

# TOTAL THEATRE

mime physical visual  
volume 4 number 1 spring 1992



If undelivered please return to Mime Action Group, Sadler's Wells, 179 Rosebery Avenue, London, EC1R 4TN.



The first meeting to discuss the applications for the new financial year (92/93) was held at the end of January and the Dance & Mime panel at Southern Arts has agreed to up its funding support of mime companies in line with the increase in core funding given it for this year. These include Black Mime Theatre and their residency at the West End Centre, Johnaton Kay for his work within the region, The Right Size for their continuing regional initiatives, and the 'up-and-coming' Jane Watson & Company who are resident within Hampshire.

The total amount offered to mime companies was over £22,000 and much of the other grant allocation made included work within the field of mime, from venue support for touring through to training initiatives and a publication which includes articles and information concerned with mime issues.

For more information about these grants or details of our policies and guide-lines, please do not hesitate to contact us in the Dance & Mime Department, Southern Arts, 13 St Clements Street, Winchester, Hants, SO23 9DQ. Tel: 0962 855099

Kallaway, the arts consultancy specialists, is to present six working seminars for small and middle scale arts organisations during March & June 1992. The seminars will reflect Kallaway's belief that a productive arts sponsorship is a mutually beneficial business relationship between arts organisations and the commercial sector.

Two of the six seminars will provide an introduction to arts sponsorship for those new to the field, including: understanding the language of sponsorship, how to draw up a proposal, how to make approaches and how to get the best out of a relationship. The other four seminars are for representatives with a working knowledge of the subject.

For further information and an application form please contact: Beatrice Malleon, Kallaway Limited, 2 Portland Road, Holland Park, London W11 4LA. Tel: 071 221 7883

For more Training information see pages 6 & 7 inside.

# News

## Edinburgh 1992

Members interested in performing during the Edinburgh Festival should look at the brochure of the Hill Street Theatre (venue 41). It's an official ITC recognised venue and they have produced one of the better detailed leaflets outlining their services and performance spaces.

Although this is not a recommendation its a good example of the services more theatres should be offering.

Contact: Tomek Bork, AB OVO Theatre Company LTD, 61a Drayton Road, London, NW10 4DG. Tel: 0081 965 5608.

## New Collaborations

Theatre directors Ruth Ben-Tovim, Anna Birch and Ben Yeger have moved into a new office space in Sadler's Wells.

Both Ruth and Ben have started to generate new projects together with an emphasis on combining new plays with physical theatre and mime technique.

To assist in this new producing venture they are looking for a fundraiser/administrator who can work on a free-lance basis. If you'd like an informal discussion with Ruth and Ben please contact 071 713 7843.

## MAG Change

Mime have moved offices from BAC, to a better situated and bigger office space in north London. Please note MAG change of address

Mime Action Group, Sadler's Wells, Rosebery Avenue, London WC1R 4TN. Telephone 071 713 7944.

## Mime in Education

Watching Brief Bursaries 91/92

The Arts Council and the Gulbenkian Foundation have awarded 14 bursaries to theatre, mime and puppetry practitioners to enable them to take short residencies in schools or in other organisations, to observe and work with children and teachers in the school environment and develop closer understanding of their audiences.

Awards have been offered to Joff Chafer of Trestle Theatre Company; Jo Verrent, writer & actress; Maggie Waren of Golden Goose Puppets; Geraldine Berridge of John Peel Puppets; Fiona Mac, carnival puppet maker; Sarah Kemp of Theatre Sans Frontiers; Julie Ward of Jack Drum Arts; Lesley Mills & Andrew Schimmin of Round the Hat Rack Theatre Company; Mike Laywood, a puppeteer of Out Of The Shadow; Karen Tovell, a story teller; Gill Nathanson, researcher; Gill Bond, Satellite Community Celebrations; Mary Cooper, writer; Stuart Hawkes, Talking Cat Theatre; Jon Palmer, Interplay Childrens Theatre.

The bursary holders have all been asked to submit a report about their residencies. Further information is available from, Sian Ede, Drama Officer, at the Arts Council, 14 Great Peter Street, London, SW1P 3NQ. Tel: 071 333 0100.

# Sponsorship & Funding News

## Barclays' New Stages

The second Barclay's New Stages Festival of Independent Theatre at the Royal Court will take place 18 May - 6 June '92. The five companies selected to participate are Welsh Theatre Company Brith Gof, The Cholmondeleys & FGatherstonehaughs, high energy multi-media ensemble Yes/No People, and physical/dance Theatre Company V-Tol.

