

# total theatre

Total Theatre Network – celebrating physical & visual performance  
Volume 16 Issue 3-4 Autumn 2004 £4.00 [totaltheatre.org.uk](http://totaltheatre.org.uk)

## magazine

### The Word Made Flesh

Forced Entertainment  
The Beckett Project  
Physical Text



**PLUS**  
Shunt take the space  
x.trax Street Inspirations  
Pig Iron – Philadelphia calling

## LIVE 05 Vow of Liveness

1. The show must be site-specific or site-appropriate (e.g. if the site is a theatre, the show must be set in a theatre). Props and sets must not be brought in, and must only be items found at the site.
2. Any sound effects must be produced live by the performers. Music must only be used as part of the story; it must be played on instruments or audio devices which are part of the action.
3. The performers must recognise the presence of the audience. There is no fourth wall.
4. Special lighting effects are not acceptable. Lights relevant to the action may be operated by the performers.
5. Scene changes are forbidden.
6. The show must not contain superficial action (e.g. no murders or weapons).
7. The show takes place here and now. Unity of time must be respected.
8. Genre shows are not acceptable.
9. The show must be devised by the company. There should be room for possible improvisation.
10. There is no director; one or more of the company may act as facilitator(s).

Furthermore our supreme goal is to force **the truth** out of our characters and situations, by all means available and at the possible cost of good taste and aesthetic considerations.

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London International School of Performing Arts

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### Up Front

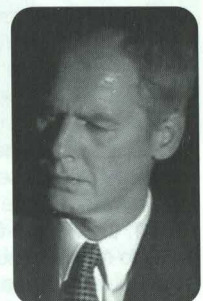
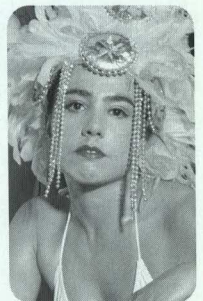
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If you would like to submit news, views, letters or advertise in the Spring issue, please note that the copy deadline is 7 December 2004. The Spring issue will be published on 1 February 2005 and will cover the period February to April 2005.

**Cover**  
Forced Entertainment's  
'Bloody Mess', photo by  
Hugo Glendinning

# Editorial

Words, words, words... In this issue of Total Theatre Magazine we have the first batch of a series of features that look at: ways that words can be incorporated into performance; ways that words can be interpreted for performance; and ways that words can inform a performance. In 'Poetry and Motion' Tom Wilson suggests that the plays of Samuel Beckett and Sarah Kane have an intrinsic physicality. 'Standing Still While Not Standing Still' by Jerri Daboo also has Beckett as her starting point; in her case it is an observation of Phillip Zarrilli's training and performing methods which use various Eastern movement practices as a means of finding the physical realisation of Beckett's words.

For Forced Entertainment, both written and found texts (such as newspaper accounts, diary entries and street names)

are used as the catalyst for improvisations. We have a reflection on their birthday anniversary show, 'Bloody Mess'. And they are not the only ones with a birthday...

On the occasion of its 20th birthday as an organization, Total Theatre Network (founded as Mime Action group in 1984) is undergoing a process of re-evaluation. Much of the discussion at the Total Theatre Salon, held at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, focused on the question of what sort of performance we now represent. Most of the terms used (mime, physical theatre, visual theatre) seem somehow not quite inclusive of all the work we represent. What has become increasingly obvious is that old divides between 'physical' and 'text-based' theatre are becoming obsolete. We have now reached a point when theatre has the potential to freely embrace all possibilities.

The simplest answer to the conundrum is to say that we represent 'total theatre'.

The next issue of the magazine will contain a full report on the Salon and a reflection on the past, present and future of Total Theatre (the organisation and the artform). The thoughts and views of all of you would be very welcome; please do get in contact to tell us what you think of the organisation and the artform – and the magazine that represents both. As the magazine will be undergoing a process of change over the coming months, we would particularly welcome comments on what you would like to see more of, what you'd like to see less of and what we're not including that we could include in the future.

**Dorothy Max Prior**  
editorial@totaltheatre.org.uk

## Dear Total Theatre,

In a piece of editorial timeliness, I'm pleased to be able to reply positively on behalf of the Puppet Centre Trust to Emi Slater's question in her feature The Alchemist (Total Theatre 16/2) – 'Why is puppetry still not sexy?'. It seems that the tide may indeed be turning as, in July 2004, the Puppet Centre Trust was fortunate to receive a substantial grant from Arts Council England to completely redevelop our provision of training for puppeteers and theatre artists committed to puppetry. PCT has been supported by ACE for the last year, through funding for an Organisational Redevelopment project, some of the fruits of which are borne out in the training programme, Animating the Animators.

The grant, which is one of the largest paid out by the London office of ACE, represents a fantastic commitment to the artform of puppetry and object animation of the kind called for in Slater's article. It will be used to offer a series of workshops and masterclasses in puppetry across England, as well as continuing ACE's investment in puppetry artists through the PCT/ACE Bursary scheme. Full details of the training projects will be released on PCT's website, [www.puppetcentre.com](http://www.puppetcentre.com). With increasing funding commitment from the money-givers, it seems that puppetry is indeed starting to get the recognition that this diverse, challenging and long-marginalised art-form so richly deserves.

**Beccy Smith**  
Project Manager, Puppet Centre Trust

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## Autumn and Winter Festivals and Events

### Visions – The Festival of International Visual Performance

Visions festival of international visual performance runs from Thursday 21 to Saturday 30 October 2004 – ten days of visually amazing performances on stages, in studios, streets and other unusual spaces around Brighton. UK premieres include performances from companies from Quebec, Italy, Portugal, Majorca, France and Belgium. Launch-Pad – the visions 'fringe' – provides a platform for companies to show new work. Before many of the festival's ticketed performances, there are free 'visions starters' shows taking place outside on the streets and in theatre foyers. The Drawn to Perform symposium, produced in collaboration with Total Theatre Network and University College Winchester, kicks off the festival on 21 October. See [www.visions-festival.org.uk](http://www.visions-festival.org.uk).

### Octoberfest at BAC

Physical, visual, musical and total... BAC's Octoberfest 2004 brings us a great line-up including a new solo from David Glass, Kazuko Hohki with 'Evidence for the Existence of Borrowers', Goat Island from Chicago, Company F.Z with both new show 'Loser' and the Total Theatre Award winning 'Throat'. Wishbone will show the first tender shoots of their new show 'Sleeper'. Ridiculusmus are back with 'Ideas Men' and will also be Scratching new material, and Perrier award-winner Chris John Jackson returns with 'Jackson's Way' which was developed at BAC. Then there's Mat Fraser's



Ding Foundation 'Unexploded Bomb' at visions

# total theatre

celebrating physical & visual performance

preview

PC-free 'Thalidomide! A Musical', Peepolykus with 'All In The Timing' and separate shows from 'Jerry Springer: The Opera' team Stewart Lee and Richard Thomson. See [www.bac.org.uk](http://www.bac.org.uk).

### Indoor Fireworks – Two Weeks of Volatile Performance

Presented by Forced Entertainment and LIFT (London International Festival of Theatre), Indoor Fireworks is a two-week programme of performances by Forced Entertainment (with the London debut of new show 'Bloody Mess') and invited international artists including Gob Squad, Edit Kaldor, Eva Meyer-Keller, The Atlas Group, Random Scream. 25 October to 6 November 2004 at Riverside Studios, Hammersmith. Full details at [www.liftfest.org/if](http://www.liftfest.org/if) or see [www.forced.co.uk](http://www.forced.co.uk).

### cpt

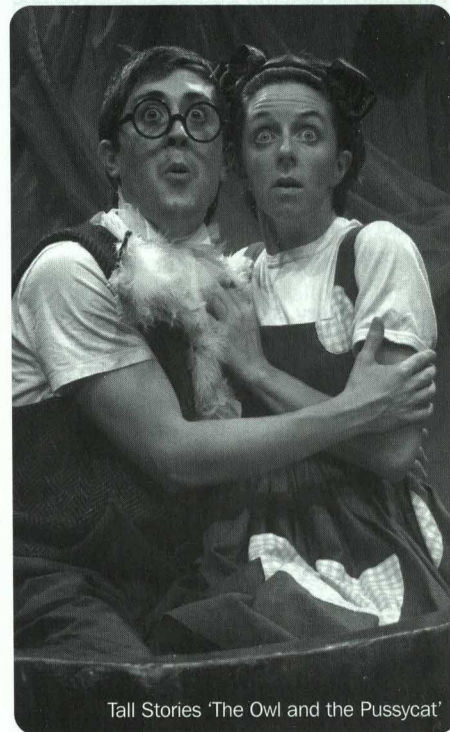
Camden People's Theatre celebrate their tenth anniversary with a birthday season that runs 6 October to 6 November and brings together performances from many of the companies that have cut their teeth at the venue, including Forbidden Theatre, Leikin Loppu, Petra's Pulse, Metro-Boulot-Dodo and Quiconque. Together with workshops in-progress from companies that are part of the TONIC mentoring scheme and a brand new show from cpt's artistic director Chris Goode. Camden People's Theatre, 58 Hampstead Road, NW1. Phone 020 7916 5878.

### Take Art – Rural Touring

Reaching parts that others don't or won't, Take Art's 'Live' programme brings high-quality professional shows to more than 100 village halls across Somerset. Highlights include Theatre Newfoundland Labrador from Canada, Cartoon de Salvo from good old Blighty and children's theatre company extraordinaire Tall Stories with their latest show 'The Owl and The Pussycat'. See [www.takeart.org](http://www.takeart.org).

### London International Workshop Festival

An eclectic mix of workshops from an international team of workshop leaders. There will be a chance to try your hand (or legs) at



Tall Stories 'The Owl and the Pussycat'

Parisian Can-Can, Bollywood, African dance and nipple-tassel twirling. For the first time, circus is also on the agenda, with workshops led by Hawaiian company Monkey & Waterfall (who combine stilts, masks and Okinawan dance) and with circus, street arts and carnival company Falos & Stercus from Brazil. The festival takes place 1-20 November 2004 in venues in London's East End and South Bank, including the Old Vic Theatre, English Touring Theatre and Menier's Chocolate Factory. See [www.workshopfestival.co.uk](http://www.workshopfestival.co.uk) to find out more.

### London International Mime Festival (LIMF)

In January 2005 the Mime Festival will once again bring the best of UK and international mime, physical theatre and visual performance to a variety of London venues, including the South Bank, ICA and BAC. Highlights will include the welcome return of Total Theatre Award winners Akhe from Russia, who describe their work as 'theatre of engineering' and England's own Nola Rae, who performed at the very first Mime Festival. See [www.mimefest.org.uk](http://www.mimefest.org.uk) for more information.

# Updates from Performers and Companies

## Company F.Z

F.Z are delighted to have just received fixed term funding from Arts Council England, London office. F.Z are continuing to tour their hit show 'Throat' in the UK and internationally in autumn 2004/spring 2005 and are developing a Christmas show with the Croydon Clocktower in December 2004; developing 'Loser' with shows at BAC for Octoberfest and at LIMF in January 2005; planning a new production 'OCD', which will open in Summer 2005; and planning a mid-scale collaboration with Jade. For more info contact CB Projects: [info@cbprojects.co.uk](mailto:info@cbprojects.co.uk); [www.companyfz.com](http://www.companyfz.com).

## Contemporary Clowning Projects

Angela De Castro is developing her next show 'Only Fools No Horses' with John Wright and undertaking R&D for this production in autumn/spring 2004, ready to go into production and tour in autumn 2005. De Castro also continues to develop the Why Not Institute professional development programme for clown-actors. For more information contact: [info@cbprojects.co.uk](mailto:info@cbprojects.co.uk); [www.contemporaryclowningprojects.com](http://www.contemporaryclowningprojects.com).

## Curious

Leslie Hill and Helen Paris are London-based artists working in performance, video and digital arts, known for their edgy, humorous interrogations of contemporary culture and politics, work which has been called 'as smart as it is seductive'. Their company 'curious' was formed in 1996 and has since exhibited and published widely. They are currently living in Paris on an international artist residency funded by the City Hall of Paris and the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Leslie Hill is a NESTA Dream Time Fellow. See [www.placelessness.com](http://www.placelessness.com).

## Dynamic New Animation (DNA)

This summer, Dynamic New Animation were invited to represent the UK at the World Festival of Puppet Art in Prague and the International Puppet Buskers festival in Gent with 'Chicken Licken'. 'Skin Deep Circus' appeared at The Garden of Delights in Manchester, at the Croydon Clocktower and at the National Theatre's 'Watch This Space' season. 'Genie in a Bottle', their 2004 youth issue project about genetics and nanotechnology, was streamed live on the internet on 14 May (see 'Let's Go Global' at [www.superchannel.org](http://www.superchannel.org)). DNA are now touring 'Atishoo!' for children under 6. New for 2005 will be 'Baba Yaga Boney Legs', an exciting adventure story for children between 5 and 11

years old and their families using visual theatre, mask, puppetry, dynamic physical performance, specially composed music and animated set design. See [www.dynamic-newanimation.co.uk](http://www.dynamic-newanimation.co.uk).

## Forbidden Theatre

Forbidden Theatre Company presents 'Goddess – a journey into the subconscious' on 22 & 23 October 2004 at 8pm at Camden People's Theatre, as part of the venue's 10th anniversary celebrations. This is the first stage in the development of Forbidden's next show which uses Greek myths to explore the repressed fears and anxieties of a woman who is unable to come to terms with her brother's death. During this stage of development the company will be focusing on creating the dream world using Greek mythology. Complementing the performance, a small exhibition and a short radio play will provide background information to the audience. Visit [www.forbidden.org.uk](http://www.forbidden.org.uk).

## Foursight Theatre

Foursight Theatre are currently touring Euripides' 'Hecuba' – the British premiere of the new translation by John Harrison, directed by Naomi Cook. This rarely staged Greek classic lays bare the tragic effect of war on women, children, and the men who perpetrate it. Two and a half thousand years after Euripides wrote this play, the world still seeks to solve its conflicts through means of invasion, incarceration and death. Euripides provides no glib answers, but a dramatic and timeless story that begs us to question the consequences of our warring actions and leads us to ponder what the alternatives may be. See Listings for tour dates.

## Gravity and Levity

This stunning aerial dance company, led by Lindsey Butcher, will be touring in Summer 2005 with a promenade installation performance 'Taking Flight', directed by Kevin Finnan (Motionhouse). Gravity & Levity



recently won the SEDA Dance for the Camera Award to make an aerial dance short for the camera as part of this programme. For more information please contact: [info@cbprojects.co.uk](mailto:info@cbprojects.co.uk); [www.gravitylevity.net](http://www.gravitylevity.net).

## Horse+Bamboo Theatre

'A Strange (& Unexpected) Event!' opens in Boston, Lincolnshire on 9 October and visits London, Liverpool, Bristol, Brighton, Manchester and a host of other towns and cities before heading to Holland. The show recreates the vivacious and colourful setting of the Mexican Day of the Dead and depicts earthquakes, giant snails, skeletons riding bikes and getting married, bold heroes, mad assassins, red devils, miracles, death, revolution and resurrection. It is a whirlwind ride through the extraordinary life of Mexican printmaker and hero of the people, J.G. Posada. 'A Strange (& Unexpected) Event!' is also scheduled to tour the UK again for eight weeks next spring and will finish its European stint with another long outing to Holland in autumn 2005. Full details on [www.horse-andbamboo.org](http://www.horse-andbamboo.org).

## Jade

After the huge success of 'Cake', Jade are now looking to take the show overseas as well as a possible further tour in the UK from spring 2005. They are also planning a collaboration with Company F.Z for a middle-scale production to tour in 2005/06 and a new show with writer Sarah Woods for 2006/07. For further information please contact: [info@cbprojects.co.uk](mailto:info@cbprojects.co.uk); [www.jadetc.co.uk](http://www.jadetc.co.uk).

## Kabosh

Kabosh present 'Tall Tales... for small people' a unique theatrical experience for children which takes place on the telephone. Kabosh (in association with BT), one of Ireland's most celebrated and internationally renowned theatre companies, create a selection of bedtime stories for those under 11 or adults who refuse to get bigger! Simply dial the telephone number below and choose one of the story options using your telephone key pad. Following past productions 'Chair' and 'Sleep Show', Kabosh present another series of classical, chilling and humorous tales for those both young and old. Simply curl up in bed or dial from the comfort of a cosy chair at home and let the tale unfurl as characters spin you a yarn for the night. 0845 6030 138

## Kaos Theatre Company

Continuing their quest to tackle classic texts with highly physical ensemble theatre, Kaos (in association with Darlington Arts Centre) present their latest show, William Shakespeare's 'Richard III', which opened at Dar-

lington Arts Centre and is now touring nationally, comprising rapid character play, dark physical theatre, video, intrigue – and a red carpet. For tour details and further information on this and other productions, see [www.kaostheatre.com](http://www.kaostheatre.com).

### Legs on the Wall

Funding has just been confirmed for a spring 2005 tour for the spectacular and groundbreaking innovators of physical and acrobatic theatre Legs on the Wall with their hit production 'All of Me', directed by Nigel Jamieson. The company will be leading masterclasses in both London and Manchester for professional performers. For more information on participation please contact: [info@cbprojects.co.uk](mailto:info@cbprojects.co.uk); [www.legsonthewall.com.au](http://www.legsonthewall.com.au).

### Lightwork

'Here's What I Did With My Body One Day', conceived and directed by Andy Lavender and devised by the company, is a genetic detective thriller set in Paris, past and present. David Ree is a genome scientist. His ancestors have been responsible for the accidental deaths of a number of French intellectuals on the roads of Paris. David is invited to a once-in-a-lifetime conference in the French capital – and his father insists on accompanying him before the predicted onset of Huntington's Chorea. When his father goes missing and the ghosts of three French intellectuals appear, David finds himself caught in a countdown to a momentous discovery. The show is at the Pleasance London from 7-31 October. See [www.pleasance.co.uk](http://www.pleasance.co.uk).

### Pleasure Seekers

'Point & Shoot', a new devised work where life, love and friendships are put on hold for a photographic obsession, is at Camden People's Theatre from 7-9 October. Details and tickets at [www.cpt.dircon.co.uk](http://www.cpt.dircon.co.uk). 'And they're off!' is a free site specific performance in a reclaimed ladies toilet, inspired by the work of Eadweard Muybridge. Presented as part of the Muybridge festival in Kingston at the Toilet Gallery from 25-31 October. For further details, email [info@pleasureseekers.org.uk](mailto:info@pleasureseekers.org.uk).

### Scarlet Theatre

Scarlet Theatre's 'The Chair Women' is touring the UK and internationally from 14 September to 27 November 2004. Play Scarlet's TV studio audience and witness the filming of three ageing female friends. Fuelled by drink, they share a fantasy of a country gala where each competes for her 15 minutes of fame. But when real life destroys their dream, real violence ensues... Scarlet uses Schwab's outrageously funny satire of suburban values to take a swipe at celebrity culture and the distorted world of

reality TV. Created in partnership with Pan Pan, Ireland, and Ludowy Theatre, Poland, 'The Chair Women' mixes theatre and TV to give you a first-hand experience of what happens when fantasy confuses real life. See [www.scarlettheatre.co.uk](http://www.scarlettheatre.co.uk).

### Shams

Following three outdoor performances at the Lost Gardens of Heligan in September, Shams continues with a tour of the south-west with 'The Garden in November' – a multimedia solo show about the trauma of and recovery from war. In the meantime, 'Carousel', Shams' new show of longing, alienation and an airport is being Scratched as part of BAC's Octoberfest. Jonathan Young will be teaching a course in Clown Through Mask from January. This powerful workshop combines European traditions with Native North American clowning through the making and wearing of 6 masks that each participant makes. (See listings.)

### Tall Stories

At the Edinburgh Fringe 2004 the company presented two shows for family audiences ('The Gruffalo' and 'The Owl and the Pussycat' – both critical and commercial successes) and a more experimental piece for adults ('The Egg', a new adaptation of a 1950s French black comedy). 'The Gruffalo' tours the USA for the third time throughout autumn 2004, before returning for Xmas at a special London venue. Meanwhile, 'The Owl and the Pussycat' will be presented by two separate casts at Norden Farm (Maidenhead) and Lakeside Arts Centre (Nottingham) – both for four-week Xmas runs. See [www.tallstories.org.uk](http://www.tallstories.org.uk) for more info. The company is still on the lookout for new office/rehearsal space...

### Théâtre Sans Frontières

In 2002 Théâtre Sans Frontières toured its first major Spanish-language production, 'El Sombrero de Tres Picos' ('The Three Cornered Hat'). The tour was such a success that this spring they will be re-touring the production to theatres in England and Scotland. The tour opens on 26 January, at Queen's Hall, Hexham, at 7.30pm and tours until 10 March. Award winning Théâtre Sans Frontières is one of England's leading international touring ensembles, performing plays in their original language with actors from around the world.

### Theatre Modo

Theatre Modo's new production of 'Ubu' premiered at the Arches Live Festival in Glasgow in September and will tour Scotland and Europe in 2005 (supported by the Scottish Arts Council and Alliance Francaise). Theatre Modo is a Glasgow-based company that creates work that combines all the elements

that make theatre a truly invigorating and exciting live artform: great texts, a highly physical style that engages and includes its audience, visually spectacular design and fully-integrated musical performance. 'Ubu' brings together a new translation of Jarry's iconoclastic classic, macabre songs and a lot of vegetables to give this twisted work of genius new life and modern resonance.

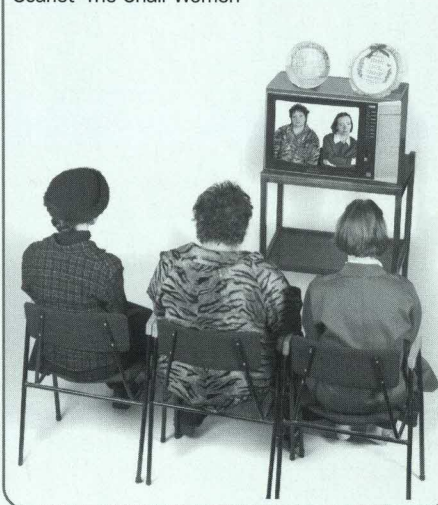
### Third Angel

Having returned from a busy and successful summer delivering their newest education programme 'Alternative Avenues into New Theatre' to young professional practitioners in Portugal, Third Angel is embarking on another new enterprise. The company will be in residence at BBC Radio Leeds as part of their community project 'all\_2gether\_now', working with community groups and individuals in the Harehills and Burmantofts area. See [www.bbc.co.uk/leeds/altogether](http://www.bbc.co.uk/leeds/altogether). Full details of all the company's projects on [www.thirdangel.co.uk](http://www.thirdangel.co.uk).

