not make a profit and - as Tom Morris stated at CPT in March last year - in business terms it is an 'utter nonsense'. So how can burgeoning young physical com-

panies make their mark, without resources or rich and generous friends?

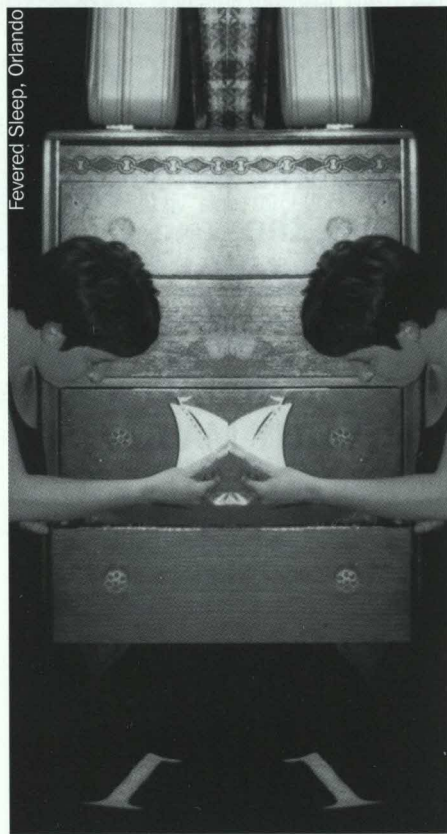
CPT's Sprint Festival of Physical, Visual and Unusual Theatre was created to provide this perceived need for a vital and affordable showcase opportunity. Sprint aims to bridge the gap between the rehearsal room and the professional tour (or, more often, the expense of the tour booker). Companies are programmed for two to three nights and are offered a box office split. CPT provides all marketing and press, training workshops and discussions, and invitations to the great and the good. For emerging companies, this can make a great difference. David Harradine of *Fevered Sleep* found that the profile his company managed to raise through CPT certainly benefited their subsequent practice. Tom Morris from

BAC saw *Fevered Sleep* at the first Sprint Festival in early 97, beginning a fruitful relationship that continues to this day.

Venues, by and large, rarely book companies with no track record, and taking a risk on a completely unknown group on the basis of a good application and interesting ideas is a policy that CPT likes to encourage. Before larger venues and programmers will even look at an invite from a new group, they need important references - the most vital of which, of course, is the press quote. CPT invited Zirk Theatre's *Carpet II* from Brussels to Sprint 2000 on the strength of their application alone. Describing herself as an extraordinary one-woman band, Zirk Theatre's Rachel Ponsonby performed one of the most bizarrely wonderful pieces of musical theatre that CPT



## Venues rarely book companies with no track record, and taking a risk on a completely unknown group is a policy that CPT likes to encourage



Fevered Sleep, Orlando

directors have seen. Incorporating a stunt in which Ponsonby plays on two flutes that are stuck up her nose and a bellow organ beneath her arm pit, reviewing the show for *Total Theatre Magazine*, Danny Schlesinger found it to be 'a skilfully ridiculous and ridiculously skilful piece of timeless musical clowning'. For CPT, it proved to be a risk worth taking.

As Sprint grows in reputation, so does the participating companies' access to that much needed press quote. The Lennie and Morris Show, directed by Angela de Castro and programmed in Sprint 2000, is an explosive mix of wit, anarchic Music Hall turns and comic improvisation (not to mention gum-frightening suspension by dental floss). Hettie Judah in *The Times* reported that the show was 'well observed and inexplicably hilarious'. Both Chris

Cresswell and Ruth Laser of Lennie and Morris are well known on the physical theatre circuit, yet to break into bigger, more mainstream venues, favourable comments from the national press are invaluable. Chris and Ruth found performing in Sprint to be enjoyable and note in particular the venue's 'friendly atmosphere'. They also point out CPT's good location, within a minute's walk of Warren Street station. They proved the latter by showcasing The Lennie and Morris Show again at CPT this autumn to an invited audience of venue managers, programmers and producers.

Gaining press interest is in itself an art for a festival like Sprint. Jane Edwardes, the Theatre Editor of *Time Out*, took part in one of the Sprint 2000 discussions on how to support young, unfunded theatre companies. She pointed out that, unless a production runs for at least three weeks, there is no point in *Time Out* publishing a review. Programming work so that it can still attract the attention of the all-important reviewer, is undertaken by Olivia Jacobs, artistic director of CPT. At Sprint 2000, we programmed a press night which included a selection of work from the festival, including some pieces that could be seen in the last weeks. In this way, a company such as Wireframe could perform their piece on press night and still be seen by audiences three weeks later. It's not ideal - as it means companies have to endure the torture of two get-ins - but, whilst it's not the be all and end all, there's no denying that a great review can help. Last year this programming tactic provided Wireframe with a wonderful *Time Out* review to add to their publicity.

Sprint is billed as a festival of 'physical, visual and unusual' theatre, so what about the 'unusual'? Wireframe is a good case in point, in particular the company's unique work *At Home*, an interactive environment of lights, sound and live animation staged for an audience of one. Because of its uniqueness, Wireframe need venues that understand the specific requirements of their work. Linda Lewis, the director of the 'visions' Festival of International Animated Theatre, saw Wireframe at Sprint and subsequently booked it for the following 'visions' Festival in Brighton.

For physical and visual theatre practitioners, participation should not end at performing as part of a festival. As a part of Sprint, CPT organises workshops with practitioners, which not only provide training but also an important meeting point and networking opportunity for companies. Previous workshop leaders have included Annabel Arden (*Theatre de Complicite*), David Sant (*Peepolykus*), David Glass, Polly Teale (*Shared Experience*) and Guy Masterson. The benefit of meeting points, whether workshops or discussions, are always difficult to quantify but do provide that vital link between the individual artist and the wider profession. Jason Hird of Leeds-based

dance theatre company Leikin Loppu comments: 'I quite enjoy all this indirect networking. Maybe nothing concrete ever happens, but little thoughts and ideas, suggestions, and bits of advice are always good to have - even if they only confirm a struggle or an aspiration that is current or forming.'

Leikin Loppu was the first emerging company to perform at CPT's Sprint Festival when it started four years ago. As a touring dance theatre company, they'd ventured onto the dance circuit, performing at The Place and Jackson's Lane. Sprint provided that link into the physical theatre world where dance theatre often finds a home. 'Sprint was really great for us,' explains Hird. 'It was good for us to perform in London. We had done stuff in dance platforms at Jackson's Lane, but it was useful to see what was happening in the ever-so-slightly-different world of theatre.'

So, whether taking part in a physical theatre festival results in rave reviews and tour bookings or brings a company into contact with other artists and ideas, the benefits are many. My advice to new and emerging physical theatre companies is: don't produce your work on your own. Working and performing work in a vacuum, and at a venue that does not primarily promote physical theatre, can be a limiting, isolating experience. Attaching yourself to a festival is in itself a statement of the calibre of your work. For the cost of a stamp, it's worth posting information about your company on spec.. You never know what opportunities may be brewing in the venue director's mind.

Producing physical, visual, unusual but economical (or skint) theatre, is possible. David Harradine again: 'Don't worry about money, think laterally. If you can't afford to hire a venue, perform in a shed; if you can't afford to pay a cast of five, make a show with a cast of one. The restrictions we all moan about can be creatively generative if you approach them in the right way.' If money is tight, Chris Cresswell advocates expenditure on those important elements that will assist in the future development of the profile of your work: 'Spend money on a director, publicity and a tour booker.'

But perhaps the most important advice is to not let those first few years of hard work and rejection letters stop your work. As Jason Hird advises: 'Always keep at it ... (until the asylum calls)'. ■

*The next Sprint Festival takes place between March 1st and April 1st 2001 and includes performances by Unlimited Theatre, Jonathan Kay, Labyrinth Theatre and Clownagogo (amongst others). Contact CPT at 58-60 Hampstead Road, London NW1 2PY. Tel.: 020 7419 4841. e-mail: cpt@dircon.co.uk. www.cpt.dircon.co.uk.*

# OUT OF THE GHETTO



Green Ginger, Bambi - The Wilderness Years

'Anything can be a puppet,' said Douglas O'Connell, speaking at the Total Theatre Network Critical Practice Debate on puppetry and animated theatre. And going by the 'visions2000' Festival of International Animated Theatre, the objects or body parts that the artful animator can transform are limitless: plasticine models, faceless dolls, mechanical automatons, even a belly button.

Most theatre anthropologists consider object animation to be amongst the earliest means of artistic expression. Participants at the debate mentioned the role of the totemic object, mask or puppet in humanity's earliest rituals, and yet puppetry and object manipulation are still at the heart of the creative impulse in the 21st century. From mud pies to finger rhymes, from peek-a-boo behind the curtains to Action Man and Barbie - our childhoods are defined by our animation of the environment we find ourselves in. The theatre maker shares with the child this desire to make sense of the world - to use whatever is available to represent and transform, to act and re-act.

The 'visions2000' Festival of International Animated Theatre, held throughout October at various venues in Brighton and nationwide, was an opportunity to see how the animators of today are developing the art form. There was something for everyone - from Theatre-Rites'

Sleep Tight (aimed at the under-fives), to a strictly adults-only cabaret from Moving Hands, featuring Music Hall artiste Miss Ida Barr playing Auntie to a rather naughty puppet who bares her breasts and rolls a spliff when Auntie nips off to the bar for a gin. This show is a good example of something that is both old and new - the company are taking puppetry to new audiences in comedy clubs, but the notion of the naughty doll with a mind of its own is a trick discovered early by every young child, and exploited extensively by ventriloquists.

That puppets can be more human than humans themselves is a notion dear to French company Flash Marionettes. 'When a man and a marionette face each other on a tightrope wire, the public dread the fall of the creature made of wood and foam more than that of the man,' read the programme notes for their show Flash Circus. Perhaps more to the point, we can allow ourselves emotions expressed through the medium of a marionette that we would otherwise keep hidden - hence the success of the use of puppetry by psychologists and therapists when dealing with survivors of trauma and abuse.

A rather different form of animated theatre was brought to the festival by Indefinite Articles. Dust is a collaboration between Steve Tiplady and Spanish artist/director Joan Baixes. There is

**Total Theatre Network's 9th Critical Practice Debate took place this October during the 'visions2000' International Festival of Animated Theatre. DOROTHY MAX PRIOR reports**

not a puppet in sight, but plenty of objects to be animated. Another interesting piece was At Home by Wireframe - an animated environment for an audience of one. The company prove that virtual reality is about far more than a computer screen. With calico, plasticine, simple lighting and an ambient soundtrack, the unseen artists create a sealed-off alternative world that allows the participant fifteen minutes to work, rest or play. Everyone that I have spoken to said it was the best fifteen minutes they've spent in a theatre for a long time. And, of course, with an audience capacity of one you achieve a sell-out at every performance.

Total Theatre Network's Critical Practice 9, held as part of 'visions2000', was an opportunity for practitioners to look at the ways in which puppetry and animated theatre are pushing the boundaries into new ways of working. For, according to Mervyn Millar of Wireframe, puppetry needs to 'get out of the ghetto' to survive. We looked at ways in which challenges were made to audiences' expectations of the form. festival director Linda Lewis pointed out that puppetry in this country is too often seen as being just for children rather than of universal appeal and that there is still a lot of work to be done to bring the form to new audiences.

Achieving a balance between respect for the tradition and reaching for the new was a



Theatre Insomnia, The Golden Bridge

theme that emerged soon in the discussion. There was an awareness that what goes round comes round - animated theatre is one of the oldest forms and has never existed in isolation from other arts disciplines. From the earliest days, the integration of different modes of expression in what we now refer to as multi-discipline art practice has been a key element of theatre: mask, mime, poetry and puppetry have sat side by side throughout history. Sometimes one element gets put aside for a while, to re-emerge as a 'new collaboration' in another era. In my introduction to the session, I spoke of the work of early 20th century visual artists who had integrated puppets or automata into their work - such as Alfred Jarry's Ubu Roi and Marinetti's Pouppee Electriques. Within dance and theatre performance, the Russian director Meyerhold slotted vigorously trained performers into a jamboree of constructions to create an automated environment, and the director of Bauhaus Stage, Oscar Schlemmer, explored the object qualities of performers, coming at one point in his career close to Gordon-Craig's belief that actors were a hindrance to theatre and could be replaced by 'Uber-Marionettes'.

The freedom for the theatre maker in using objects rather than performers was something commented on by a number of practitioners. The idea that anything can be represented - that there are no limits to the imagination for the visualiser - was seen as the reason why many people chose puppetry or animation as their medium. To those of us who struggle with the material world, the counter argument is that there is no reason why the physical body cannot express any idea - it ultimately comes down to finding a means of expression that suits the artist (there being no superiority or inferiority in any means of expression).

Outside of the realms of stage theatre and into the wider world, Douglas O'Connell spoke of the value of using objects in community projects as a way to help kids grapple with the challenges of discovering and celebrating their personal identity, feeling that they help them to feel less self-conscious. An American with an impressive track record with Steppenwolf and Emergency Exit Arts, Douglas is now working in Brighton with GLAM (Gay and Lesbian



Flash Marionettes, Photo: Renaud Berthoud

## **We can allow ourselves emotions expressed through the medium of a marionette that we would otherwise keep hidden**

Arts and Media) developing projects that integrate visual theatre within a community arts setting. He spoke of the influence of companies such as Bread and Puppet Theatre and showed a video of his Gallery 37 project for the Greenwich and Docklands Festival. Douglas expressed his preference for working without spoken text.

There was heated discussion, as always in any debate on visual or physical forms of theatre, on the place of the word. As a writer, Sean Prendegard felt that there were some occasions when words were the only way that something could be expressed. This was hotly disputed by many of those present, who felt that there wasn't anything that couldn't be

expressed in visual imagery. On the subject of poetry, Terry Lee from Green Ginger said that there wasn't a lot of room for poetry in his work - which he refers to as 'micro theatre' rather than puppetry. Green Ginger are a company that cut their teeth in street performance. MTV-style fast edits and short sharp shocks are the stuff of this theatre, which aims to sacrifice a few sacred cows along the way. Green Ginger, although a highly visual company, do rely heavily on spoken text as an integral part of the narrative of their latest work, Bambi - The Wilderness Years.

Sean Myatt and Felicia Negomireanu from Theatre Insomnia use dialogue and storytelling in their latest work, The Golden Bridge, which aims to preserve rather than uproot the traditions by using stillness and the gentle magic of the fairy tale to tell universal truths. 'We are no longer a culture that understands symbols,' Myatt said - which I interpreted to mean that though surrounded by symbols we have reached a cultural overload where we have lost the shared language of universal symbolism. Is this really so, or are the archetypes and images of the contemporary world fragmented but still understood? Are we, like the occupants of Plato's Cave, deluding ourselves that shadows are reality? Or did Plato get it wrong - perhaps there is nothing more real than the shadow itself. The notion of a shared language emerged from the discussion as crucial to visual forms of theatre; artists can come from many different starting points but collaboration relies upon a common understanding - a belief perhaps that reality is not a solid mass of fixed forms but a fluid flow of veiled illusions. ■

*Critical Practice 9 has been recorded by the Arts Council of England archives and can be heard as a webcast on [www.artsonline.com](http://www.artsonline.com) until the end of February 2001.*



# CARRY ON CAMPING

A most unusual Year of the Artist residency took place last summer, when a pretend family of four spent a week in a caravan park in Hampshire. **RICHARD CUMING** reports

From 23rd-30th July 2000, our family, the Outing family - my husband Reggie, myself (Daphne), and our two grown-up daughters, Tracey and Marilyn, plus Marilyn's 6 week-old baby, Sky - went on holiday. We spent a lovely week in our two-door, four-berth caravan at the idyllic Hill Farm Caravan Park near Romsey, Hampshire.

What distinguished our family from the other holidaymakers was that this was a Year of the Artist residency by our performance company fishproductions. We (Sally Mann, John Lee, Jane Watson and myself) enjoy exploring the nature of performance. We are

committed to performing in unusual spaces and exploring the ways in which audiences connect with us in those spaces.

The Family Outing Caravan project came about in June 1999 when fishproductions was asked to create a comic performance for an outdoor classical concert at the Barnstaple Festival. We decided to improvise scenarios around the idea of an actual family attending the concert. We would gradually reveal ourselves as performers, whilst initially being seen as audience members. This allowed us to playfully transgress the boundaries of how families are expected to behave in public spaces. To highlight this I

took the role of the mother, Daphne. We became the fools at the carnival - both part of the audience and outside of it.

June 2000 until May 2001 has been designated the Year of the Artist, funded by The National Lottery through the Arts Council of England. Across the country, one thousand artists have been selected for one thousand residencies to take place throughout the twelve month period. Each of the Regional Arts Boards have made their own project selections. We jumped at the opportunity to apply to Southern Arts for a residency. We wanted to place the Outing family in an environment over which we had more

control, and to develop the relationships between the family and our audience in greater depth, whilst still improvising around a structure.

We decided to go on a caravan holiday for a week on a real campsite, remaining in character all the time. Audiences could visit at any time of day or night, providing the event with an element of chance. The residency was influenced by the rising popularity of TV docu-soaps, in which so-called ordinary people allow their lives to be filmed for public consumption. To render our make-believe real-life family accessible at all time, we developed a website with webcam broadcasts, a chatroom and e-mail facility. Audiences could log on to check our progress, to read our diaries, to see us live on the Internet. They could influence the performance by e-mailing us ideas.

There have been numerous examples of performers and actors who have stayed in role for long periods of time, as well as characters enclosed in a particular space. For example, at LIFT 1999, four actors lived in the window of Arding and Hobbs department store at Clapham Junction (Urban Dream Capsule). Again at LIFT, this time in 1985, the Spanish actor Alberto Vidal lived in a cage at London Zoo as 'Urban Man'. Historically, the actors in *Commedia dell'Arte* - clowns and fools - played the same character for their whole career. Contemporary actors in soaps sometimes play the same character for many years and, apparently, some film actors are so into their role that they may only be addressed as that character on set.