The assessors for the awards were Max Stafford Clark Artistic Director Royal Court, Nicolas de Jongh Theatre Critic London Evening Standard and John Ashford, Director Place Theatre.

A good selection for a panel, however, if we are to see a mime winner, it is surely a essential that the funders consider a representative from the mime art form on their panel. Only time and some positive suggestion will tell.

Contact Royal Court Box Office for further details 071 730 1745/2554.

## 1992 Prudential Award For The Arts

The Awards, which are being judged at this moment, are worth £50,000 this year (a 30% increase). This year the winning company in each of the five categories - dance, music, opera, theatre and visual arts - will receive an award of £25,00, to be spent on the winning companies artistic programme. Short-listed companies will also be allotted £5,000 due to a new development this year. The lucky winners will be announced in the beginning of July 92.

## Foundation For Sport & The Arts

An important reminder that it's not too late to apply for grants from this new foundation, set up by the Pools Promoters Association - in fact only £15 million of the expected £60 million income has been spent this year. Grants have been made to a wide variety of clients and size of organisation doesn't seem to be a major problem. Indeed large numbers of small organisations has been given cash help.

Try this source if you haven't already. Contact: Grattan Endicott, Secretary to the Trustees, The Foundation for Sport and the Arts, PO box 666, Liverpool L69 7JN. Tel: 051 524 0235/6.

## Euro-Arts Projects Wanted

From July to December 92, Britain will be holding the Presidency of the European Commission. To coincide with this an attempt has been made to winkle some cash out of the Treasury Department to fund a European Arts Festival.

John Drummond, former controller of Radio 3, has been appointed as festival director. He's interested in hearing from anyone running new projects with a European slant - they do not need to involve collaboration with European artists, as with Platform Europe. Limited funding may be available for part of the project costs.

Contact John Drummond, c/o, Tony Dyer, Office of Arts & Libraries, 071 270 5948.

## British American Arts Association

Have published their up-date for 1992 featuring news and a listings of their publications, conference, grants, fellowship programme and information/advice services.

To discover more about BAAA contact BAAA 116 Commercial Street, London, E1 6NF. Tel: 071 247 5385.

## Networking in Europe

Compiled by Rob Fisher

Hoe do you plug into Europe. Heres the first directory containing information and addresses of over 150 networks, both institutional and informal, operating in the cultural sector in Europe.

150pp - £10.00 (inc p&p)

From: International Informations Unit, Arts Council, 14 Great Peter Street, London, SW1P 3NQ.

# Publications

## The Arts Promoters Pack

by Jo Hilton

How to plan and run your own event or venue. The pack is aimed at new promoters and is a step-by-step guide to the process needed to ensure successful promotion. Contents include structure, marketing, funding, finance, working structures and meetings.

The pack is non-art form specific and is very much for beginners. A good, clearly written first time guide for arts promoters. Nothing too in depth but it gives an excellent overview. Useful in conjunction with the right type of training. For more Training information see pages 6 & 7 inside.

100pp - £ 7.50 (plus £2.25 p&p)

From: East Midlands Arts, Mountfields House, Forest Road, Loughborough, Leicestershire, LE11 3HU.

## "Bringing Art to Village Halls"

By Sheila Rowley & Stephen Woollett

This publication offers comprehensive information on promoting and presenting entertainments, events, workshops, classes and exhibitions in local halls. Although mainly devoted to Village Hall management committees & local arts officers it is essential reading for companies/soloists/trainers who wish to take advantage of the huge network of village venues throughout the country. It would give you valuable insight into the workings of this surprising network.

Published by ACRE, The Rural Communities Charity and supported by the Arts Council & the Carnegie UK Trust.

£4.95 (inc p&p)

From ACRE: Contact Marion Gilliland, ACRE, Somerford Court, Somerford Road, Cirencester, Glos, GL7 1TW.

## Festivals Guide 1992/93

An independently published designed to give comprehensive information on all festivals in Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland.

Two issues are to be printed. The first will cover festivals between April-August '92, the second covers August-April '93. Entries for festivals are free, but, you are also welcome to advertise.

Members will find this a useful guide to gauge festival they might wish to include in their sales push for their touring shows. Its an extensive reference guide combined with very valuable information for administrators looking for alternative touring options.