### Yellow Earth Theatre

Yellow Earth Theatre has been announced as the winner of the inaugural Pearl Award for Creative Endeavour at the prestigious Pearl Awards ceremony held in London on 22 September. The Pearl Awards are the UK's first awards to recognise and celebrate the achievements of the Chinese community in Britain. David Tse, artistic director of Yellow Earth Theatre, was delighted that the company received the award and pleased to be recognised for the artistic contribution they have made to British life. Yellow Earth is currently working on its latest production '58', a new play by Philippe Cheronnier and David K.S. Tse, based on the 58 Chinese found dead in the back of a lorry in Dover in 2000. On Monday 8 November, Yellow Earth Theatre is holding a fundraising benefit reception on the opening night of the week's performances of '58' at Soho Theatre, London.

Scarlet 'The Chair Women'



# Shunt take the Space

**ELYSSA LIVERGANT**  
explores the spaces  
of Shunt Events, a  
theatre collective  
whose relationship to  
space is at the centre  
of their process

**W**hen I walk out of London Bridge station on a hot July day I find myself faced with a solid queue of tourists waiting for their turn in one of the capital's biggest attractions – the London Dungeon. I skirt past a young boy, his body twitching with anticipation. I find Stainer Street, and with a right turn I leave the expectant crowd and am walking along a dark and noisy underpass. Past a series of metal doorways I reach one with a buzzer for Shunt. A little door within the door opens and I step into the space the collective will inhabit for the next few years.

Shunt's interest lies in exploring and experimenting with the live event and, helped by their use of non-theatrical spaces, they challenge the expectations associated with going to see theatre. As one member explains, 'from the second you walk in the door to the second you leave and go home you're in the

event and the show happens in the middle of that'. After almost 6 years in the intimate and increasingly cluttered Archway 12A in London's East End, and having garnered unprecedented acclaim for their last show, the company is in the midst of a major transition.

Inside their new space, a former spirits vault, it's dark, damp and disorienting. Free to wander around I get lost in its vastness, as it sprawls 70,000 square feet in a variety of different directions. I often come across smaller spaces or lofts that seem like private spaces, strewn with remnants of play or papers. Along one corridor through a vent in a shared wall I hear the recorded wails and audience screams from the Dungeon. The company is now in the throes of preparing for their next show 'Tropicana', and the show promises lots of death and dancing. In the 'long corridor' there is a cacophony of power drills and saws as company members, other collaborators and volunteers help build the performance space. As one member explains, 'it's good to have it [the space] and hard to get it all ready'. Over the course of a few weeks I see the vault transform 'into a space-in-the-making' and with no time to sit down and talk I pick up a drill and get to work.

I was first introduced to Shunt in early March 2003 during a preview performance of 'Dance Bear Dance'. After walking down the alley just off Bethnal Green Tube and being

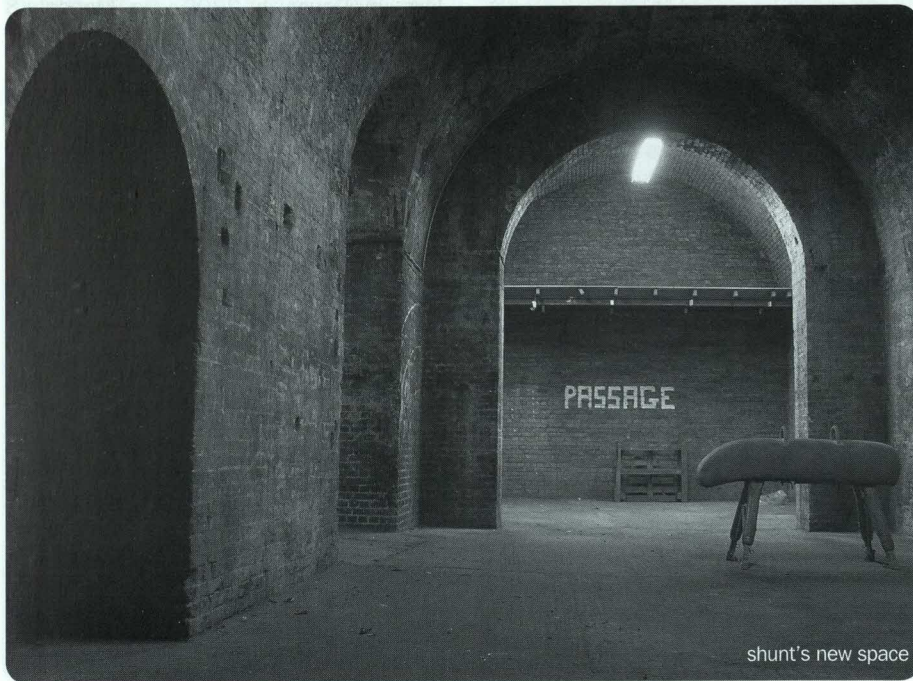
ushered into an archway by figures in black suits and animal masks I meet Belarus. Similarly masked beside a conference table, she welcomes me, takes my conference fee and gives me a badge. I am China. A masked Spain greets me at the bar with a handshake and refers to me by my role. Through the course of the evening I find myself placed in situations. I am nestled at the conference table between other delegates, witness to a failing terrorist plot I may or may not be part of. I gamble with chips in a high roller's casino and chant German prepositions at a

## In shunt's work the physical space is the primary text

church service. Like dropping into a virtual reality, the performers are doing it for 'real' and so am I; this is happening now – in this space at this time, and any fictionalized spaces 'are quoted within the concrete space'. The action undulates between the bodies of the performers and the journey they provide, and situations inviting action from the audience. As I travel between spaces, physical and imaginative, I am cast as a necessary player in the narrative without being relegated to fly-on-the-wall status or audience participant.

Made up of ten strong-willed artists, most of whom met while at theatre school, their work is presented under the line 'devised, directed, designed and performed by Shunt'. No individuals named and no roles assigned, although within the company there are definite roles and responsibilities. Functioning as a collective, leadership shifts throughout the process, and there is no attempt to 'squash or pacify' differing opinions. There is a great deal of candour, and a real commitment to each other and the space they share. When they disagree, they 'fight, and then go outside, swear and kick the wall and then come back in'. Although they worked on several shows together after graduation the official Shunt began with the acquisition of Archway 12A. While there, they created three big shows, 'The Ballad of Bobby Francois', 'The Tennis Show' and 'Dance Bear Dance', as well as running a series of cabarets that provided space for themselves and others to take risks.

Tying Shunt's inception to the occupation of its own space is quite fitting for a compa-



ny whose 'starting point is generally the space', and who are interested 'in what could happen in a space'. In their work the physical space is the primary text, and collective members consider what materials and situations that space invites. While devising, the company is always considering the audience's sensory and imaginative journey in a space, asking themselves 'what it's like for an audience to come into this room, through that door.' Often ideas for the use of space in relation to the audience come first, before they know what the show is. As such the design for a show has a huge shaping influence on any given piece. The company's desire is to 'change the audience's perception' of the immediate and imaginative space they have entered and their place in it.

The company seek 'remarkable events that possibly could happen in real life' as points of departure for creation, and their work is often infused with a 'sadistic' humour. 'The Tennis Show' hung on the contours of a tennis court and the hierarchy within that space and the game. The audience witness spaces vanishing, the lines of the court literally sucked down a hole, as everything that was set – the rituals, players, rules and court gradually disappear. As a starting point for devising, 'The Ballad of Bobby Francois' used the situation of the 1972 Uruguayan rugby team who cannibalised fallen team-mates to survive after their plane crashed into the Andes. Cast as fellow passengers, the audience experience the crash and then are left to witness the survivors struggle to maintain their humanity.

In 'Dance Bear Dance' there was a startling revelation a quarter of the way in. The audience are quickly ushered into a safe zone between two metal doors. Held in the zone the doors are opened in sequence to reveal mirrors on either side. Or so we think. On closer inspection we realise we are not faced with our own mirror image but that of another audience group going through the same experience. Both groups cross over in awe and disbelief to meet each other. In preparation for their latest show 'Tropicana' the collective thought of proposed devising sources in response to seeing the space. In this project science fiction story 'Solaris', written by Stanislaw Lem, has provided a loose springboard for generating material. They considered the space in terms of how they might move the audience through it, and then 'how that movement of the audience will inform the central narrative of the performance'. I'm told that the new work verges on promenade and uses 'the space and its vastness as the main character'.

As I leave the vault I wonder how this new character impacts on the ethos and working practices of the collective. Members have described their new home as 'huge', 'overwhelming', 'beautiful' and 'very dirty'. Its scope



shunt 'Tropicana' photo by Hugo Glendinning

provides possibilities and challenges. You can spend all day in the space and never know who else is there. A far cry from the intimacy of the former archways where everyone could discuss ideas as they cleaned. The space, show, sound system, design, promotion, and audience capacity have all expanded. It will require a greater effort to traverse the distance between them to continue developing their hard-earned process of shared creation.

Although still on the outskirts of the 'mainstream' the collective is now circulating in a national sphere, exemplified by their relationship with the National Theatre. The expectation associated with this new profile and location means there is a risk of becoming a 'homogenised professional outfit'. The collective acknowledge this and aim to challenge the pressure by staying 'connected and focused on how we work, who we are and what we are doing.'

The space and those that inhabit it possess exhilarating possibilities. There are quiet spaces to rehearse, develop and build things simultaneously, 'which really helps the process' and the size 'outreaches by a long way any one project'. There is also the space for members to be involved with different projects at the same time which 'allow(s) for development of new forms of play', that can contribute to the collective's work. Shunt are now joined by collaborators who have studios in the vaults and they, as well as others, have 'become part of a community filling out the space'. As their work is 'always particular to the space and who and what populates it', I leave twitching with anticipation as to how this space of creation and performance will evolve. ■

For further information on shunt, including performance dates and times for their new show 'Tropicana', see [www.shunt.co.uk](http://www.shunt.co.uk)

# Outside the Music Box

Musician and composer **CLIVE BELL** reflects on his life in collaborative theatre



Clive Bell photo by Caroline Forbes

Speaking as a musician who works both in and out of theatre, it's interesting to reflect on the good things that theatre offers people like myself. Dressing up is obviously top of the list – where else would I be allowed to pose on a balcony in a wig, coaxing a pavane from a harpsichord? This was the Royal Shakespeare Company's 'School For Scandal', and as I barely play keyboards, one of my most terrifying jobs. Then there's the camaraderie. Theatre people are generally much nicer than musicians, and develop intense friendships at the drop of a hat, to be tearfully but totally abandoned right after the final night party. Still, that process of day in, day out collaboration on a show's devising is all too rare in the rest of music, where it's a couple of quick run-throughs and bang – you're solving technical problems in front of an audience.

Other advantages of theatre include opportunities to perform to young children – the best audience in the world, since they don't realise that theatre and music are different. I wrote songs and played live for 'The Singing Turtle' by Kabutar, touring primary schools. I began the show as a silhouette behind a paper screen, playing shakuhachi (Japanese flute). As I puffed away, shaking my head in the traditional way of producing vibrato, the audience giggled and laughed. It's so seldom that a shakuhachi player is rewarded with laughter.

I cut my theatrical teeth in a show possibly more radical than anything I've done since,

Barry Edwards's Grotowski-inspired 'Ritual Theatre'. The entire performance was improvised by musicians and actors, and was often compared to watching a sporting event – there could be passages where we got lost, but a triumphant three-goal victory was also possible. Thus I learned to create musical coherence on the spot, out of nothing, in front of an audience. Even the lighting was improvised: my brother Neil re-invented theatre lighting from the ground up, carrying lights around the stage during the performance and trying not to get in the way. It still surprises me that you rarely see this done on stage.

Though of course what you can do on a stage is usually rather narrowly defined. Musicians are often kept offstage, with notable exceptions. The most recent one in my experience

was a cameo for a saw player in Robert Wilson's 'The Black Rider'. (This was created by Wilson in collaboration with Tom Waits and William S. Burroughs and presented at the Barbican as part of BITE.)

But I recall two adaptations by Steven Berkoff where a musician was simply parked on the stage throughout and allowed to play as appropriate. Colin Wood's cello in Aeschylus's 'Agamemnon', a pianist in Wilde's 'Salome' – these remain my strongest memories of music fully integrated into theatre. Maybe because when musicians play, they are visibly working – and Berkoff's theatre is all about the ecstatic display of physical work.

My best experiences of team devising in theatre have been with two very different companies, IOU and Complicite. The IOU process involved long meetings and much silence. Clocks ticked, beards grew and ideas evolved in Darwinian slowness or sudden flowering bursts. But we all knew that the talk was an adjunct to the heavy building work that was going on in parallel, as some clanking skyscraper or inflatable (for example a leech housing a jeep) was taking form at the other end of the workshop. I worked alongside the contrasting musical talents of David Humpage and Lou Glandfield. IOU shows tend to have music all the way through, so in rehearsal we would improvise or compose on paper according to where a scene had got to. Alternatively, a scene of action might be fitted around a song that had been finished, like a film director editing to music.

For a musician, especially one like myself who used to live in Japan, it's important to know who's in charge. And how far you can get away with taking the initiative. In this respect, a collective like IOU was a real challenge. There was no director as such, more a climate. A climate of approval or disapproval which you could learn to read, like a red sky at night. For the show 'Boundary' it was said, before rehearsals, that tunes which the audience could whistle might be a good thing. I fancied tackling this, but should I wait till we were well into rehearsals? Should I write something and risk having it rejected by the climate? I decided to pounce, wrote some pop songs with words by Louise Oliver, and was rewarded by hearing them beautifully

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**You get stretched into musical areas you might not have explored – for rehearsals on 'The Elephant Vanishes' I remember playing a flute full of sand**

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IOU 'Cure'; photo by Pori Medlock

sung by Kazuko Hohki and Nabil Shaban. This was a composing breakthrough for me, and I realised a musician could take the initiative and help create a show by bringing forward a piece, rather than wait for a scene to be devised and then fit music to it.

Working on a Complicite show is an extraordinary process of intensely creative collaboration guided by a director (Simon McBurney). I don't want to overwork the sports team analogy, but it's astonishing for a musician to feel so included in this physical work: hours of yoga stretching, group games that weld you into a team, and team improvisations that take you deep inside every detail of whatever text or idea is being staged. After a few weeks of this, the team consciousness you feel before going out on stage is so heady that you half expect to find a big number on the back of your costume and the stage to be covered in floodlit grass.

In rehearsal, every possible episode is devised again and again, improvised in small groups and performed for the rest of the company. As a musician, you get to do a lot of acting, and learn why you are a musician and not an actor. And you get stretched into musical areas you might not have explored – for rehearsals on 'The Elephant Vanishes' I vividly remember playing a flute full of sand.

For the Complicite production of Brecht's 'Caucasian Chalk Circle', three musicians (Joe Townsend, Michael Ormiston and myself) worked alongside composer Gerard McBurney

and sound designer Chris Shutt. In rehearsals we improvised away happily – between us, with Mongolian throat singing, Romanian fiddling and Thai mouth organs we could make quite a racket – knowing that, because we had a composer, everything would be all right in the end. Gerard wrote a handful of exquisite songs. It was weeks before the penny dropped and we realised that that was all he was going to write, and the rest of the music needed to be sensibly devised by us three chortling layabouts. Eventually the sound score was a wonderful thing, interleaving our underscoring improvisations, Gerard's songs, Gerard's multi-layered tape compositions (eight shakuhachis, or eight Mongolian throat singers) and blood-curdling performances of Georgian polyphonic hymns by the entire cast.

There are shows where the musician turns up in the final week of rehearsals, plays whatever the composer puts in front of him or her, and reaches for a magazine to read between cues. Far from criticising such practices, I'm down on my knees in gratitude for any show that employs live musicians, and in my experience the National Theatre is a beacon of fair treatment in this regard. But of course, it's nice as a musician if you feel like you are being encouraged to contribute creatively to a show, rather than just prevented from ruining it. I have enjoyed working on several shows with the composer Paddy Cunneen, who has several key skills. Chief of these is the ability

to convince the musicians that they are the most important people in the production, no mean feat when it's a big theatre swarming with technical staff, production assistants and of course actors. Paddy's other great skill is to encourage creativity, while never leaving it in doubt that he is taking responsibility for the music. For long stretches of the classical Japanese play, 'Fair Ladies at a Game of Poem Cards', he encouraged me to perform a guided improvisation on shakuhachi, so that I felt I owned the music, and the play. For Mikhail Bulgakov's 'Flight', also at the National Theatre, we accompanied a Russian steam train's arrival on stage. In rehearsal I was gratuitously showing off on the accordion a fast, shuddering bellows technique that I was fond of. Suddenly my galloping bellows were not only in the show, but amplified to steam train volume in the theatre PA system. The moral of this tale is that theatre people should trust musicians (while crossing their fingers), and have faith that if a musician is given his head he will strive to improve the show rather than destroy it. ■

See [www.clivebell.co.uk](http://www.clivebell.co.uk) for further information on Clive Bell's work, which includes music for 'Bedcases' and 'Pig', the last two shows by the Whalley Range All Stars, and several shows by Kazuko Hohki. Clive has provided shakuhachi music for the next project by Doo-Cot, scheduled for spring 2005. See [www.doo-cot.com](http://www.doo-cot.com).

# Another Fine Mess

Genuine audience members wanted – no drunks, no timewasters.

**DOROTHY MAX PRIOR takes the Eurostar to experience Forced Entertainment's 20th Anniversary show, 'Bloody Mess'**

Paris, the Beaubourg district, an early summer evening. Bistros offering devilled kidneys in the Menu à 12 Euros, a Mexican bar with tin tables occupied by Americans. Diners at the crêperie keep watch on bloated fountain sculptures the colour of children's toys. The Bear's Den is bursting with burly gay men; a fire-eating unicyclist commandeers a volunteer. The Pompidou Centre's escalators take visitors up to heavenly views of the city from the rooftop café. Down in the basement is a theatre with a very wide stage, panoramic you could say. We take our seats, and the entertainment begins: Forced Entertainment's 'Bloody Mess'.

The stage area is onstage, offstage and backstage of – what? We seem to have walked in on the soundcheck at a rock gig. Objects are dragged around the stage or handled with fetishistic care: a rickety selection of chairs, disco strobes and 'traffic lights', amps and cabs, silver cardboard stars, foil ribbons... The assembled characters are a motley crew: a couple of PA guys, hair hanging over their faces, drag a spaghetti trail of leads across the stage, thrusting mics into the faces of people who don't want them. There's a foul-mouthed cheerleader, a gyrating rock chick and a 'proper' actress who seems to have wandered into the wrong show. There's a gorilla

throwing popcorn, and a couple of sad clowns who turn nasty and brawl. As is often the case with Forced Entertainment shows, there is a sense of these characters as modern archetypes, the product of our collective unconscious, a deranged contemporary Tarot pack come to life.

'Bloody Mess' continues the company's ongoing investigation into the nature of theatre itself. Two parallel lines of questioning have informed their work over the years: 'What is a performer?' and 'What is an audience?' Together, these questions provide a reflection on the essence of theatre itself: a performer acts or enacts an action; a witness actively receives that information. The endless debates on the difference between performance art and theatre can be reduced to this: no witness, no theatre.

In 'Bloody Mess' the starter for ten is: Why are we, the performers, here and what do we want? Rock music, an ego-driven performance mode, is the perfect metaphor for this investigation and thus provides the kick-off reference point and central imagery for the show. The question is presented upfront early in the show, as each of the ten performers confides his or her hopes directly to the audience, speaking into a mic that is passed between them with all the confused ritual of a discussion panel at a conference.

The ego of the performer/character is put on the line, to be observed, mocked, trampled on or embraced. In 'Bloody Mess' – as in many other Forced Entertainment shows – the distinctions between a character portrayed and a performer's own identity are blurred... although any audience assumption of what is 'real' and what is 'fiction' can lead to dangerous misunderstandings. Better to see what is happening before us as a lesson in life – everything we see and hear, be it on this stage or in the world outside, is a story that we interpret, simultaneously truth and fiction.

After the show, we go out into the now-dark square. The mimes and jugglers have gone home; the blobby sculptures remain, bobbing in the water. The company and entourage settle in the outside area of the bar opposite. White metal tables squeal as they are dragged into place, seats are swapped, conversations struck up. A waiter looks on with cool detachment, then steps in to take orders for overpriced beer.

I am sitting with Robin Arthur and Terry O'Connor, core members of the Forced Entertainment ensemble. Robin and Terry, Cathy Naden, Richard Lowdon and Claire Marshall are the performers, Richard Lowdon is also scenographer/set designer and Tim Etchells is the director. Forced Entertainment is a collective, and although there are designated roles (designer, director, performer) there is a shared responsibility for and investment in the resulting work.

For a great many of the company's key works (such as 'Emanuelle Enchanted', 'Club of No Regrets', '12am Awake and Looking Down') these six have been the enactors of the Forced vision. In recent years, there has been a shift towards more varied combinations of performers – partly because of a desire for artistic change and partly life circumstances such as family commitments. Some of the core group have developed work outside of the company, some haven't. Robin now lives in Germany, and works with various Berlin theatre companies and artists, such as Gesine Danckwart. For Terry, mother of a young son, all her creative energy is channelled into the company. Despite their different approach to outside interests and possibilities for artistic expression, they share an approach to their work with Forced Entertainment that amounts to a complete trust in the value of that work.