Our project was not about creating characters, nor were we conflicting with our environment. We were stressing the ambiguity of the real/fake holidaymakers. No one would see the whole performance, and anyone watching would only see a part of an ongoing process. The chance element meant that we might be out shopping, asleep, or watching TV. On the other hand, we might be observed whilst in the middle of a family argument. This set-up posed some interesting questions. How much would we have to play to an audience? Would we have to go into performance mode? At what point do we become the performer? Do we perform when there is no audience? Would we be able to sustain a marathon performance?

With the help of the Test Valley arts officer, Michael Johnson, we found a caravan site with sympathetic owners who were keen to host us. Test Valley also provided partnership funding. We wrote a two page structure for the week and rehearsed by improvising around that structure. We included the daily activities of any holiday - lunch,



## The family have to sell their home to pay off debts and are forced, in the end, to live in the caravan forever

watching TV, shopping, relaxing. We added character interactions: Daphne fancies the campsite proprietor Geoff, Reggie is jealous; Marilyn visits with her baby, Sky, the family has differing responses to the baby; Tracey is only on holiday on sufferance. We also devised dramatic situations: Reggie wants to set up his own business, an events management company; Tracey leaves in a huff; the family have to sell their home to pay off debts and are forced, in the end, to live in the caravan forever.

In the actual performance it became clear that our relationship with our audience was paramount and provided the answer to many of our concerns. Firstly, there was an accidental audience - the other campers. Some watched us from a distance for a few seconds whilst they filled their water canisters; some became friendly and started to treat us as real holidaymakers. Our nextdoor neighbours, Nairn and Sheena from Dundee, though at first wary, got into the habit of bringing over a bottle of wine late at night to chat. Children often came to talk to us. They accepted us as both performers and people.

Secondly, there were those who came to see us perform. They had expectations, and consequently we felt a pressure to play to them, to adopt the mask of the performer. At all time, however, we had to be truthful as performers. We used the nightly barbecue as a set routine, leaving room for improvisation. We invited the audience to join us to sample Reggie's burnt sausages. Some of them brought their own contributions and the event became a carnival.

Thirdly, there was an invisible audience who logged on to our website. Despite initial technological problems (you try setting up a computer in a field!), we received a wonderful array of e-mails, ranging from gags - 'Watch out for the bulls Daphne' - to hugely convoluted plots and scripts. We learnt to use the webcam as a creative editing tool to convey a point of view.

There were those who themselves broke the boundary between audience and performer, like the aforementioned Geoff, on whom Daphne had a crush, or psychologist, Stephanie Cox, who visited us on several occasions to see how this performance marathon was affecting us. The limited space of a caravan creates the illusion of comfort. The nature of the space, inside and outside, develops its own narrative and creates opportunities for clowning and physical comedy. Attempting to erect the awning, for instance, without having the least idea how to do it, became an entire morning's comedy routine. We had to enlist the help of other campers. The campsite staff became players in the ongoing narrative, as did the various TV crews, radio interviewers and newspaper reporters who came looking for a story.

Sometimes there were stretches of time when there were no visitors. We did then become a real family; relaxing on our sun loungers, reading magazines, listening to the radio, bickering quietly, playing with Marilyn's baby.

It was sad to leave at the end of the week. As we packed away, a small crowd gathered to watch us. Some artist friends who had come to visit with their children, helped us to dismantle the awning. Lastly, we switched off the webcam on the computer which was now standing alone in the middle of a field, and packed it in the car. We hitched up the caravan and drove away. Once we were outside we took off our costumes and returned to our real selves. It seemed very strange indeed. ■

*For further information on the Family Outing Caravan Holiday visit [www.thefamilyouting.co.uk](http://www.thefamilyouting.co.uk). Contact fishproductions on Tel. 023 8061 0870 or e-mail: [rish@fishproductions.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:rish@fishproductions.fsnet.co.uk).*

# East is East

Artist and lecturer AJAYKUMAR visited New York recently and was disappointed by a performance directed by one of India's leading theatre-makers, Ratan Thiyam

On 27th October I sat in the auditorium at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, New York and witnessed a production of Uttar-Priyadarshi (literally meaning 'the later life of Ashoka'), presented by Ratan Thiyam's Chorus Repertory Theatre from Manipur, India. It was not, however, the 'active witnessing' that sociologist Paul Gilroy attributes to the ideal experience of a spectator at a work of live art, but rather an observational procedure.

Uttar-Priyadarshi has little plot in order for the audience to focus less on story and more on the conflict of good and evil that director Ratan Thiyam believes exists within all of us. For Thiyam, this resolution of internal conflict is more important than that which exists without, such as the manifest conflicts in his home kingdom of Manipur, for instance. Manipur is an extraordinarily culturally rich kingdom with unique cultural forms, including one of the five

principal classical dance-drama forms on the subcontinent, and an indigenous martial art, Thang Tha. Manipur is, however, also a realm plagued by violence and internal strife. An independent kingdom until it was incorporated into the British Empire in the 1890s, Manipur gained independence alongside India

in the state. Manipur's population consists of numerous tribes, some of whom are also in conflict with each other.

Ratan Thiyam decries violence on all sides as simply self-serving. His message - triumphing both non-violence and the search for the resolution of conflict within - is a noble one.

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**Human suffering is not without but within and the conflict that must be fought and won by each of us is the interior battle**

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in 1947, but was forcibly incorporated into the Indian state two years later. Since then there has been a move toward independence and the Indian army has for some time been sta-

The production I saw, Uttar-Priyadarshi, is based around the story of the Indian Emperor Ashoka, who lived more than two thousand years ago. Ashoka, through barbarous battle, was able to conquer and unite most of the subcontinent. However, the concomitant murder and bloodletting ultimately appalled him. Buddhist philosophy, with its maxim of finding eternal truth within, influenced him. Ratan Thiyam is not a Buddhist, but uses this story in his play to reach an audience beyond Manipur and to address conflict that is not particular to Manipur but to us all. Buddhism is arguably the most espoused and lauded Eastern philosophy in the West. The play begins with a long Buddhist incantation by a group of actors dressed as Buddhist monks. It ends with words boldly displayed in English surtitles above the stage, telling the audience that human suffering is not without but within and the conflict that must be fought and won by each of us is the interior battle: 'Only through compassion can you conquer evil.'

These heartfelt and worthy statements are poignant, particularly in the context of the political situation in Manipur. However, the work rarely goes beyond the didactic. Good and evil are presented as a collage of singular

tableaux rather than as inter-acting eternal, and dramatic conflict. At no point does the play get below the skin. At no stage is it engaging on a deeper level, disturbing our unconscious to enable the spectator to reach a more profound consciousness. There is no catharsis. If we are then to view it on an intellectual level only - in the absence of sophisticated Brechtian dramatic strategies - a pamphlet would have done the job more cheaply and effortlessly.

This is, perhaps, inevitable on a Western stage (wherever it is topographically located). Despite the theories and practical experiments of innovators such as Adolphe Appia in the early twentieth century, the nature of the spectator/spectacle relationship remains largely undisturbed in the early part of the twenty-first century. The Western stage is primarily one that provokes a mindset of observation rather than participation. There are some rare exceptions, but Uttar-Priyadarshi is not one of them. Ratan Thiyam, like many non-Western practitioners over the last fifty years, has rejected contemporary Western theatre as a model and searched in his roots for new forms. Yet his work - both in the East and the West - is so often performed in theatre buildings that are legacies of the nineteenth century. This production sits easily in such a framework. The inherent weakness of the spectator/spectacle relationship when performed in conventional theatres, such as the Brooklyn Academy of Music, is further deepened by the inability of Uttar-Priyadarshi to disturb; to get below the spectator's reason and confront her or his deeper strife. Consequently, as one is unable to engage dynamically with Thiyam's edict, the production veers too close for comfort toward exoticification.

There is a conundrum faced by any non-Western critic analysing non-Western performance taking place in the West for a predominantly Western readership. Because there are relatively few productions presented in the West of non-Western forms, the spec-

tator is relatively uninformed and each work becomes representative of the whole opus for its Western spectator. An anxiety emerges for the critic: if I criticise the work as rigorously as any other, then, given that this work is by the

is subjected to this pernicious filtering process. The work is as commodified (with less money) as a Prada handbag. Why is it that if you walk into Selfridges, you will find it difficult to find a dress made by an Indian

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## The western stage is primarily one that provokes a mindset of observation rather than participation

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most renowned director in South Asia - promoted as having similar status to Brook, Suzuki, Barba and Mnouchkine - will this consciously or unconsciously provoke a rejective response to all South Asian work? Quite possibly. Of course, the only option is to be published and be damned.

However, in the context of a critical reading of non-Western performance, it is crucial for the spectator and reader to therefore remind her/himself that what she/he may be seeing/reading is only one piece of work by one director, and although this particular production may have failed, it is only one of a number of experiments and, consequently, this process of experimentation in totality must not be rejected. Furthermore, it is important for the spectator and reader to remind herself/himself that international work is presented in their countries usually only through support by its government; a government more inclined to support work which presents its country in the best light than work which is aesthetically, artistically and politically cutting edge. The work, therefore, is inherently conservative.

It is furthermore important to look at the process of selection in the UK. The people who select work for our international festivals are, despite the growing cultural diversity of the UK populace, comprised of those who represent the dominant global ideology. Non-Western work in this context is inevitably exoticified. Experimental, non-conforming work

fashion designer? Do you think that only people from certain countries have a creative sense in this form? No, it is all about marketing and who controls the means of distribution.

So how do we find a means of experiencing non-Western art without looking through the tinted glasses of Western producers and the blinkered vision of conformist cultural commissars of non-Western governments? One option, it seems, for those interested in seeing challenging, experimental work that comes out of the Third World, is to put aside, at least temporarily, the homespun international festivals, and spend some of their hard-earned cash to become 'cultural tourists' for a few weeks. The opportunity would then be there to see work in its social and political context and to discover first-hand the roots from which the practice springs.

Another option is to create new fora for artistic dialogue. And we can still dream. Perhaps, in this context, art on the Internet still offers one of the few relatively direct worldwide meeting grounds for artists and witnesses. Of course in many underdeveloped countries there are financial and technical obstacles to such encounters and access is still limited. However, it may only be a matter of time before such obstacles are history. ■

*Ajaykumar is an artist and lecturer in multi-disciplinary art at Goldsmith's College, University of London.*

Stampede, FlyDragon



# GOING UNDER

After eight weeks spent rehearsing their new show in the confines of a living room, Stampede were terrified when they faced their first audience. LUCIEN LINDSAY-MACDOUGALL recalls the birth pangs of FlyDragon

**W**e meet to think about our next production. We're all brimming with ideas and blather about stories we've been inspired by recently. We talk about films we've enjoyed. We throw everything into the pot - ideas that have simmered on backburners, topics that are forefront in our minds. Is there a style that we have in mind? Any story that that style would suit?

The filtration of hours of babble hones us down to something to work on. Three of us had recently read and enjoyed Orwell's 1984, and are fascinated by Winston's hazy memory of a time before. We'd also all seen and been inspired by such films as Brazil, Gattaca and Bladerunner.

We decide we'll invent a world of our own. We set about telling each other tales. One of us tells a story that raises all our brows. That

becomes the basis on which we can start work. It's not perfect. It's not formed. Now we can get together in a rehearsal room and start playing.

We have certain restrictions. No money, of course, and nowhere to rehearse. Where Patrick and Sarah live, there's a room we could squeeze into. So, all things considered, we decide to make a piece we'll enjoy creating in a confined space. We think we'll play on a small raised platform and tell the whole story from this island. We'll explore the cartoon mime style we touched on together whilst at the Lecoq School. This restriction of space frees us up to explore any place, time or story. With use of gesture we can make anything - a city, a house, landscapes. Naturally there are limits, but exploring its possibilities will be fun. We'll have to be very inventive. Also we

are attracted by the work we had done on melodrama. As our story is about betrayal and the separation of two sisters by a nasty father, we have all the grand emotions - cowardice, treachery, sacrifice, innocence. A blend of these two styles is something we played with whilst studying in Paris. Lecoq calls it 'melomime'.

Patrick is going to be an onstage musician so we'll cut out the sound operator. He'll operate lights which we'll attach to the stage, saving on a lighting technician. Everything's compact. We won't spend loads of money. Let's go!

We trawl randomly through books, sniffing anywhere for material. We're inspired by Auden's Dog Beneath the Skin, the Book of Revelations and then a book called Living at the End of the World. We rip pictures out of





# GROUND

papers of disasters and floods and crisis; bits of text, any picture that might help build the story. Each meeting we have is a kind of pitching session, at which each of us tries to sell our ideas.

Working collaboratively means everything takes twice as long. It's often frustrating. To keep a unity of vision, that is to play the same game and tell the same story, is always something we battle over. Having no director can bring a whole gamut of problems. Imagine a football team without a captain or manager. We each have areas that we're drawn towards. I can't stand selling and publicising the work and Sarah is determined to get a handle on that side of things. Besides, she's a much better bullshitter than me. I love to write, so tend to do more of that. I record improvisations on mini-disc or a DV camera and use them as a third eye or an objective ear. The camera can make the movement look puny but exposes it for its most obvious weaknesses. The vocal recordings make me realise how we say the same thing several times and I'm often able to cut huge chunks out. A lot of the final script will be text record-

ed from improvisations but a lot has to get written too. Sometimes Sarah will write a scene and read it to us. Benedicte decides what needs rehearsing - when we need to have things done by. A lot of the time we all run around reminding each other of everything and delegating no-one to do anything. They say creative people lead chaotic lives.

We work all the weekdays we can and by the end of four weeks we have developed the story. Patrick has become the storyteller and the tale is told from his viewpoint. Every day we invent new things for the characters to do, places for them to go, people for them to meet. We try out scenes. If we find a scene this early it probably won't last the course; by the time we present in eight weeks it will have died and been resurrected and died again. We spend ages making scenes of the main events in the story. We spend a day on a scene, then throw it out.

A video recording of a run-through horrifies us. A greater sense of urgency ensues. Part of me wishes we'd had this shock a bit earlier. We need an outside eye. Luckily we've set up a showing in a week and we'll get feed-

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**To keep a unity of vision, that is to play the same game and tell the same story, is always something we battle over**

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back. We're so close to the story and so cooped up in our tiny rehearsal space that we're beginning to lose control. We continue to make improvisations, some of which give us hope that we can still act and that we're not just killing time. Our confidence waxes and wanes every day. One day it flows and we think the floodgates have opened, the next every obstacle conceivable seems to impede progress. We have angst-ridden conflabs and tell ourselves it'll all work out. We know that if we keep applying ourselves it will come right.

We've spent so much time concentrating on the movement and plotting the story that the life of the characters seems thin. We've improvised every scene so many times. Each time, one of us scrunches their brow and tries to be encouraging - 'It's OK. I like the idea ...'. Ideas are well and good but they won't make our audience happy. We are making a story about a sealed underground world; a Brave New World that brainwashes its occupants and keeps them submerged in a state of perpetual bliss. A cocoon of lies surrounds one of our main characters. She takes a risk and decides to escape.

The gradual build up of lots of little scenes are like movements in a symphony. Now different scenes are lifeless and slow and technical. In turn each of us will feel confident to deal with an individual scene, to put the spark back into it. Sometimes, individually, we can get quite possessive about a scene and build some glorious moment on stage that we abandon on its next outing. Keeping ourselves concentrated is not easy and a scene that we tussle over can wipe out the best part of a day's work. We ditch 'great ideas' readily, even if we've spent hours on them.

One fantastic thing about devising everything from scratch, is that however precious or convinced we are that what we're doing is working, there always comes a point where we are forced to defend a thing or scrap it. What one was convinced about three weeks ago doesn't stand up any more. We decide to re-think about a quarter of our entire piece. We chop our stage in half and start to play on it. It's worryingly small but it's more what we originally wanted. If we don't take risks now it'll be too late. ►



## Having no director or leader can bring a whole gamut of problems. Imagine a football team without a captain or manager

From the glorious confusion and chaos will emerge a story in spite of us. The story comes from our collective unconscious. We're too busy on stage, however. A fear of not doing anything keeps us doing every scene like demented chickens. We keep repeating scenes so the movement becomes second nature. Once the technical side takes over, and we're thinking of the text and where to move, the life of the improvisation on which the scene was based has been sapped. Do we panic and abandon the scene? It's not funny anymore! Try the same scene another way? We haven't scheduled that. We could put it aside for a few hours and let it stew. Our piece is turning out to be quite a broth. It feels like an adventure movie with too turgid a plot. We've got action but the characters are a bit thin. We must remedy that. We've put spectacle over character.

Now we attempt to play the whole piece to get a sense of the flow. Our acting is forced and ill-timing laces every scene.

A week before we go up, we perform *FlyDragon* for an invited audience to get feedback - a bit like previewing a movie privately before it goes out on general release. We have our wall removed from two feet in front of us and for the first time ever an audience. We get through the piece even though we're all fizzing with caffeine and shocked by having lights on us and people looking at us. Immediately we are glad to have exposed ourselves to others. They can see the story more than we can. They tell us the story again. They communicate to us what they like, what they're irritated by, what they have taken from the story. Much of the advice or observations are deliciously contradictory or diverse. Most of all they help to remind us of simple things. Relax, they all cried. Let the story tell itself and let us in. Our over abundance of 'clever' mime was rightly brought up. They were tired of hundreds of doors, corridors and stairs. They didn't find it tragic and they didn't find it funny. They craved humour and wanted to be moved by the two sisters. *FlyDragon* was under siege and our acting was also put under the spotlight and deemed to be decidedly dicey. We all sigh with relief. The criticisms will sting at first, like antiseptic applied to a wound, but will help clean things up. Let's hope we won't put a paying audience through that kind of pain.