64pp magazine format

£2.00 each copy

Available form WH Smiths or mail order from Festival Guide, 63-65 North Road, St. Andrews, Bristol, BS6 5AQ. Tel: 0272 420369.

## British Arts Festivals Association (BAFA)

BAFA is an independent association of many of the leading professional arts festivals in Great Britain and provides the only collective voice for arts festivals in this country. They produce a leaflet each year giving advance information on dates and programme details for all the forthcoming festivals in BAFA membership, currently 45.

A useful organisation for members to make contact with as the information and meeting the association run provide a useful link for performance companies.

Contact: Gwyn Rhydderch, Co-ordinator, British Arts Festivals Association, PO Box 925, London N6 5XX.

Tel: 081 348 4117.



Jacksons Lane north London's combined arts venue have appointed Peter Grahame, as the new Theatre Manager.

As he is seeking to up grade and expand the usage of the newly re-built theatre space and he aims to realise this.

He is most interested in hearing from individuals and companies who would like to discuss the possibilities of performing as part of a radical new programme of diverse and regular public performance.

Contact Peter Grahame, Theatre Manager, Jacksons Lane Community Centre, 269a Archway Road, London, N6 5AA. Tel: 081 340 5226  
For rehearsal space information see pages 4 inside.

The Community Dance and Mime Foundation (CDMF) has just updated its Guide-line Contracts and Pay-scales. The Guide-lines offer sample for mime and dance workers in the community, recommend minimum pay levels and advocate good employment practise. The new Network Brochure will also be available in the spring containing national listings of community dance & mime practitioners, regional arts boards and national arts organisations.

Other publications available from CDMF include Animated, the movement's quarterly magazine, which contains articles on issues affecting the community dance & mime movement, news from CDMF members, resources, funding and training opportunities. CDMF's Briefing Papers and Information Sheets are produced during the year informing the movement of key issues in a clear and concise way. Recent topics include National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ's) restructuring of the arts funding bodies and the National Curriculum.

From the early summer CDMF will be selling the Arts Council/Sports Council Young Peoples Dancing Directory and database "On The Move". The directory includes contracts for youth dance and movement groups across the UK, details on setting up groups and other useful information for young people to dance.

CDMF members are entitled to receive some of these publications free and they also receive regular mailings, discounts on CDMF's book-lists, early booking and discounts at CDMF's training courses, conferences and special events, access to CDMF's specialist advisory service on financial, legal, training and other issues and the rare opportunity to be more actively involved in this national movement.

For further details of these publications, CDMF training Opportunities and membership contact CDMF at School of Arts, Leicester Polytechnic, Scraptoft Campus, Leicester LE7 9SU or tel (0533) 418517.

Total Theatre is published quarterly by  
Mime Action Group  
Sadler's Wells  
Rosebery Avenue  
London WC1R 4TN.  
Telephone 071 713 7944

Editor David Ryan

Design Daren Ellis

Editorial Group Anne Dennis, Desmond Jones, Shani Solomons, Brendan Stapleton & Paul Vates

Printed PrintSolve 081 997 9646

Volume 4  
Number 1  
Spring 1992

© Copyright  
Mime Action Group 1992

Total Theatre Issn 0960-6106

Cover Photo: Senor Z, presented by Amoros et Augustin.  
Photo: Nicolas Beaurain.

The views expressed or opinions stated in Total Theatre are not necessarily the views of the Editor or Publisher. Similarly statements made or opinions expressed by the advertisers are not necessarily shared by the Editor, Publishers or the Editorial Group.

Reasonable care has been taken to avoid errors in the magazine, but no liability will be accepted for any errors which may occur.

No material in this publication may be reproduced in any way without the consent, in writing, of the publishers.

the publishers will not accept responsibility for the safe return of any unsolicited material.

We assume permission to publish any unsolicited material unless otherwise stated in writing.

TOTAL THEATRE is just one of the many services MIME ACTION GROUP provides for mime and mimes in the UK. Membership is available to anyone who want to know more or involve themselves in the contemporary mime movement.

For details of membership benefits please contact: David Ryan, Mime Action Group, Sadler's Wells, Rosebery Avenue, London WC1R 4TN. Telephone 071 713 7944

## Arts Development Association Bites The Dust

ADA, the national arts umbrella organisation, has gone into voluntary liquidation following diminishing funding and historic bad debts. Hit by the lack of funding revenue, and the recession ADA made administrative cut backs before being forced to wind up. Members will be familiar with ADA's magazine "Local Arts UK", their series of publications & guides, conferences and sponsorship awards. It is a loss of a valuable arts tool and will be sorely missed.