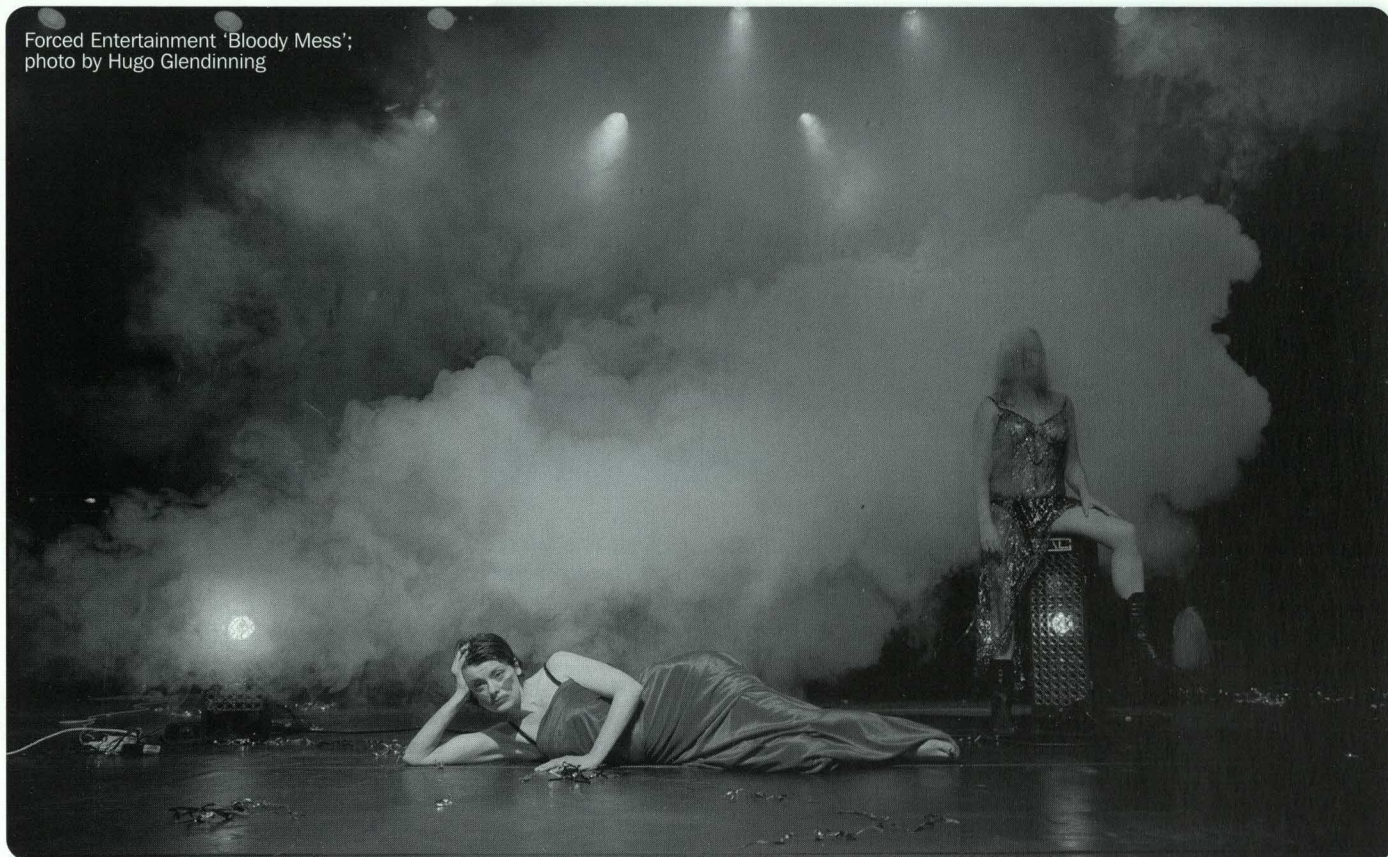
Critics and academics may not always have understood the company's work to be theatre – often viewing theatre as a dirty word

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**The endless debates on the difference between performance art and theatre can be reduced to this: no witness, no theatre.**

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Forced Entertainment 'Bloody Mess';  
photo by Hugo Glendinning



– but for Robin and Terry, there is an absolute belief in theatre as an artform. They say that, although there have been times in the past when the limited view of theatre funders and bookers was such that Forced Entertainment's work wasn't accepted within that framework, as far as they were concerned, the reason for doing what they did was a belief in the power of theatre – together with a desire to investigate that power and how it worked.

'Bloody Mess' – the title a nice little dig at the critics who've viewed Forced Entertainment as people just making a mess rather than making proper theatre – has the feel of a culmination work, with many motifs, themes and set-pieces that reflect the on stage history of the company.

Theirs is a theatre that is 'total' rather than 'physical' or 'visual'. They create theatre in which speech is an inseparable part of the whole performance text. They are not interested in creating imagist theatre, and they have no particular training in or inclination towards corporeal, movement-based theatre. What they are interested in is an empty space into which are thrown the starting points for play: dressing-up clothes, bad theatrical props and found texts being some of the possibilities.

The company's use of written and spoken text is one of its defining features. Excerpts from newspaper articles, film dialogue, diaries and street names are just some of the sources used in the past. Text appears lit up in neon or on hand-written cardboard signs;

as confessions read out from a script or a list of questions; in an interview set-up or as a monologue. There is very little of anything that resembles 'regular' theatre dialogue. In 'Bloody Mess' as in other works, performer/characters speak to the audience or at each other, often with the cadences and rhythms of poetry recitation. An example is the exchange in which two men trade comic and chilling examples of *A Beautiful Silence*, the rhythm of the words thrilling in their musical resonance.

The performer/characters in the shows can be viewed, said Etchells, as 'a set of alternative selves, versions...' (quoted in conversation with Adrian Heathfield in 'Not Even a Game Anymore') – but even this we can see as part of a theatrical tradition; the clown who plays and replays aspects of the self, the commedia dell'arte actor who perfects one character over a lifetime – and did Marlon Brando ever really play anyone other than himself?

And in many other ways, despite the challenges to what is viewed as theatrical orthodoxy, Forced Entertainment's theatre shows preserve the conventions pretty firmly. Space is delineated in a classic theatrical manner: the performer/characters move downstage into narrator-confessor role, move back into the play-space of the mid-stage area, move offstage (which is still onstage) into the realms of the gods, watching the games of humankind. The 'pit' between performer and audience is filled with broken glass and

snarling dogs – Robin confirms that the company are not interested in an audience participation free-for-all. The rules and regulations are set and the performers are in control of the space.

We discuss the way in which audiences sometimes feel 'let down' when their expectation of what in the show is 'truth' and what is 'fiction' turn out to be mistaken. I recall a post-show discussion after 'The Travels' when some people were dismayed to learn that far from being 100% documentary, what they had seen was a performance – inspired by real-life experience – that contained texts transposed from one person to another, merged stories and other fictional devices. 'In the end,' says Robin, 'it's theatre.'

Inventing the truth, I suggest, is what Forced Entertainment do best. ■

*'Not Even a Game Anymore' is a selection of original writings on the company in English and German, edited by Judith Helmer and Florian Malzacher (Alexander Verlag Berlin, 2004). A Forced Entertainment Symposium takes place 16-17 October 2004 at the Nuffield Theatre, Lancaster. See [www.nuffieldtheatre.com/forced](http://www.nuffieldtheatre.com/forced). 'Bloody Mess' has its UK premiere in Lancaster on 16 October, then touring. 'Indoor Fireworks' – two weeks of volatile performance presented by Forced Entertainment and LIFT – 25 October to 6 November 2004, Riverside Studios, Hammersmith. For full details of all the above see [www.forced.co.uk](http://www.forced.co.uk).*

# Poetry and

From Beckett to Kane, TOM WILSON  
looks at the intrinsic physicality of text

# Motion

In this piece I want to explore how physicality is intrinsically found in text and what this might reveal to us about working with text. In doing this I want to examine the close link between the poetic qualities of language and how this demands a response based in physical movement. By focusing on two playwrights that write strong physical presences I will identify the demand for theatre-makers to consider the inherent physical aspect of a text.

Samuel Beckett and Sarah Kane both share a similar aesthetic quality in their text. They transform simple statements into a dark poetry, often shifting between extended monologues and dynamic repartee. This is reinforced by their explicit and implicit demand for a *mise-en-scène* that is as visually striking as the dialogue. This concern and use of a poetic quality is as old as drama itself; Aeschylus through Shakespeare to Chekhov have all been aware of the importance of the sonic qualities of words being as important as their semantic meaning.

Despite this shared concern for the poetic nature of written texts, Beckett and Kane apparently have a fundamentally different way of defining how their performances should be physically. Where Beckett writes a full set of instructions for staging that are to be followed near religiously, Kane provides a deep vein of poetry that demands a similar intensity of visual image to accompany the text. Regardless of this apparent difference, they are not that far apart in terms of the way language works on the performer.

Beckett's texts have a high degree of physical instruction, crafted to ensure that the realisation of the *mise-en-scène* is as close to his vision as possible. This is most obvious in his 'shorts' and what is considered his best work, 'Endgame'. Here text and physicality interact within two 'zones'.

The first zone is Beckett's explicit statements on the way in which characters should move, elucidating the characters' relationships within the dialogue. Simon Henderson (in *Total Theatre Magazine* Vol 4, Issue 2/3) asserts: 'Beckett never let words "speak for themselves"... Concern for movement and physicality was never simply to illuminate or amplify the poetry, but to add a level of significance and meaning which is equally as

important as the text.' In 'Endgame' we find the gradual disintegration of the characters' physical and mental states articulated through the images Beckett provides on stage. Thus Clov's eternal 'to-ing and fro-ing' becomes a physical emblem of the pull between his desire to survive and his desire to be free of Hamm's control, making us experience the repetitive futility of the actions that the dialogue alone can only report second hand. However these instructions are fused and dependent upon the second 'zone': the qualities of the language and how they make a performer move, breathe and feel.

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## Aeschylus through Shakespeare to Chekhov have all been aware of the sonic qualities of words being as important as their semantic meaning

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Beckett's dialogue indicates his characters' physicality through the repetitive rhythmic exchanges, extended pronouncements and enforced stillness.

This control of enforced stillness and silence punctuates the rhythm of each character. As a performer exploring Beckett's roles, the temptation is to add to Beckett's instructions, but it is precisely by not adding anything and allowing the rhythm of the dialogue to impact upon you that you find the desired effect. I think here of Clov's 'stiff, staggering walk'. The tempo of his movement is directly linked to his speech patterns. Clov's vocal frustration has a staccato drive, each statement has a purposeful intent, but is halted,

tripped and arrested by the commas and full stops of the writing, and, of course, Hamm's thunderous interjections; and this gives us Clov's walk, jarred by the physical difficulty of his legs seizing up. Only through speaking can we find the physical quality. Alan Schneider, Beckett's favoured director, identifies that you act 'the roles of the characters in the various situations and relationships which Beckett [has] provided', not concerning yourself with the meaning. In providing a text that outlines, through its rhythmic patterns, the physical tensions of the characters, without actually saying what anything means, Beckett gives everything an actor needs to portray his role. Schneider articulates the depth at which this works when he says 'Beckett's plays stay in the bones. They haunt me sleeping and waking, coming upon me when I am least aware.'

This physical shape of the writing is also important to Beckett, and consequently the actor. Clov's monologue 'Grain upon grain, one by one, and one day, there's a heap' has a shape that shapes the body, as it mimics the rhythmic shape of the sentence. Here I find the clearest link to Kane's work.

For Sarah Kane, 'the language of theatre is the image.' Although Kane's initial work explicitly demanded a visually striking depiction of violent activities, her later work developed these images into the poetic language. The fact is that theatre texts do not need to be seen as 'dialogue' pieces but should be seen as inherently physical pieces, where the language needs a physical form to exist, indeed emerges out of a physical form.

In her later work, including 'Crave', Kane provides no overt indicators for the visual image she wants on stage. She writes only words; it is our task to find the physical form of these and, like Beckett, this is not to be found in the meaning of the words, but in their

rhythm and sound. Kane herself identified how she knew 'Crave's' rhythm before she knew the content of the sentences. In a way the content is not important, but the sounds are.

Recently, Liquid Theatre attempted to place the play in a more 'naturalistic' context, resembling a slightly decaying urban flat. As a newcomer to Kane, I found it intriguing that the rhythms of the language overcame this context and the visual content became irrelevant in comparison to the sound of the piece. In some quarters this production received a poor reception, due in some part to the expectations of the reviewers. Yet through its approach to the language it did succeed in creating a rhythmic intensity that found its way into my body, and this is in many ways due to Kane's 'shaping' of the language. Consider...

'... and sit on the steps smoking till your neighbour comes home and sit on the steps smoking till you come home and worry when you're late and be amazed when you're early and give you sunflowers and go to your party and dance till I'm black and be sorry when I'm wrong and...'

Here, just in reading these words, I find my body adopting a physical tempo, a physical state that articulates the rhythmic patterns. The lack of indicated rest or breath in this section challenges us to find a natural place for breath. As this section carries on for almost two pages it signals the challenge to do this in the least number of breaths, forcing the 'confession' out of the body, and placing the body in a state of physical stress to match the emotional crisis. It is not the meaning of these words that are powerful, but the

structure and sound; just as in contemporary dance the effect of a sequence of movement is not only contained in its gestural meaning, but its dynamic quality.

With this approach to language we find that 'performance is visceral. It puts you in direct contact with thought and feeling'. (Sarah Kane quoted in Graham Saunders, 'Love Me or Kill Me: Sarah Kane and the Theatre of Extremes', Manchester University Press.) Kane reaches to the heart of what the poetic qualities of text are: a felt reaction. Recalling other writers from the canon Yoshi Oida states that:

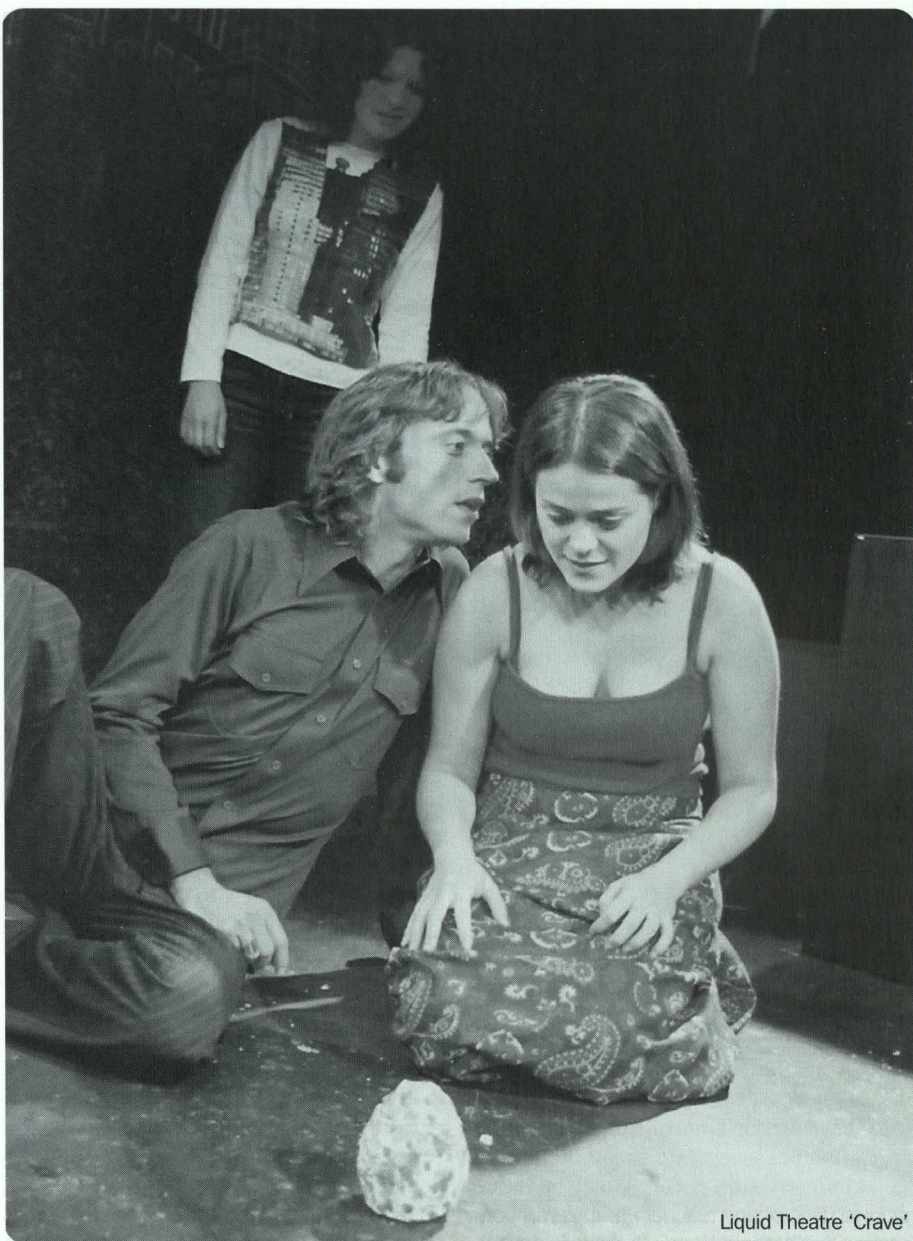
'Sounds have their own resonance or "meanings". A good writer, either consciously or unconsciously, writes more than a story, more than speeches or dialogue. A good writer chooses sounds. When you pronounce the words of a great writer... even without understanding the language, you feel something, because he has chosen the right

sounds.' (Oida, 'The Invisible Actor', Methuen, 1997)

This 'choice of sounds' extends to the inherent tensions an actor will experience within the body when those sounds are produced, and the text produces a physicality regardless of its content.

If text has a role to play in performance, even of that which is based primarily in physical performance, the key is not to focus on what the words tell us but how they tell us. What they do to our bodies and what our bodies do to them. Thus we can find our utterances raised to the poetic and more suited to the poetic quality of physical and total theatre. ■

Alan Schneider quotes are taken from 'Beckett, A Critical Heritage', edited by Graver and Lawrence, Routledge 1979. 'Crave' text reproduced from 'Complete Plays', Sarah Kane, Methuen 2001.



Liquid Theatre 'Crave'

# Standing Still while not Standing Still

JERRI DABOO  
looks at Phillip  
Zarrilli's use of  
Asian martial arts  
in approaching  
Beckett

Phillip Zarrilli photo by Peter Hulton



Beckett's 'Act Without Words I', written as a score of physical actions, contains the line: 'Does not move.' How can we physically act 'Does not move'? What do we do, if we don't move? But this is specifically written as a separate action, so it must be performed as an action. Watching international director and teacher Phillip Zarrilli performing 'Act Without Words I', there is a clear moment when he is lying on the floor where he communicates: 'Does not move'. He explains that he achieves this through focusing on the breath, keeping his awareness through his feet, hands, eyes and ears, and the clear thought of the line itself. He needs to fill in the white space of the moment, to embody the thought, feeling and action of the decision to not move. Although there is no outer movement, he appears to express a clear inner choice: 'Does not move'. It is through the connection with the bodymind and the breath, states Zarrilli, that 'thought takes shape as action', even if the action is to remain still.

Zarrilli has been developing a unique psychophysical approach to actor training and performance for over 25 years. He utilises a selection of Asian cultivation practices: yoga, tai chi chuan, and the fast and flowing south Indian martial form of kalaripayattu. He has trained in, and written extensively about,

kalaripayattu and the Indian dance-drama form of kathakali since 1976. It might well be asked, how can a form as dynamic as kalaripayattu be of use to an actor in performing Beckett, where they are often so physically restricted? If there needs to be stillness, of what help is the flow of movement and energy in martial arts? It is this very need for outer stillness, but a stillness filled with 'inner life', that Zarrilli states makes his training so relevant for Beckett. He quotes the late A.C. Scott's phrase relating to tai chi, the need to 'stand still while not standing still'. Even though there may be little movement externally, the bodymind needs to be 'filled out' from the inside to keep the performer engaged with the action, and give life to the moment of performance.

Yoga and martial arts have been used in actor training for many years. Stanislavski adapted exercises from yoga for use with actors in the First Studio at the Moscow Art Theatre from 1912. His use of Eastern practices has influenced many key practitioners since, including Michael Chekhov, Jerzy Grotowski, and Eugenio Barba. Training in yoga and tai chi is now not uncommon in drama schools in Britain and America. However, these forms of training are often used as preparatory exercises to relax and focus the actor, and are practised in isolation to rehearsals. They become a warm-up, something useful for the opening of a session, but not of real relevance to the western actor in the context of rehearsing a play. What makes Zarrilli so significant is that his use of martial arts goes beyond an initial training period, and has direct importance in not only the embodiment of the actor in performance but also, in the case of Beckett, in an enhanced understanding of the dramaturgy of the play, and how this can be actualised.

This was demonstrated in 'The Beckett Project in Ireland', which took place in May 2004 in Cork, and consisted of the performance of seven of Beckett's short plays:

'Ohio Impromptu', 'Play', 'Eh Joe', 'Not I', 'Footfalls', 'Act Without Words I', and 'Rockaby'. They were performed by a company of six actors, including the renowned American actress Patricia Boyette, and directed by Zarrilli. The actors had begun the rehearsal period with one week of intensive training with Zarrilli in the forms he teaches, after which the rehearsals were preceded by one and half hours of training every day. Even though some of the actors had worked with Zarrilli before, it is clearly not possible for them to be able to fully learn the forms in a few weeks. When Zarrilli teaches in a university context, there is a one or two year training programme, during which time students can begin to have a deeper understanding and embodiment of the techniques. With a much shorter time in which to work, Zarrilli focuses on the ways in which the cultivation of the bodymind through the forms can be of benefit for the actor. The forms all focus fundamentally on the breath, and a development of awareness, concentration, grounding and a sense of 'interiority' which is actualised in outer movement, thus con-

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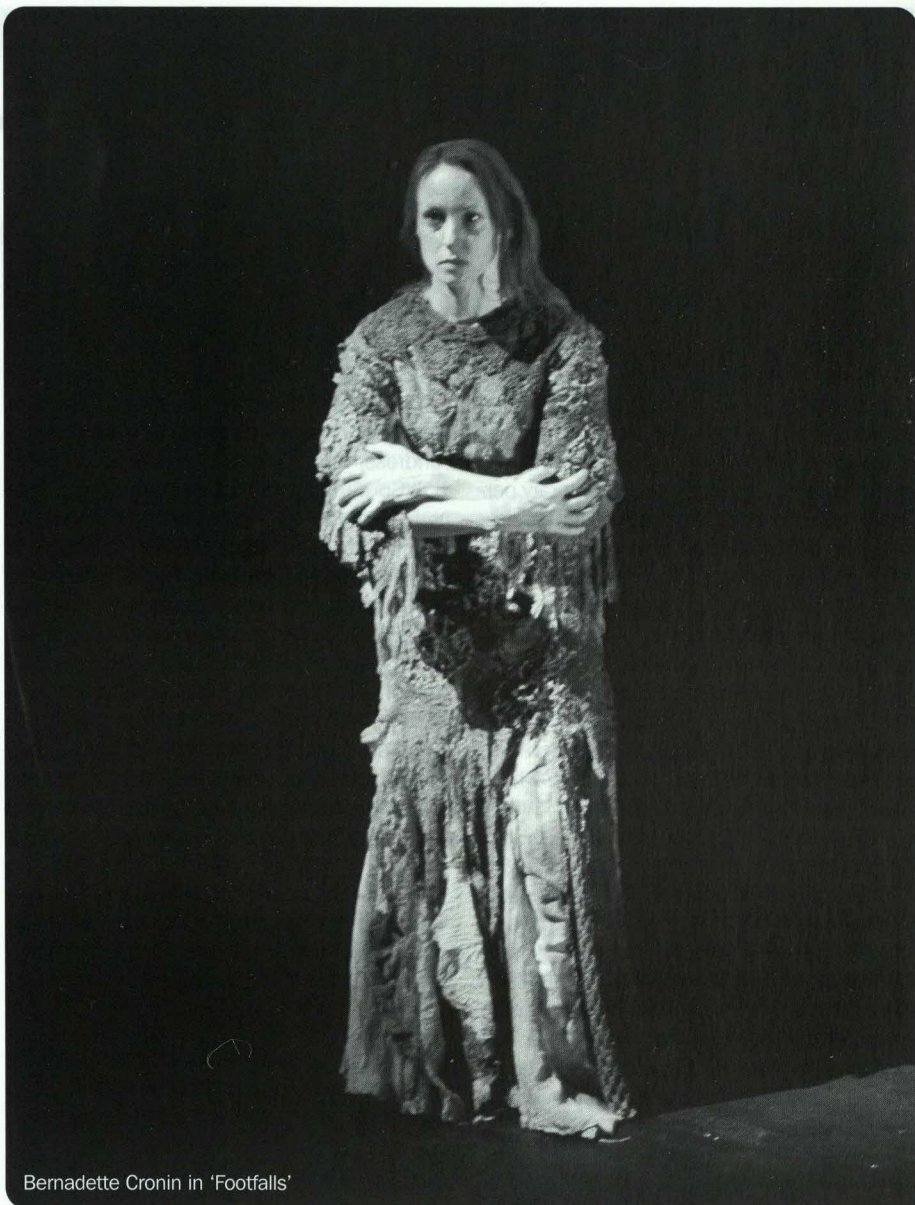
**Zarrilli achieves it by feeling his feet on the floor, and connecting this with his breath, and then putting his awareness into his lower eyelids, which helps stop his eyes from blinking**

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necting inner and outer in such a way that can lead to complete embodiment of the performative action in each moment.