The following day we come together to discuss how we feel. Despite giving a terrible showing of the piece we all feel that we're on the right track. We talk for hours and decide to make some radical decisions. We decide on scenes that we'll cut. We make some decisions about placement of scenes and we think about which scenes need to be clearer or need bringing forward. We talk a lot about the different characters and realise how far away we've been from them. We all agree they've become heavy and morose. We're playing everything with tension and we are exhausting the audience. We start improvising the piece again, playing the story but forgetting any order. We allow every moment to have its time. We stipulate to ourselves that lightness is the key. Patrick, as the storyteller, will control the play. He interjects or stops a scene, asking for another if he's bored. The two sisters play without acting. Our characters seem more grotesque for being so much calmer and in control. They can tell the story how they want and at their own pace. The best stuff always happens in rehearsal. It's given us a kick in the pants and urgency is a good incentive. ■

*Stampede premiered FlyDragon at Hoxton Hall, London in November 2000. The show is available for touring in spring 2001. Details: 020 8802 9785. e-mail: stampede@talk21.com.*

# Circus Arts News

News from the Circus Arts Forum: Issue 3 Winter 2000 / 2001

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

Circus, in all its diverse manifestations, is undergoing something of a renaissance at the moment. Both traditional touring circuses and theatre-based circus companies are attracting new audiences, and circus skills are being incorporated into many forms of performance, from contemporary dance to street theatre.

Circus Arts Forum has been set up to raise the profile of circus as an art form, to celebrate the diversity of circus arts, and to act as an advocate for circus practitioners and a source of information for anyone with an interest in circus. Part of my job as co-ordinator of the forum is to represent circus as the vital and dynamic art form that it is, a form that has always involved collaboration and innovation. Although we all know how much is happening out there in the big, wide circus world it will be a while before the rest of the world has caught up. Yes, there are arts officers, venue managers, local council officers and journalists who understand and appreciate the wonderful things that circus offers. But there are many others who have no idea of the range and success of UK circus performance. Advocacy will be one of the main concerns of the forum over the next few months – any information that you have on UK circus – be it statistics on audience numbers, information on training opportunities, documentation of innovative projects or any other evidence of the sector's strengths – would be gratefully received. Please get in touch.

Circus Arts Forum can now proudly announce the birth of its new website. From February 2001, you will be able to log onto www.circusarts.org.uk to find out about such things as circus training and funding, or to get yourself on the site so that you can make contact with other individuals or companies. There will also be a regularly updated noticeboard for offers and opportunities, and current and past issues of this newsletter will be posted on the site. So, whether you are a professional performer or producer, or someone with an interest in circus who wants to find out more, this is the website for you. Although from now on the website will become a key focus point, we will not be abandoning those of you that prefer other means of communication. I'm in the office on Wednesdays and Thursdays when you can reach me by phone on 020 7729 7944 or by fax on 020 7729 7945. Alternatively, contact me by e-mail: info@circusarts.org.uk.

Dorothy Max Prior  
Co-ordinator, Circus Arts Forum

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

## NEVER MIND THE DIAMONDS, GET THE STILTS!

The Dome Show performers might be flying off to pastures new after the closure of the Millennium Dome, but what of the vast array of equipment that has been used in the central show performances?

Many people in the circus community – particularly those who live and work outside of the capital – have expressed their concern that the loot will stay in London. Jim Riley from Skylight in Rochdale says: 'I am sure I am not alone in wondering what will happen to the performance and rehearsal equipment from the Dome. I heard on the radio that nothing has been decided yet. It may be that the NMEC are proposing to sell or auction the equipment. However, with the exception of Circus Space, most circus schools are poorly funded and unlikely to be in the bidding.'

Riley is concerned that schools such as Belfast Community Circus, Circomedia, Greentop and his own Skylight Circus often lag behind in the allocation of resources. 'Don't forget the equipment has been paid for out of public monies already,' he says, and suggests that the equipment from the Dome be shared out around the various circus spaces in the UK, for the benefit of young people and up and coming performers everywhere.

This sentiment is endorsed by many other people working with youth circus or circus training schools around the country, including David Alexander of the Clocktower in Flintshire and Charlie Hull of Grip Circus Theatre in Cambridge. On the case is Pax Nindi of the Arts Council, who says he is 'making enquiries'.

Robbery at the Dome? Not likely guv'nor – if Jim gets his way. He suggests that anyone who is concerned should write to The Dome Minister c/o The House of Lords.

## LONDON ARTS

Circus Arts News has been given advance news of a new circus development scheme being mooted by London Arts. At the time of writing it wasn't possible to find out more specific details, but we've heard rumours that it will be similar to the A4E Express scheme – with little hunks of money to create new work. Guidelines should be out in early 2001. For more details contact the combined arts department at London Arts on 0207 608 6106. If you live outside London, lobby your own RAB to find out what they are doing for circus.

## THE YEAR OF THE ARTIST

Meanwhile, over in the Eastern region, Total Theatre Network has funding from Eastern Arts to create a circus and physical theatre education project in the East Anglia region in April 2001. Two local artists will be in residency for a week, teaching a variety of skills and creating a piece of celebratory circus. There will also be a day's circus conference as part of the week – details of the conference to follow in the next issue.

## CIRCUS SPACE COMMISSIONS

The Circus Space Professional Development Centre has announced grants awarded for their Creation Studio project and commission funds for new shows and acts, all made possible by grants from the London Skills Development Fund. Out of twenty-two applications for the Commissions Fund, five awards of between £2000 and £5000 have been made to: Will Cleary and Ian Marchant; Genevieve Monastesse; Sophy Griffiths; Matilda Leyser; and John Paul Zaccarini. There have also been a number of Creation Studio awards to aid the research and development of new work, including awards to Jo and Jake, Matt Costain and to Mamaloucos.

# DOME BIRDS FLY THE NEST

About the only feature to have emerged critically unscathed from the Millennium Dome, has been the arena's central show.

DOROTHY MAX PRIOR considers where the ninety or so performers who were specially trained for the show can hope to go from here

A group are gathered in the combustion chamber of what used to be the Shoreditch Electricity Company – now London's Circus Space. It is where ninety young people trained for the Millennium Dome Show, which is just completing its final month of performances. Around fifteen of those performers are here today, gathered together for one of a series of workshops organised by Mamaloucos as part of the preliminary work for their forthcoming circus-theatre production, *The Birds*.

It is getting late, everyone is feeling a bit tired and cold, and the session is drawing to a close. Some of the group are in the air – high above, holding hands – while on the ground a petite woman shivers and pulls a black wool cardigan around her shoulders, watching them with fierce concentration. They let go and swing away from each other, and the woman allows herself a smile. She is award-winning actor/director Kathryn Hunter, founder member of Theatre de Complicite, and probably not someone you would expect to find working on a circus project.




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**'I have no desire to return to nightclubs with my trapeze on my shoulder, looking for fifty quid and all the beer I can drink'**

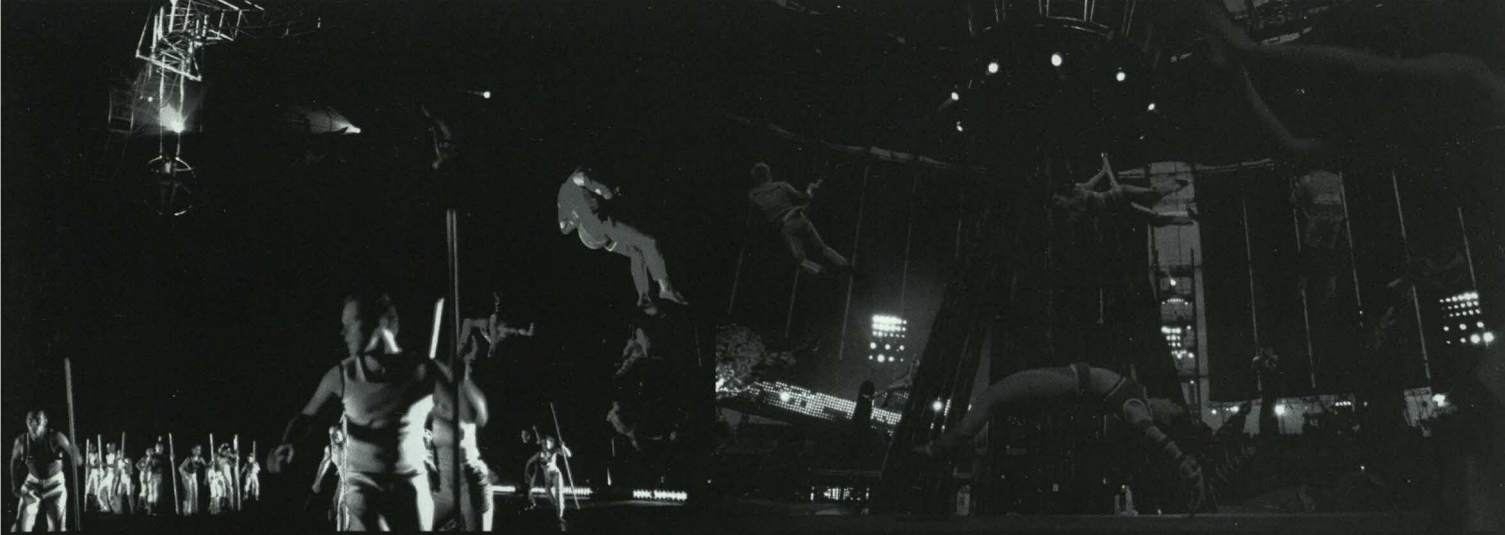
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But the Mamaloucos project aims to challenge those expectations, and brings together an artistic team that includes composer Goran Bregovich, designer Tim Hatley and writer Sean Prenderghast, to work with Kathryn Hunter on the creation of what producer Mat Churchill describes as 'the first ever piece of circus-theatre with an artistic team of this calibre'. They will be working with ten aerialists, two actors and a band to create the show which it is hoped will tour in their own specially constructed tent in 2002. For the workshop participants, the project is a welcome one, as it provides a possibility for them to continue to work in a collaborative, supported environment, after the close of the Millennium Dome.

At the same time as the Mamaloucos project is being developed, another large-scale show is in the offing. Circus Space has recently

formed its own production company, The Generating Company, building on the achievements of the training programme and Dome Show to create a new touring circus company. It has festival bookings confirmed for 2001, as well as a run at a leading London venue – following the success of *Cirque Éloize* and *Circus Oz* on the theatre circuit. The working title for the new show is *Storm* – intended as a thematic starting point for the devising process, which will happen under the guidance of artistic director Pierrot Bidon, previously of *Archaos*. Dome Show designer Mark Fisher is also on board, and producer Paul Cockle is gathering a team of assistant directors who will work with Bidon on the creation of the content of the show. One of these assistant directors may well be Matt Costain, who played *Skyboy*, the male lead in the Dome Show, until a shoulder injury put him out of action.

Now out of the show, Costain has time to reflect on the past year and on opportunities coming up in 2001. 'I think in common with many performers in the Dome Show, I feel that after some time working on such a huge project, I am ready for something more intimate,' he says. 'I have been drawn to projects where the emphasis is on the personal rather than the epic. By the same token, I have no desire to return to a life of knocking on doors, small-scale profit, and turning up at nightclubs with my trapeze on my shoulder, looking for fifty quid and all the beer I can drink.'



Costain is in the lucky position of being courted by both producers, Churchill and Cockle, for a role in the two new productions – and he will find it difficult to choose: 'There are similarities between the two projects, both of which are looking at a convergence of circus and theatre, and both of which are looking at establishing a long term presence in the market place.' And perhaps, most significantly for Costain, both productions are presently on tenterhooks with funding decisions pending. He continues: 'The Generating Company offers a rolling production and rehearsal structure, looking to employ a full-time ensemble constantly hothousing ideas for inclusion in an evolving show. This is a rare opportunity to create work on a larger scale that is still artist-led and relevant. Mamaloucos is a company that I worked with some years ago and since that time has continued to develop across the whole range of circus considerations, from artistic policy to technical and logistic experience. I wish I could do both. But then I wish I could do everything.'

A lot has changed in the past two years. As Paul Cockle points out, neither of these two projects would have been likely to emerge before then. Cockle is keen to build on the legacy provided by the Dome. It has been an extraordinary time for the one hundred and sixty plus performers in the Dome Show. After an intensive year of training, followed by a year's employment performing up to four hundred shows in the central arena of the Millennium Dome, they are coming to the end of what has been a very long season. For some, enough is enough. 'I am keen to move on,' says Gisele Edwards. She has loved the training, and enjoyed performing in the show, but wants to be part of something 'more fulfilling artistically'. She will be working in the future with shunt, the Total Theatre Award-winning theatre company that started life at Central School of Speech and Drama, and although she's very interested in any further opportunities to work with Mamaloucos, she will also be developing her solo act which combines singing and aerial work.

Other Dome Show performers have felt more at ease with the overtly commercial, crowd-pleasing aspects of the show. Bob Collins, whose photo appears on the front cover of the show brochure, has enjoyed the whole experience: 'It's a great spectacle – it succeeds in what it sets out to do.'

If you were lucky enough to catch the show at the right time, it is hard not to agree. At the 3pm performance on the Saturday after the attempted jewel heist, the central arena is full, including all available floor space. The large crowd gives the show what it needs – the energy for the performers to bounce off – almost literally at one point, as aerialists wearing stilts drop over the heads of the excited gang of kids I've got with me. It is moments like these – the interaction between performer and live audience – which Bob feels make the show. It is something that he would like to develop in his own work. Collins has formed a production company, Flybionic, with Alex Poulter and James Roberts, whom he met through the Dome project, together with Vicky McManus. The company have already started performing at parties and clubs, and have a gig lined up for New Years Eve at The Verge in Kentish Town. Collins also took part in the CircElation project in Sheffield as a

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## After an intensive year of training, followed by a year's employment performing up to four hundred shows in the central arena of the Millennium Dome, the Dome performers are coming to the end of what has been a very long season

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trainee director, which he saw as an exciting opportunity to pursue the possibilities of work that combines circus, dance and theatre.

Like Bob Collins, Laura Pero is a Dome performer who originally trained as a dancer. She is also interested in auditioning for the two major new productions, as well as in developing her own small-scale work. She describes her experiences over the past two years as a 'massive learning curve', and – although a dancer – she tells me how shocked she was by the physical demands of training and performing in a circus show. She is currently part of a group working on a new flying trapeze act under the direction of Andreas Evangelou of The Flying Dudes – a project that also includes 'Domies' Sophie Oldfield and Helen Ball. Pero is also planning to audition for both the Mamaloucos and Generating Company shows.

Although aerial work seems to be the future for many of the Dome Show performers – hardly surprising considering the emphasis in the show itself – there are some set on a different path. Joe Hull and Emma Insley knew each other before the Dome training began. They have now worked together for four years, and formed a company called Unbalanced in 1998. They are now creating a new act that combines acrobalance with comedy and character work. 'We'd really like to carry on working with people we met at the Dome,' they both tell me, reflecting the feeling of bonding and camaraderie that everyone I spoke to felt.

Inevitably, however, members of the Dome Show company will move onto pastures new. I've even heard rumours that one of the performers has already applied to join the police force. But this is an exception. Most will be continuing in circus-theatre or cabaret work using circus skills, which is the wonderful legacy of the Dome training. ■

Contact The Generating Company at The Power Station, Coronet Street, London N1 6HD. Tel.: 020 7729 9522 ext. 250 or e-mail: [clairebrand@thecircusspace.co.uk](mailto:clairebrand@thecircusspace.co.uk). Mamaloucos can be contacted at the same address or on tel. 020 7613 5358. e-mail: [mat@mamaloucos.com](mailto:mat@mamaloucos.com).

# The Advocate

The future of the British circus industry lies in the training provision given to children and young people, argues STEVE WARD of NAYC (the National Association of Youth Circus)

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**There needs to be more widespread recognition of the role that young people have to play within the growth of the future circus industry**

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In an article in Issue 2 of Circus News, Stewart McGill said that he 'certainly would not cry that circus is dead' in the UK. We would agree with him, if only in considering the untapped wealth of potential young talent that exists around the country. Whilst a current development in Circus training courses such as those offered by Circus Space, Cirkomedia, ZACA, and the Filton College in Bristol, points towards the building of a solid platform of British-based performers, we need to go back to the grass roots level - as it is from here that future generations of performers, originators, technicians and audiences will come.

Kristov Istvan, the director of the Hungarian State Circus, once said to me, 'the hope of the circus lies with the children'. I think he was absolutely right. If we don't encourage children and young people now to experience circus through seeing performances or taking part in circus skills projects, then the industry itself will have great difficulties in the future.

Across the UK we already have a tremendous wealth of enthusiasm and talent that is not fully recognised. There are many youth circus groups providing circus skills training that foster a life-long interest in circus. Several of these groups have been going for many years; many are voluntary organisations operating out of community centres, church halls and schools, with little or no funding. Much of this work is relatively unknown or recognised by the major 'players' in the circus industry and yet the standard of some of this work is very high.

For example, from the Wyre Forest Community Circus, 14 year-old Kaleigh Grainger won a Gold medal at the 10th World Unicycle Championships in Beijing, China this summer. She has also worked in the USA, Germany and Italy this year. From Bristol, the Circus Maniacs group took 3rd prize at the International Circus Festival in Sweden. From Leeds, Circus Zanni have won the 8th European Circus Schools Festival in Belgium, as well as individuals from the group winning the Junior Clowns of the Year Award. These are just a few examples of many that reflect the current good standard of British youth circus.

It was back in 1993 that the National Association of Youth Circus was formed as a voluntary national umbrella body to promote and develop the circus arts 'for, with and by young people'. Since that time it has attracted many member groups from across the UK (and some from overseas as well) and it has developed national recognition for its work with young people. What is perhaps more important is that also it has received international recognition. NAYC was represented at an International Youth Circus Congress in Berlin this year. As a result of work done there, a German National Youth Circus Network is being developed with the NAYC model being used as the basis. Similarly in the USA the American Youth Circus Organisation (AYCO) has been created, again as a result of many hours of dialogue between NAYC and the AYCO organisers. At this very moment in Queensland, Australia there are moves to create a State Youth Circus Network along the lines of NAYC.