## Arts Council Amateur Review

The Arts Council commissioned review of the UK dance and mime movement is well underway. Freelance arts consultants, Katie Venner and Anthony Peppiatt have been engaged to carry out the research and to make recommendations to support the future of the movement.

For further information contact: Katie Venner on (0272) 425368 or Anthony Peppiatt on (0524) 37881.

## Manchester Moves Towards New Millenia

Manchester has won the Arts 2000 bid to host the Year of Drama in 1994. An arts Council initiative the Arts 2000 scheme is to choose a region/city to represent an art form area each year, culminating with the celebration of the year of the artist, 2000 AD.

For further information please contact, Gregor Stewart on 061 881 9349.

## Live Art Commission Awards 92/93

The Arts Council's new Combined Arts Unit, which is now responsible for policy and provision of Live Art, has awarded seven grants to national organisations to commission a challenging and diverse range of Live Art projects in 92/93.

Live Art, formerly referred to by the Arts Council as performance Art, explores contemporary issues, possesses a distinctive relationship to its audience, and whilst being rooted in the visual arts is not bound by a single art form practise or context.

The Live Art Commission Scheme is intended to provide funds for the commissioning of innovative live work in galleries, studios and site specific locations; to encourage creative partnerships between artists and promoters; to promote awareness of the vitality and diversity of Live Art practise and increase access to Live Art events. Grants totalling £57,600 were awarded to: Bluecoat Gallery, Liverpool (site specific work); Hull Time Based Arts (artist with disability residency); Contemporary Archives, Nottingham (to commission MAG members Reckless Sleepers in October 1992); Serpentine Gallery, London; Arnoldfini Live, Bristol; Projects UK/Tyne International, Newcastle-U-Tyne; Zap Art, Brighton. For further information contact Lois Keidan or Daniela Karsten, Live Art (Combined Art), Arts Council, 14 Great Peter Street, London, SW1P 3NQ. Tel: 071 333 0100.

## Letters

Dear Total Theatre & MAG,

It was with great dismay that I read page 7 of Total Theatre Vol3 #4 Winter '91/92, which were devoted to Croatian Propaganda concerning the very tragic and very complex situation which has led to the Yugoslavian Civil War. No one who knows me can doubt my deep-seated conviction that no one can separate theatre from politics, any more than you can separate theatre from life. Through art we communicate our feelings and ideas. Theatre in fact consists of a very special relationship between the actor/communicator and the audience. But I believe also, that as communicators, we have the responsibility to use our skills in a clear, informed and honest manner.

None of this did I find in the article on page 7. They were devoid of discussion, analysis (economic or historical) and almost devoid of truth.

A new world order is being created at the moment, for better or worse. In the present economic chaos, much of the world finds itself in internal strife. The map is dotted with tragic wars and killings. As spheres of influence and struggles for power manipulate great parts of the world, both economically and militarily, one must be extremely careful not to misinform or misrepresent, no matter how good our intentions.

Thus we must be committed to study closely the history of conflicts, and to analyse where they have come from and where they are going. To do otherwise is highly irresponsible. Is MAG to become the champion of Armenia or Azerbaijan? Ireland or Northern Ireland? The Kurds or the Turks? Whom will we support in Crimea, in South Africa, in Algeria, etc, etc.? As passionately as I feel about many of these questions, I would suggest that in future "Total Theatre" does not allow itself to be the spokes-person for a particular cause, by printing its war propaganda.

In Yugoslavia, it is precisely this kind of misuse of the media, both in Zagreb and Belgrade, which has fanned the incredible level of hate, racism, feelings of religious and cultural superiority, etc. now found through out the area. False history and lies have been used with great abandon. However, during this period, some of the finest people throughout the Republics have been journalists, writers, film-makers, etc. Who have refused to be drawn into this propaganda machine, often at great personal sacrifice. Can we please follow their example and be thorough and responsible in the future. Sincerely, Anne Dennis.

## Reply

Dear Anne,

The article I wrote on page 7 "Total Theatre" Vol3 #4 was never intended to be a piece of political propaganda, rather it was to draw attention to the loss of two specific arts festivals of International importance - Eurokaz and the Dance & Movement Festival of Zagreb. Both festivals have presented British mime talents in the past.

My motivation was to start a membership debate as regarding exactly the issue you raised that "through art we communicate our feelings and ideas".