Zarrilli explains that when directing or performing, his point of entry into a particular dramaturgy is through 'problem-solving' using psychophysical approaches. This includes the basic principles from the training, such as control of the breath, awareness, grounding and focus, but also finding the specific demands for each play. In 'Footfalls', the character of May, played in 'The Beckett Project' by Bernadette Cronin, repeatedly turns and walks in a set number of steps. In order to fully embody this action throughout the play, she needs to retain a sensory awareness in the act of walking, and in rehearsal learned to focus her attention on her feet. When not walking, her spoken text is describing her steps, so she needs to keep this awareness in her feet through her voice, creating a resonance of the movement which can help to embody the text.

This application of psychophysical approaches to the voice is particularly important in Beckett. Billie Whitelaw, a long-term collaborator with Beckett, has discussed the importance of using 'no colour' in approaching his texts. Rather than having a psychological notion of the idea of a 'character', the focus instead should be on the musicality and rhythm of the text. This is especially difficult for performers who are used to attempting to be as expressive as possible. However within Beckett, the 'problem' for actors is the necessity of cutting away all unnecessary movement and vocal expression. But this does not mean that the voice is 'empty' or monotone: the task is again how to find the fullness within the 'no colour'. Patricia Boyette needed to find this for herself whilst playing the Voice in 'Eh Joe'. Whitelaw, whom Boyette has consulted several times, suggested that she feel her voice as being like 'Chinese water torture', each phrase being a drip of water in Joe's head. Zarrilli additionally suggested she could sense that each phrase is a sewing-needle going under and through the skin. Zarrilli, playing Joe, responded to the sound of Boyette's Voice through a series of psychophysical devices. The text states that Joe wants to 'squeeze' the voice out of his head, and Zarrilli tries to suggest this 'squeezing' by listening to the voice whilst not blinking. This is physically very difficult, and Zarrilli achieves it by feeling his feet on the floor, and connecting this with his breath, and then putting his awareness into his lower eyelids, which helps stop his eyes from blinking. Since this is physically exhausting, the release of his breath each time the Voice stops speaking is directly communicated to the audience. I found Zarrilli's performance of Joe to be extremely affecting, with the sewing-needle metaphor made very real: each time the Voice began



Bernadette Cronin in 'Footfalls'

speaking, I felt as if a just-healed scar was being scratched open.

While watching all seven plays, I had this same physical, visceral response to each piece. Boyette, in particular, gave stunning performances of the immensely difficult and taxing 'Not I' and 'Rockaby'. Whitelaw had told her that she needed to find an individual voice for each part, and through using a psychophysical exploration of resonance in different parts of the body, she certainly offered very distinctive vocal qualities in her three performances, each with different shadings of 'no colour'. Overall, even though the actors were not necessarily overtly 'doing' much, the intensity of their inner connection and involvement was very present.

The means used to produce the performance is itself not obvious on stage. The audience need have no knowledge of the inner processes of the actor in actualising each moment, nor of the intense training methods that have led them to cultivating it,

in order to feel their presence. This is another important factor in the use of Zarrilli's work, in that the actor can use concrete tools and devices to find complete embodiment in the action of the play, which remain 'invisible' to the audience who only need to see that which is relevant for the dramaturgy. Having seen 'The Beckett Project in Ireland', I feel that even after a short period of experience of the martial arts training and methods that Zarrilli uses, there is a possibility for finding the resonance, rhythm, musicality and 'no colour' in Beckett's work through a psychophysical exploration of performance that fills each action with inner life, and enables the performer to 'stand still, while not standing still'. ■

*Phillip Zarrilli directs and teaches workshops internationally. He is also Professor of Drama at Exeter University, and offers training at his studio in west Wales. See [www.ex.ac.uk/drama/staff/kalari](http://www.ex.ac.uk/drama/staff/kalari).*

# Tricks and Turns

**MIRIAM KING asks: what makes a good speciality act?**

**V**alantyne Napier's 1996 Glossary of Terms defines Speciality Acts as 'All the acts in Vaudeville/Variety/Revue and Panto with a highly skilled component.' The question of skill in 'New Variety' and Cabaret is often raised, as so much contemporary performance is seen to be a post-modernist pastiche of quirky entertainment rather than having real skills. But although acts of great skill, needing a high degree of training or practice, are an important part of the picture – there is another tradition too...

Charlie Holland (programme director of the Circus Space and expert on the history of speciality acts) finds Napier's definition narrow, pointing out that historically there have always been highly successful acts with little skill but considerable personality. For example, the not-so-difficult yet completely engaging and enduring Egyptian Sand Dance of Wilson, Keppel and Betty. And then – high on personality – there is Joseph Pujol, known as Le Pétomane, who became the toast of 1890s Paris. Smart in a dress coat and with proud aplomb this flatulent artiste passed wind in various tones, lengths and velocities, blowing out the gas-jet footlights of the Moulin Rouge as his finale. Not letting air out, but keeping

it in, was English music hall artiste Elsie Walenda's speciality. In 1898 she remained underwater in a 'crystal aquarium' for over four minutes. In this water world she'd successively undress, write, sew, eat and drink.

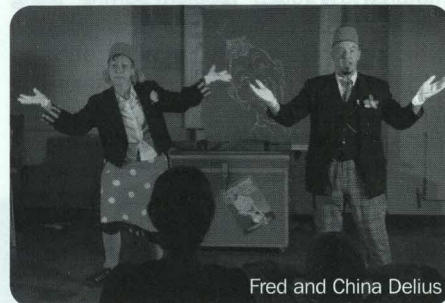
So perhaps it's not what you do but the way that you do it? We know what doesn't work: acts identical to lots of others; acts which are all skill and no imagination or all imagination and no skill; acts which are too long or have no sense of timing and acts with no attention given to staging, lighting or costume... But what does make a good speciality act?

Seeking an answer for contemporary times, I posed the question to Chris Cresswell of Voodoo Vaudeville who thinks the scene is exploding with talent, if we only had the venues:

'A good speciality act has to speak directly to the audience, and possess an innate charm and humour,' says Chris. 'It should have a touch of the surreal, be familiar and yet from a completely different dimension so that the audience is left wondering how on earth did they think of that? And other acts think "Bastards! I wish I'd thought of that!" The best and most enduring speciality acts are often very simple ideas performed in an unexpected way.' Danny Schlesinger is a prime example of this: a rotund man with a larger than life yellow balloon... Just how much innocent fun can one man have with one balloon? Presented with 1940s-style pizzazz, the double act Swizzleshaker is another popular act that has appeared at Voodoo Vaudeville and elsewhere, taking 'a dash of circus skills, poured over a double measure of dance'.

Rapport between the performers in this and other speciality acts is vital. A special rapport certainly exists between Fred and China Delius, a father and daughter double act of eccentric dance, magic and escapology. Fred says: 'A speciality act is by definition an act specialising in a rarely-seen skill – be that paper-tearing or swallowing golf balls. What makes a speciality act so appealing is the commitment to a rare or odd skill. What they are doing is their passion, combining their art/skill with a unique, engaging and entertaining personality.'

So what does Charlie Holland feel makes a good contemporary speciality act? 'What I'm looking for in an act is a quality of concept



Fred and China Delius

matched by the quality of execution. Hitting the jackpot is having an act which wows both a casual, non-specialist audience member and the aficionado who has seen almost everything before.'

An example of these qualities is a diablo double act called Tr'espace, who, at a recent Circus Space Cabaret, completely entranced the audience, including all the performers present. So, what really worked about this act? Charlie says: 'We marvelled at the virtuosity and risk-taking of the display... The act expressed passion – between the performers, about the potential of playing with the object, about moving, about working with the music... In making the act, the performers had thought about all aspects of the act, and had taken all the small elements and worked with them, as a composer plays with instruments, notes, time, volume and feeling, to put them together in a way which resonated for them, and for us.'

So, ladies and gentlemen, there we have it: speciality acts – a cornucopia of tricks and turns. The delight of a skill done simply, the surprise of the simple done skilfully; all oozing that magic ingredient – charm. ■

*The Circus Space Cabaret continues monthly – see [www.thecircusspace.co.uk](http://www.thecircusspace.co.uk). Charlie Holland's Night of Celluloid Speciality Acts (favourite film clips from the most weird and wonderful acts of Music Hall past) is at the Theatre Museum, Covent Garden, London on 16 November 2004 as part of the International Workshop Festival (IWF). The IWF in November 2004 will also include a number of workshops of interest to those who might want to develop a speciality act. See [www.workshopfestival.co.uk](http://www.workshopfestival.co.uk). Chris Cresswell will be leading workshops on Creating a Speciality Act on 23 and 24 October in Brighton. Details: 'Embrace the Chaos', c/o Brighton Fringe office on 01273 699733. Miriam King's own speciality solo act Grace E. Spoon – the Scarecrow Woman – has been seen this year at Voodoo Vaudeville, Lost Vagueness and Glastonbury Festival: [mimking@tinyworld.co.uk](mailto:mimking@tinyworld.co.uk).*



Grace E. Spoon photo by Mark Bennett

# Wet and Wild in Winchester

A rainy day in the life of Hat Fair performer KATIE ETHERIDGE

**T**he unofficial theme of this year's 30th Anniversary Hat Fair was water. Getting out of my tent on Saturday morning, it is the first thing I see. A sparkling river lapping at the roots of weeping willows. Within minutes the heavens open, followed by my broken umbrella. Paddling through street performers and crowds of Saturday morning shoppers, I head for the Cathedral Green.

Two guys walk past pulling a caravan, shouting 'Bonjour'. It's Compagnie Provisoire: an offstage performer creates live sound effects with a table of junk and a microphone as the clowns set up camp in front of a soggy but delighted audience. I enjoy their antics until play is stopped by the now-torrential rain.

Meanwhile the Brits plod bravely on. The Great Orlando picks a member of the audience and then makes a puppet in their image with blue foam, an electric carving knife, old tights and unhealthy amounts of UHU. Not quite Blue Peter but quirky fun.

After a restorative but financially crippling hot chocolate, it's time to get ready for my show. Willett and Patteson are kindly letting me transform their 'Amazing Camera Obscura' (a lovely 14-sided wooden travelling sideshow) into a 'minema' cinema showing 'Kitty Deplihez's Animated Pictures'.

As Kitty, a Victorian 'actress' and early film star, I am hosting a rolling 10-minute programme of silent movies. Evoking the experimentation and energy of early film and the humour and playfulness of music hall, the films range from a peep through the keyhole to a museum visit that goes horribly wrong, via an exotic snake dance.

I've shown this growing series of films in cabaret, museums, shop windows and installations but the sideshow is a first. We remove the innards of the camera obscura, and install benches, a screen, and video projector.

I decide to treat myself and get changed in the cathedral loos which cost 10p but are nearby and clean. On returning I discover that we have a queue of people but no power. Luckily Miss Fay is on hand to regale waiting audiences with charming renditions of particularly sadistic music hall numbers, whilst promised power supply is chased up.

Despite thinning crowds as the evening sets in, each screening quickly fills up with passers-by, policewomen, loitering teenagers and deviating churchgoers. At one point, seventeen 11-year-old boys (with their skateboards) are crammed in giggling hysterically, and they donate afterwards. Exit comments include 'I love the Hat Fair' and 'She's as fit as my mum', which I tentatively take as a compliment.

Apart from mysterious power cuts and the odd leak, it all works better than I'd imagined, and everyone comes out smiling. The only awkward bit is operating the video. I feel that the spell is broken when I burst in at the end with my remote control. Next time I will try to hide the technology.

Afterwards, I dive into the nearest pub and find Giro the Clown propping up the bar. He insists on making me a balloon sausage dog.

By now, my umbrella is doing a passable impression of Brighton's West Pier, a pathetic heap of tangled metal pounded by water. Even the nice policewoman takes the piss out of it as I see her trying to explain what apathy means to a pair of teenage boys bemused by Comic Character Creations' brave and sodden 'World Record Attempt at Apathy'.

Set to be a festival highlight, Mirando Al Cielo's 'Producciones Imperdible' cannot go ahead in the rain as it is performed on a glass

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**Apart from mysterious power cuts and the odd leak, it all works better than I'd imagined**

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stage, with the reclined audience watching from underneath. I am lucky enough to catch one eight-minute section, a taut duet danced to an electronic score. The experience is intimate, and truly exhilarating when the dancers hover inches above you, but eye contact is slightly awkward and I sense that they are warming into it. Disappointingly, they don't get a chance to, as the show is aborted by rain.

Unfazed by the weather, the hardy folk of Winchester turn out in force for Saturday night's street party. I am starting to fade so after ooh-ing and aah-ing over the 30th birthday fire sculpture, I head for the dry warm wonderland that is the NoFit State Circus tent for the Hat Fair cabaret. With a vibrant variety of acts and laid back but celebratory atmosphere, it is the perfect late-night focal point for performers, public and crew to meet, relax and reflect on a long, wet, but triumphant day.

Fraser Hooper masterfully rides the chaos when a large dog invades the stage. Wordlessly he tries to persuade the interloper to go, eventually resorting to stick throwing. Later, two very drunk ladies climb on stage, and in an inspired moment he throws a stick for them too. By now the audience is hysterical, and the women just don't get it.

Tired, happy, and still a little damp around the gills (although not sure now if from rain or lager spillage), I roll back to my tent, put on all my clothes and hat, and gratefully flop into a dry sleeping bag... ■

see [www.hatfair.co.uk](http://www.hatfair.co.uk). For Willett and Patteson's *Amazing Camera Obscura* see [www.amazingcameraobscura.co.uk](http://www.amazingcameraobscura.co.uk). Katie Etheridge can be contacted at [oldclockshop@dsl.pipex.com](mailto:oldclockshop@dsl.pipex.com).



# The Philadelphia Story



Pig Iron 'Cafeteria' photo by J.J. Tiziou

## DAN ROTHENBERG from Pig Iron on what makes Philly the place to be

I am sitting with Adriano Shaplin, founder of the Riot Group, in my apartment in South Philadelphia. Adriano will be subletting my place while I'm in Edinburgh with Pig Iron's three-woman clown show, 'Flop'. We've just wrapped up nine weeks of collaboration on 'Hell Meets Henry Halfway', Pig Iron Theatre Company's first text-driven work and Adriano's first collaboration with a company other than Riot Group.

We're talking about Philly's low profile – Philly the underdog city, the city with a chip on its shoulder, Philly the home of cheese steaks and Rocky. 'What is this city about?' asks Adriano. 'I know what San Francisco is about. San Francisco is about gay people and biking and hills and computers. Seattle – coffee, rain all the time. What is Philly about? I don't know.'

That said, Adriano, along with the Riot Group, are planning to move to Philadelphia in 2005 and make the city their US base. They will be plugging into a burgeoning, and as-yet-unnamed, ensemble theatre renaissance that is making its mark on the city. A number of ensembles, founded in the 1990s and making very different kinds of work, are coming into their own. Headlong Dance Theater, a contemporary dance company known for their postmodern humour and 'talking dances,' recently completed a collaboration with Kyoto's Arrow Dance Communication

which culminated in performances in Japan, Philadelphia, and New York. New Paradise Laboratories (NPL), whose kaleidoscopic dystopias pull from pop culture's detritus as well as medieval art, will enjoy its second commission by the Tony-winning Children's Theater of Minneapolis next year. And my own company, Pig Iron, has been invited back to the Public Theater in New York to develop a new work based on Shakespeare's 'Measure for Measure', set in a morgue. Important performance work is coming out of Philadelphia, and curators and presenters across the US and abroad are starting to take notice.

The surge is driven in part by economics. 'Philly is the only large east coast city that is still cheap to live in and make work in,' says Amy Smith, co-founder of Headlong. Rents are a quarter of those in nearby New York City, and the city is relatively compact and easy to get around. Philadelphia artists are able to take advantage of New York's cultural marketplace without facing the hardships associated with trying to make work in New York's bazaar-like atmosphere. Adriano reports that Matt Saunders of New Paradise Laboratories, when asked why his company is in Philly, replied: 'Yeah we're in Philly. We perform in New York whenever the fuck we want. And we live in houses here.'

Philadelphia is also buoyed by a generous

funding community, led by the multi-pronged Pew Charitable Trusts, which funds the Dance Advance program, the Philadelphia Theatre Initiative, and one of the largest fellowships for individual artists in the country, the \$50,000 Pew Fellowship in the Arts. The rotating categories at the Fellowship include scriptworks and choreography as well as 'performance art'; in 2002 the performance art fellows included Big Art Group's Caden Mansen, NPL's Whit McLaughlin, designer-writer-performer and one-man phenom Thaddeus Phillips of Lucidity Suitcase, and Pig Iron's co-artistic directors, the first collaborative group to receive the fellowship.

Cheap rents, good funding, plus the largest number of not-for-profit theatres in the country. Two public radio stations, including University of Pennsylvania's WXPB, a prime destination for singer-songwriters. A variety of opportunities for informal performance, ranging from performance salons at the monthly First Friday (primarily a showcase for visual arts in Old City), a complementary Last Monday series founded by Big House Plays & Spectacles (known for its site-specific installations and brilliant Beckett interpretations), to drag-and-vaudeville cabarets at the Trocadero hosted by the Big Mess Orchestra. Philadelphia has the largest number of students in any US metropolitan area, which pro-

vides a young audience and teaching jobs for artists. And perhaps the underdog character keeps the city the inexpensive well-kept secret that it is: 'People are here because they want to make work, not because it's a 'cool' place to live,' says Smith, again comparing the city to San Francisco or New York. New York is the city where you always look over your shoulder for the next thing, sometimes out of economic necessity; Philly is a city that lets you concentrate.

When this crop of hybrid-performance-creators coalesced around the turn of the millennium, cross-pollination began in earnest. Saunders, a performer and set designer for NPL, has provided set designs for small independent theatres like Theatre Exile, for Pig Iron, and for Headlong's 'Britney's Inferno', an interrogation of fame and the mind of the US teen. Lee Etzold, known to UK audiences as the tall and over-organised clown in Pig Iron's 'Flop' (Edinburgh 2004), straddles all aspects of the Philly arts scene: this former tap-dancer-and-basketball-player turned independent-singer-songwriter is a co-founder of New Paradise Labs, has performed with Headlong Dance Theater and in Brat Productions' all-female adaptation of 'Moby Dick', and for many years worked at the Philadelphia Fringe Festival, before the festival expanded and split in two to become the Philadelphia Live Arts

Festival and Philly Fringe.

The importance of this festival, founded in 1997 by Philly native and former Pennsylvania Ballet dancer Nick Stuccio, to the performance scene in Philadelphia can't be overstated. Stuccio, who calls himself a 'gym teacher of cultural ecology', has put Philadelphia's generative theatre movement in a global context, inviting such luminaries of the international circuit such as Richard Maxwell, Shen Wei, and Teatr Biuro Podrozy. From the UK, Stuccio has brought creators ranging from 'hard-core surrealists' Ridiculusmus to comedy duo the Boosh to star choreographer Akram Khan. Stuccio has also been a major supporter of the Philadelphia artists, with high-profile presentations by Rennie Harris Puremovement and commissions of new work by Pig Iron, New Paradise, and Headlong at recent festivals. Stuccio sees himself as a 'bullhorn/platform' for the new work coming out of his hometown. 'It's about Philadelphia's sensibility more than 'movement-based' or 'developmental', proposes Stuccio. 'It's based in taking risks, experimenting, reinvention, innovation, a real, honest exploration of new territory.' In the 2004 festival, Pig Iron will present its collaboration with Shaplin, an adaptation of Witold Gombrowicz's 'Possessed'; Headlong premieres its next major work 'Hotel Pool', a dance choreographed (of course) for

hotel pools which will tour hotel pools across the country in the fall; and Stuccio has commissioned NPL to create a new martial-arts adaptation of 'Don Juan'.

Now another generation of dance and theatre artists, inspired by the cohesion and successes of the Philly scene, are moving into town. Hotel Obligado, a commedia-based company of graduates from Dell'Arte in California, set up shop a couple of years ago. Young choreographers and emerging artists take part in 'Dance Theatre Camp' each summer, an artist-led and participant-taught month-long series of workshops in hybrid creation that Headlong launched a few years back. And Aaron Posner, founder of the Arden Theater and chair of the Live Arts Festival's board, has started exploratory conversations about creating a year-round centre for experimental performance in the city.

What to compare it to? 1890s Paris, when the impressionists founded the Salon des Refusés, plus cheese steaks? Greenwich Village in the 1950s, set to 'Eye of the Tiger'? Don't tell anyone – Philadelphia is a simmering theatrical broth all its own. ■

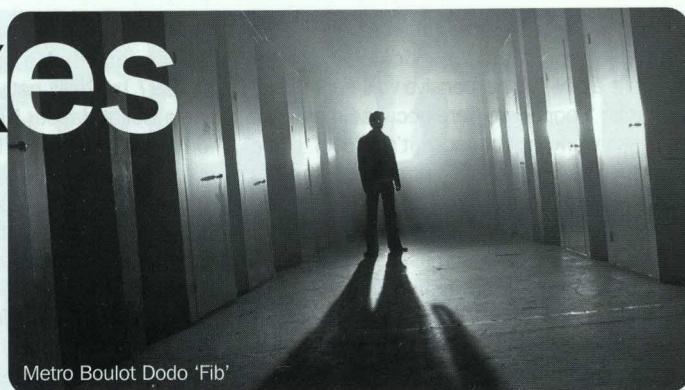
*Dan Rothenberg is co-artistic director of Pig Iron Theatre Company; see [www.pigiron.org](http://www.pigiron.org). For more on the Philadelphia Festivals, go to [www.livearts-fringe.org](http://www.livearts-fringe.org)*



Pig Iron 'Flop' photo by J.J. Tiziou

# Little Boxes

**DOROTHY MAX PRIOR discovers  
some contemporary takes on the  
fairground booth at x.trax 2004**



Metro Boulot Dodo 'Fib'

**B**ooths and boxes, miniature theatres, tents and garden sheds... all these and more were to be found in the Garden of Delights as part of x.trax 2004 in Manchester.

The creation of an intimate space that is somewhere between indoors and out has been a long-standing part of performance practice. The temporary space shares with the street as site the idea of the artist as an autonomous practitioner, in control of his or her own production rather than fitting in with the requirements of a built venue. Another streets-link is the fact that work in booths and other similar spaces has also traditionally been part of the 'popular' rather than 'legitimate' theatre heritage. From the travelling showman in a caravan to the circus sideshow; from the Victorian Penny Gaff set up in shop windows to the Whalley Range All Stars pitched in a park – this is theatre that comes to the people, theatre seen by people who might otherwise never witness live performance. This is as true today as it was in medieval times.