So what does NAYC do? It provides a platform for links and collaborations between youth circuses around the country; it provides advice and information for both members and the general public; it provides training opportunities for people working in the area of youth circus; it provides opportunities and experiences for young people; and, most importantly, it provides a platform for advocacy. Already NAYC has produced a Code of Practice for members that is acknowledged by the industry, the circus training schools and local authorities. It has brought youth circus work



to the attention of insurers. It has a representation on such bodies as the Circus Arts Forum. Above all it has become the voice of youth circus in the UK.

This is only the beginning and there is a long way to go before youth circus has a standing in its own right. Although some within the industry, notably Gerry Cottle, wholeheartedly support the work of NAYC, there needs to be more widespread recognition of the role that young people have to play within the growth of the future circus industry. Youth circus needs to have its place accepted by all concerned; the industry, the training centres and the funders. It must continue to have a voice.

Several art forms have a 'national youth' performance section. In the UK we have the National Youth Theatre, the National Youth Orchestra, the National Youth Musical Theatre. Perhaps the time is now right for a National Youth Circus as a showcase for emerging British talent that can feed the industry for the future.

Circus definitely is not dead. It is alive and kicking with the young people of this country. ■

*For further information about NAYC contact Jim Riley, Skylight Circus Arts, Broadwater Centre, Smith Street, Rochdale OL16 1HE.*

# FLIGHT OF THE HEART

Every month for the last twelve months, on the night of the full moon, theatre practitioners from across the globe have been gathering at Teotihuacan, the sacred pyramid site near Mexico City, to participate in a unique experiential performance event.

**DEBORAH**

**MIDDLETON** reports

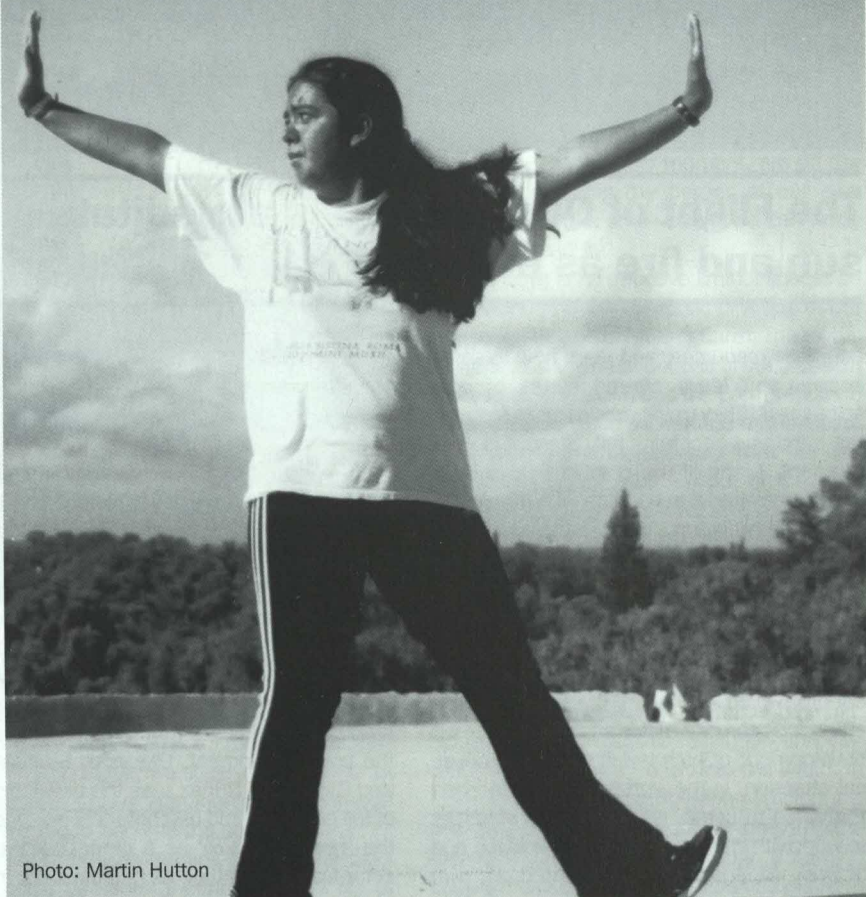


Photo: Martin Hutton

In September, a group of European participants flew to Mexico to take part in a unique theatre event being offered by Nicolás Núñez of the Taller de Investigación Teatral or 'Theatre Research Workshop' (TRW). The Flight of Quetzalcóatl is a twelve-hour experiential performance which has taken place at Teotihuacan, the pyramid site near Mexico City, on each of the full moons throughout the year 2000. Núñez and his group designed the performance to mark the two thousand years since the founding of this extraordinary sacred place. Teotihuacan is dominated by the huge Pyramid of the Sun, and the entire complex is associated with a solar deity, Quetzalcóatl, the Feathered Serpent. The Flight of Quetzalcóatl is a meditation on the archetypes of the Sun and Fire as

expressed through the myths of Quetzalcóatl, and of Nanahuatzin, the pre-Hispanic hero who jumps into the fire to become the sun.

Núñez's theatre is the product of a lengthy investigation into theatrical and ritual processes. Like all of his productions, The Flight of Quetzalcóatl combines conventional forms of theatre with participatory sections which employ ritual strategies. Audience members are invited to use the theatre event as a structure through which to make a profound personal contemplation, perhaps even transformation.

The participants who travelled to Mexico from Europe for the 'flight' were particularly fortunate in being able to take part in a week of workshops, on site, as preparation for the performance. The workshops comprised two

strands - learning the ritual dance Citlalmina, and taking part in experiential 'dynamics' (psycho-physical exercises) in and around the archaeological zone.

Núñez's dynamics typically require the participant to develop high levels of psycho-physical discipline, and to respond to emotionally challenging provocations. The work is based quite firmly in the belief that we find the best in ourselves only through conflict, and through going beyond our usual, self-imposed, limitations. The challenges in the work are to raise energy, access latent resources, and to face, if not our demons, then at least some truths about ourselves.

As a form of actor-training, the dynamics function as arenas in which participants can develop self-knowledge, explore personal



Nicolás Núñez and the Taller de Investigación Teatral Photo: Martin Hutton

## The Flight of Quetzalcóatl is a meditation on the archetypes of the sun and fire as expressed through the myths of Quetzalcóatl

energetic resources, and learn how to safely access and leave altered states of consciousness. They train participants in focusing the mind and becoming fully present in each moment. Many of the practices have been drawn from traditional indigenous rituals. For example, the group utilised traditional rhythmic and meditative ways of walking and 'contemplative running' in the pyramid zone and of making contact with the space. Citlalmina is carefully comprised of a pre-Hispanic dance and a Tibetan monastic dance, each of which are sacred practices involving efficacious corporal codes and demanding the development of high levels of psycho-physical attention. In the workshop, as in the performance to come, we used such practices to work with images of the Sun archetype and of Fire - allegorically investigating one's own sense of a personal 'fire' within. (In pre-Hispanic mythology, Citlalmina is the female archeress who shoots arrows at the stars and represents the meteorite.) The central theme of both the workshop and the performance was the challenge to 'jump into the fire' like Nanahuatzin - to say yes to the void, to take the risks and make the commitment necessary to making one's own life catch fire.

Núñez's dynamics are designed around the mythological imagery in such a way that participants experience rather than directly think about the meanings inherent in them. The mythological symbols provide the means by which participants can explore themselves and their relationship to the Universe. In the context of a place like Teotihuacan, working in sight of the Pyramid of the Sun, one has the opportunity to contemplate the mythologies through contact with the architectural designs created to embody and honour them.

Throughout the workshops we walk, and run, and dance, and work on building our capacity for attention in the here and now. We encounter ourselves and each other and inevitably find ourselves facing ontological questions inspired by the work and the place. Deeply personal mythologies unravel from the archetypes that we encounter through story and dance, through the very stones of the pyramids themselves, and the murals painted on their walls in faint but enduring colours. All week we work our way into our selves - bringing our energies to life, quietening mental chatter, gaining a foothold, it seemed, in the present moment. Like both Stanislavski and Grotowski, Núñez sees the development of full energetic and psychological presence in the 'here and now' as a central aspect of actor-training. Further, as he points out in his book *Anthropocosmic Theatre* (Amsterdam: Harwood, 1996), the 'here and now' is also an 'archaic mechanism of rite'; a means by which to access energetic and meditative states which can lead to altered perception and altered modes of consciousness.

Whilst the workshops we took part in were designed as actor-training dynamics, they

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**We walk, and run, and dance, and work on building our capacity for attention in the here and now**

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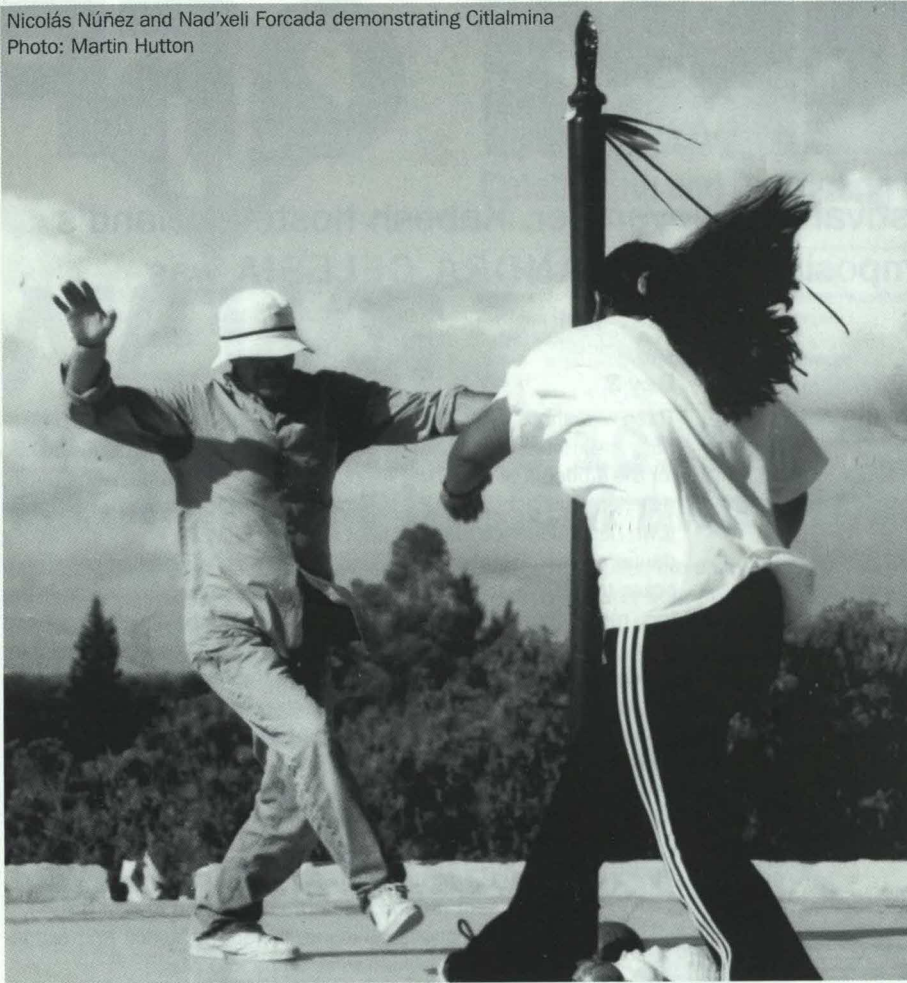
arguably function primarily as personal rites of passage. They are structures in which participants can carry out the kind of developmental process traditionally associated with 'warrior practices'. In Núñez's work we are 'warriors' fighting to conquer our own mental, physical and spiritual territory. And at Teotihuacan we had the extraordinary opportunity to make that 'fight' in the very place where anciently the sacred warriors were trained.

The performance is twelve hours long, divided into three four-hour sections, separated by two small breaks in which participants are offered food and drink. In addition to the members of the workshop group, the audience is comprised of people who have travelled out from Mexico City for the night's work. We gather at the TRW's base, a short distance from the pyramids themselves. At 10.30pm the event begins.

The TRW's base includes a large outdoor tonalamatl platform: a stage painted with the symbols of the Nahuatl calendar. The opening ceremony of the performance involves each participant being invited to choose a slip of paper that directs them to a symbol on the platform. We stand on the circle, wondering whether the arbitrary choice tells us anything about ourselves. I am assigned to Ehecatl - the Wind - symbolising creativity, movement and harmony. This is a ceremony which initiates us into the performance. By taking our place on the platform, we separate from our friends and enter the performance alone. This is an important starting point for work which requires that we abandon our social roles, resist egotistical defences to the new, and engage deeply with the experiences on offer. On the tonalamatl platform we stand on a symbolic Universe, part of a cosmic order, not



Nicolás Núñez and Nad'xeli Forcada demonstrating Citlalmina  
Photo: Martin Hutton



the social order. The tonalamatl symbol is also the first and most personal piece of information we receive. Each participant can make a personal reflection on the performance from the starting point of their tonalamatl sign.

We now begin a long, rhythmical walk, in silence, in single file, around the edge of the vast pyramid site. We walk for eight miles, passing the imposing structures on our right, whilst on our left the neighbouring villages celebrate Independence Day with fireworks. We walk a line between the world of the sacred and the world of the profane; it is the same line that Núñez's theatre seeks to tread. Teotihuacan is on a high plateau surrounded by mountains and we watch the weather roll around the hills, the vast sky changing colour. Fireworks, like shooting stars rushing into the heavens, leaping off the earth, making it just a little way into the void.

The members of the company wear bands of shells on their ankles and the sound of their walking sets a focusing rhythm. We walk for two hours, keeping our attention fixed. It is a

kind of walking meditation, in which the vision of the pyramids flows beside us and through us. And then we find ourselves in rough country, and come upon an actor tending a fire. Sitting around his fire, we stare at the flames as he tells the story of Nanahuatzin who jumped into the fire to become the sun.

This comprises the first third of the work and could be seen as performing the act of separation from daily reality that would typically be the first stage in a rite of passage. The second and most striking section of the performance comprises the transformative crux of the work. Participants are blindfolded and led away from the base by the monitors. We quickly become spatially disoriented. At some point, however, it becomes clear that we are being led into a cave. The monitors guide people under low ceilings and through small openings until they bring us to a place of rest. Out of the darkness comes a textured vocal performance, telling the story of Quetzalcóatl; the actors' voices playing with each other, and with the strange acoustics of the cave. When at last

we are invited to remove our blindfolds, we find ourselves in a deep, total blackness. For a time we undergo the sensory deprivation of silence and sightlessness. For some amongst us it is a joyful thing - to grin into the uncanny void. For others, myself included, it is terrifying; it is a time of facing the demons within. Finally, candles are lit and we find ourselves in a large cavern seated around a huge display of flowers, blooming weirdly there at the dark centre of the earth.

One of the key themes in the myth of Quetzalcóatl is that of going down into darkness to emerge into light. Like Quetzalcóatl, we have gone into the underworld to make our 'fight' with ourselves. We are told: 'All heroes are forged in anguish and pain ... Not forever on Earth, just for a while here ... We, in this cave, at this very moment, are on the threshold of being the heroes of our own adventure. With a small effort, we can really make our heart fly.'

The cave is an effective liminal space; an 'otherworld', heavily symbolic of areas of our own psyches, and of Mother Earth. The myths we hear, and the ritual actions of contact with each other, ourselves, and the Earth which we enact there, provide us with the materials for a transformative experience. That we are blindfolded again to be led out of the cave increases this sense of liminality, of journeying - physically and psychologically - to another place. Back in the upper world, we lie on the grass and remove our blindfolds to look at the heavens; after the depths of the earth, we gaze into the wide, star-studded expanse of Mexican sky.

The final stage of the performance must, by necessity, bring us to resolution and closure; to incorporation back into the world. In the final acts of the event, each participant is personally invited to allegorically jump into the fire. Our 'jump' takes us through a flaming hoop of candles, onto the tonalamatl platform where our journey began. As we prepare to 'jump' we look through the flaming circle and see the sun beginning to rise behind the pyramid of the sun. On the platform, one by one we join the traditional pre-Hispanic Dance of Quetzalcóatl. Following the dance steps, feeling the rhythms, moving cyclically together we bring the night to an end. The sun comes up. The darkness has passed. ■

*Nicolás Núñez will be giving workshops in Britain in April 2001. For further details contact Dr. Deborah Middleton at The University of Huddersfield on 01484 478455 or e-mail: D.K.Middleton@hud.ac.uk.*

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**When at last we are invited to remove our blindfolds, we find ourselves in a deep, total blackness**

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# KICKING OFF

As part of the Belfast Festival last November, Kabosh hosted Ireland's first Physical Theatre Symposium. ALESSANDRA CELESIA was amongst the participants

In Northern Ireland physical theatre is still a new cultural force. In this small triangle of land marked by a conflict that has culturally isolated it from the rest of Europe, text-driven political theatre is paramount. The majority of Northern Irish productions touch in some way on the theme of 'the troubles', with text taking precedence over movement.

Whilst physical theatre is taken very much for granted in continental Europe, in Ireland only a few companies struggle to put body and space into the theatre vocabulary of the next generation. Helped along by favourable cultural policies, this handful of groups - including Barabbas, Blue Raincoat, Corn Exchange, Big Telly, Kabosh, Pan Pan and Ridiculusmus - produce a fresh and atypical theatre. One of these companies, Kabosh, recently organised Kicking Space, Ireland's first Physical Theatre Symposium, designed to promote and facilitate new partnerships and for practitioners from both sides of the border to meet and exchange skills.

## Day 1

Under an extraordinary blue sky the first Irish Physical Theatre Symposium kicks off. Kabosh's artistic director, Karl Wallace, welcomes participants to the Cooke Centenary Hall and immediately the action begins. We spend the day experimenting with objects all linked by the theme of air, guided by Karl and Annie Ryan, director of the Dublin company Corn Exchange. They propose an interesting approach to chorus work and clarity of movement that leads to a presentation of work later that day.