Neither was it my intention to present war propaganda and/or to support either side an artistic and supportive "...transfusion to our colleagues in Croatia and Slovenia".

Whilst I must admit that factual information was hard to come by in the run up to the last edition due to the clamp downs etc. in a war zone. The faxes that were printed reflected the only source information that I had to hand.

Surely this is the point of a members magazine to start debate regarding current artistic affairs relating to the profession, as well as passing on factual information (regarding training, performance, conferences, funding, sponsorship etc).

What we have all tried to do with Total Theatre is to establish a magazine that reflects the views and opinions of the membership. To keep the magazine live it has been our intention to strive towards a homogeneous publication that truly serves its crucial purpose - informing members.

For mime to have a role in our cultural future members must continue to support MAG's activities. Total Theatre, as your magazine, is a vehicle for all the work of members, funders, friends & allies, and Mime Action Group itself. David Ryan Co-ordinator.

## Theatre Record

A fortnightly publication providing fully indexed, neatly organised reviews of productions, with a full cast list and technical credits, reviewed in the national press. A comprehensive, if unofficial, first night diary, is provided to help avoid clashes, plus an instant cuttings library for production research, or promotional use for coming seasons. A special half price offer (for SWET/ITC/TMA/PTN members who do not already subscribe) is promised £25 for 13 fortnightly issues.

Contact Theatre Record, 4 Cross Deep Gardens, Twickenham, TW1 4QU. Tel: 081 892 6087.

## Bazaar, Quarterly magazine

Bazaar is the only magazine in Britain that gives you a panoramic view of what's happening in South Asian Arts.

Featuring both up & coming and established artists working in every aspect of the arts - from photography, film, dance and traditional music to contemporary art, literature and the latest happening sounds. Articles, features and comprehensive listings service of national events, plus a regular review section.

Contact Bazaar, Freepost, London, SW9 8BR.

## Directory of Social Change

Publish a wide variety of useful guide and hand-book publications which aim to promote the more effective use of charitable resources.

A list of their publications and services is available from Directory of Social Change, Radius Works, Back Lane, London, NW3 1HL. Tel: 071 284 4364 (publications or 071 431 1817 (courses) (Northern Courses (051 708 0117).

## Equal Opportunities Policy into Practise: Gender

By Gill Hague

The third in ITC's series of booklets on Equal Opportunities in theatre. The booklet tackles how women working in the theatre may be affected by sexism. It provides, both employers and employees, with practical guidance on issue which affect them including: childcare, sexual harassment, personal safety, recruitment & training.

168pp

Pb: ISBN 1-871180-02-3: £ 1.95 (+40p p&p)

Available from Independent Theatre Council, 4 Baden Place, Crosby Row, London, SE1 1YW. Tel: 071 403 1727.

## Who Does What in Europe? New Edition

Compiled by Rod Fisher

New and updated version of this introduction to the cultural role and policies of the European Community, Council of Europe, UNESCO and other pan-European institutions and the scope they provide as sources of finance.

90pp - £ 7.50 (inc p&p)

From: International Informations Unit, Arts Council, 14 Great Peter Street, London, SW1P 3NQ.

## Street Theatre and Outdoor Performance

"Is there life after juggling"

Bim Mason, Fool Time Circus School

NB To be published September 1992

The book is a description, an analysis and a celebration of outdoor theatre, which demonstrates what a sophisticated art form it is. A practical guide to those new to the subject, it also enables practising performers to gain some perspective on their own work. It also provides arts administrators and festival organisers with information they need to successful programme outdoor events.

The book describes some of the less well known methods, as well as examining the performance practises of some of the more established British and European companies. It shows how the contemporary scene has been arrived at, and indicates how outdoor performance continues to challenge and dissolve our definitions of theatre, analyses them and suggests future possibilities.

220pp illustrated

Hb: 0-415-07049-X: £30.00 (plus p&p)

Pb: 0-415-07050-3: £ 8.99 (plus p&p)

From Routledge, 11 New Fetter Lane, London, EC4P 4EE. Tel: 071 583 9855.



## Noticeboard

### Male Performers Wanted

In the April/May period I shall be auditioning for five male performers for a physical theatre production to be rehearsed in the early autumn of this year. The piece, based upon Herman Melville's short story "Bartleby" will be premiered at Newcastle's Dance Umbrella Festival and a short intensive tour is being organised for the period immediately afterwards. Funding has been applied for and I hope to be able to offer a reasonable fee for the performers during the rehearsal period.