Since the early 20th century, the boundaries between popular and legitimate theatre practices have been slipping. In France, Picasso, Satie and Cocteau were part of a large group of artists who frequently visited the fairground booths and sideshows of Paris; visits which were not only a source of inspiration for them but which set up interchanges and collaborations. In Russia, Bakhtin extolled the

virtues of folk tradition and the carnivalesque whilst Meyerhold embraced the notion of the fairground booth and its 'cabotin' or strolling player with wild enthusiasm: 'A creaking wagon transports my faded old show, my theatre' (from Meyerhold's 1912 essay 'The Fairground Booth').

The modern version of that 'creaking wagon' comes in many forms, as witnessed at the Garden of Delights. Dot Comedy drag their performance space around with them – a judge's bench from which His Lordship screeches edicts and injunctions. Whalley Range have theirs as a temporarily-fixed site – a big bed inside a theatre booth. In 'Bed-cases', an audience of six is popped into that bed and entertained with a glorious mix of (literally) moving pictures, songs and animated objects – not to mention a pop-up book that comes to life. The company have made this sort of contained theatre experience for small audiences a speciality. The work is informed by a visual-arts sensibility, and all the elements – the choreography of moving parts and people, text, song and design – are honed into a homogenous whole that seems deceptively simple and easy. To make things look easy is a rare gift shared amongst those with real talent!

An homage to all the traditions of the fairground booth is found in Circus Wonder's 'The Man Who Can Breathe Through His Eyes' – a very lovely little act in a booth in which a man immerses himself in a bath and yes – breathes through his eyeballs. You too will believe... it is all in the presentation – we are led in and primed for the short performance piece by The Man himself, whose gentle-showman style is highly endearing to young and old. Timing is of the essence – and he knows just how long to draw out the suspense before taking the plunge. A magic moment.

A quirky version of the booth idea is presented by Luci Gorell-Barnes. Her 'Bookshed' is in one of the quieter corners of the site. Guided two-at-a-time into the shed, the audience are welcomed in by a lady 'housekeeper' in black, treated to a choice of beautiful hand-crafted books-as-art-objects to peruse, then offered cake before departing. It is a calm, reflective experience that is in sharp

contrast to the hurly-burly of the Garden, much of which is a little too dominated by the sounds from the live music stage for my taste.

Taking the booth one stage further are Metro Boulot Dodo, whose 'Fib' uses the theatre-in-a-box idea, but with a contemporary twist. 'Fib' is an installation-cum-interactive performance for an audience of fourteen, who have fourteen chances to experience the contents of fourteen 8 foot by 8 foot white boxes. Each experience last three minutes and entering a box could involve encountering a live performer, an exhibition or an audio soundtrack (all related to the art of lying). Relationships, bereavement, identity and self-esteem are a few of the threads running through the installation/performance pieces. We are asked to examine our responses to reality and fiction, received stories and perceived stories. This subject matter lends the work an obvious association with Forced Entertainment – but the piece is developed into something that has their own MBD stamp. The underlying conundrum of the sideshow freak, exposed to public view, is there in 'Fib'. Finding oneself in a box with a live performer begs the question – Have I the right to look? And how do I respond? Treat them like a zoo exhibit – an example of a fascinating species to view dispassionately? (Exhibit 1: 'hysterical young woman'. Exhibit 2: 'anxious young man'.) Treat them as if they were on film? Look them in the eye? Respond very directly to the fact they we are both here in this space, with a physical touch or a spoken interaction?

Such questions have always been part of the Fairground Booth experience, which brings performer/exhibit and audience together in an intimate set-up that invites a response, yet with that response carefully controlled or limited by the experienced showman or woman.

The booth – be it a traditional version or a modern interpretation – makes a welcome addition to any street arts festival, with the welcome bonus, at UK festivals especially, of being somewhere to escape the rain! ■

See [www.xtrax.org.uk](http://www.xtrax.org.uk) for further details of the 2004 programme, and for information on x.trax 2005 which will include the decibel showcase of culturally diverse artists.



'Bookshed'



Walk the Plank 'Supernova'

# It Started with a Ship...

**DOROTHY MAX PRIOR attends Total  
Theatre Talks Street Inspirations  
at x.trax 2004**

**S**o here we are – a-gathered in a tent for a Total Talk on what inspires street artists. We learnt that what this very diverse range of artists present have in common with each other – and with other total theatre practitioners in or out of the street scene – is a willingness to use any starting point in creating their work: it could be a sculpture, a poem, a drawing, a gag, a Situationist intervention... or in the case of Walk The Plank – a ship.

WTP's Liz Pugh, who opened the presentations, told us that their beloved ship was not only an unusual site for performance but also a starting point in the creation process. Small-scale intimate pieces on the ship itself grew into large-scale spectacles using the ship and the surrounding water – often using a variety of disciplines – poetry, pyrotechnics and projections being one interesting mix, as seen in the currently-touring 'Supernova'. This used poems by Lemn Sissay – and the challenge, said Liz, was to see if they could make poetry work for an audience of 3,000. For Walk The Plank, the site used is both text and character... and projects have included work in derelict dockyards, multi-storey car parks and the canals of Manchester – embracing the estate agent's leitmotif 'Location, Location, Location!'

Jim Parris has a rather different set of inspirations. As a musician (with the band Carmel but more pertinently as member of Nzi Dada, whose sound-and-vision project premiered this year at Bracknell), Jim finds inspiration in music of all sorts, from African to ambient via James Brown who he discovered at age 14, describing that experience as 'visceral – like losing my virginity'. But he is also very interested in sculpture and architecture, and takes inspiration from a number of visual sources, including classical African art. Add in an interest in dance, costume and ritual performance and we can see a very exciting mix emerging – one in which Jim takes inspiration from a number of cultural sources whilst avoiding a deliberately 'ethnic' style.

For Roger Hartley of the Bureau of Silly Ideas, his inspirations were often – you've guessed it – silly ideas. There is more than a little of the Trickster in his work – which has included animating wheelie bins 'the most

inane objects in the world' and, most recently, creating a mock roadworks. Concept is his main inspiration – the notion of making things that look like real things to create interactions with daily life; a 'ballet of things and people'. He described the glorious beginnings of the Roadworks – their research took them outside London Bridge station in the rush hour as a try-out. With hard hats, signs and road furniture they set up shop – ignored by passers-by until one the 'workers' does a back-flip. It is this playing with a transient audience that most appeals to Roger. Future plans include a set-up with aerialists changing light bulbs in the street...

Following the presentations, a lively discussion started. The many thoughts from the floor gave even more credence to the notion that street inspirations can be many and varied. But emerging themes proved Liz Pugh's earlier-made point about 'a zeitgeist of similar

ideas floating around the ether'. Going from the evidence of this group, there seems to be growing interest in the dramaturgy of sound and the use of sound in street and outdoor performance; in site as a text; in the use of public places other than the streets – parks, canals, stations; in the possibilities for direct interaction with daily life; in a street theatre that has moved on from party politics to embrace the personal politics of sex and ethnicity.

But why – ultimately – do this? What is the most-often cited inspiration, the most powerful driving force? The answer is the one that seems the most innocuous at first: 'Fun!' says Roger... But think about it: the right to make mischief in public – to confront, challenge, enlighten and entertain the passer-by. Is there anything more intrinsically political or more inspirational? I doubt it. ■



Nzi Dada

# **Para Active** **'Zoo-oid Fright Night Experience'**

Metro Gilded Balloon Caves

In 'Zoo-oid Fright Night Experience', Para Active 'perform their ethnicity' with a welcome bucketload of trickster provocation and political suss. Boundaries between performance and audience space are blurred in the seat-free setting of the Caves as an MC in splendid jam-jar Golly make-up introduces a series of wrestling matches featuring his Zoo-oid specimens – freak-show nightmare visions of 'ethnic minorities'. These include Chemical K-Ali the Kathikali dancer, a burkah-clad Arab with a bomb disguised as a baby, a kung-fu kicking 'oriental' babe, and an asylum-seeker with fourteen family members needing housing. These are pitted against contestants such as Fat Yank McGringo, the Daily Mail and Geoff the Disabled Patrolman.

Audience participation rears its ugly head in the shape of the lap-dancing Third World Kidnap Fetish which wonderfully parodies the decadent luxury of consumer-society S&M versus real-life bondage and torture. This is a show that not only gives liberal political correctness the good kicking it deserves but also proves that political theatre does not have to be worthy and humourless.

With a DJ on the decks, zippy cartoon comedy action and a host of colourful characters, 'Zoo-oid Fright Night Experience' would work brilliantly outside of regular theatre



Para Active

venues – I'd love to see it touring the clubs and pubs of Middle England (wherever that might be).

**Dorothy Max Prior**

# **Pig Iron** **'Flop'**

The Pleasance 2

# **Ars Nova New York**

**The Wau Wau Sisters'**

The Pleasance 2

Two excellent afternoon physical comedy shows at the Pleasance with all-female casts. So who said women weren't funny? Perrier, eat your heart out...

Pig Iron's 'Flop' is well placed in its afternoon slot; a gentle but surreal clown show with a trio of red-nosed performers who embrace the tradition – playing out the archetypal clown roles of straight-guy who wants to get things right, vain egoist who wants to be on top and anarchic fool who wants to cause mayhem. The characters may be rooted in tradition, but the show's themes are contemporary. Proving that clowns have as much right to tackle the big issues as anyone else, we are treated to a tongue-in-cheek investigation of space-time theory as it impinges on life, death and the universe.

Starting point is Stephen Hawking's 'Brief History of Time' (big bang, black holes, quantum mechanics and all that jazz) – with nods in the direction of 'Close Encounters' and 'Alice in Wonderland'. A sub-text is the nature of communication (and miscommunication) – with mistakes and misunderstandings resulting in disastrous outcomes that would normally be irreversible but, in the parallel universe created on stage, prove possible to be turned on their head. The show is a little too slow at the start – and it is a relief when the performers allow the wordless mime to break out into the occasional word or sound. Time is of the essence – and 'Flop' could do with cutting by about 15 minutes from the first half – but evolves into a spot-on perfectly timed example of clown theatre.

'The Wau Wau Sisters' is an energetic and extremely funny piss-take of

Soma International 'Cabaret Decadance'



a whole herd of sacred cows – including country music, cock-rock and Catholicism. An acrobatic white-knickered Convent Schoolgirl Striptease (with crucifixion), saucy songs that 'put the cunt into Country' and a fabulous speed-punk tribute lead to a doubles trapeze finale replete with lit fags and beer cans in hand. Of course, this modern vaudeville skit works because these two American 'sisters' are seasoned circus and burlesque performers with a high level of skill in both aerial and acrobalance. If that wasn't enough, they are skilled comedy songwriters and dab hands on guitar and drums to boot.

There were moments when the pace was a little slow, and a film section didn't really work for me – although I'm ready to admit that there's a need to create breathing spaces in such a physically demanding show. A great hour's entertainment from a very talented duo which would have been better placed as an evening rather than afternoon show – and would also have benefited from a cabaret rather than theatre setting.

**Dorothy Max Prior**

# **Soma International** **'Cabaret Decadance'**

Metro Gilded Balloon Teviot

Soma's puppet show for adults is proof that the pleasure principle is still an important factor in contemporary performance. In essence, it's a series of lip-synched songs and dances superbly enacted by puppeteers Serge Deslauriers and Enock Turcotte, who animate their cast of puppet characters with a sensual and flowing skill that blurs the boundaries between flesh, bone, fabric and wood. The company's collective experiences – in puppetry of all sorts, dance and fashion design – has led to the creation of a show that utilizes all these skills to maximum effect.

The influence of gay culture is also a strong element – the lip-synching female glamour-pusses being a loving nod in the direction of drag – not to mention Konrad the transvestite puppet who ends the show in a glorious leggy entanglement with

compere Dominique Therrien. The compere's role is not only to provide links (often sardonic reflections on puppetry itself) but also to act as an ironic counterpoint to the glamour and liveliness of the puppets – her colourless clothes, monotone voice and stilted walk making her more puppet-like than the stars of the show.

This is not a challenging or thought-provoking show – but it is not aiming to be. It is a good old-fashioned entertaining night out, created by a company whose highly competent levels of making and performing skills create an ambience of confidence that allows the audience to relax – confident that we are in safe hands.

**Dorothy Max Prior**

## Tanya Khaborova/ Derevo 'Reflection'

Aurora Nova/St Stephen's

Kaleidoscopic images of creation, from alchemic cook to the final image of a bow-holding centaur within a prism of light, mesmerise us in this beautiful dance fable. Vital soundscape enriches and menaces – lighting lifts and holds. Although a solo show, with just one bare tree in the background, I never feel Khaborova is alone on stage. Phenomenal lighting (designed by fellow original Derevo member Elena Iarovaia) and soundscape give us suspension of time and split-second changes of scene from creation to destruction.

Tanya is a hieroglyphic being, a chameleon of creation with inhuman movement... We see a gravity-bound insect, a broken winged angel, a lady silent footed even in high heels. A teaming swampland of creation – theatre to be watched with the same heart that would absorb a poem. I saw 'Reflection' performed five or so years ago as part of LIFT, but this time the show is far more succinct, sensual and essential. This is body-theatre that follows a non-narrative structure, an experience of mood, atmosphere, presence and invisible yet bodily-perceived rhythm. Theatre to be felt in the quiet spaces between our cells.

At the close of the show we are left within a cathedral of calm, leaving a muted ache somewhere behind

our ribs; a sense of loss, a sense of remembrance, a sense of hope, that ripples out into the night and into our own nocturnal shadows.

**Miriam King**

## Black Hole Theatre 'Caravan'

Aurora Nova/St Stephen's

A 1950s style carnival rolls into town. A real cabaret performer is on stage, her speciality being saucy skilful hula-hooping. She meets with the grimy fairground workers, and with a cute knowing glance, entices one backstage... 'Caravan' is a multi-layered show that messes with the traditional line between puppets and puppeteers. There's blood, severed limbs, sex and treachery: from here on, think Santa Sangra goes puppets.

Originally 'Caravan' was created for an Australian pub audience, an adult show to be performed in brief episodes. It's a show to be felt rather than logically thought about. Holding tight onto a chaotic timeline and articulating the rough, 'Caravan' has many different elements; tiny detailed puppets such as bum-sniffing dogs, a large three-person-operated raunchy devil-dancing showgirl puppet with a phallic devil's tail, some video projection (I would have liked this to have been flickery super-8 film) to highlight the small intimate details – and I par-

ticularly enjoyed the colour gel rear projections of images such as a fairground big wheel.

Puppets can transform and be cheeky, and if seen clearly, small can work beautifully. There's a gorgeous circular movement between the puppeteer and the puppet – these puppeteers are grubby faced and don't hide into the background and their puppets get away with things that live performers couldn't. This is a strictly adult show – in Black Hole Theatre's puppetry, the whimsical is strictly out the window.

**Miriam King**

## Tiger Lillies 'Punch and Judy'

Pod Deco

When you were a child did you ever cover your ears and sing 'la, la la,' so that you couldn't hear what people were saying? After this performance I did just this as my two companions had completely opposing opinions of this show. So, my unbiased opinion!

Well, singer Martyn Jacques still has the most amazing falsetto voice, and the drummer and double bassist/saw player support him well. The choice of 'Punch and Judy' as a vehicle for the Tiger Lillies' dark songs, twisted sense of humour and sideways take on the world could be perfect. The naively drawn back projection and filmed story was at

times evocative, but mostly felt flung together, and the giant inflatable Punch and Judy was at first comic, but quickly became repetitive and dull, although I did enjoy the extremely graphic giving-birth scene. Finally the elements of live performance meant that Martyn Jacques had to keep exiting, which destroyed the flow of the performance.

I would have much preferred a simple, pared down song cycle, with the Tiger Lillies grouped close together under a spotlight. This would have been extraordinary enough. The need for the theatricals was not apparent, and did not provide either entertainment, or an alienating effect so that the story had a wider resonance.

**Richard Cuming**

## NIE (New International Encounters) 'My Long Journey Home'

Pleasance Courtyard

As a young man, Hungarian Andras Tomas was pressganged by the German military, marking the start of his arduous passage. He was taken away from his fiancée, made to fight for a cause he didn't understand and placed in a Siberian mental institution. Presumed mad because no one could understand what he was saying, he wasn't mad at all... just a Hungarian speaking Hungarian.

This is an absurd and near-tragic tale told with great sensitivity and humour by four performers, using physical theatre, puppetry, live music, audience participation and multiple languages to evoke the bitter-sweet nature of the story. Whilst narrating the drama, three of the male cast assume the various characters that come into Andras' life – Marcella his girl, a German army captain, fellow soldiers and asylum doctors – filling the performance space with visual, physical and verbal action. There is playfulness in their delivery, taking the edge off the disturbing nature of what is conveyed in some scenes.

All elements in this well-produced piece of story-telling work together to take us to a satisfying end. This is the first production to be presented by Anglo-Czech company NIE in the UK – hopefully the first of many.

**Akua Obeng-Frimpong**



NIE 'My Long Journey Home'

## Marie Brassard 'Jimmy'

BITE, Barbican, June 2004

French-Canadian actor-director Marie Brassard's production of 'Jimmy' is a brilliantly distinct yet slightly unsettling portrayal of what happens to the characters of our dreams when we wake up; the world between action and imagination in our slumber-life. There is an edge of nightmare to this colourfully haunting piece implying that you do not dream your dreams – they dream you.

We meet Jimmy – a dreamt entity, although presented as a real, breathing, bleeding, feeling character. He is forced to deal with a multitude of complexities whenever his dream-vestibule (first an American general, and later an actress) wakes up and he is left in limbo. He must stay trapped wherever the dream stops – in an airplane toilet for weeks at a time, or in a desert of writhing dismembered soldiers.

Brassard has a remarkable capacity to slip between an array of characters, from the arch-browed, nose-bleeding homosexual hairdresser, Jimmy; to an actress (whose persona is interwoven with the actress as a real person as well as played character); the actress's dead mother; and Jimmy as a sweet yet slightly disturbed child. This is perhaps due to the use of a microphone that distorts her voice and, in a pre-supposed, brilliant technical rebuff, is used to reveal more about the nature of performance, performer and audience expectation to enhance the key issues of identity within the play. The message Brassard leaves us with is rather uniform for such an original play – that ultimately, we can do nothing if we do not dream.

Katie Phillips

## Compagnie Jerome Thomas 'Cirque Lili'

BITE, Barbican, July 2004

'Cirque Lili' takes place in a beautiful yurt-like freestanding tent. The wooden interior, wooden stage and wooden seats give the show an instant atmosphere. Luckily the performance is not remotely wooden. Jerome

Thomas presents a show inspired by characters and acts from the classic circus era. He modernises them into one man's portrayal of the various characters, all performed through movement, dance and juggling. He's accompanied by Jean-Francois Baez on accordion, and saxophone by John-Charles Richard. Giving a real trad feel, the ring boy is played by Christophe Pilven.

Thomas's characters begin with the magician and a feather manipulated in a slow and playful manner. He then does something with a stick and drops it, plummeting into the 'juggler's trap'. Instead of acknowledging the drop that we all saw, he rushes to hide it, with a bad attitude too. It happened several times during the show and for a man considered to be the greatest contemporary French Juggler it is inexcusable and annoying to watch.

Other characters were the strong-man with two boules, a clown who was playful yet aggressive, blatant and far too sweaty to lie across members of the audience. There was a lion-tamer with three giant balloons and a cloth, table and broom, together with a rotating stage, gave the illusion of a horse act. The show-stealer was not Thomas at all, but the ring boy who had to clear the stage of props. Not enough hands and too many props, lots of drops and many laughs.

Danny Schlesinger

## Simon McBurney/ Complicite 'Measure for Measure'

National Theatre, London,  
May 2004

Written between Elizabeth I's death and James I's coronation, Shakespeare's 'problem play' reflects the uncertainty of its time with ambiguous characters and dubious moral behaviour. Leaving his deputy (Angelo) in charge, a ruling Duke feigns a foreign trip allowing him to observe his deputy's behaviour. Angelo attempts to bring moral order to Vienna, but falls foul of the demands of his own libido.

Director Simon McBurney, displaying his usual flair for inventive staging, brings a coherence to this challenging text with contemporary references to the judicial system and

the flexible 'morality' of our world leaders. The ensemble's continuous presence and the use of varying speeds in scene changes clearly create the contrast between the public world, set against the unseen darkness of reality. Most striking about this production is the clarity with which the play trips off the stage, aided in no small part by the physically-charged interpretation of the characters. Both Naomi Frederick as Isabella, the pious novice nun charged with surrendering her virginity to save her brother's life, and Angus Wright as a noble Provost, utilise electrifying physical tension to articulate the emotional strain in which they find themselves.

In this play, it is words that deceive and dissemble while actual deeds speak the truth of the characters. A point articulated through the blending of silhouette and live video images, creating a striking sense of voyeurism for the audience and reflecting the Duke's continual voyeuristic presence, and firmly foregrounding the idea that only seeing is believing. McBurney's brand of visually-rooted theatre has found an ideal text.

Tom Wilson

## Company F.Z 'Loser'

Metro Circus/Croydon  
Clocktower, June 2004

'Loser' investigates presence and absence, friendship and loss, and the humour within grief and tragedy. Reversing the roles of their acclaimed production 'Throat', F.Z's John Paul Zaccarini directs and Flick Ferdinando performs, together with Paschale Straiton (in a role initially developed by Hayley Carmichael) and Jonathan Priest. The rapport between these three is perfect, and the production fully utilises their clowning skills. The performers are on stage as the audience arrives. First there are three – vodka and corny dancing, bad clothes, karaoke, flirting and fighting. The audience are played to, drawn into the game. Then there are two.

With the disappearance of 'Paschale' (the show uses the familiar device of identity-merging of performer and character), the two that remain gradually move into a different theatre space, one of more dislocated action. 'Paschale' remains as a

Compagnie F.Z 'Loser'



ghostly presence, shadowing their relationship. A composed soundtrack and stylised movement gradually replace the played-live pop tunes and physical clowning. The stage furniture becomes the vehicle of expression for the characters' emotional states. Ice-framed portraits melt and a neon light flickers. The desire for understanding, affection and resolution is played out beautifully on the centre-piece spiral staircase – a choreography of clinging, escaping, leaping and sliding that unites dance, gestural movement theatre and the classic circus skill Chinese pole.

The show is in its early days and there remain a few sections where the 'carpentry' needs a bit of attention. Nevertheless, 'Loser' is an engaging and entertaining piece of visual and physical theatre in which joy and pain, grief and humour, the gorgeous and the grotesque all co-exist.

Dorothy Max Prior

## Falsa Imago 'Damaged by Miracles'

Hoxton Hall, June 2004

Falsa Imago (comprising Theatre de L'Ange Fou performers Aude Tournay and Igor de Quadra) have created a duet merging physical theatricality, improvised text and mime. 'Damaged by Miracles' examines fragmented identity, sexuality and self-image.