Above us on the first floor we can hear the second group running and stamping their feet like crazy people. They are working with Belfast company Ridiculusmus. Someone says that the students are gagged and shut outside on the roof. We are curious - tomorrow we are with them.

## Day 2

Still in shock. We now know that we are prisoners of two crazy visionaries who, with their rather singular method, called ARSFLOP, are shaking us to the roots of our souls. The 'O' of ARSFLOP stands for 'open your heart'. Open your heart and go where it takes you. The more it is dark, the more it is true, the better it is. It is about humour and humanity.

Annie Ryan is working today on Commedia dell'Arte. Based on the original Italian form, she creates modern characters that wear make-up instead of masks. The presentation of work is accompanied with rhythmic percussion.

## Day 3

Three workshops run simultaneously today. Blue Raincoat, a Sligo company inspired by Decroux and the Suzuki technique, hold a workshop for the students of the Ulster Association of Youth Drama. Anne Gilpin, a Belfastborn dancer who now works in London, brings to her home town her experience in movement learnt at LAMDA. A very interesting dance company, Echo Echo, lead us through a world of cardboard boxes that dance with the body. Ursula and Steven, the artistic directors, met in Amsterdam at the School for New Dance Development and have travelled throughout Europe for many years. Strangely, it was after a show in Derry that they discovered that the Playhouse had a dance studio without a dancer. They decided to stop there, choosing Northern Ireland as their adoptive land and have never looked back. They say that there is a lot to do and that the relative scarcity of physical theatre is not a drawback but a challenge.

Whilst Echo Echo experiment with boxes, Dublin theatre company Pan Pan, work with material and scissors. The two companies work together with participants to present a public performance at the end of the day - notions of sound, vibrations, space and experimentation all come into play.

## Days 4, 5 & 6

The last three days. The symposium has taken off and the atmosphere is electric. The students sleep little. Workshops by day, the shows of the Belfast Festival by night. Belfast seems for a week to be the centre of the world. Barabbas and Big Telly have arrived, two of Ireland's biggest companies - one from the south, one from the north - brought together by a concert of vacuum cleaners which goes down well at its public performance at 4.30pm.

Meanwhile Anne Gilpin teams up with international performer/puppeteer Adam Kronenberg to lead us on a voyage through lightness. Adam, originally from Australia, is spending this year in Belfast teaching at the Belfast Circus School.

All is new. All is at its beginnings. Sometimes these new directions are a little muddled but when they succeed the results are amazing. Such as the Kabosh show Mojo Mickybo, which was highly commended in the 1999 Total Theatre Awards and won a Dublin Fringe Festival award in the year before. Kabosh is beginning to export their work to England and across the Atlantic. Next year the company insist that the symposium will happen again, opening its doors for a second time to professionals from other countries. ■

For further information on Kicking Space contact Kabosh, Old Museum Arts Centre, 7 College Square North, Belfast BT7 3DZ. Tel.: 028 9024 3343. e-mail: kabosh@dircon.co.uk.





# total theatre network

Celebrating and Promoting Physical & Visual Performance

## NEWS

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Dorothy Wilson

## Critical Practice 10: The Role of the Director in Physical and Visual Performance

Critical Practice is a series of ongoing debates organised by Total Theatre Network. The next debate, which is being held as part of the London International Mime Festival in association with the Royal Festival Hall, looks at the role of the director in contemporary physical and visual performance.

Is there a place for the visionary director in devised performance? Who are the ones

who have inspired the practitioners of today? Does a theatre company working as an ensemble need a director and how does the actor/director work within this structure?

These and other questions will be considered by a panel of speakers to include: Anton Adassinski (Derevo), Didier Guyon (Fiat Lux), Paul Hunter (Told By An Idiot), Cal McCrystal (Spymonkey) and Dick McCaw (IWF).

Critical Practice 10 takes place at the Voice Box, Royal Festival Hall, London, on Saturday 20th January at 2.30pm. Tickets for the debate are free of charge to Total Theatre Network members (one per individual member, two per company) and £5/£3 concessions for non-members. To book tickets tel.: 020 7729 7944 or e-mail: admin@totaltheatre.org.uk.

## TOTAL THEATRE NETWORK AGM

Total Theatre will be holding its Annual General Meeting on Saturday 20th January 2001 at 1pm in the Voice Box, Royal Festival Hall, London. A formal notice of the AGM is enclosed with this mailing. This document invites members to submit nominations for the Board to stand for election at the AGM.

Total Theatre Network actively encourages new Directors onto the board. Directors commit themselves to attending four to five board meetings per year, plus one day-long retreat. Directors are in regular contact with the office and frequently help out voluntarily, as well as giving artistic and management guidance on the way the organisation should be heading.

If you would like a say in the future of the organisation, you are invited to nominate yourself for election onto the Board at the AGM. Please see the enclosed papers for further information. In advance of the AGM, Total Theatre Network will only circulate details of the nominees if they exceed the number of spaces on the Board. All other information will be tabled at the AGM.

The subject of where to hold future AGMs was raised at last year's AGM. While the Board of Directors has decided to continue to hold AGMs in London on grounds of cost, the organisation is committed to holding events around the country. In the last year these have included meetings in Brighton, Sheffield, Birmingham and Edinburgh.

## FUNDING NEWS

Total Theatre Network has been offered a second term of 2-year funding by the Arts Council of England. This award is the result of much time, effort and consultation with the Board and members to produce a 3-year plan which was complemented by the Drama Department.

## STAFF NEWS

*Annabel Arndt writes:* I'm sure that members would like to join myself and the board in thanking John Daniel for five fantastic years as the editor of Total Theatre Magazine. During this time, John has been responsible for ensuring that this publication is recognised as the most important in the sector. We wish him luck and hope he enjoys his time in India.

Total Theatre Network is now looking for a new editor for the magazine. The successful applicant will demonstrate writing flair, experience of the technical and artistic requirements of magazine production, and a good knowledge of the sector. For an information pack, send a sae to the office marked 'recruitment' by 30th January 2000.

We are sad, also, to say goodbye to Marion Wallis, our voluntary membership officer. Marion has had an immense impact on the organisation and has worked hard to simplify the membership process. Anyone interested in giving a day a week on a voluntary basis to replace Marion as Membership Officer should contact the office.

## PHYSICAL THEATRE DOWN UNDER

Annabel was delighted to have been invited as a key note speaker to the National Australian Circus and Physical Theatre Conference in October. The conference was chaired by Mike Finch, artistic director of Circus Oz, and provided a mixture of masterclasses, performances, discussions and critical debates (on topics such as health and safety issues), daily cabarets in which fellow delegates per-

formed (such as the amazing Joel Salom - one to watch out for when he next visits the UK), and individual performances from companies such as Circus Oz.

Fellow delegates included Mime Action Group founder and Legs On The Wall artistic director Nigel Jamieson (fresh from directing part of the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games) and ex-Total Theatre Chair Verena

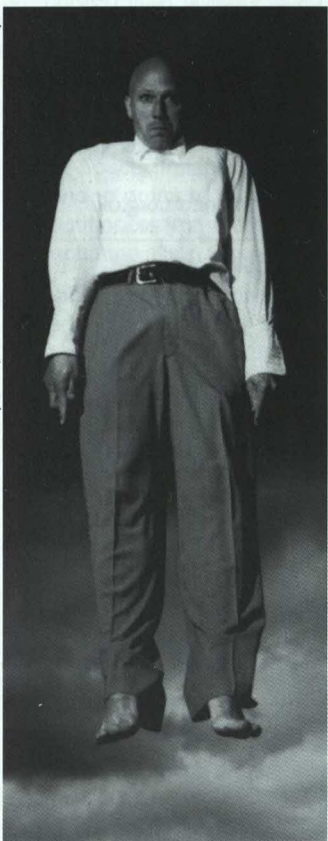
Cornwall. Annabel was made to feel extremely welcome by the community in Australia and hopes that the professional links made between the two countries will continue.

Annabel has too many thank yous to list but must make an exception by thanking one of our most distant members, Ian Reece from Yungaburra, who she stayed with and who showed her around the area.

**Hoipolloi  
Sweet Bobabola**

Waterman's Arts Centre,  
Brentford, October 2000

This is the story of two alien bakers who plan to take over the world by feeding humans their irresistible cakes fatally spiked with 'sweet bobabola'. This extra-terrestrial special ingredient causes those who imbibe it to swiftly fall into a hypnotic state and walk into the sea, leaving the alien bakers free to dominate the planet. Promising stuff one would think, from performers adept at creating and presenting their own, original material. Unfortunately, however, this particu-



Hoipolloi. Sweet Bobabola Photo: Richard Heeps

lar show falls disappointingly short of the company's usual standard.

From the outset, the show's two energetic performers, Trond-Erik Vassdal and Shôn Dale-Jones, engage well with the audience in a jovial and warm manner, yet the over-enthusiastic welcoming and tantalising build-up to what will follow, only serves to heighten expectations that are increasingly dashed as the production progresses. Bill and Bob, the aliens in their human guises, flounder amongst inexplicable debris strewn about the stage. They sport checked

blazers, intermittently donning token costume additions and wigs to represent the story's other characters. The shamelessly shambolic scene changes and character confusions soon lose their comedic appeal, however, and the rather laboured, slapstick cake-baking routines would not look out of place in any pantomime - yet even the younger members of this audience fall silent the more protracted these sequences become. Some of the seemingly superfluous onstage items are used inventively as abstract props, particularly a collection of tangled telephones.

These two strong performers are obviously working hard to their credit, yet one can't help feeling they are struggling against rather weak material which seems barely out of its early devising stages.

**Rebecca Brown**

**Circo Para Todos  
Children of the Andes**

Circus Space, London,  
September 2000

Theatre may be considered to be the Siamese twin of circus, but for me it is dance and circus that are most strongly conjoined. Circo Para Todos's celebratory performance is living proof that the two belong together. From the moment the company burst on stage, filled to the brim with youthful enthusiasm and energy, to the grand finale Circo Para Todos are a living medley of music and movement.

The company present a series of short pieces including *Las Muertes*, an excerpt from the full-length show; *Day of the Dead* skeletons crawl on the floor, leap in the air, and charge menacingly around the auditorium - stilts become balancing bars and little skeletons leap upon larger skeletons. The company exploit all the possibilities of the combination of stilts, acrobalance and dance - moving the action through different levels, using ground and air effectively.

Although this piece is the highlight of the evening, others are just as enjoyable. My favourite is a piece entitled 'Two Intrepidas', billed as the final fling of company founders Hector Fabio Cobo Plata and Felicity Simpson, who created and nurtured this circus for Colombian street children. They dance a Tango for stilts and unicycle; the strident beat of La

Cumparsita played out in a whirl of wheels and flounced skirt, macho moustache and strutting stilts.

With Circus Space full to the brim with enthusiastic sponsors, excited children, tray-bearing waiters, and salt-dipped Margaritas, it would have been hard not to have enjoyed the evening. Circo Para Todos means Circus for Everyone - and it seems that that is just what it is.

**Dorothy Max Prior**

**Shared  
Experience  
Theatre  
A Doll's House**

New Ambassadors Theatre,  
London, November 2000

The power of Ibsen's *A Doll's House* lies in the undercurrents beneath the action, the unspoken subtext between the characters. The power of Shared Experience lies in their ability to physicalise emotions. A brave, or some would say strange, choice then for this company to stage Ibsen's classic.

Past productions by Shared Experience, such as *Mill on the Floss*, *Anna Karenina*, *Jane Eyre* and *War and Peace*, have revelled in what makes so much physical theatre effective - the visual manifestation of a character's subconscious. When adapting a novel for the stage, this style serves them well. However, a playscript such as *A Doll's House*, has already been fully dramatised. This production, therefore, inevitably spoon-feeds its audience, as every thought and deed is shoved down our throats to such a degree that there is nothing left for us to mentally munch on.

At first Anne-Marie Duff is bright and refreshing as Nora, a woman caught in a web of sexual and domestic games. But the production lets her down. The sense of menace would be felt much more keenly without the constant physicalizing of her fears. Much of the acting seems melodramatic and misplaced. There are glimmers of Shared Experience's trademark imagery - Nora's erotic twisting of a string of silver beads depicting woman as a plaything struck a chord. But the design alone, although visually beautiful, is not enough to bring anything more than predictability to a production flawed in too many fundamental ways.

As much as I have enjoyed their past work, even I must acknowledge that Shared Experience have the right to fail. It is just a shame they had to do it with such a great play.

**Emi Slater**

**Theatre Insomnia  
The Golden Bridge**

Sallis Benney Theatre,  
Brighton, visions2000,  
October 2000

In contrast to much of the work in visions2000, *The Golden Bridge* is a traditional puppet show that relies on the quiet unfolding of a classic fairy-tale. There are no hi-tech interventions or ironic narrative reversals, just an archetypal story that is told with simple skill by two narrator-puppeteers. *The Golden Bridge*, like many fairytales, is the story of a journey, a transition from one state to another.

Unusually, it is not only the male hero but also the princess-heroine who must equally pass through her journey's trials before the couple can be united. Unfortunately, the company choose to abridge this section of the story quite drastically, creating an imbalance that robs it of some of its strength. Nevertheless, the essence of the story is well interpreted using lovingly crafted puppets made of natural materials, silk cloths and simple fairy lights. There is a well-kept balance between movement and stillness, puppets and objects are placed in tableaux as the action moves to another part of the stage.

The sceneography is the driving force behind the piece - Romanian director Felicia Negomireaunu is also an artist/maker. There are times when the visual strengths are let down by sections of dialogue that feel stilted and delivered without conviction. Both of the performers, company co-founder Sean Myatt and Kathryn Powell, seem more comfortable as puppeteer/storytellers than in actor mode. A favourite moment came towards the end as they smiled warmly at each other like loving parents when their puppets were finally reunited. It was, however, a delight to witness such a gentle and moving piece of theatre, that proved that there is still a place for simplicity in the modern world.

**Dorothy Max Prior**

## Indefinite Articles Dust - A Shadow Odyssey

BFVT, BAC, London,  
October 2000

Indefinite Articles have used Homer's Odyssey as the narrative base for their new show Dust and combined

or just an under-use of talented performers and artists?

That said, there is a nice sense of irreverence and humour which comes through the piece and I suspect that with a bit more work it will come alive more from the performers' point of view. Even Homer's story may prove to have more punch.

**Anne-Louise Rentell**



Indefinite Articles. Dust Photo: Sheila Burnett

it with extremely clever visuals and an excellent original score. The company's contemporary retelling of the tale is visually resonant and intoxicating. Constantly-changing, vivid dust patterns and drawings translated from an overhead projector onto a screen, are a mesmerising and ingenious method of storytelling. The music controls the pace of the piece to successfully draw the audience into the narrative.

But I do wonder what all the fuss is about Homer's Odyssey. A guy fights a few mythical creatures and beds a number of goddesses over a period of years whilst 'desperately' trying to return to his wife and son. This is a boy's own adventure story from ancient times. On top of this, Steve Tiplady's Odysseus is quite laid-back and I can't really imagine him slaying anything, let alone a one-eyed monster. His tone is that of the storyteller and on that level it works, but it lacks a sense of urgency and purpose during the climaxes. His two female co-performers and artists are kept in the background, busily creating the next brilliant image. Considering the tale's subject matter, was this deliberate

## Mem Morrison Lilac

BFVT, BAC, London,  
October 2000

When Mem Morrison's mother was married, she was married in lilac. On the wedding photographs, however, her dress appears white. This blanking out of the primary colour of someone's life is the starting point for the production. At the same time as shifting through a literal colour spectrum onstage (reflected in the costumes, lighting and props against a stark minimalist set), Morrison tries to make sense of his relationship with his parents - a puzzle-solving that uses colour as a powerful metaphor for the different shades of meaning that tint one's life.

The piece is episodic in format, and some sections are stronger than others. One piece in particular, in which the relationship between a father and son is pitched perfectly on a mat of brilliant green AstroTurf, is evocative, touching and sincere. Other sections lack the truthfulness that make this episode work so well,

and this is particularly an effect of Morrison's performance style. Whilst appearing to deliver most of the text directly to the audience, Morrison fails to actually engage us, and the semblance of intimacy is masked by a rather overdramatic and affected tone that swings from disengaging to just annoying.

Because the visual aspects of the piece are so simple and understated (an effective sparseness that renders a clean palette upon which Morrison can draw his ideas), the imagery shifts into the imaginations of the audience via the text. When the text fails to engage, the bare bones that are left are not quite enough to hang a full-length show on. Whilst there are dashes of vibrant colour in this work, its basecoat never really moves out of a mid-shade of grey.

**David Harradine**

## Flash Marionettes Flash Circus

Sallis Benney Theatre,  
Brighton, visions2000,  
October 2000

'Sometimes puppets speak about humans better than humans themselves,' says Ismail Safwan, director of French company Flash Marionettes, in the programme to their new show Flash Circus, premiered in the UK at visions2000. There are certainly times when our hearts are so opened that we forget that these creatures that are tugging at those heart strings are made from wood and foam.

Grandmother singing her old Russian folk songs, a pig juggling sausages, a puppet walking a tightrope - we laugh and cry and worry with these puppets throughout. The narrative is the age-old show within a show - a behind the scenes story of a struggling circus troupe. Throughout the piece, the question of who is more real, person or puppet, is played out in both subtle and upfront ways, culminating in a final scene that toys with a question dear to many fans of the film *Bladerunner*. Who can ultimately tell the difference between human and automaton?

Flash Circus is that rare thing: a show that combines different art forms with a skill and panache that proves that multi-discipline performance doesn't have to mean jack-of-all-trades, master-of-none. It is all down

to the abilities of the performers - and the four company members who co-write and perform the show are skilled enough to bring off a performance that integrates physical acting, spoken text, puppetry and circus, creating a cohesive whole that is both artful and entertaining.