Interested physical performers with acting and movement (dance & mime) skills should contact asap Simon Henderson, 160, Avondale Road, Byker, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2ER. Tel: 091 265 6895 for more information.

### Performers Wanted

Ophaboom Theatre are interested in hearing from performers for a street Commedia piece being taken to Edinburgh in August 1992. Performances will also take place in July at festivals and in Covent Garden. As ever we are looking for talent, commitment and an openness. We can offer little money, apart from what as a group we can pick up and a few paid gigs, but the future...

Contact Geoff Beale on 071 737 6800 for details of a workshop/audition at the end of March led by Franco Busari.

### Mimescope Require Performers

Mimescope has a business department dealing with television, films, commercials, conferences and trade fairs.

Jobs are coming in all the time for experienced professional performers with total theatre skills (mime and/or circus skills).

Work is available both in the UK and abroad.

Interested performers should send their publicity material and, if possible, a video to Kath Gorman (Address below).

### Mimescope Require a Stage-manager

An experienced stage manager, on a free lance basis, for odd gigs (mostly one nighters) in and around London and on tour. Equity/ITC rates of pay.

The company is based in Woodford Green, North East London area. Applicants should be within easy reach of this area.

Send CV plus letter of application, by 3rd April 1992 to Kath Gorman, Administrator, Mimescope Limited, 17 Grange Avenue, Woodford Green, Essex, IG8 9JT.

### Need a Director?

Michael Harvey has recently finished work with Gambolling Guizers on their new show "Bamboozle". If you are looking for a director and would like to chat to Michael you can ring him on (0222) 222270.

### Rehearsal Space for Hire

3,000 square foot of naturally lit performance space is available for rehearsals and workshops. Price £10.00 per hour.

Contact Bridget Ashley-Miller, Delphina Studios, Maryland Works, 22 Grove Crescent Road, Stratford, London E15 1BJ. Tel: 081 519 8841.

### More Rehearsal for Space Hire

Jacksons Lane is able to offer rehearsal space in the sports hall/studio, on weekdays, during the day.

This would suit a company requiring a regular rehearsal venue, for 30-35 hours per week. Shorter bookings (half day/full day) may be possible, on a regular or occasional basis, depending on availability.

The space is suitable for dance, mime, physical theatre and circus companies.

Features heated 37m x 8m semi sprung floor, 2 changing rooms with showers, limited storage space, cafe & circus equipment.

For further information please contact Anne Gill on 081 340 or 081 340 5226.

### Touring Van For Sale

It's a 1978 Mercedes 407D van, with a newly re-built diesel engine, seats seven, 6'x6' cargo area behind a moveable bulkhead.

Why should you buy it? Two reasons: comfort and money. The comfort of the company who travels in it, and the money you will save on van rental in next years' budget.

What will it cost? Probably no more than your current years' budget for van rental. And if hard time fall, or you have a block of un-booked space you can always hire the vehicle to another company that needs it.

How do you decide?

Please contact me as soon as possible to arrange to look over the van. We can negotiate your companies needs, and how you could buy this van. It will become available this summer, and you could be using it from the beginning of the Autumn touring season.

I'm asking £2000 for it, and am quite happy with payments in instalments.

Contact: David Gaines, Flat 8, 22 Wandsworth Plain, London, SW18 1ET. Tel: 081 874 0513.

### Featured image

Inside Out Theatre Company, in the ultimate comedy thriller, "The House That Henry Built".

An enthralling tale which will have you laughing, but, beware, terror is just around the corner. Who is Henry? Why is he rotting? What is the flower of decay?

A unique style of physical theatre encompassing traditional thriller and horror spoof to conjure up a truly mind boggling world. "...masters at what they do. Ultra contemporary and completely convincing." Canadian Broadcasting Corp.

31st March to 18th April Tickets £7/£5 (reductions). Tue to Sat 7.30pm Sun 5.00pm (NB no show Monday). Theatre Museum, Covent Garden, 1e Tavistock Street, London, WC2 7PA. Box Office 071 836 2330 Photo Credit: Mike Ratcliffe.

# MAG Up-date

Up-date of news of MAG's work will be delayed until the conclusion of the Extraordinary General Meeting of members at the Voice Box, Royal Festival Hall, Southbank, London, SE1. Thursday 9th April, 2.00-4.00pm.