Using a battered old tape recorder to document their words, they create a collage of disjointed sentences about being 'an embarrassing human being'. This aural soundscape preserves their thoughts as profound prose flits between sound memories of their trials, and echoes a fragile search for reality within the differences between man and woman. They discover 'essential experiences' with, and around each other – sexual, emotional and playful, and we are drawn in to the groans of pleasure, gasps of pain, and quiet laughter that this generates.

Although centred on the male psyche, it is the female counterpart and images of womanhood which are the ultimate 'miracles' that the title alludes to. Woman is seen as the pure, divine state (pregnant, bare-breasted in a satin slip and heels); man, as neurotic and worthless, who tries to teach himself (with the use of chalk and a blackboard) where he can place himself between 'Embarrassment' and 'God'. Not comfortable with being naked, he tucks his penis between his legs, then dives and slides around the stage like a mad predatory animal, but is calmed by feeling her swollen belly and playing with her hair. Although slightly lacking in congruous content, there are some nice montage images amidst poetic phrasing.

**Katie Phillips**

## The Godot Company

### Beckett Short Works: 'Ohio Impromptu', 'Rough for Theatre 1', 'Rough for Theatre 2'

Southwark Playhouse, London, June 2004

Beckett's desire to produce searing poetic images of loneliness and isolation are faithfully presented by 'the Godot Company. The weathered floorboards of the stage remind me of the dereliction in Beckett's 'Film', setting the tone for the three pieces. In 'Ohio Impromptu', the image of two identical men – thick, silver hair touching the floor – sees the derelict state of our mind as age creeps upon us. The 'Roughs for Theatre' provide two images of the search for help. In the first, a wheelchair-bound old man taunts a tramp for physical aid; in the

second two 'guardians' search for evidence of 'hope' to prevent a silent figure from jumping to his death.

'Ohio Impromptu' is a bleak text delivered through Peter Marinker's droning voice and punctuated by single 'raps' on the table from a listening figure. It is hard to listen to and its briefness means accessing the text is emotionally draining. 'Rough for Theatre 1' is more accessible, and Marinker is a marvellously excited bitter old man bringing out a comic vindictiveness against Anthony Jackson's fumbling tramp, who is less engaging and lacks the fear of isolation.

The most emotionally desolate of the pieces is 'Rough for Theatre 2', whose lone man at the window incidentally bears a striking resemblance to a Hopper painting. Again Marinker is the primary source of comedy, the more bumbling but caring of the two. This is a fine contrast for Jackson's stern authority and detached manner and leads us towards an empathy with the silent figure at the window. Small comic business serves to highlight the tragic loneliness of the lone man.

In all, an evening that allows these three Beckett texts to speak for themselves and underline Beckett as a master of the poetic image, and a source for us all to draw upon.

**Tom Wilson**

## Lulu's Living Room

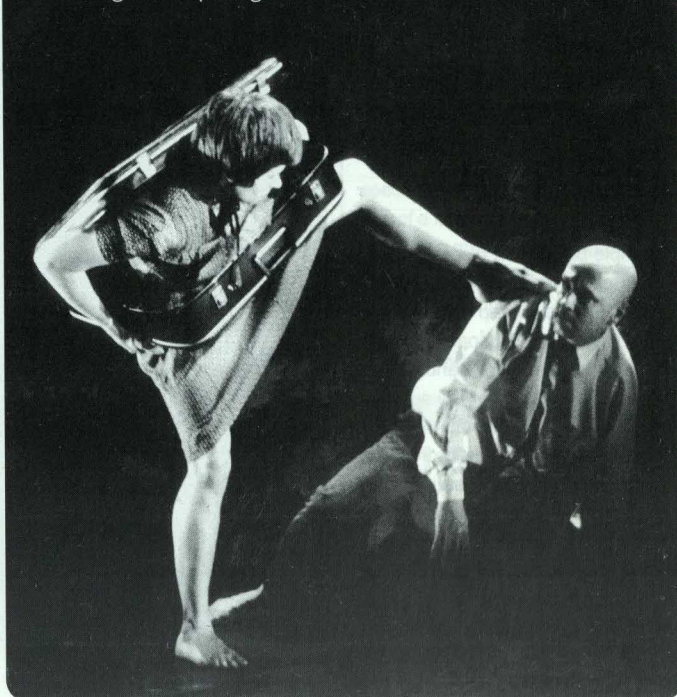
### 'Apart Again'

Komedia, Brighton, July 2004

In a dark, dark house there is a dark, dark room. And in the dark, dark room there is a dark, dark cupboard. And in the dark, dark cupboard (back-lit and with an opaque glass front so we can see her shape outlined) is a woman... In 'Apart Again', she and her three companions – one other woman and two men – act out a choreography of love and hate, desire and repression, dream and nightmare.

The show's theme of the puzzling nature of human relationships in general and male-female relationships in particular is relentlessly pursued. There is a satisfying single-mindedness of intention enacted, with movement motifs recurring throughout the piece, and duets re-created in different combinations. There is a distinctly European style to Lulu's Living

Lulu's Living Room 'Apart Again'



Room. They make dance-theatre – but it is not Tanztheater. There is a strong influence of French movement theatre (hardly surprising as the choreographer is Frenchwoman Marianne Rouvier-Angeli) with more than a touch of Theatre du Mouvement in its intense physical couplings and a dash of Josef Nadj in its love of boxes, doors and screens, which are fully exploited for physical possibilities by the four performers. Add to this a soupçon of surrealism – and there you have it.

At times dangerous and dysfunctional, at times resigned and reflective. Sometimes heartbreakingly human, sometimes comically animal – just occasionally admirably angelic. The four specimens on display are, ultimately, just like you or me or even them next door.

**Dorothy Max Prior**

## High Spin

### 'Who Dunnit?'/ 'Sleepwalker'

Corn Exchange, Brighton, July 2004

A double bill from High Spin, a dance-theatre company featuring performers with and without learning disabilities. High Spin have a policy of creating work in collaboration with guest artists/choreographers – and although this permanent ensemble

have a very engaging physical presence on stage, the quality and style of the work varies enormously from one show to another, as each production is very visibly stamped with the artistic signature of the collaborator. This can be clearly seen in this juxtaposition of two pieces created in the same time-period with different choreographers.

'Who Dunnit?' choreographed by Maxine Doyle, is inspired by iconic film detectives. It is a mildly amusing and entertaining diversion, but there is little depth to the work (a series of physical comedy and dance vignettes). Furthermore, the choreographic action of these scenes seems to be mostly led or held by the performers without learning disabilities – with one or two notable exceptions, such as a solo sofa dance of flounced skirt and crossed legs.

In comparison, 'Sleepwalker' (a collaboration with Miriam King) creates solos, duets and ensemble sections that place the performers in many and various combinations. There is a pleasing coherence to the visual design (beautiful ghostly white garments, a dim stage softly lit by lanterns and lovely suspended bird-cages) and the dream-time choreography seems to perfectly suit the company, who respond by giving strong performances, creating a succession of very beautiful and engaging moving pictures.

**Dorothy Max Prior**

**Nikki Tomlinson/  
rotozaza/Rajni  
Shaw Theatre**  
**'Still, It Matters'**

Hoxton Hall, July 2004

This triple-bill of short pieces by Nikki Tomlinson, rotozaza and Rajni Shaw Theatre really exploited the peculiarities of Hoxton Hall's space. Tomlinson's saw/sore/soar dance solo played to three sides of the auditorium, starting with movements that made the floor both a backdrop and a dance partner, and culminating in charges up and down the length of the space. Rotozaza's 'OOFF' took us via the bar into a studio room with a performance area marked out with numbered squares. Two unrehearsed performers struggled to obey instructions bellowed from onstage speakers: 'speed walk to A2', 'stick your leg out the side, circle your foot and blow kisses. Repeat when you hear this sound'; while gym-bunny Mimi coached, bullied, and then was bullied by them. The piece was played hard and loud.

Rajni Shah's 'The Awkward Position', however, stands out as a piece of immense vision and subtle beauty. Trying to describe it to a friend, I said it was as if you'd been rehearsing a very strange play for days, then had a nightmare about it. 'The Awkward Position' would be the play of the dream of the rehearsal of the play. It sits between performance and rehearsal, between dream and the bored reality of waiting. A figure (Sally Marie) takes a long slow walk along the edge of the stage, while two others (Yvonne Naughton and Dmitris Papakyrakis) helter towards each other from opposite sides of the stage, criss-crossing just when you think this time they're going to collide. 'House lights' – we're suddenly aware of the director's presence as she speaks from the sidelines. From then, the director's presence is a subtle disturbance: at once motherly and dictatorial. There is a delicate play in the performers' obedience to her as she nods or quietly directs them from one episode to the next. 'I want to speak', says the male performer and a long silence ensues. There is an anti-duet, in which the couple tug rather than guide each other, drop rather than support.

Faulty Optic 'Licked' in 'Resonance'



When two performers deliver an impassioned speech about political engagement – in a complete deadpan – (while a third slides slowly off her chair) we sense that the 'awkward position' also describes our place in this world.

**Alex Mermikides**

**Leeds Met Studio  
Theatre and  
Opera North**  
**'Resonance'**

BAC OperaFest, Virtually Opera,  
May 2004

The triple bill, 'Resonance', sets out to explore the possibilities of interdisciplinary work focusing on performance and music, through a collaboration between their two representative organisations, Opera North and Leeds Met Studio Theatre.

In Faulty Optic's 'Licked', their trademark cronky puppetry, as superbly handled as we've come to expect, brought to life a nocturnal fantasy world where imagined monsters are all too real in a Victorian moral fable mining the same rich vein as Improbable's 'Shockheaded Peter'. Video sequences expertly set the scene: an eerie desolate woodland where endearing tribes of pegs are snared by a sinister hunchbacked figure with an overactive tongue and a taste for gingerbread babies. The ingeniously customised booth allowing for split-screen staging of a table-

top household remained off-centre to the open space of the dark forest and its monstrous inhabitants. Here, the full scale bunraku-style figures and stop-start animation sequences played expertly with scale; the children remaining tabletop-sized, the hungry witch always human height and the projected world exactly paralleling that staged, creating a fantastic extension to the live physical world. The broodingly atmospheric score, grounded in tremulous xylophone and vibraphone, was built integrally into the performance, with the histrionic tones of Dominic Sale's fairytale songs archly performed by Katharine Price.

If both the performance and use of sound in 'Licked' were built in as components of a highly theatrical piece, Forced Entertainment's reworking of 'Starfucker' explored the conceptual addition of scoring to a performance piece. An abstract three-voice score had been provided to counterpoint its evocative series of celebrity images, replacing Tim Etchells' original rendering of the words with their video projection onto stage. The sort of 'high culture' associations of the operatic voice were perhaps a nice comment on the banal and absurd situations imposed on celebrities through the staging ('Antonio Banderas, weeping on a trampoline') but in terms of any more correspondent relationship that might affect the sense or feeling of the piece the use of sound was, for me at least, rather opaque.

Paul Clark and John Binias's collaboration on 'The Weather Man' moved us to the opposite extreme through the sound-led narrative of Robert Fitzroy, insecure idealist, philanthropic governor of Fiji, sea captain of the Beagle for Darwin's fateful voyage, and England's first, ill-equipped 'weatherman'. This was a richly historical tale using the interrelation of sound and spoken narrative to explore thematic oppositions: creationism vs. natural selection; discursive vs. narrative. Sarah Belcher's varied and dramatic libretto played beautifully with tone and the conflict of spoken and sung narration was a challenging use of material and allowed for great aural counterpoint of themes, atmospheres and ideas. The staging however, reminiscent of a 1960s BBC recording studio, played on the dated tone of the written source, but also emphasised its aural basis, ultimately inviting the question of why it had been staged physically at all.

**Beccy Smith**

**Robin Deacon/  
Marcia Farquhar/  
Gary Stevens/  
Ursula Martinez**  
**'The Performing Kitchen'**

Home, July 2004

'The Performing Kitchen' consists of four one-person pieces taking place in the domestic kitchen of arts organisation Home's family house in Camberwell. The audience perch at the breakfast bar, lean on the walls or sit on the wood floor of the open-plan dining area while the performers inhabit the trendy and impossibly tidy kitchen. The setting is something like a cookery show – Jamie Oliver would not look out of place – but I'm hoping for something more Fluxus or Bobby Baker.

Marcia Farquhar gets her hands dirtiest as she tries to divine the future from broken eggs and makes biscuits that she uses to give audience members individual predictions. Ursula Martinez runs through 'Some Short Stories Involving Food', engaging snippets of autobiography that evoke a South London childhood through memories of Stardust and cheddar cheese. But a short piece on alternative uses for a peeled cucumber puts

a whole new perspective on the sliced salad Martinez offered when we first entered. Robin Deacon's piece begins by asking what happens to extinct food items whose jingles live on, but grows into a cutting denunciation of processed food and culminates in a strawberry-jam-bloody experiment involving an electric knife.

It's Gary Stevens' funny but ultimately slightly disturbing opener that proved the most satisfying fare. Stevens tells an odd domestic story of two brothers, their mother and a stranger in their house through something like a comedy, quick-change hat routine in which a hat, a beard, is an indication of character; a kettle, a rubber duck, indicate settings; key gestures suggest action (a hand wave tells us a character has left). But once the family has gone we're left with the alien entity of 'not Tony' who sits between identities but is most definitely there.

**Alex Mermikides**

## Out There Festival

**Strangelings:  
'Baker's Revolt'  
Moving People:  
'The History Men'**

South Hill Park, Bracknell,  
July 2004

The Strangelings' show is a yeasty street theatre piece that follows a group of Marxist bakers in their attempts to lead a revolution in our culinary and social habits, proudly proclaiming the liberation slogan of 'I'm a Baker!' Although not even a dozen-strong they seem like more as they wrestle with flour, yeast, water, sugar, salt and oil, the ingredients needed to free us from the tyranny of the white sliced loaf, symbol of capitalist oppression. The show is built around two large 'props'. First a large white van, from which pour staging, props and a revolutionary soundtrack. Onto the staging launch our bakers: flipping, juggling and balancing their way through the narrative. The second is a long zip-wire, on which a torpedo bread-roll hangs, along which our bakers will attempt to storm the mansion.

One brawny baker affixes a TV aerial to link to other bakers around the country and the signal is projected onto a stage atop the van. Then in a denouement of evocative pathos a brave baker is struck down. At this

moment, the crowd falls silent and from the distance emerge a brass band solemnly playing Dvorak's Largo (the 'Hovis theme'); an uneasy mix of laughter and sadness ripples through the audience. From this point on the game is up and with our dead baker buried in a loaf tin, the others disappear into the crowd leaving us to go forth and bake our daily bread. Packed full of wheaty-goodness – best served with tea and jam. Delicious.

Moving People's Jo Smith started her puppet career with Faulty Optic and the heritage is clearly visible, while the work is equally rewarding. With the puppets being constructed from a variety of found and second-hand objects, the narratives have a sense of emerging out of a stream of junk consciousness. This show comes in two parts, a promenade 'collection of data' and a theatre-based sequence of vignettes. What ties it together are the beautiful grey-blue 'boffin' puppets and their silent cataloguing of the human race, asking such questions as 'How wide is your smile? How long is your face? How big is your heart?'. As promenade characters, they have that pleasant invasive quality that people find hard to resist.

In the theatre-based piece they emerge and measure both the audience and a small skeletal primate, who kicks against captivity by invading the audience. From this then emerge two further vignettes – a rich man/poor man scenario and a forced turkey revolting against his captor. Each of these straddles comedy and pathos, allowing them to avoid being overly didactic or dry, but clearly emerging out of social issues. What

this reminds me is how simple ideas can be, and how rewarding they are when carried off. It also highlights the pleasure to be found in puppetry, how it can save the adult heart and leave you feeling lighter and more peaceful.

**Tom Wilson**

## Vietnam National Puppet Theatre 'Vietnamese Water Puppetry'

Greenwich and Docklands  
Festival, Royal Observatory  
Gardens, July 2004

The picturesque natural amphitheatre of the Royal Observatory Gardens in Greenwich Park at a warm summer's dusk created a sense of magic, which the performance itself amply maintained. The staging: a large shallow pool, decorated as a tall traditional pagoda with bamboo screens shielding the eight puppeteers, contributed a sense of the exotic and arcane.

The performance consisted of eleven discrete scenes, each showcasing images of Vietnamese folklore or rural life, shaped to offer stories in miniature: the competitive play between two juvenile dragons, a fishing trip where the fish bit back, the love story of two phoenixes. An initial outline of the scenes by Teu, a traditional buffoon character, moved our focus from interpretation to simple enjoyment of the presentation. Delicate comedy and an astute awareness of spectacle informed each scene's delivery, accompanied by a small orchestra of traditional musicians and phenomenal vocal

accompaniment by a chorus of singers, making it easy for the audience to invest solely in the fantasy of the images: a rare emphasis in recent western traditions of puppetry.

This was very much an evening of spectacle, a consummate presentation of a fascinating artform – the free ticketing a remarkable opportunity for a very mixed audience to observe the work of a historic and expert company.

**Beccy Smith**

## Odd Enjinears 'Lienz'

Olala Festival, Austria,  
July 2004

Odd Enjinears are an Amsterdam-based company of theatre-makers, artists and musicians. The divisions between each discipline are consciously and deliberately blurred in their work. 'Lienz' was a show about time and how it affects us. The set was a huge frame divided into three rooms. In the centre was a large medieval-style clock with a pendulum. Ropes were attached to the axle of the clock and spread to all parts of the structure where they were attached to all sorts of domestic items.

A figure cycles on to the set and sets the pendulum swinging, which causes the clock to start ticking, which causes the axle to start winding the ropes, which causes all manner of effects, sounds and accidents to happen. The material qualities of each object are exploited – balloons burst, kettles whistle, trapdoors spring open and bellows deflate. The interest lies in the inventive and amusing way in which objects are juxtaposed and how they are used.

There are three characters in the performance all trapped in their environments, all at the mercy of events triggered off by time ticking away and all struggling to make sense of their situation. At times there was so much going on that you were not sure where to look and at times the sounds were so small you were straining to hear. This was the show's strength, however. Rather than bombard us with sensation it made us sit up and look and – what is more – allowed us time to do that.

**Edward Taylor**



## Environmental Theatre

### 'The Albatross'

Glastonbury Festival,  
June 2004

Under a waxing moon I sat, as the apt lines of the Ancient Mariner 'glimmered the white moon-shine' were sung high above me. This being the last night of the festival, I felt a little bereft, as I too had struggled on for three days through 'fog smoke white' and the winds at night. The musical score was an eclectic mix of folk meets opera. The marriage of live percussion, brass, string and voice cut through the night air with poignancy. This live soundtrack carried the piece from beginning to end and resonated through the furore of pyrotechnics.

In the beginning, we are greeted by three running women calling the coming of the explorers. The explorers arrive in fantastic style, in a carriage pulled by an engine-driven bike. With a dash of slapstick they board their huge chrome-sheeted ship. A long sequence unveils itself with a ferocious sea creature in the style of a Chinese dragon, but is soon broken by the infamous winged bird, the Albatross. The suspended performer floats high from the mast swinging under the moon. Next come the waddling penguins in unison, soon to be chased by the explorers. Then an armed explorer turns on heel and aims his rifle towards the Albatross.

As the shot is fired, a rather clumsy sequence unfolds between the red falling silk and the flailing 'bird' who begins to struggle with her harness in a disjointed 'dying' sequence, represented through the all-too-familiar Tissu circus technique. But despite these technical mishaps, I thoroughly enjoyed this spectacular outdoor feast.

Tansy Lihou

## Mischief Là Bas

### 'Painful Creatures'

Streets of Brighton Festival,  
Queens Park, Brighton,  
May 2004

Once through the 'pain barrier' and unleashed to explore the attractions of this 'unfairground' at my own pace, I felt suddenly impervious to the rain as I was drawn into an uncanny world.

Wandering through wet woods, my senses were overwhelmed by the scent of pine emanating from a tree... bedecked with hundreds of air fresheners.

Peeping through a slot in an octagonal booth, I was mesmerised by Medusa, as she writhed by candlelight, watched by dozens of pairs of eyes. I looked too long, and the spell was only broken by a bloke tapping me on the shoulder, asking for a go. Up the hill, closer inspection of neat rows of seemingly identical plaster heads on poles, revealed unnerving tiny differences in their features. Not sure for a moment which way to turn, my attention was directed by a megaphone-wielding 'carnie' (who seemed to be following me, or were there lots of them, all identical...?) to a live, disembodied bottom, emerging from the gloom.

Drawn by distant drums past a gingerbread house with two solemn child inmates, to open space and a crowd, I started to come back to reality as I struggled to see what was going on. Intimate interaction gave way to a large-scale finale in the form of a Wicker Man-esque fire sculpture. Installations near the end seemed to be crammed together and not as imaginatively sited. This and the over-stated 'crime scene' were kinks in an otherwise totally immersing black-magical experience. If this is pain, bring it on.

Katie Etheridge

## Trans Express

### 'The Lazy Kings'

Streets of Brighton Festival,  
Preston Park, Brighton

Six lazy monarchs are borne through the streets, each in their own beautifully baroque 'chariot'. One has a rustic hay-wain and is accompanied by cowskin-clad folk with giant musical-moo-makers. Another is in a giant clam-shell and followed by an ancient fire-engine filled with a fishtank-full of goggle-eyed creatures. A chattering queen is perched on top of a sphere, spouting a stream of cajoling gobbledey-gook, circled by a team of cyclists on cranky old machines. A perky young prince leaps out of his coach (led in by a team of giant skeletons) to drag a young maiden in with him.

It is pure carnival: boundaries are

blurred as the monarchs sing, dance and flirt with their 'subjects', the costumes and structures are divinely decadent; there is noise and merriment, the smell of smoke in the air, performers running through bearing flaming torches. This French company are highly experienced in crowd management; there is little obtrusive stewarding. We are led to an enormous (25 metre) mobile rig strung with swings and hoops. And then? Well, the Kings ascend and do lots of good aerial tricks – then it is over.

And here is the problem: despite the years of devising and designing, there seems to have been nobody looking out for the dramaturgy of the piece. It was a fantastic event – but missing a dramatic resolution. I was pleased that they didn't take the easy option – fireworks. As sound had been used so well during the processional section, perhaps they could have built on that to create a symphonic ending? As it was, this premiere was beautiful but incomplete.

Dorothy Max Prior

## Peter Brook

### 'The Death of Krishna'

Brighton Festival, Gardner Arts  
Centre, May 2004

The idea of the 'war to end all wars' seems always to have fascinated human imaginations. As the twentieth century offers an archive of such images historically, how might such an idea be imagined theatrically today? (Which is, of course, also to ask how theatre might be imagined today). As a sort of coda to Brook's monumental production of the Mahabharata, this hour-long performance for one actor presents, firstly, the inter-cultural image of a storytelling.

The Hindu cosmos is offered as a stage adorned simply with the rich colours of carpet and cushions, the lighting of devotional lamps and incense, and, facing the audience throughout, a mask of the elephant god, Ganesh. Brook describes these as 'a few essential Indian objects', a description that expresses the stylised aesthetic – which still, in Benichou's wonderful performance, remains playful. Brook's regular writers – Jean-Claude Carrière and Marie-Hélène Estienne – offer the story of Krishna's death inlaid with many others, shifting

from the narrator's voice to the voices of a host of characters; while through Benichou's shifts of gesture, the narrator takes on some 'essential' trait of each one, each in different degrees of transformation, whether spiritual or physical.