**Dorothy Max Prior**

## Theatre de Complicite Light

Theatre Royal, Plymouth,  
October 2000

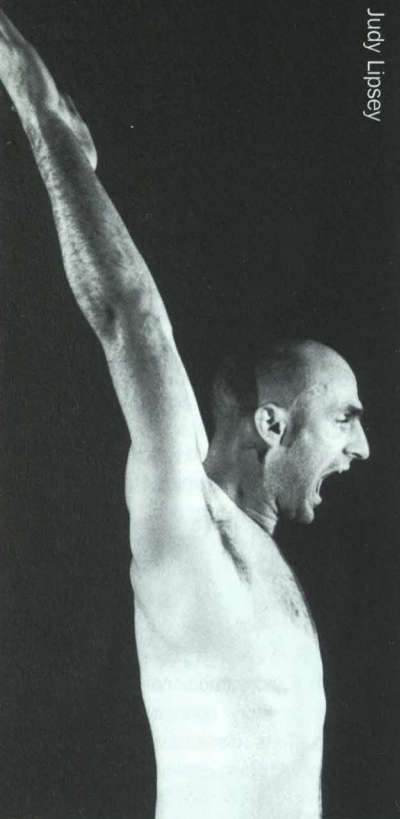
The seventeen-year-old company's last show, Mnemonic, brought to life a story of eternal recurrence, of the compromise we have to face in order to live with laws and order, and of the fragility of the system of values which defines what is right and what is wrong. Unlike Mnemonic, Light seems to cling to a more traditional theatre aesthetic: a story concerning the plague and its disastrous consequences is told from beginning to end, in the same way you would expect it to be narrated in a book.

The simplicity of the structure acts as a double-edged sword, for in making itself accessible, it also leaves some spectators confused as to why one would want to narrate such an apparently surpassed story. The events of the story and the philosophical riddles that it entails lack any notion of the 'contemporary', which is surely a vital issue in contemporary devised theatre. Yet stylistically the piece runs very smoothly. Rescuing a form of narration which seems to have become lost, the company's ability lies in the successful recreation of images and situations through well developed Lecoq mime techniques. And so coffins are produced in abundance using the simplest of means, cows are killed and their dead bodies thrown around the stage, and objects transformed according to the multi-functional purpose that the performers are able to invest upon them.

A forgotten world is magically recreated in front of the audience, one which perhaps is too far removed from a postmodern aesthetic to be fully appreciated, but nevertheless succeeds in its simple and ancient task - that of telling a story through theatre.

**Augusto Corrieri**

Photo: Judy Lipsey



**DV8**

**Can We Afford This/The Cost of Living**

Queen Elizabeth Hall, London, October 2000

DV8 give good value for money. For the cost of a ticket, you get bare flesh, circus tricks, trapdoors, trampolines, gun shots and the most stunning undulating set covered in green carpet. 'Dancing on carpet is difficult, resulting in a twenty per cent price increase,' someone says early in the proceedings - setting the tone for a show that's all about commodification.

For this piece, originally commissioned for the Sydney Olympic Arts Festival, Lloyd Newson has blown the budget on a cast of seventeen performers that includes a singer, a clown, some circus artistes and (let's not forget) a host of dancers. When late-comers arrive to take their seats, they're reminded of the money they've already wasted by missing the first five minutes of the show. So what do we get in exchange for our hard-earned cash? Dance of course. But contemporary or Classical? (Remem-

ber, combining both styles will cost more.) Nudity? (There's yards of lithe flesh to feast on.) A song? (Paul Cap-sis obliges with Cher's Believe.) Some laughs? (Naturally, this is a DV8 show after all.)

There's a point to be made by all this goading: If everything and everyone has a price, what value do we put on things that don't live up to the norm? What about the fat? The disabled? The ugly? The queer? Where do they fit into our world of Gap commercials and Hello magazine? Confrontational, provocative, sexy and fun, DV8 ask the questions and leave it to their audience to make the connections. That's why they consistently prove themselves to be a company whose work you can ill afford to miss.

John Daniel

**fecund theatre**

**Intimate Male**

BFVT, BAC, London, October 2000

fecund's new show, presented here as work-in-progress, is understated and subtle in comparison to the high-energy productions which have made them their name. This is a stripped down, intimate, thoughtful piece of work, that reflects upon two strands of concern to the performer (John Keates) - what it means to be a man and thirty, and how to make a piece of theatre that works.

Keates talks us through the performance as he goes along, reading from canonical theatre text books into a video camera, speaking softly into a microphone as he drinks his way through a few cans of beer. Above him, projections of multiple types of thirty-year-old Caucasian males variously cavort and entertain, and this introjection of video opens up the cast beyond the solo performer. This conspicuous yearning to present 'everyman' really only illustrates how very specific the point of view of this piece is, and how many experiences of being male and being thirty are left out. There's no point criticising the piece for not doing what it doesn't even set out to do, however, and a lot of the material is engaging and funny.

Much of it, though, is irritating (and I guess this too is meant to capture some of the essence of man),

not least an extended monologue version of Fight Club that left my friend (who hasn't seen the film) bewildered. A bit of bad singing was obviously made deliberately bad, and the determinedly untheatrical vocal tone, whilst winning at times, at others becomes too much like a kind of Wooster Group cool, without any of the supreme charm that allows those performers to get away with it. And whilst there's a lot of great work here, there's an awful lot of talking that doesn't always have that much to say.

David Harradine

**Full Beam Visual Theatre/Awkward Silence**

**Better to Have Loved & Echo and Narcissus**

BFVT, The Lion & Unicorn Pub Theatre, London, October 2000

Within the first five minutes of Better to Have Loved I recognised the text as Jeanette Winterson's The Passion and not David Murphy's script as credited in the programme. For whatever reason Full Beam Visual Theatre chose to ignore Ms Winterson's contribution to their production (I suspect copyright) - it affected my ability to treat the performance with any real respect.

It's a tough job translating a novel to the stage and worse if you lift verbatim what is a quite magical text and deliver it as a monologue. In this sense, as the main character, Lizzie Philips was unable to embody the text in a way which made it come alive on stage. However, when she related the story through shadows on a screen, or with two tiny puppets walking across the snow-covered hilly tracts of a four poster bed, the charm and imagination of the puppetry did more justice to the beauty of the writing.

Awkward Silence created a simple and effective retelling of the Echo and Narcissus metamorphoses with near life-size puppets. The piece quietly opens with a moth flitting around a naked bulb. We then meet Echo, a strangely grotesque yet beautiful puppet who shyly echoes Narcissus's calls. Narcissus's discovery of his own reflection in the shape of a twin who mimics his every move is inspired and funny. I was very dis-

appointed when it was all over so quickly. Awkward Silence is an imaginative and talented company with strong, confident animation combined with a lightness of touch. Ones to watch.

Anne-Louise Rentell

**Green Ginger**

**Bambi - The Wilderness Years**

Sallis Benney Theatre, Brighton, visions2000, October 2000

Green Ginger's reworking of the Bambi story is a rite-of-passage initiation into the hell and torment of adolescent boyhood. Poor little Bambi lives in a wasteland caravan with his mum and a kid brother who's not quite all there upstairs. Mum gets shot, Bambi sets off on a pilgrim's progress through the land of junkies, joints and fumbled first sex with his mate's girlfriend. Life is hard and there's no way out, but occasionally some fun to be had along the way. But where's a boy's father when he needs him most?

Aimed fairly and squarely at the late-teen market, Bambi draws its references from contemporary subterranean pop culture - a post-modern mix of nihilism and ironic humour. Although the show's publicity avoids the 'p' word, puppetry is an important part of the process - together with film, sound and some very nice projected graphics. Visually, it is a feast of hi-tech meets low-tech beat imagery. The use of pre-filmed shots as mock-ups of closed circuit TV gives the show the darkly surreal feel of Chris Morris's disturbingly funny TV production Jam. Like Faulty Optic, the company use film to give a different, unsettling perspective on the puppets that we are seeing on stage.

I wouldn't go as far as to say that I enjoyed Bambi, but I know I wasn't the target audience - my teenage son loved it. Between their last production, Slaphead, and this one, the company have moved too far from gothic darkness to real doom and gloom for my taste, but the skill and energy of Green Ginger are indisputable.

Dorothy Max Prior



**Ken Campbell**  
**History of Comedy Part 1:**  
**Ventriloquism**

Komedia, Brighton,  
 October 2000

Ken Campbell sits at the back of the stage with his 'knee pal' astride his lap. His attempts at ventriloquism are entertainingly awful and he is determined that we shall reach these dizzy depths too. His face contorts: 'Who dared to put wet fruit bat turd in our dead mummy's bed, was it you Verity?' And like good pupils we try our best not to move our lips.

Ken Campbell is up to his old tricks again - haranguing, berating, going off on a tangent, doing card tricks with a pack of sausages, telling shaggy dog stories. He goes one stage further this time and has a dog on stage with him - and a sort of pram-come-sledge for his Gertrude Stein puppet. Eskimos like her, we are told. The main narrative thread of this new piece of theatre is the ideological battle between Ken and his ex-girlfriend Nina about the virtues of our Gertie versus the manly appeal of Jack London's Call of the Wild. Where ventriloquism fits into this is hard for me to explain - Ken does it so much better. Thus, Andy Capp, talking sticks, pygmies, talcum powder, funerals, and plays written by drug-dependant Inuit Indians are all somehow roped together in a breathless three-hour marathon.

Here is a man who doesn't do things by halves. His passion and zest for life oozes out of every cell of his body. Playing Ken Campbell is the biggest challenge of his life. 'This is it, it doesn't come any better than this,' he says, extending his arms out to embrace everyone and everything on stage and in the auditorium. Ken Campbell, This Is Your Life.

**Dorothy Max Prior**

**The Lion King**

The Playhouse, London,  
 August 2000

The first carnivalesque procession of animals through the auditorium signals that this is more a theatre event than a musical. And that sense of carnival is what makes The Lion King so special. For although the story fails to engage on more than a superficial level, and the music suffers from blandness (despite the impact of Libo Em's additions to the original score), the spectacle works on multiple and magical levels. Julie Taymor's design is what draws us in - a highly imaginative concoction of masks and puppetry, optical illusion and vivid colours.

Taymor embodies artistic and cultural cross-pollination, having trained with Lecoq and in Indonesia, and worked in film and opera. The choreography blends contemporary dance with ballet and afro-Caribbean dance, working alongside actors whom Taymor has trained to animate her inspired puppet creations. Some of

the effects made by exploiting the illusion of scale are simply stunning, and the way in which the audience's imaginations are invoked in creating landscapes and vistas, birds and animals, makes for a spellbinding experience. There is wit and integrity in the performances too, particularly Josette Bushell-Mingo, whose Shaman-like character has been developed especially by Taymor for the stage version of this Disney cartoon.

Of course the blandness of Disneyfied pseudo-myth is the platform on which the show is built, but in design terms this is a production which challenges the notion that commercial theatre ignores radical theatrical ideas. If you can get hold of a ticket, go see it.

**Dymphna Callery**

**Pinkorama**  
**Yerba Buena Houseboat**

Shoreham-on-Sea,  
 September 2000

There is a quiet revolution going on - outside of the mainstream theatre world; people are creating little oases of art and entertainment in the comfort of their own homes. Performance artist Karin Paish is a worthy contributor to this noble tradition and has, for a number of years, been running an art space on her houseboat in Sussex. For her final event at Yerba Buena she created a weekend of performance and installation entitled Pinkorama. Five artists together explored the colour pink, resulting, inevitably I suppose, in a cosy, fluffy, feminine sort of event that left the participators with a feeling that all was right with the world.

Karin is an optimist - her belief in the beauty and power of life over death shines through everything she does. The weekend started with her walk through the streets of Shoreham clad only in a fresh-flower bikini. The theme of flesh and flowers was played on in the photomontages of Alison Milner and a bedroom decked in satin and orchids called Nature's Pink Paradise. In the kitchen are pink foods galore, natural on the port side and artificial on the starboard. The kitsch end of the pink spectrum was explored by Dan Thompson in an installation of touchy-feely fabrics, found objects, and cute pop classics. On the boat's jetty, Charlotte Walshe performed The Desert Rose, a butoh-inspired move-

ment piece developed in collaboration with live artist Mim King. Emerging from under a silk sheet, fuchsia pink hands play and scurry like hybrid life forms somewhere between spider and sea anemone.

Yes, it feels like we're in a 60s Happening. Yes, it has all been done before - but Charlotte on the deck for the last performance of the weekend on this, the last sunny day before the rain, is a personification of all that is pink and lovely.

**Dorothy Max Prior**

**Kneehigh Theatre**  
**The Red Shoes**

BFVT, BAC, London,  
 October 2000

Two men dressed in stained vests and pants, each holding a suitcase, observe me in a bemused way upon entering BAC. They later find another pair (one man and one woman) observing the audience in a similar way from onstage as the show begins. It is silent, but for the sound of water as they ritually wash their feet. Next they are joined by a man in drag who puts a cabaret-spin on the whole thing as he climbs a spiral staircase, with microphone in hand, up to a platform.

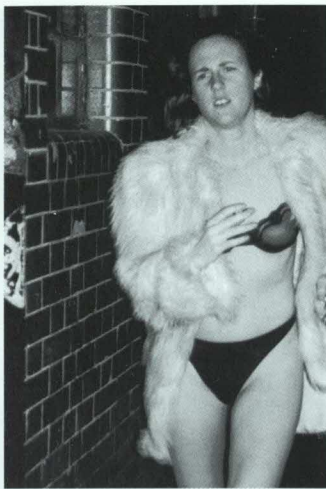
The set conjures up a crooked fairytale house, which supports and serves well Anderson's magical story. With smooth use of concertina screens, some flying fishing rods, and various suitcases, the set successfully transforms as the characters are brought to life. With the mechanics of the show rarely hidden, and the red shoes shown in their best, reddest, shiniest light, I was entranced and enchanted by the ensemble performing. A variety of characters are created using very little (the odd hairpiece, prop, or bit of clothing) - my favourite being an operatic vicar.

After highly memorable performances and a dramatic struggle for the girl between the devil shoes, an angel came to lift her to salvation and I was left thinking about animal passion. Escaping both, she seems to tell us to dance our own dance. At the end, the narrator, descending onto the stage, removes his long coat revealing stained underwear, and you question who will be pulling the strings tomorrow.

**Zoë Bywater**

Photo: Mark Douet

Ursula Martinez, Duckie Explosion!!



**Duckie Explosion!!**

Soho Walking Tour, London, October 2000

This enterprising bunch have been beavering away in a bar in Vauxhall since the mid-90s, producing haphazard club nights and spawning such inimitable talents as Divine David, Ursula Martinez, Amy Lamé, Marisa Carnesky and Chris Green. Occasionally the mayhem spills beyond the confines of the Vauxhall Tavern and onto the streets. For those lucky enough to have participated in Duckie's first walking tour in 1998 (which included a performance by Bette Bourne specially commissioned from Neil Bartlett), this whirlwind trip round the sights of Soho's rock 'n' roll past was not to be missed.

This is the type of underground performance event which commentators will refer to in decades to come. If you missed the heady days of Warhol's Factory or Leigh Bowery's Mud Club, at least be sure to get yourself down to Duckie to witness history in the making. With the matronly Miss Lamé as tour guide, Duckie's second walking tour weaved down Tin Pan Alley, across Charing Cross Road and into the midst of sleazy Soho. In Falconberg Court there was an encounter with Chris Green which took us back to the early 80s. Resplendent in a zoot suit, Steve Strange hat and stilettos, Chris was on his way to the Blitz Club (the birth place of the New Romantics). On the rainwashed street, theatre and reality collided when a hostile passer-by pelted him with a milk shake.

In St Anne's Court, Marisa Carnesky, drugged-up to her eyeballs, was

an aspiring model turned lap-dancing junkie, whilst off Berwick Street Market there was a foray into a hairdressers where swirling psychedelic projections and the smell of patchouli transported us back to the 60s. Ursula Martinez was the limp hippie with the guitar. Later, she transformed herself into a hissing punk princess. In a churchyard off Wardour Street Carnesky gave the penultimate performance of the tour before the group were ushered into Madame Jo Jo's to catch up with Chris Green's New Romantic - who, twenty years later on, had metamorphosed into an overweight club promoter spinning 80s sounds in a sad retro club. Fabulous fun.

John Daniel

**Scarlet Theatre Sisters and Others**

Young Vic Studio, London, November 2000

This is the fourth production that Scarlet have made in collaboration with Polish director Katarzyna Deszcz, and these pieces could easily sink into difficult waters were it not for her consummate skill. Tightly pacing and choreographing every moment of the play; adeptly cutting across extended periods of repetition with frantic activity; picking out the nuances and detail at the same time as drawing the piece with broad and heavy strokes - not a second of material is allowed to slip away from the tight control of nine performers under her superb direction.

The piece itself presents in the first act the female protagonists of Chekhov's *The Three Sisters*, whilst their male companions appear in the second. Chekhov's play is a delicately written layering of feeling upon feeling, coincidence upon coincidence, finally creating an illusion of reality that is, at the same time, profoundly theatrical. Both these aspects are foregrounded in Scarlet's liberal adaptation. The characters become ciphers for their original selves - lines are repeated, movements entrap them in the physicalisation of character, images stack up - echoing the layers that unfold in the original - until eventually the cracks begin to appear and the stifling repetition gives way to a powerful unfolding of events and emotions. Jane Guernier's wonderful *Anfisa* links the two acts together, casting a comic light on these dramas of banality.

However, by the time the men appear in the second half of this double bill, the formal choreographic style has become a little too familiar to be able to bear all over again, and the coming and going and shouting and stamping of the characters really just reinforces the fact that the men in this play are cast from very rough clay in comparison to the fine detail with which the sisters are presented.

David Harradine

**Forced Entertainment Quizoola**

Gardner Arts Centre, Brighton, November 2000

Why are two people sitting on chairs in the middle of a circle of light bulbs? How long did it take Tim Etchells to write two thousand questions? Is he a lapsed Roman Catholic with an obsession with the notion of the Confession Box?