A formal notice and agenda are enclosed with this magazine. It is essential that you try to make this meeting as it will have important bearing on the future work MAG will be carrying out on your behalf.

## National Blueprint For Mime Development Up-date

The Mime Action Group commissioned National Blueprint For Regional Mime Development is in its final writing stages and it is expected that the document will be available by May 1992.

it will be a practical document, aimed at all those interested in Mime and its development, and is designed to be used as a discussion and educational tool. Thus it will be a springboard and not an answer or trite solution.

The design and format will also enhance its appeal, accessibility and usefulness, and the culmination of all the information and suggestions will encourage nationwide discussion about, and action on mime development.

MAG hopes to liaise closely with all Regional Arts Boards to secure maximum effect, and establish a national shared understanding about mime. As a tool, the Blueprint will demand commitment and vision from all concerned; however the evidence suggests that if we enable the right voices from the community, mime has an immense role to play.

The Blueprint aims to cover mime as a flexible force, and not just to concentrate on performance and touring - although certainly not negating its vital nature.

It will offer an excellent opportunity to re-examine and look forward via a challenging document.

MAG will also have a short video to accompany the Blueprint (a simple "talking heads" piece, again to encourage discussion).

If you would like more information, or to reserve a copy of the Blueprint, then please contact:-

David Ryan, Co-ordinator, Mime Action Group, Sadler's Wells, Rosebery Avenue, London EC1R 4TN or Telephone 071 713 7944.

## MAG Moves

MAG's office has moved to North London in order to be more accessible to national transport and better office & resources facilities. As we are hoping to recruit another member of staff the office will be open for members to drop in, chat and use our resources. Opening times will be advertised once we have laid the carpet.

Please note: New Address is Mime Action Group, Sadlers Wells, Rosebery Avenue, London, EC1R 4TN. Tel: 071 713 7944. Fax TBC.





# Strategic Thinking

## Quote:

"The arts funding system - the Arts Council and its partners - does not create art, and neither does it plan it. Rather, it tries to create the conditions in which art and artists, participants and consumers, may flourish. The National Arts and Media Strategy (NAMS) is an attempt to do this better. And because most good ideas arise outside the funding system, the process was made as open as possible, with few preconceptions - to an extent that many people have found disconcerting". Howard Webber & Tim Challens, Co-ordinator NAMS.

The following is the final report submitted by MAG to the strategy unit at the Arts Council. The report is a summary of the discussions main points and Action Notes.

Present: Tina Glover (Facilitator), Ruth Glick (Rapporteur), Geoff Beale (Ophaboom Theatre), William Dashwood/Rosemary Harvey (Smart Arts), Karen Gartzke (Arts Council Drama Dept), Peta Lily (Mime Artist), Mel Jennings (Black Mime Theatre), Penny Mayes (Trestle Theatre), Helen Carter (London Arts Board), Anthony Bradnum/Martin Grant (Inside Out Theatre), Sue Mitchell, Maureen Salmon (South East Arts/CORAA), Shani Solomons Nick Ewbank (Old Bull A.C.), Helen Lawrence, Jac Wilkinson, Freida O'Byrne, Graham Marchant (Arts Council Touring Report), Katie Williams (NAMSU).

Tina Glover introduced the meeting by indicating that the seminar would in the main be examining the two NAMS documents DRAMA and TRAINING. However if there were items not covered by these reports, and she cited Naseem Khan's Mime Training Report as one example, then those present should raise those points whenever they felt it to be appropriate.

## The Identity of Mime

The meeting was pleased to note that for once Mime was not just a small paragraph in an Arts Council document. It felt, however, that the NAMS documents did not fully address the problems of mime.

It was felt to be ironic that at a time when Mime's profile was on the way up - Theatre de Complicite at the National Theatre, Stephen Berkoff's and Richard Jones productions using mime techniques plus many more examples - most mime performers felt it to be counter productive to use the word "mime" in their publicity material. On the whole the meeting felt that the terms "Mime and Physical Theatre" as used in these documents was an adequate if not ideal description of the work.

The meeting recognized that the identity problem extended to audience perceptions but did not feel that the marketing needs had yet been properly analysed and addressed.

The meeting recommended that the Arts Council consider restructuring its Drama department to cover a wider brief. A more accurate description might be the Theatre of Performing Arts department. The meeting recognized the dangers of very generalised departments and felt the needs of theatre could be safeguarded under such a new system by retaining Officers with specific art-form responsibilities.