One is left, though, with an old question: is this sufficient for storytelling to become theatre, for the relating of events to become itself an event?

Mischa Twitchin

## Circus Ronaldo

### 'La Cuccina dell'Arte'

Ghent International Street  
Theatre Festival, July 2004

Is there anyone better at giving an audience a night of pure entertainment than Circus Ronaldo? After the delightful 'Fili' they return with a smaller show (just brothers David and Danny Ronaldo), for a smaller audience, in a smaller tent. But a drop in scale doesn't mean a drop-off in humour and invention. The stage is set out with three tables and chairs; behind this is an old-fashioned pipe organ on wheels which supplies the music for the show.

David is the officious maitre d'/head chef while Danny is his eager and stupid assistant – a classic clown relationship. They select two members of the public, a man and a woman, to be the customers. Even this goes wrong with two women being chosen at the same time by mistake. This confusion and how it's resolved (i.e. whatever David says goes) adds an edge to the proceedings, played for all its worth throughout the show. Pizza-making is then demonstrated, involving some stunning dough juggling and spinning. The behind the scenes hysteria and tension in a kitchen is vividly and palpably evoked as they take orders from the crowd whilst keeping ten plates spinning in the air – you could cut the atmosphere of panic with a knife.

Eventually the two customers get their pizzas but only after phoning out for a takeaway. The set-up is incredibly simple but the intimacy of the relationship between the performers and audience, the piling on of comic detail and the ability to weave superb circus skills into a story raise it a cut above almost everyone else.

Edward Taylor

# total theatre

[www.totaltheatre.org.uk](http://www.totaltheatre.org.uk)

network NEWS

## Changes at Total Theatre Network and Circus Arts Forum

*Felicity Hall (acting director) writes:* Sadly, Annabel Arndt has decided not return to her role as Total Theatre Network and Circus Arts Forum director following her maternity leave. The board and staff of Total Theatre Network and the Circus Arts Forum advisory committee are immensely grateful for all the hard work Annabel has done for both organisations over the years, and would like to thank her for developing them both into organisations with firm foundations and identities. We all wish her the very best for the future.

*Annabel Arndt (retiring director) writes:* I wanted to say a very warm and sad goodbye. I have had such a good time with Total Theatre Network over the years, having seen how it has grown from a project funded organisation to what it is today. I have enjoyed raising the profile of the sector, trying to offer support and meeting members at the various events. It seemed particularly strange not being in Edinburgh this year. I therefore found the decision to leave to be a very hard one. I have spent the last year of maternity leave having great fun as a mother and don't feel that I would be able to put my energies into a full-time job in London. I have now decided to be a student again. Later this month, I will be doing a Business and Management degree in Bournemouth. Although officially full time, it will leave me time to concentrate on my daughter Poppy. I really don't want to sever contacts with the sector and will enjoy hearing what's going on in this magazine. I wish you all the very best and hope that our paths will continue to cross.

## Directorship of TTN and CAF

The post of Total Theatre Network director will be advertised in the national and trade press in mid-October. Details will also be available from the website. If you would like to be sent

an application pack, please email [admin@totaltheatre.org.uk](mailto:admin@totaltheatre.org.uk) and we will send you one as soon as they are ready.

Circus Arts Forum is very pleased to announce the appointment of the new CAF Director, Ali Forbes, who started with CAF in September.

## Total Theatre Salon and 20th Birthday

23 August saw the very first Total Theatre Salon followed by the 20th Birthday celebrations for Total Theatre Network (which was founded as Mime Action Group in 1984) held at the Outhouse in Edinburgh. The Salon was attended by a variety of Total Theatre Network members and friends who came together over fresh mint tea and Turkish delight to discuss the way in which Total Theatre has changed the landscape for practitioners, as well as its role in the future, and the further development of Total Theatre Magazine and the Total Theatre Awards. The Salon went very well, and everyone was pleased to hear that more Total Theatre Salons are planned over the next year.

The evening was then rounded off by the birthday celebrations which included a barbecue, energetic dancing and the showing of a specially-made film which detailed the history of the Total Theatre Awards. We would like to say a big thank-you to all the people who joined us for the Salon and the party.

## Total Theatre Explores

As we go to press (September 2004), Total Theatre Explores is hosting a discussion event on 'Age and the female body within physical and visual performance' at the 'Interdisciplinary Landscapes: Postfeminist Practices in the Arts' conference at University College Northampton, with a panel of speakers that includes Linda Marlowe, Deb Pope, Nola Rae, Lois Weaver and Bisarkha Sarker, chaired by Dymphna Callery. Documentation of the event will be available shortly on the Total Theatre website. This event is part of Total Theatre

Explores, a Creative Renewal Project funded through the European Union Social Fund, looking at employment opportunities for women in performance. We will shortly be announcing details of further Explores events and projects. If you are interested in participating in Total Theatre Explores, please contact Becca Gill at [becca@totaltheatre.org.uk](mailto:becca@totaltheatre.org.uk).

## Re:visions – Drawn to Perform Symposium

There are still some places left for the Drawn to Perform symposium taking place on Thursday 21 October 2004 (9.30am–5pm) at University of Brighton, Grand Parade, Brighton, and hosted by visions, University College Winchester and Total Theatre Network. This will be the opening event for visions, the biennial international festival of visual performance.

Drawn to Perform will explore visual sources of inspiration for use in contemporary performance work. Speakers and workshop leaders will include John Fox (Welfare State International), John Wright (Told By An Idiot), Penny Saunders (Forkbeard Fantasy), Liz Aggiss (Divas), David Harradine (Fevered Sleep), Tristan Sharps (dreamthinkspeak), and Edward Taylor (Whalley Range All Stars). Special reduced rate for Total Theatre Network members is £20. To book please contact visions on 01273 643194 or email [visions.fest@brighton.ac.uk](mailto:visions.fest@brighton.ac.uk). See [www.visions-festival.org.uk](http://www.visions-festival.org.uk) for full details.

## Total Theatre Talks at London International Mime Festival

We are pleased to announce that Total Theatre Network will again be collaborating with LIMF during the Mime Festival, which runs 15-30 January. Details are still being confirmed, but will soon be available on the Total Theatre website, and subscriber-members will also be mailed details. Also see [www.mime-fest.co.uk](http://www.mime-fest.co.uk) for this and all other events.

## FUNDING NEWS

## The Jerwood Charity

is funding a Young Producers' Bursary at BAC. The aims of are: to support a new generation of producers and promote a creative relationship between young producers and visionary artists; to revolutionise the way funders are able to support project-funded theatre companies; to improve and diversify opportunities for audiences to see high-quality innovative new theatre. The Jerwood Charity also supports the Jerwood Young Directors Scheme at the Young Vic and the Jerwood New Playwrights at the Royal Court.

## One To One Individual Artists' Bursaries in Live Art 2004/05

The Live Art Development Agency is offering bursary awards to individual practitioners based in London who work in Live Art. Seven bursaries of £8,800 will be made available to artists to undertake self-determined artistic and professional development strategies. Guidelines and application procedures are available for download from [www.thisisLiveArt.co.uk](http://www.thisisLiveArt.co.uk). All applicants must discuss their proposal in advance on 020 7033 0275, or by email on [info@thisisLiveArt.co.uk](mailto:info@thisisLiveArt.co.uk). Deadline for applications is 6pm on Monday 11 October 2004.

## Dance Northwest

is currently inviting dance artists to apply for a £6,000 commission to develop and tour a new piece of work. The piece will form part of a triple-bill and will tour in the autumn of 2005. The commission is open to professional dance artists with two or more years choreographic experience, who are actively involved in dance in the Northwest. The applicant must be available to undertake development of the work during the period December 2004 to August 2005, and be available to tour with their performers in autumn 2005. Proposals must be submitted by return of a completed written application form, available from Dance Northwest at [projects@dancenorthwest.org.uk](mailto:projects@dancenorthwest.org.uk). (Telephone 01606 863845.) The deadline for applications is Friday 29 October 2004.

## The Circus Space/Esmée Fairbairn Foundation Creation Bursaries

There are four bursaries of £1000 and five of £500, plus rehearsal space and advice, for performers to experiment and work towards devising new work. Winners of the £1000 bursaries are:

- Bureau of Silly Ideas for 'Bouncy, Bouncy', using truck wheel inner tubes as springboards
  - Matilda Leyser to experiment with designing a new piece of aerial apparatus
  - Kate Evans and colleagues to investigate choreography specific to stilt movement
  - Michaela O'Connor for experimenting on a triples trapeze swinging bar
- Winners of the £500 bursaries are:
- Nigel Roder to develop the art of plate manipulation
  - Chantal Daly to research a new piece of equipment based on an egg and an aerial hoop
  - Charlotte Mooney and Alex Harvey to work on an aerial piece exploring the human relationship to death
  - Elisa Laghi to develop props and develop for her hand balancing act
  - Andrea Gaechter to work on a contortion piece
- See [www.thecircusspace.co.uk](http://www.thecircusspace.co.uk) for further details.

## Arts Council England

is making a significant new investment in puppetry arts. Over £70,000 will be made available over the next 18 months to the Puppet Centre Trusts to support creativity and professional development of puppeteers. The grant is a timely one

following the growing presence and stature of the artform. The grant has been awarded to the Puppet Centre Trust to offer continuing professional development opportunities and bursaries for puppeteers and related practitioners. PCT's programme will feature masterclasses held at UK festivals by internationally renowned specialists. See [www.puppetcentre.com](http://www.puppetcentre.com) for Animations Online, the electronic magazine of PCT, or contact Beccy Smith, project manager, on [pct@puppetcentre.demon.co.uk](mailto:pct@puppetcentre.demon.co.uk).

## MANAGEMENT

## CB Projects

are currently developing projects for 2005, including Legs on the Wall (spring 05), Company F.Z (spring/summer 05), Contemporary Clowning Projects (autumn 05), Jade (summer 05) and Circelation in (April 05). See [www.cbprojects.co.uk](http://www.cbprojects.co.uk).

## Calling all artists and companies

Do you need some help with a funding application? Could you do with some advice on marketing, some PR support, some assistance with an education project, or simply some general administrative support? Amy Howard may be just the right person for the job. With a professional background in fundraising, arts administration and arts education, she is a freelance consultant on the lookout for the right projects to work on over the winter and spring. For more information, phone 07866 180280 or email [amycehoward@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:amycehoward@yahoo.co.uk). CV and references available on request.

## MissingLinkProductions

are now in proud possession of a new office – next door to Total Theatre Network. But isn't that where they were before? Yes and no – they have moved to the other side – bigger, better and with a wooden floor very handy for tap dancing! For entertainment solutions contact: MissingLinkProductions, The Circus Space, Coronet Street, London N1 6HD. Telephone +44 (0)20 7739 7713. See the website for photos of artists on their roster at [www.CircusPerformers.com](http://www.CircusPerformers.com). If you wish to be kept up to date with MissingLinkProductions subscribe to their free monthly newsletter by emailing [subscribe@MissingLinkProductions.co.uk](mailto:subscribe@MissingLinkProductions.co.uk). To request a copy of their brochure email [brochure\\_request@MissingLinkProductions.co.uk](mailto:brochure_request@MissingLinkProductions.co.uk).

## OPPORTUNITIES

## Les Cyclistes

David Furnham will be shooting a short silent film based on a group of English enthusiasts endeavouring to follow the Tour de France. It will be filmed on location next July. He is seeking three male actors with a track record in comic timing and physical theatre improvisation, with a feeling for the absurd and good cycling skills. Please send a CV and photograph to Dr David Furnham, Middlesex University, School of Arts, Cat Hill, Barnet, Herts EN4 8HT. The project is funded by Middlesex University, the Arts Council SE and the Arts and Humanities Research Board. The Les Cyclistes project aims to create a touring event (film plus mixed-media installation) which will take place in a small marquee and vintage Citroën H Van. It will tour to cycling venues and rallies and arts festivals in 2006. For more information please contact [d.furnham@mdx.ac.uk](mailto:d.furnham@mdx.ac.uk).

## TNT theatre

are interested in receiving CVs and letters from performers with a genuine interest and experience in physical theatre with a view to auditioning for their company. Music or dance skills and knowledge of Grotowski/Meyerhold styles of theatre an advantage. Tours involve tough but exciting touring mainly outside of the UK. Good fees and conditions. Address for contact: Phil Smith, TNT, 28 Danes Rd,

Exeter EX4 4LS. Or email [casting@tnt-theatre.net](mailto:casting@tnt-theatre.net).

## Leicester Comedy Festival,

the longest running comedy festival in the UK, which regularly attracts over 45,000 people, wants to hear from comic performers who may want to participate in the 12th Festival taking place 11-20 February 2005. The event has a reputation of including a diverse range of comic performances and the programme is not just limited to stand-up comedy. Help and support is given in finding a venue, promoting the show and ticket selling via a centralised online box office. Further information about the festival, and details on how to take part, are available from [www.comedy-festival.co.uk](http://www.comedy-festival.co.uk).

## Decibel/x.trax

showcase of culturally diverse performance is 31 May-3 June 2005. The x.trax street arts showcase, in association with MIA, is 3-5 June 2005 (tbc). Artists wishing to submit proposals to be part of the decibel/x.trax showcase of culturally diverse performance should visit the website for background notes and a proposal form. Deadline for receipt of proposals is 1 November. Telephone +44 (0) 161 227 8383 or see [www.xtrax.org.uk](http://www.xtrax.org.uk).

## NOTICEBOARD

## X.trax online directory of street artists

is now live with information and contact details for more than 120 street artists and groups. This is a free to use service for artists and promoters – let us know what you think of it. [www.xtrax.org.uk](http://www.xtrax.org.uk)

## Chats Palace Arts Centre

in Hackney has spaces available to hire for rehearsals, meetings, or to run classes. These include a dance/acting studio (with mirrors), our main venue, the bar/foyer area, and small meeting room. The venue is available to hire for parties, live music events, theatre shows, conferences and much more. Call Nick or Katya on 020 8533 0227 for more information or to book space.

## The charity Crisis

is looking for any scenery, backdrops or props that can be donated to decorate their Christmas shelters. They are able to collect from the London area, but would also consider collecting reasonable amounts from any distance. Contact Bob Evans, project manager, at Crisis, 020 7426 3822 or email [robert.evans@crisis.org.uk](mailto:robert.evans@crisis.org.uk).

## PERFORMANCES

## Chipolatas

## OCTOBER

2-9 Perth Royal Show, Australia

## NOVEMBER

6-13 'Too Much' Fest, Dieppe, France

14 'Kinderhoogdag', Leuven, Belgium

## DECEMBER

tbc Bangkok / Tokyo

## facing/the/crowd

## 'THE LOUDEST SOUND AND NOTHING'

[www.facingthecrowd.co.uk](http://www.facingthecrowd.co.uk)

## OCTOBER

15-23 Canterbury Castle, Castle Street

## Foursight Theatre

## 'HECUBA'

## OCTOBER

6-7 Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

8 Forest Arts Centre, New Milton

9 Ashcroft Arts Centre, Fareham

- 12-13 Warwick Arts Centre
- 14 Redditch Palace Theatre
- 19-20 Stamford Arts Centre
- 21 Square Chapel Arts Centre
- 27-28 Shrewsbury Music Hall
- 29-30 MAC, Birmingham

## NOVEMBER

- 4-6 Jersey Arts Centre
- 9 Hawth Studio, Crawley
- 10 Old Town Hall, Hemel Hempstead
- 11 Courtyard, Hereford
- 12 Arc Theatre, Trowbridge
- 16 Exeter Phoenix Theatre
- 18 W'm Brookes Sch, Much Wenlock
- 19-20 Cambridge Drama Centre
- 21 Nottingham New Stages
- 22 Eastwood Theatre, Eastwood
- 23 Minster Theatre, Southwell
- 24 Elizabethan High School, Retford
- 25 Old Library, Mansfield

## Jonathan Kay

## 'ALL I KNOW &amp; ALL I DON'T KNOW'

020 7254 8682

[theatre\\_of\\_now@madasafish.com](mailto:theatre_of_now@madasafish.com)

## OCTOBER

25-31 Inner Space, Norwich

## NOVEMBER

5-10 Phoenix Project, Glastonbury

## Nola Rae

## OCTOBER

15 Bridgewater AC 'Napoleon'

## NOVEMBER

- 3 Chelmsford Workshop
- 4 Chancellor Hall, Chelmsford 'Napoleon'
- 12 Local Gegents i Cabets (Spain) 'Mozart'
- 13 Nau de la Música (Spain) 'Mozart'
- 16 Théâtre de Perpignan 'Mozart'
- 17-18 Perpignan 'Elizabeth'
- 30-2 December Morant – Espace Culturel Jean Carmet 'Mozart'

## JANUARY 2005

- 15-30 London Mime Festival 'Napoleon'
- 22 Chaux-de-Fonds (Switz.) 'Mozart'

## SHAMS

## 'CAROUSEL'

## OCTOBER

15-17 BAC, London

## 'THE GARDEN'

## NOVEMBER

- 3 Tacchi-Morris AC, Taunton
- 4 Okehampton College
- 5-6 Cotswold Playhouse, Stroud
- 11 Mill Hill School, NW7
- 12 Brewery Arts, Cirencester
- 13 Crediton AC
- 17-18 Ustinov Studio, Bath
- 19 Olympus Studio, Gloucester
- 20 Chesil, Winchester
- 24-25 I.E. Theatre, Axminster
- 26 Wharf Theatre, Devizes
- 27 Falmouth AC

## Théâtre Sans Frontières

## 'EL SOMBRERO DE TRES PICOS' ('THE THREE CORNERED HAT')

## JANUARY

- 26 Queen's Hall, Hexham
- 27-28 People's Theatre, Newcastle
- 31 The Arc, Stockton-on-Tees

## Third Angel 'HURRYSICKNESS AND REALTIME'

+44 (0)114 281 2044  
[www.thirdangel.co.uk](http://www.thirdangel.co.uk)

Part of Wonderful: visions of the near future  
Magna, Rotherham  
Exhibition Dates: 18 September to 31 October  
Cornerhouse, Manchester  
Performance: 3 December, Green Room, Manchester  
Exhibition dates: 28 November to 9 January 2005

## Theatre-rites and the Lyric Hammersmith 'IN ONE EAR'

OCTOBER

9 Lyric Hammersmith  
12-13 Takeoff Fest, Darlington AC  
18-19 Croydon Clocktower  
22-24 Warwick Arts Centre  
28-31 Lakeside Arts Centre, Nottingham

NOVEMBER

3-6 West Yorkshire Playhouse  
13-14 Artsdepot, Finchley  
18-20 Pegasus Theatre Oxford  
30-1 Jan Lyric Hammersmith

## Travelling Light TC

[www.travlight.co.uk](http://www.travlight.co.uk) 0117 377 3169

## 'TOO MANY COOKS'

OCTOBER

10 Lakeside Arts Centre, Nottingham  
12 Takeoff Fest, Darlington AC  
15 Brewery Arts Centre, Kendal  
16 Warwick Arts Centre  
21-30 Bristol Old Vic Studio

NOVEMBER

2-6 Polka Theatre, Wimbledon  
7 Trinity Theatre, Tunbridge Wells  
12-13 The Hawth, Crawley  
20 Half Moon  
21 ArtsDepot, London  
25 Dorchester Arts Centre  
26-27 Lighthouse, Poole  
1-4 North Edinburgh Arts Centre  
7-9 Draiocht, Dublin  
20-31 Royal Exchange, Manchester

## 'CLOWN'

co-production with Bristol Old Vic

DECEMBER

9-31 Bristol Old Vic

JANUARY

1-15 Bristol Old Vic  
27-29 Birmingham Rep  
30 Warwick Arts Centre

## Horse + Bamboo Theatre

## 'A GREAT (AND UNEXPECTED) EVENT!'

[www.horseandbamboo.org](http://www.horseandbamboo.org)

OCTOBER

9 Blackfriars Arts Centre, Boston  
13 The Arts Centre, Southport  
14 The Arts Centre, Stanwix  
18-20 Jackson's Lane, London  
21 Ashcroft Arts Centre, Fareham  
23 Theatre in the Mill, Bradford  
24 The Platform, Morecambe  
27 Unity Theatre, Liverpool  
29 The Arts Centre, Portsmouth  
30-31 Komedia/Visons Festival, Brighton

NOVEMBER

2-6 Royal Exchange, Manchester  
10 The Arts Centre, Bristol

11 Roadmender, Northampton  
12-13 Square Chapel, Halifax

## Kabosh

## 'ELIZABETH' BY DARIO FO

0115 846 7777

OCTOBER

5-10 Dublin Fringe Festival Project AC  
12-13 Haymarket, Basingstoke  
21 Swansea Taliesin  
22 Nottingham, Djanogly

## Scarlet Theatre

## 'THE CHAIR WOMEN'

[www.scarlettheatre.co.uk](http://www.scarlettheatre.co.uk)  
020 8441 9779

OCTOBER

6-9 Project Theatre, Dublin Fringe  
12-31 Riverside Studios, London

NOVEMBER

5-6 Cambridge Drama Centre  
9-11 Nuffield Theatre, Lancaster  
16-18 Darlington Arts Centre  
19-20 Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh  
24-26 Theatre Royal Wexham

## Curious

## 'SMOKING GUN' AND 'FAMILY HOLD BACK'

a curious double bill with Leslie Hill and Helen Paris  
Drill Hall, London  
30 October - 7 November 2004

## VENUES/FESTS

## BAC Octoberfest

[www.bac.co.uk](http://www.bac.co.uk)

For the full programme see the website.  
Highlights include:  
Kazuki Hohki's 'Evidence for the Existence of Borrowers'

Goat Island's 'When Will The September Roses Bloom?/ Last Night Was Only A Comedy'

Company F.Z.'s 'Loser' and 'Throat'

Ridiculusmus's 'Ideas Men'

Peepolykus's 'All In The Timing'

Wishbone's 'Sleeper'

Kombat Opera's German Experiment

## Circus Space Cabaret

28-29 OCTOBER 2004

Green Gift - Gliding through space  
Michael Kortheus - ping pong pop  
Stefanie Bonse - boleadoras, a sensual (con)-fusion of the sexes  
Aaron Walker - uplifting aerial performance  
Mimbre - fabulous acrobatic trio  
Celia Stothard - chansons and jazz in French and English

11-13 NOVEMBER 2004

Tigris - hula-hoop sailor!  
Ilona Jantti - aerial hoop from Finland  
Bongo Bolero - slick acrobatic balance act

Bruce Wilson - pole manipulation  
Lucie Pasquier - cloudswing  
Swizzleshaker - cocktails for two  
Dave Pickens - compere

27-30 JANUARY 2005

(part of London International Mime Fest)  
Duo Vertigo - jaw-dropping cradle act  
Lukaluka - elegant club juggling  
Molly Saudek - tightwire dancer  
Duo Dinh Anh - Vietnamese acrobatic balance duo  
Damien Gaumet - Smooth Washington  
Trapeze

## The Corn Exchange (Newbury)

Box Office 01635 522733  
[www.cornexchangegenew.com](http://www.cornexchangegenew.com)

At New Greenham Arts:

14 Oct Stan's Café's 'Be Proud of Me'  
15 Oct Biserk Dance Company's 'One Third of a Picture'  
28 Oct & 11 Nov Chris Goode's '9 Days Crazy'

At The Corn Exchange:

15-16 Oct Unlimited Theatre's 'Zero Degrees and Drifting'  
21 Oct Earthfall's 'Running Away With The Hairdresser'  
3 Nov Stan Won't Dance's 'Sinner'  
26-27 Nov Hoipolloi's 'My Uncle Arly'  
3 Dec-3 Jan Hiss and Boo & Corn Exch present 'Jack and the Beanstalk'

## Croydon Clocktower

020 8253 1030  
[www.croydon.gov.uk/clocktower](http://www.croydon.gov.uk/clocktower)

OCTOBER

18-19 theatre-rites' 'In One Ear'  
26 Peepolykus's 'All in the Timing'  
27 Quiconque's 'Hideaway'

DECEMBER

9-11 Company F.Z.'s 'The Birds'

## Hoxton Hall

OCTOBER

7-9 Fronteras Latin Cabaret  
21 Hoxton Bark Cabaret

NOVEMBER

11-14 Reckless Sleepers' 'Last Supper'  
18 Hoxton Bark Cabaret  
25-27 Wrestling School's 'Dead Hands'

DECEMBER

16 Hoxton Bark Cabaret

## visions

[www.visions-festival.org.uk](http://www.visions-festival.org.uk)  
01273 644099

21-30 OCTOBER 2004

The Festival of International Visual Performance. Highlights include:  
Marionetas do Porto's 'Nada ou o Silêncio de Beckett'  
Black Hole Theatre's 'Caravan' (adults only)  
Ding Foundation's 'Unexploded Bomb'  
Stans Café's 'Be Proud of Me'

## London International Mime Festival

JANUARY 2005

For full programme see  
[www.mimefest.co.uk](http://www.mimefest.co.uk)

## SYMPOSIA

## Re:visions - Drawn to Perform Symposium

01273 643194

21 October 2004, University of Brighton.  
Drawn to Perform will explore visual sources of inspiration for use in contemporary performance work.  
£40/£25 artists and students. Special reduced rate for Total Theatre Network members is £20. To book please contact visions by phone or email  
[visions.fest@brighton.ac.uk](mailto:visions.fest@brighton.ac.uk). See  
[www.visions-festival.org.uk](http://www.visions-festival.org.uk) for full details.