How long will this audience sit listening to people telling tall tales and truthful fantasies? Is there any difference between acting and being? When is a performer telling the truth? What is truth anyway? Is being natural the greatest of all preferences? Who in the audience isn't mentally answering each question as it comes up? How can we listen to someone explaining how to improve the efficiency of the Nazi death camps without flinching? Is this a valid question? Is there any such thing as an invalid question? Is questioning a valid thing to do? Why are the two women on stage a thousand times more interesting than the man and the woman together? Are women more truthful with each other? Who said women can't clown? Why is that man picking at the threads of his jeans? Is he playing at being nervous or is he acting as someone nervous in order to hide his nervousness? Or is he just nervous? Why is he trying so hard to be a clown? Why doesn't he wipe the smile off his face? Why doesn't she wipe the smile off his face?

What do they do if they want to go to the toilet? Who will be left when the six hours is up? Are they trying for the Guinness Book Of Records? Whatever happened to Ross McWhirter anyway? Is this the end?

Dorothy Max Prior

**The Mimorial Kasparuv Kolinsky Festival of Non-Verbal Theatre Kolín, Czech Republic**

This is a great and friendly festival, centred round the town square. The imaginative programme runs twelve hours a day for a week and includes shows for kids and adults, bands, dance and circus, Czech and foreign work.

The festival opened with a disappointing medley of mime and clown acts. With the occasional exception, this felt like cabaret night at a trapist sixth form college. Com Factory's street dance fairytale, *Sedm let Stesti*, and the weak *Cirque Batard* of Cahinn-Caha were eclipsed by *Teatr Novogo Fronta's Vagabond* Adam Kadmon. Full of old-school fire and adrenaline, this show walks an 'everyman' through state terror into the arms of the post-communist Russian Mafia.

The earnest efforts of a young Intent Theatre to convey some similar tale of oppression in *Pootevreny Soumrak* were undermined by a lack of control of their material. They strike familiar poses but are unable to take possession of them. The Forman Brothers converted a vast barge into a luxury floating theatre for their new show *Nachové Plachty*. This fairytale of a girl brought up by her sailor father after her mother's tragic death is told with incredible visual flair and narrative incoherence. It is lush theatrical vision stunningly realised in its mixing of puppets, set, actors and shadow play. The first half is a delight. The second half, made almost nonsensical by plot lacunas, induces thoughts of mutiny.

Perhaps the festival's finest moment was *Herzslégr*, a show commissioned from Sco. Stage Code for a beautiful old spa building. The company of five utilised the building's facade and cloakroom but sited most of the action in and around the drained pool. Aspiring towards the dance theatre of Pina Bausch, the piece is full of ideas - many great, some sublime, and a number that seem superfluous. When they tap strongly into the space's strange haunted atmosphere, it's wonderful stuff. Ultimately this show is like the festival as a whole, ambitious and rewarding, not universally triumphant, but deserving praise and respect.

James Yarker



## PUBLICATIONS

**Playing Commedia: A Training Guide to Commedia Techniques**

is a new handbook on Commedia dell'Arte by Barry Grantham published by Nick Hern Books. The book includes practical games and a history of Commedia and includes chapters on: warm-up games, mime and movement, word games, face masks and the legacy of Commedia dell'Arte. Almost all the illustrations are drawn from 16th and 17th century sources and are used to illustrate particular points regarding posture, gesture, costume and mask. *Playing Commedia* is priced £12.99 in paperback (ISBN: 1-95459-466-4).

**The Marketing Manual**

is an easy-to-use, comprehensive reference book on the practicalities of arts marketing, providing an overview of how marketing tactics fit into marketing planning. The publication combines practical advice with case studies and creative ideas to meet the needs of today's arts marketers. Published by the Arts Marketing Association, it is available at £25 from Bolton's Warehouse, 23 Tenison Road, Cambridge CB1 2DG. Tel.: 01223 578078.

**Maskwork: The Background, Making and Use of Masks**

is a unique combination of ethnography, design and practical advice on the art of masks and mask-making by Jennifer Foreman. The book explains the anthropology, nature, use and meaning of masks around the world. The second part comprises eight themed workshops including: theory, background and instructions for mask-making, supplemented by photographs of assembly and use by groups of people from all age ranges. *Maskwork* is published by The Lutterworth Press, price £17.50 (ISBN 0-7188-2948-4).

**The Moving Body: Teaching Creative Theatre**

is translated by David Brady from Jacques Lecoq's *Le Corps Poétique* and is now available for the first time in English from Methuen. Written by Lecoq with Jean-Gabriel Carraso and Jean-Claude Lallias, it includes all the famous Lecoq techniques: neutral mask, character masks, counter-masks, bouffons, acrobatics, Commedia and clown. Illustrated in black-and-white, the book is priced £14.99 (ISBN: 0-413-75260-7).

**Small Acts: Performance, the Millennium and the Marking of Time**

is a book of essays by fourteen of the UK's leading performance artists, marking their responses to the new Millennium in a series of site-specific actions. The book includes visual documentation by Hugo Glendinning alongside a dynamic series of essays on questions related to performance, time and the experience of the Millennium. Contributors include: Bobby Baker, Tim Etchells, Ronald Fraser-Munro, Lois Keidan, Robert Pacitti, Peggy Phelan, Scanner and Third Angel. *Small Acts* is published by Black Dog Publishing in paperback, priced £16.95 (ISBN: 1-901033-57-0).

## NOTICEBOARD

**AboutFace Theatre Company**

Have the following video & audio equipment available for hire: Philips front and back video projector (with analog access); 2m x 2m free-standing front and back projection screen; 2 TV monitors; 3 VCR recorders; JVC Digital Video camera; Digital Photo camera (2.1 pixel); portable Mini Disc recorder/player plus mic. Rates are reasonable. Details: Joanna on 01273 773989.

**Chris Barltrop**

has recently completed a six-year spell with Moscow State Circus to go freelance. Chris Barltrop's Publicity Machine & Consultancy Service offers presentation, representation, public relations and production support. Details: 01432 880835 or 07836 573600. e-mail: [chris\\_barltrop@hotmail.com](mailto:chris_barltrop@hotmail.com).

**Bodily Functions**

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

**eXtant performance company**

has a small amount of video projection equipment for hire. The company can also undertake the editing and assist with the production of multimedia shows. The service they offer is aimed at small companies who would like to try their hand at this area of presentation but are put off by the expense. Incredibly competitive hire rates for fellow practitioners. Details: 07946 460545. e-mail: [extant\\_pc@hotmail.com](mailto:extant_pc@hotmail.com)

**MissingLinkProductions**

provide acts to suit your entertainment needs - from aerialists to acrobats, clowns to contortionists, mimes to magicians. Lunches, launches, parties, cabarets, soirees. Details: 020 8341 7645. e-mail: [info@MissingLinkProductions.co.uk](mailto:info@MissingLinkProductions.co.uk). [www.MissingLinkProductions.co.uk](http://www.MissingLinkProductions.co.uk).

**Rehearsal Spaces**

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

**Rehearsal Spaces**

available in recently renovated studio 2 minutes walk from Highbury & Islington tube, London. Two large studios, large kitchen and production office. Details: 020 7288 1495. e-mail: [a&a@corsica.in2home.co.uk](mailto:a&a@corsica.in2home.co.uk).

**Rehearsal Spaces**

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

**Rehearsal Space**

available for hire from Nitro, 6 Brewery Road, London N7 9NH. Spacious studio (30ft x 40ft). Access to photocopier, fax, showers and kitchen facilities. Available seven days a week on flexible short and long term lets. Details: 020 7609 1331. e-mail: [tasha.btc@virgin.net](mailto:tasha.btc@virgin.net).

**Rehearsal Spaces**

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

**Rehearsal Spaces**

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

**Rehearsal Space**

available at reasonable rates at Oxford House, Bethnal Green, London. Facilities include a cafe and photocopying and fax. Bookings can be made seven days a week. Details: 020 7739 9001.

**Rehearsal Space**

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

**Rehearsal Space**

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

**Rehearsal Space**

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

**Rehearsal Space**

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

## OPPORTUNITIES

**AboutFace Theatre Company**

is looking for people for future collaborations. The company is based in the Brighton & Hove region. Contact: AboutFace Theatre Company, 17 Wilbury Grove, Hove BN3 3JQ. Tel./Fax: 01273 773989. [aboutfacetheatrecompany@madasafish.com](mailto:aboutfacetheatrecompany@madasafish.com).

**British Centre of the International Theatre Institute**

is looking for a part-time administrator to work two days per week on a freelance basis for a fee of £45 per day. Apply to Neville Shulman OBE, Director, International Theatre Institute, 4 St George's House, 15 Hanover Square, London W1R 9AJ. Details: 020 7919 7276. e-mail: [iti@gold.ac.uk](mailto:iti@gold.ac.uk)

**Sue Lee & Kosta Andrea Theatre Company**

is looking for two male actors to collaborate on their new show *Came Vale*. Must be available for a minimum of ten weeks between February and

## NOTICEBOARD

May 2001. Sue Lee & Kosta Andrea Theatre Company is an international, small scale touring theatre company based in London, producing new theatre work, combining the poetic realism of the characters with a heightened physicality. Write with a CV to Sue Lee & Kosta Andrea Theatre Company, 42 Middle Lane, London N8 8PG. Details: 020 8348 4289. e-mail: sukosta@dircon.co.uk.

### Perpetual Motion Theatre

is looking for a technician/driver for a UK tour of One - (the other) from January 11th-February 16th and April 4th-6th 2001. Also for dates in Moldavia and Russia in May and June. Must have experience in video, lighting and sound. Details: 07779 723730.

## EVENTS

### Real Action 3

has now been delayed until autumn 2001. The follow-up to last year's training programme in Liverpool, the project will involve open access workshops, residencies and a programme of performances in Liverpool, Manchester and Lancaster. Details: 020 8348 0203.

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS

### AboutFace Theatre Company UK

17 Wilbury Grove, Hove, West Sussex BN3 3JQ  
Tel./Fax: 01273 773989

### Blast Theory

Unit 43a, Regents Studios, 8 Andrews Road,  
London E8 4QN, Tel.: 020 7249 5551  
Fax: 020 7249 5559

### London Arts

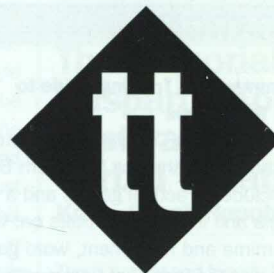
2 Pear Tree Court, London EC1R ODS  
Tel.: 020 7608 6100  
Fax: 020 7608 4100  
Textphone: 020 7608 4101  
e-mail: info@lonab.co.uk

### Primitive Science

Sebbon Street Exchange, Sebbon Street,  
London N1 2DZ  
Tel./Fax 020 77226 5004

### The Weird Sisters

4 Shamrock St, Clapham North,  
London SW4 6HE  
Tel.: 0771 536 0021  
e-mail: weirdsists@aol.com



## total theatre magazine

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

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

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

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**AboutFace Theatre Company UK**

toured their new show *Close Ups*, directed and co-devised by former Forced Entertainment associate member Tim Hall, last summer in North America (Ottawa, Winnipeg, Edmonton, Victoria, Vancouver and New York City). The company has recently relocated to West Sussex and currently is taking UK bookings for *Close Ups* for spring and autumn 2001. AboutFace is also starting a new collaboration with the writer Marcus Thompson which promises to investigate the dark sides of sibling relationships, and will be premiered in the autumn. In addition the company provide event entertainment for corporate organisations and events, such as a *Commedia dell'Arte* performance for *Cirque du Soleil* events in London. Details: 01273 773989.

**The Big Picture Company**

has been awarded an Arts Council touring grant for *A Dark River* (inspired by Lorca's *Blood Wedding*), last seen at the Young Vic Studio in July 1999. Big Picture tour in March and October 2001, and the show is accompanied by a full programme of workshops. Details: 020 7348 0203

**Angela de Castro**

has just been made artistic director for the next *Circus Oz* production planned for 2001/02. Angela has a very busy year ahead. As well as running *The Why Not Institute for Contemporary Clowning* at Arts Ed, she is planning two new productions for autumn 2001. More details about the productions and her other collaborators will be announced in the next issue. Details: 020 7348 0203.

**Catalyst Theatre Company**

is one of Canada's most exciting and forward-thinking companies. Catalyst return to the UK in Spring 2001 with the award-winning *The House Of Pootsie Plunkett*. During the company's visit they will be running workshop residencies in London, Liverpool and Frome. Anyone interested in participating should e-mail [chenine@bhathena-jancovich.co.uk](mailto:chenine@bhathena-jancovich.co.uk). Details: 020 7348 0203.

**Circo a Vapore**

presented their new production *Macbeth - A Grotesque Tale*, an adaptation of Shakespeare's *Classic* told by Mediaeval buffoons drawn from Goya's and Bruegel's paintings, at Piazza Santa Maria in Trastevere, Rome, Italy during the Estate Romana 2000 Festival of Theatre. *Macbeth* was directed by Silvia Marcotullio, winner of the EU European Theatre Directors Award 1997. This production is the result of years of research and rehearsal by the company into the comic genres of satire and parody using a physical, visual style of performance. *Macbeth* is now available for touring in 2001. Details: 00 39 67 00 9692. e-mail: [circoavapore@tiscalinet.it](mailto:circoavapore@tiscalinet.it).

**Forbidden Theatre Company**

is currently working on a new adaptation of *Alice in Wonderland* in collaboration with composer Craig Adams. The story follows *Alice* on the night before her wedding day, as she confronts her fears through her dream in *Wonderland*. The show, which will combine text, music and movement, will



Theatre Alibi, Little White Lies Photo: George Falloon

premiere at the Diorama Arts Centre for two weeks in February and will then tour to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in rep with *Forbidden's* first devised piece *Flat One*. Details: 020 7813 1025. [www.forbidden.org](http://www.forbidden.org).

**Foursight Theatre**

premiere their new touring show, Euripedes' *Medea* - in a new translation by John Harrison - at mac, Birmingham on March 6th and 7th as part of the *Moving Parts Festival*. Featuring Naomi Cooke as *Medea* and Patrick Morris as *Jason*, this production promises to be fearsome, explosive and a moving revelation of the human capacity to cause pain. A timeless tragedy, *Medea* is a universal story about a woman stretched to the limits of her experience - surviving on the edge. *Foursight* tour *Medea* to venues throughout England until May 2001. Details: 01902 714257. [www.foursight.theatre.mcmail.com](http://www.foursight.theatre.mcmail.com).

**Generally Better Productions**

has changed its name to theatre O, following a successful run at last summer's Edinburgh Festival Fringe with *3 Dark Tales*, which tours extensively throughout the UK this spring. The company is now managed internationally and in London by Glynis Henderson Management and throughout the rest of the UK by Chenine Bhathena of Bhathena-Jancovich. In July, *3 Dark*

*Tales* will be programmed at the Barbican, London, as part of B.I.T.E.. Details: 020 7348 0203.

**Improbable Theatre**

present *Spirit* at The Royal Court, London in March. Created by Julian Crouch, Phelim McDermott, Lee Simpson, Guy Dartnell and Arlene Audergon, *Spirit* takes its audience into an improbable world of improvisation, headless puppets, fractured storytelling and visual imagery, to find out what happens to three brothers when things don't turn out the way they should. Details: 020 7978 4200

**Indefinite Articles**

continue to tour *Dust - A Shadow Odyssey* this spring. Directed by Joan Baixas and Luis Boy and performed by Sally Brown, Zannie Fraser and Steve

*Tiplady*, the show combines storytelling, shadows, visual theatre and original music to create a magical journey for the imagination. Reality and mythology are woven together in a visionary mix of water, dust, lights and the human body. Details: 020 7978 4200.

**Ophaboom**

recently completed an autumn tour, which has included them performing all three of their shows, *Richard III*, *Faustus* and *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. Between October 2000 and April 2001 the company will have played from John O'Groats (Lyth Arts Centre) to Lands End (Acom, Penzance). Two new shows are being planned for 2002, one a traditional Ophaboom show, the other an indoor altogether darker piece. Details: [www.ophaboom.co.uk](http://www.ophaboom.co.uk) or [www.ophaboom.com](http://www.ophaboom.com).

**Optik**

gave the UK premiere of their latest show, *In The Presence Of People*, at The Boilerhouse, Brunel University in November. The show is part of an international collaboration in live and wired performance with Theatre Research, Bulgaria and Instituto des Artes Cenicass, Brazil. *Optik* explore impulse through the body and movement, creating site-specific sculptural performances. The performers' actions are based on everyday movements - walking, running, lying, standing - and energised through rhythmic patterns of repetition and duration. Details: 020 889 44027. e-mail: [optikperformance@onmail.co.uk](mailto:optikperformance@onmail.co.uk). [www.optikperformance.com](http://www.optikperformance.com).

**Perpetual Motion Theatre**

follow a successful run at the 2000 Edinburgh Festival Fringe with a UK tour of *One - (the Other)* in January, February and April 2001. Mixing movement with multi-lingual text and video projection, *One - (the Other)* is a poignant, hi-energy ode to the mavericks of life, exploring the flipside of Blair's 'Cool Britannia'. The show is devised and performed by a cast of actors from Asia and Europe and directed by Emi Slater. *One - (the Other)* was

## PERFORMER & COMPANY UPDATE

shortlisted for a Total Theatre Award 2000.  
Details: 0207 483 3798 or 07779 729794.

### Playbox Theatre

are currently staging *Beyond Beauty*, a fusion of text and movement produced in collaboration with writer Ron Hutchinson. The show, which is a Playbox commission, takes its audience on a journey beyond the 'happy ending' of the *Sleeping Beauty* tale. The company's long-awaited project created by Andrew Watson, *The Age of Innocence*, is now in a training and development phase as fifty young artists work in the studio with Playbox's in-house acrobatic trainer, John Francis, and with Deborah Pope. All of the show's creators except the designer and choreographer, are from *Cirque du Soleil*, but this is not a *Cirque du Soleil* production. *Age of Innocence* is planned to open in September 2001. A full colour brochure of theatre and circus training classes at Playbox is available from The Dream Factory, Shelley Avenue, Warwick CV34 6LE.

### Ridiculusmus Theatre Company

set off on an international tour in late January with gigs at the Tron Theatre, Glasgow and as part of the Dublin Theatre Symposium in January. They return in May 2001 with a whole package of goodies planned for London, including one-off performances of their earlier shows.  
Details: 020 7348 0203

### Spymonkey

tour *Stiff - Undertaking Undertaking* in the UK and internationally this spring, including performances at the Purcell Room as part of the London International Mime Festival. The company is also set to begin work on their next show, joined by the German performer Stephan Kreiss. Spymonkey formed in Zurich, Switzerland in 1998, whilst co-founders Petra Massey, Aitor Basauri and Toby Park were working with action-theatre company Karls Kuhne Gassenchau. Together with director Cal McCrystal (*Peepolykus*, *The Mighty Boosh*) they devised and created their debut show *Stiff*, set in a funeral parlour, which has since received critical acclaim and went on to win a Total Theatre Award at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2000.  
Details: 01273 600779.

### Tanden

have recently completed a research period towards their first show, based on Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, planned for a spring tour. The company, directed by Frances Barbe, train in the unique actor training method of Japanese director Tadashi Suzuki, and are exploring the use of that training as a foundation for ensemble practice, and for a more physical style of theatre performance. Details: 020 8451 1268.  
tanden\_theatre@hotmail.com.

### Théâtre Sans Frontière

recently completed a UK tour of *Le Chat Noir*, a magical folk tale from Brittany performed in simple French and suitable for audiences of eight years and over. Performed by a cast of five, accompanied by anarchic puppets, fantastical masks from Trestle Theatre and original music, *Le Chat Noir* is directed by Sarah Kemp. Details: 01434 652484/607206.  
Admin@tsfront.co.uk.  
www.theatresansfrontieres.co.uk.



Théâtre Sans Frontière, *Le Chat Noir*  
Photo: Keith Pattison

### Theatre Alibi

tour *Little White Lies*, a funny and entertaining pack of funny and sad stories about fibbing, throughout England until April 2001. First mounted in 1996 the show is written, directed and designed by the same team that produced last year's *Shelf Life*. The company has recently been chosen for a £45,000 Sainsbury's Checkout Theatre Award for its collaboration with Theatre Royal Plymouth on *Why the Whales Came*, a new show for 9-13 year olds touring nationally in autumn 2001. Details: 01392 217315.  
e-mail: alibi@eclipse.co.uk.

### Told by an Idiot

present *A Little Fantasy* as part of the London International Mime Festival in January. Company founder Hayley Carmichael and other members of *Told By An Idiot* present a selection of wordless works-in-progress inspired by a wide range of things - the works of Rodin, Zeus, gymnastic equipment, and the human body. With the help of music, design and light, the Company will explore stories of life and love. Details: 020 7978 4200.

### Unlimited Theatre

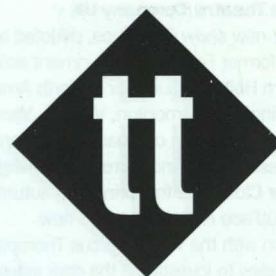
broadcast their production of *Static* on Radio 4 last October to an estimated audience of 300,000 - more people in one go than are ever likely to see the show in a theatre. Unlimited presented *Scream* as a work-in-progress at the British Festival of Visual Theatre in London in October. The company continue to work on the show and plan to present a further two work-in-progress showings in London and Leeds in February. The company will also continue to tour the award-winning *Static* and *Clean* throughout March and April 2001.  
e-mail: unlimited@pop3.poptel.org.uk.

### The Weird Sisters

preview their new show, *Cheap Day Return*, devised by the company in collaboration with Cal McCrystal, at The Bull, Barnet in January 2001. The production will tour nationally and internationally in 2001/02, including Germany, The Netherlands, Canada, Australia and the USA. Details: 0771 536 0021. e-mail: weirdsists@aol.com.  
www.weirdsisters.co.uk.

### John Paul Zaccarini

can be seen on January 13th and 14th performing *Throat*, as part of the London International Mime Festival. *Throat* is available for touring nationally later in the year.  
Details: 020 7348 0203.



## total theatre magazine

### FREE LISTINGS SERVICE

#### Total Theatre Network members only

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

#### Listings can be placed in:

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

### DISPLAY ADVERTISING

#### Advert Cost

Size	Members	Non-Members
Full page	£150	£270
Half page	£100	£200
Quarter page	£75	£120
Eighth page	£50	£80

#### Advert Dimensions (mm)

Size	Rotation	Width x Depth
Full page	-	188 x 269
Half page	landscape	188 x 129
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Quarter page	landscape	188 x 64
Quarter page	portrait	89 x 129
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Number	Members	Non-Members
650 leaflets	£65	£95
900 leaflets	£90	£125

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

**PERFORMANCES**

**The Big Picture Company  
A DARK RIVER**

020 8348 0203

**MARCH**

- 2-3 Croydon Clocktower
- 11 Hoxton Hall, London
- 21-22 The Studio Theatre, Leeds
- 23 The Bull, Barnet
- 28-29 Royal Exchange Studio, Manchester (tbc)

**Catalyst Theatre  
THE HOUSE OF POOTSIE  
PLUNKETT**

020 8348 0203

**MARCH**

- 20-24 The Playhouse, Liverpool
- 26-15 Riverside Studios, London (tbc)

**APRIL**

- 20-21 Merlin Theatre, Frome
- 24-25 Arc, Stockton
- 26-28 The Tron, Glasgow

**Foursight Theatre  
MEDEA**

01902 714257

**MARCH**

- 6-7 mac, Birmingham
- 8 The Guildhall, Grantham
- 9-10 Cambridge Drama Centre
- 13-14 Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton
- 15 Sir Robert Martin Arts Centre, Loughborough
- 17 The Arts Centre, Warwick
- 19-31 Nottingham New Stages (tbc)

**APRIL**

- 3 Old Town Hall, Hemel Hempstead
- 4-5 The Brewhouse, Taunton
- 6 The Forest Arts Centre, New Milton
- 7 Havant Arts Centre

**Improbable Theatre  
SPIRIT**

020 7978 4200.

**MARCH**

- 14-7 The Royal Court Theatre, London

**Indefinite Articles  
DUST**

020 7978 4200

**JANUARY**

- 17 Hurtwood House, Dorking
- 25 Nuffield Theatre

**FEBRUARY**

- 2 Little Angel Theatre, London
- 22 Loughborough University

**MARCH**

- 26-12 BAC, London

**Ophaboom  
THE HUNCHBACK OF  
NOTRE-DAME**

020 8442 9655

**FEBRUARY**

- 23 Trouville, France (tbc)
- 27-28 QEHA, Bristol

**MARCH**

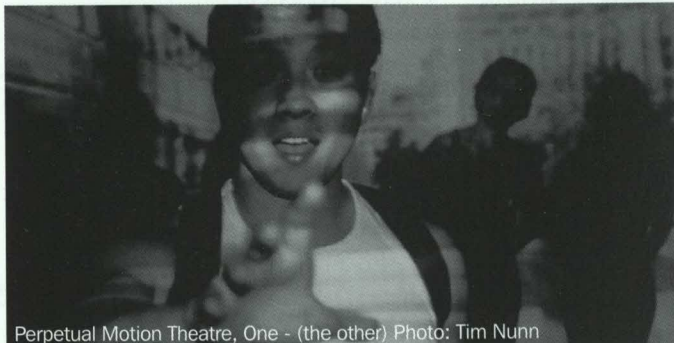
- 1 Ridings Arts Centre, Winterbourne
- 2 Winsley Village Hall, Wilts.
- 3 West Dean, Wiltshire
- 6 Christ's Hospital Theatre, Horsham
- 7 Malden Theatre, Pulborough
- 8 Wiltshire (tbc)

- 9 Madley Parish Hall, Herefordshire
- 10 Leintwardine Village Hall, nr Ludlow

- 15 Acorn Theatre, Penzance
- 16 Uplyme Village Hall, nr Lyme Regis
- 17 East Portlemouth Village Hall, Devon
- 22-23 Little Angel Theatre, London
- 29 Danebank Theatre, Crewe
- 30-31 Theatre in the Mill, Bradford

**APRIL**

- 5-6 Isle of Wight



Perpetual Motion Theatre, One - (the other) Photo: Tim Nunn

**Perpetual Motion Theatre  
ONE - (THE OTHER)**

0207 483 3798 or 07779 729794

**JANUARY**

- 11-12 Rondo, Bath
- 13 Tacchi Morris, Taunton
- 15-16 Phoenix, Exeter
- 18 The Bull, Barnet
- 20 Barbican, Plymouth
- 22-23 North Cornwall Arts (tbc)
- 24 Truro College, Truro
- 25 St. Austell College, St. Austell
- 26 Acorn, Penzance (tbc)

**FEBRUARY**

- 1 Miskin Theatre, Dartford
- 8-9 Powerhouse, Yorkshire
- 12 Loughborough University
- 14 Soundhaus, Northampton (tbc)
- 15 Hoxton Hall, London

**APRIL**

- 3-5 mac, Birmingham (Moving Parts Festival)
- 6 Limelight, Aylesbury, Bucks (tbc)

**Ridiculusmus  
SAY NOTHING/YES, YES,  
YES/THE EXHIBITIONISTS**

020 8348 0203

**JANUARY**

- 23-27 The Tron Theatre, Glasgow

**FEBRUARY**

- 1-17 Perth Fringe Festival
- 26-28 Brisbane

**MARCH**

- 1-3 Brisbane
- 5-10 Bay Islands Festival, New Zealand
- 12-17 Taranaki Festival, New Zealand
- 19-24 Hawaii
- 28-31 Touring in Holland

**APRIL**

- 1-28 Touring in Holland

**Spymonkey  
STIFF - UNDERTAKING  
UNDERTAKING**

01273 600779

**JANUARY**

- 21 Croydon Clocktower (LIMF)
- 24-28 Purcell Room, SBC, London (LIMF)

**FEBRUARY**

- 6-11 Merlin Theatre, Budapest

- 26-4 US Comedy Arts Festival, Aspen, Colorado

**MARCH**

- 28 mac, Birmingham
- 31 Unity, Liverpool

**Theatre Alibi  
LITTLE WHITE LIES**

01392 217315

**FEBRUARY**

- 1 Exeter Phoenix
- 13 Hawth, Crawley
- 14-15 Komedia, Brighton
- 16 21 South Street, Reading
- 21 Lakeside Theatre, Colchester
- 22-24 Salisbury Playhouse
- 27 The Barn, Dartington
- 28 Sundial Theatre, Cirencester



- 1 Bridgwater Arts Centre
- 2 Windsor Arts Centre
- 6-10 Drum Theatre, Plymouth
- 14-17 Haymarket Theatre Studio, Leicester
- 21-22 Arc, Stockton-on-Tees
- 23 Square Chapel, Halifax
- 27 Bridport Arts Centre
- 28 Acorn, Penzance
- 29 Falmouth Arts Centre

**MARCH**

- 3-4 QEHA Theatre, Bristol
- 6 mac, Birmingham
- 10-11 Ustinov Studio, Bath

**APRIL**

- 3-4 QEHA Theatre, Bristol
- 6 mac, Birmingham
- 10-11 Ustinov Studio, Bath

**Theatre des Bouffes  
du Nord  
LE COSTUME**

020 7928 6363

**JANUARY**

- 24-3 The Young Vic, London (LIFT)

**Theatre O  
3 DARK TALES**

020 8348 0203

**JANUARY**

- 30 Darlington Arts Centre

**FEBRUARY**

- 22-24 Royal Exchange Studio, Manchester

**MARCH**

- 28 Studio Theatre, Leeds
- 31 Salisbury Arts Centre

**APRIL**

- 27-28 The Pavilion Theatre, Dun Laoghaire
- 30-5 Drum Studio, Plymouth

**MAY**

- 10-12 Waterfront Hall, Belfast

**The Weird Sisters  
CHEAP DAY RETURN**

0771 536 0021

**JANUARY**

- 31 The Bull, Barnet (preview)

- 31 The Bull, Barnet (preview)

**FEBRUARY**

- 1 The Bull, Barnet (preview)
- 14-24 Friends of Italian Opera, Berlin
- 27-1 BAC, London

**MARCH**

- 2-3 Wimbledon Studio Theatre

**APRIL**

- 20-29 Orlando, USA

**FESTIVALS**

**London International  
Mime Festival**

January 13-28

(BAC) 020 7223 2223  
(Cine Lumiere) 020 7838 2144/46  
(Circus Space) 020 7613 4141  
(The Drome & South London Gallery) 0870 906 3711  
(Hoxton Hall) 020 7739 5431 (ICA) 020 7930 3647  
(Purcell Room & QEHA) 020 7960 4242

**JANUARY**

- 13 Les Deux Voyages de Jacques Lecoq (Cine Lumiere)
- 13-17 BlackSkyWhite, Bertrand's Toys (Purcell Room)
- 13/20 Whalley Range All Stars, Head Quarters (RNT Foyer)
- 15-21 La Ribot, Still Distinguished (South London Gallery)
- 16-21 Basil Twist, Symphonie Fantastique (ICA)
- 19-21 Derevo, The Rider (QEHA)
- 19-21 Fiat Lux, Nouvelles Folies (Purcell Room)
- 20-21 Maybellene, The Road to Shangri-La (Hoxton)
- 20-21 David and Danny Ronaldo, Lazzi (QEHA Foyer)
- 20-21 John Paul Zaccarini, Throat (Circus Space)
- 23-25 Ariel Teatr, A Little Requiem for Kantor (ICA)
- 26-28 Stephen Mottram's Animata, Organillo (ICA)
- 27-28 Circus Space Cabaret (Circus Space)
- 21-28 Shunt, The Ballad of Bobby François (The Drome)
- 22-23 Theatre du Mouvement, Le Chant Perdu des Petits Riens (Purcell Room)
- 23-25 Told By An Idiot, A Little Fantasy (BAC)
- 24-28 Spymonkey, Stiff - Undertaking Undertaking (Purcell Room)
- 26-28 Theatre de L'Ange Fou, Entangled Lives (Hoxton Hall)
- 26-28 Kantor of Film (BAC)

**Moving Parts 2001  
MAC, BIRMINGHAM**

0121 440 3838

**FEBRUARY**

- 15-16 Motionhouse, Fearless
- 22-23 Henri Oguike (title tbc)
- 24 Third Angel, Where From Here

**MARCH**

- 1 Trading Faces, The Wife of Bath
- 2 theatre O, 3 Dark Tales
- 6-7 Foursight Theatre, Medea
- 14-15 ACE Dance Co., Solitude or Sanctuary
- 17 Claire Russ and Caroline Broadhead, Veil Safe
- 22-23 DanceXchange, Bare Bones
- 28 Spymonkey, Stiff - Undertaking Undertaking
- 31 Unlimited Theatre, Clean/Static

**APRIL**

- 5 Perpetual Motion Theatre, One - (the Other)
- 6 Theatre Alibi; Sweet Little Lies

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Gaulier School, St Michael's Church Hall,  
St Michael's Road, London NW2 6XG.

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20 JANUARY

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Anton Adassinski (Derevo) and Cal  
McCrystal (Spymonkey). 3-5pm. £5 (£3  
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#### The Why Not Institute

London 020 8987 6661

20-21 JANUARY

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February  
 THU 15 & FRI 16 MOTIONHOUSE  
 THU 22 & FRI 23 HENRI OGUIKE  
 SAT 24 THIRD ANGEL

March

THU 1 TRADING FACES  
 FRI 2 THEATRE 0  
 TUE 6 & WED 7 FOURSIGHT THEATRE  
 SAT 10 KAZUKO HOHIKI

WED 14 & THU 15 AGE DANCE COMPANY  
 THU 22 & FRI 23 BARE BONES

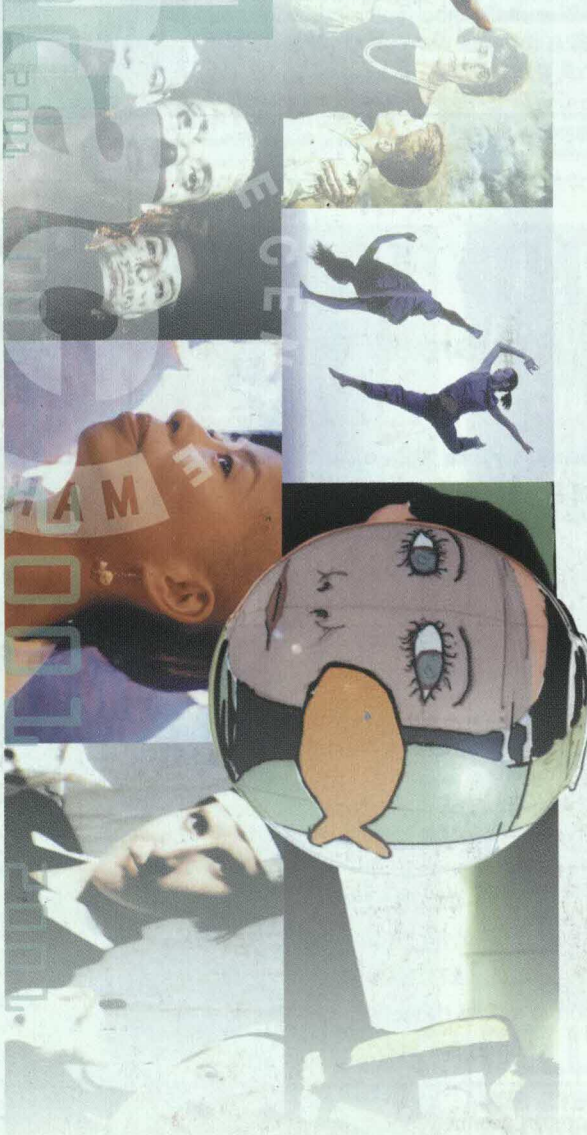
WED 28 SPY MONKEY  
 SAT 31 UNLIMITED THEATRE

April

THU 5 PERPETUAL MOTION  
 FRI 6 THEATRE ALBI

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