## Forced Entertainment Symposium

[www.nuffieldtheatre.com/forced](http://www.nuffieldtheatre.com/forced)

'We are searching for a theatre that can really talk about what it's like to live through these times'. 16-17 October 2004, Nuffield Theatre Lancaster. To celebrate the company's 20th birthday, Lancaster University presents a two-day symposium. An international array of speakers, including academics and practitioners, will engage with Forced Entertainment's practice in close collaboration with the company. Tickets: £60 full price, £35 concessions. This includes a ticket for the UK premiere of 'Bloody Mess', refreshments, lunch and party. See website for further info and booking forms.

## UK TRAINING

## Academy of Circus Arts

Winchester and touring, 07050 282624

DIPLOMA COURSE

Six-month training inside the big top.  
Email [zippos.circus@virgin.net](mailto:zippos.circus@virgin.net)

## Albany Centre, Bristol

The Flummery Room is a space for opening the imagination and developing a sense of play and invention. Monday evenings ongoing class. Open to all. Any questions? Ring Amy on 0117 966 3204 or Jenny on 07767 337 966.

## Bristol University

MA in Cultural Performance

For 5 years WSI has collaborated with Bristol Uni to offer this unique MA. Students spend one semester in Bristol before coming to Lanterhouse to participate in the WSI programme. Contact: Arts Faculty Office, Senate House, University of Bristol, Tyndall Avenue, Bristol, BS8 1TH.

## Central School of Speech and Drama

London, 020 7559 3990

MA ADVANCED THEATRE PRACTICE

A four-term course with choice of: Creative Producing, Dramaturgy, Lighting Design, Object Theatre and Puppetry, Scenography, Sound Design, Writing, Performance, Direction. See [www.cssd.ac.uk](http://www.cssd.ac.uk)

## Centre for Performance Research (CPR)

Aberystwyth, 01970 622133

For programme see [www.thecpr.org.uk](http://www.thecpr.org.uk).

## Circelation 05

[www.circelation.co.uk](http://www.circelation.co.uk)

Circelation 2005 dates will be 2-15 April 2005 in Leeds. It is planned that this performance laboratory for circus arts in relation to other disciplines will become an annual event from 2005. From 2005 Chenine Bhathena will be taking over as the artistic programmer. Application forms will be available from October 2004. Please check the website for more information.

## Circomedia

Bristol, 0117 947 7288

- One Year Foundation (RSA Diploma)  
- Three Month Introductory  
- Evening Classes

## Circus Space

020 7729 9522

New Circus Degree Programme: Foundation Degree in Circus Arts (2-year vocational course) and BA (Hons) Degree in Circus Arts. Applications for the course starting in October 2005 will be taken from July. Contact the Degree Admissions Service on 020 7613 4141 or email [degree.admissions@thecircusspace.co.uk](mailto:degree.admissions@thecircusspace.co.uk).

## Clod Ensemble – The Poetic Body

020 7713 0095

A six-week evening course for actors and performers, led by the Clod Ensemble's artistic director, Suzy Willson. Wednesday evenings, 13 October to 17 November. Venue: The Clod Ensemble's rehearsal studio, First Floor, The Claremont Centre, 24-27 White Lion Street, London N1 9PD. This course, for actors and performers, explores the basic principles of Jacques Lecoq's idea of the poetic body. To book a place, please contact Roxie Curry by phone or [roxie@clodensemble.com](mailto:roxie@clodensemble.com). See [www.clodensemble.com](http://www.clodensemble.com).

## Clowning Masterclass

[www.thewhynotinstitute.com](http://www.thewhynotinstitute.com)

The Why Not Institute presents 'How to be a Stupid', an intensive full-time course in the state of clowning, with Angela de Castro. For beginners and those more experienced. 22-27 November 2004, London, £200. For bookings and enquiries contact: The Why Not Institute, People Show Studios, Pollard Row, London E2 6NB, 020 7739 8363, [info@thewhynotinstitute.com](mailto:info@thewhynotinstitute.com).

## Desmond Jones School

London, 020 8747 3537

Full-time and part-time professional training in Mime and Physical Theatre. Also run short courses in impro/mask, etc.

## Ecole de Mime Corporel Dramatique

London, 020 7272 8627

Movement Theatre and Corporeal Mime (Decroux Technique).

## Embrace the Chaos

01273 699733

A workshop for the creative performer. Brighton Fringe Basement, Kensington Street, Brighton; 23 & 24 October 2004; £50 (£35 concessions); limited spaces. Running over two days, this workshop will cover comic timing, presence, creation and performativity. The workshop will be led by Chris Cresswell.

## Gerry Flanagan

020 7430 0544

Clown Workshops at the City Lit, London.

## Hoxton Hall

020 7684 0060

Wrestling School: one-day professional workshop at Hoxton Hall in conjunction with performance of 'Dead Hands'; Saturday 27 November. Howard Barker and members of the company will explore some of the underlying ideas behind Barker's work. Call or visit [www.hoxtonhall.co.uk](http://www.hoxtonhall.co.uk) for details.

## Jolly Good Productions

[www.jollygoodfun.co.uk](http://www.jollygoodfun.co.uk)

Clowning, Face Painting, Punch and Judy. Contact Ron Wood on 01748 821621 or email [ron@jollygoodfun.co.uk](mailto:ron@jollygoodfun.co.uk).

## The Kelman Group

Leeds 01484 851227

[www.kelmangroup.com](http://www.kelmangroup.com)

Runs regular workshops in the improvisational techniques of Scott Kelman, Kelmanworks Exploring, a new approach to physical and vocal skills, making discoveries in complicity, presence and composition, becoming a more confident and playful improviser, developing sensitivity in ensemble work.

## LISPA

[www.lispa.co.uk](http://www.lispa.co.uk)

020 8969 7004

2-year programme based on the teachings of Jacques Lecoq (Initiation Course and Advanced Course). Evening courses and weekend workshops for professionals and beginners. Contact [welcome@lispa.co.uk](mailto:welcome@lispa.co.uk)

## Little Angel Theatre Puppetry Classes

Little Angel, Islington, London

[www.littleangeltheatre.com](http://www.littleangeltheatre.com)

Separate evening courses in: general puppet making with Lyndie Wright; puppet manipulation with Ronnie Le Drew; marionette with Jonathan Broughton; and puppet carving with Jan Zalud. Will also be running the Little Devil, a puppet club for grown-ups. For details on all courses call Steve on 020 7359 8581 ext 3

## London International Workshop Festival

1-20 November 2004

Three weeks of workshops for performance practitioners – experienced or otherwise. There is circus from Brazil, dance from Africa, can-can from Paris and Bollywood from India, drama from Italy and Russia, and there is burlesque and vaudeville from London and the USA. For full details phone 020 7261 1144, email [mail@workshopfestival.co.uk](mailto:mail@workshopfestival.co.uk) or see [www.workshopfestival.co.uk](http://www.workshopfestival.co.uk).

## Meyerhold's Theatrical Biomechanics

020 8981 6617

Six-day workshop taught by Kathleen Baum (13-18 December). The workshop will consist of three elements: physical training; heightening the performer's sensitivity; and building an ensemble. Please send a letter or email of no more than 300 words expressing your interest, background or training and current practice to Biomechanics, Chisenhale Dance Space, 64-84 Chisenhale Road, London E3 5QZ. Email [mail@chisenhaledancespace.co.uk](mailto:mail@chisenhaledancespace.co.uk). Deadline for applications: Friday 26 November.

## Middlesex University

London, 020 8411 6148

School of Art, Design and Performing Arts – MA Choreography with Performing Arts. Full time, exploring choreography.

## Nose to Nose

+44 (0)1342 823410

Clown Impro. Workshops for organisations and the public. Introductory Days and Weekends, Residential Intensives. Call or see <http://members.aol.com/nosetonose>

## Rescen/ Middlesex University

020 8411 5711

MA Choreography with Performing Arts; full-time cross-artform course. E-mail [machoreo@mdx.ac.uk](mailto:machoreo@mdx.ac.uk)

## School of Physical Theatre

London 020 8215 3350

[school@physicaltheatre.com](mailto:school@physicaltheatre.com)

Full-time one-year professional training. Now accepting applications for 2004/05. 17-18 Apr – Workshop: The Human Comedy 15-17 June – School Public Perfs 19 April – 'An Open Mind', TheatreWorks production

## Shams – Clown Through Mask workshop

07740 475 879

Colour, innocence and experience: a journey towards the self through 6 masks. Introductory weekend 4 & 5 December, London. Full course starts early January for 8 weeks – 3 sessions a week, London. Contact Jonathan Young by phone or email [jonathan@shams72.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:jonathan@shams72.fsnet.co.uk).

## Theatre Training Initiative

[www.theatrettraining.org.uk](http://www.theatrettraining.org.uk)

[info@theatrettraining.org.uk](mailto:info@theatrettraining.org.uk)

A series of weekly workshops and performance research weekends are on offer, in Butoh, Suzuki, Kalarippayattu, Into Play, and Tai Chi/Qi Gong. Weekly Suzuki Sessions with Conan Dunning of Frank Theatre, Australia: Tuesday evenings, 14 September to 2 November. Weekly 'Into Play' Sessions with Lukas Angelini: Saturday mornings 11 September to 30 October. Weekly 'Butoh' Sessions with Fran Barbe: Tuesday evenings 9 November to 30 November. Tai Chi and Qi Gong (in the park!) with Chen Gang from Paris: 19 Sep. Making the Body All Eyes: Kalarippayattu with Phillip Zarrilli/CVN Kalari: 8-10 October. Full details will be announced on our website.

## University of Kent, Canterbury

01227 823338

MA by Practice as Research – for information or to apply for entry to the course, please phone Paul Allain or e-mail [p.a.allain@ukc.ac.uk](mailto:p.a.allain@ukc.ac.uk)

## The Why Not Institute

London +44 (0) 20 7739 8363

[whynotinstitute@aol.com](mailto:whynotinstitute@aol.com)

For more details and description of the courses please contact the Institute.

## The Wright School

London,

[www.thewrightschool.co.uk](http://www.thewrightschool.co.uk)

See the website for full details.

## OVERSEAS

### Academy of Living Movement

Vienna, Austria, Tel +43 1 8892945

[www.livingmovement.org](http://www.livingmovement.org)

4-year professional performance training – a new approach to the schooling of movement artists. Incorporates bodywork, eurythmy, ensemble, devising, neutral mask, scenography, storytelling. Contact: [info@livingmovement.org](mailto:info@livingmovement.org). UK applicants can also contact Philip Beaven: [philip@livingmovement.org](mailto:philip@livingmovement.org).

### Butoh Centre Mamu

[www.tadashi-endo.de](http://www.tadashi-endo.de)

Short courses and long intensives throughout the year in Butoh at Endo's studio in Gottingen (near Hannover) in Germany. Next intensive workshops: 10 December-19 December. Cost: 200 Euro inc accommodation. Contact Gabriele Endo: [gendo@butoh-ma.de](mailto:gendo@butoh-ma.de) or +49 551 790 6245

### 'Circo a Vapore' School of Theatre

Rome, Italy, +39 06 700 9692

Two-year professional training. See [www.circoavapore.3000.it](http://www.circoavapore.3000.it) or e-mail for info in English [circoavapore@tiscalinet.it](mailto:circoavapore@tiscalinet.it)

### Dell'Arte

[www.dellarte.com](http://www.dellarte.com)

Auditions for Physical Theatre Programme take place throughout the US, Canada, Mexico and Europe. For info and application see website.

### Ecole Internationale de Theatre Jacques Lecoq

Paris, +33 1 47 70 44 78

Two-Year Course plus the Laboratory of Movement Study (LEM).

### École Philippe Gaulier

Janville-sur-Juine 91150 Tel +33 (0) 1

60 82 19 83 [philgaulier@aol.com](mailto:philgaulier@aol.com)

[www.ecolephilippegaulier.com](http://www.ecolephilippegaulier.com)

13/09/04-06/05/05 – School 2004-05; Le Jeu, Neutral Mask, Bouffons, etc.

### Espace Catastrophe

Bruxelles, +32 (0) 2 538 12 02

Training in circus and performing arts. Contact [espace@catastrophe.be](mailto:espace@catastrophe.be) or see [www.catastrophe.be](http://www.catastrophe.be)

### Mime Centrum Berlin

[www.mimecentrum.de](http://www.mimecentrum.de)

'The Biomechanics of Meyerhold' and other workshops.

### Total Theatre School

Australia, [sophie@totaltheatre.com.au](mailto:sophie@totaltheatre.com.au)

One- and two-year intensive performance-based courses in physical theatre techniques. See [www.totaltheatre.com.au](http://www.totaltheatre.com.au).

### ZID Theater LAB

Netherlands, +31.20.4888449

ZID Theater offers a training opportunity for performers and theatre directors. Summer school and Artists in Residence programme are upcoming. For more info contact: [karolina@zidtheater.nl](mailto:karolina@zidtheater.nl) or see: [www.zidtheater.nl](http://www.zidtheater.nl).



# The School of Physical Theatre

Founded in 1978

London England  
director Ron East

*"The School provides a carefully structured set of themes, based on the LeCoq method, as well as providing the technical ability and physical skills necessary to develop professional standards of expertise"*

full-time professional programme **October - June**  
summer intensive **August**  
part time classes

certified LeCoq instruction

## The School Of Physical Theatre

Three Mills Media Centre, Three Mills Lane, Bromley-by-Bow, London, E3 3DU, England

tel +44 (0)20 8215 3350 e-mail [school@physicaltheatre.com](mailto:school@physicaltheatre.com)  
fax +44 (0)20 8215 3482 internet [www.physicaltheatre.com](http://www.physicaltheatre.com)



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## ECOLE DE MIME CORPOREL DRAMATIQUE AND THEATRE DE L'ANGE FOU

ARTISTIC DIRECTORS: STEVEN WASSON & CORINNE SOUM

WHAT IS ESSENTIAL FOR THEATRE?

THE RESPONSE HAS ALWAYS BEEN TO PLACE THE  
ACTOR AS THE ONLY INDISPENSABLE ELEMENT.

NAMING IT DRAMATIC CORPORAL MIME, ETIENNE  
DECROUX CREATED AN INNOVATIVE METHOD AND PRECISE

TECHNIQUE FOR A NEW GENERATION OF CREATIVE PERFORMERS  
WISHING TO TRANSFORM THEIR IDEAS INTO A PHYSICAL REALITY.

OUR SCHOOL OFFERS THE OPPORTUNITY TO STUDY THIS DISCIPLINE  
IN DEPTH FROM DIFFERENT ANGLES, BOTH FORMAL AND CREATIVE



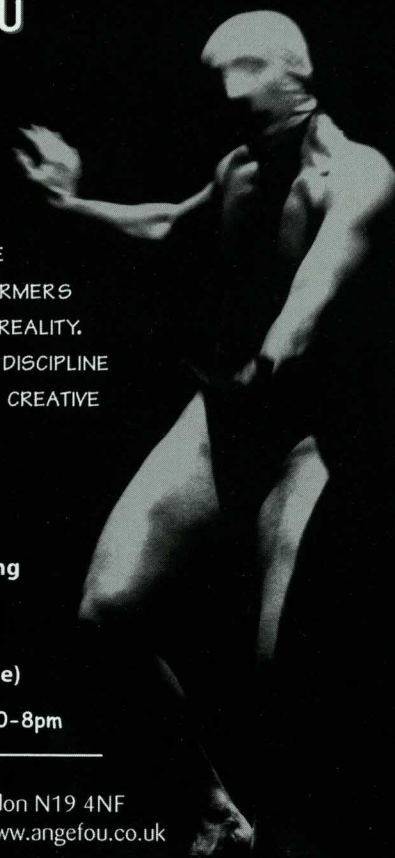
- Training includes:  
Technique, improvisation, composition  
and repertoire.
- Students may join the school at the beginning  
of each month.

- Class Schedule:  
Monday to Fri 10am to 2 pm (October to June)

- NEW: EVENING CLASSES, TUE/THUR, 6.30-8pm

Ecole de Mime Corporel Dramatique

Unit 207, Belgravia workshops, 157-163 Marlborough Road, London N19 4NF  
Tel: 020 7263 9339 - E-mail: [infoschool@angefou.co.uk](mailto:infoschool@angefou.co.uk) - Website: [www.angefou.co.uk](http://www.angefou.co.uk)





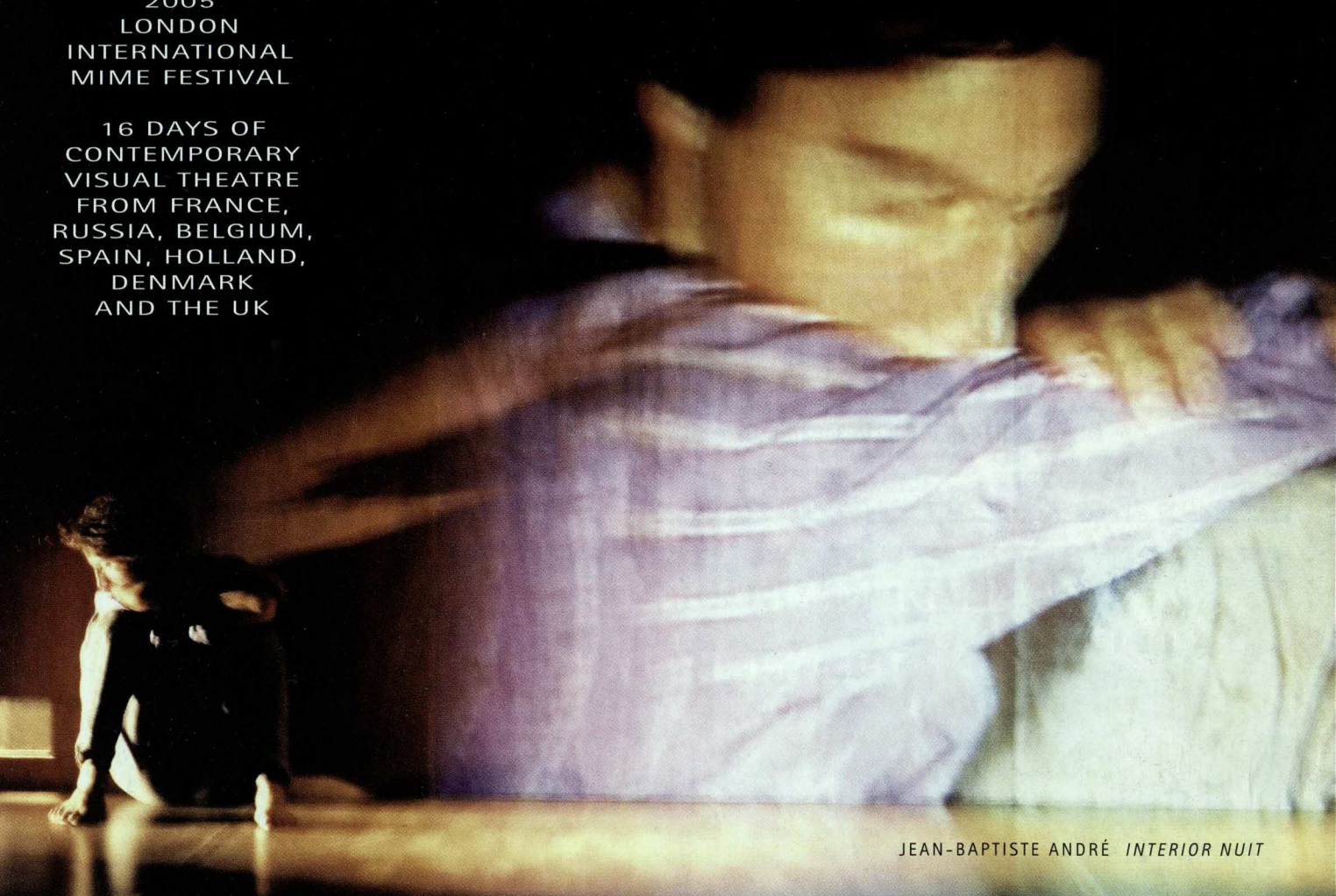
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JEAN-BAPTISTE ANDRÉ *INTERIOR NUIT*

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JEAN-BAPTISTE ANDRÉ  
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As children, we are all circus performers. And then we grow up, and it takes a lot to prise open a lunette in the gloomy adult consciousness and to allow a little of that forgotten light to steal back in. Three cheers, then, for the London International Mime Festival. I had almost forgotten what strange tricks the human body can play, and the laughter – and wonder – its transformations can generate.

Michael Wright, SUNDAY TIMES