A significant concern was the need to continue to develop the representation for mime in the arts world. To that end the meeting recommended that the Mime Action Group be given increased funding to ensure its long-term security and facilitate its role as the lobby organisation for mime and physical theatre.

The meeting concluded that it was the nature of mime to tour. Although the use of buildings was important (see Artists' needs below), it was not useful to look towards the development of one Theatre space wholly dedicated to mime performance, as this was ultimately restrictive to development to the art form. It was recommended that building based work that was site specific and could happen throughout the country was the more appropriate development.

B) Where training takes place away from an organisation, the skills learned must be allowed to feed back into the work place. Time must be allowed to brief colleagues; there could be "INSET" days for arts organisations - the whole organisation takes a training day out - or takes time "in retreat" to allow time to assimilate new information.

C) Human resource management exists in small organisations but is not labelled as such. The work demands that this is done whatever the skills of the individual administrator concerned. Some small arts organisations are innovative managers but do not have the language to communicate this to arts training providers. It is recommended that independent training skills advisers be appointed regionally to advise clients on their needs.

D) Change must be appropriate to the particular organisation and not imposed from outside. Training has to be sensitive to the position the organisation is currently in, the direction in which it is moving and the speed that it can assimilate change.

There was considerable concern expressed about the poor level of pay for administrators in mime and that there was no obvious career path within the art form. This led to the loss of good people and also difficulty finding appropriate people to replace them. As a result companies often had to offer higher salaries to administrators. Where companies were run cooperative this could lead to artificially created hierarchies resulting in difficulties.

## The Artists' needs and their Relationship with the Theatre Profession

It was a major concern of the meeting that the Arts Council had not yet fully recognized the intrinsic difference of mime; it being part of "process" theatre rather than text based. This resulted in much longer rehearsal periods and therefore increased costs.

The artist need better facilities, not only because of the time required to rehearse, but also because a better environment would create more opportunities to develop the work, eg: properly equipped studio spaces would enable the physical performer to prepare appropriately with regular classes and workshops.

The meeting also recommended that consideration be given to artists' need to recharge their batteries through the funding of sabbaticals and bursaries for courses.

It was felt that cross fertilisation with the rest of the theatre profession was rarely carried out on an equal basis. There was a need to educate Directors in how to use mime and movement based work. The meeting would welcome more opportunities for mimes artists to direct and therefore not always be the movement co-ordinator or choreographer.

The meeting felt that it was interesting to cite the appearance of Theatre de Complicite at the National Theatre in the context of cross fertilisation; the irony that the work in question had been text based, was not lost on those present.

## Small and Middle Scale Touring

It was felt that the small scale touring circuit was in crisis. The meeting also recommended that funds be allocated as a matter of urgency to support venues', marketing, technical and personnel resources as they were currently wholly inadequate.

The meeting also recommended that there be one complete network created for small scale touring.

It was agreed that mime was often more artistically suited to the intimate playing areas of the small scale and the meeting took exception to the idea that growth to the middle scale was somehow a sign of greater quality.

The current debilitation of the small scale might prevent new and innovative work from developing as this was their entry point.

The push to middle scale was often a reflection of the economic necessities - the ability to raise sponsorship was cited as one not artistic ones. Middle scale venues also provided the much needed support systems mentioned above.

artists and companies wanted to make the move to the middle scale then it would be necessary to provide much greater support than was currently available. This was particularly important in the areas of administration (see below), and marketing.

Despite the points above it was also felt that mime should not always be pigeon-holed as small or middle but that an ideal future should include the opportunity to present productions with fifty performers on stage. The meeting felt that much greater dialogue was necessary between companies and venues generally.

The proposal that one of more companies be funded at a higher level was cautiously welcomed, but not at the expense of other artists and companies.

It was felt that one way in which small scale companies successfully transferred to the middle scale was through site specific projects; which might be residency or performance based work.

On the question of internationalism the meeting endorsed the continuing development of an international profile but felt that more note should be taken of the large amount of touring now undertaken by mime through The British Council.

## Administration

The meeting concluded that a great deal needed to be done in this area. There was a need to recognize the different training needs inherent in administering small scale mime work. In the main this was because the work was created in the studio rather than text based. Administrators therefore required a much broader set of skills.

The meeting discussed the high incidence of cooperative run companies in mime and how this affected the training skills required. The different structure of cooperative companies was considered though no firm conclusion reached as to whether they were such because of the style of the work or because of the "youth" of the companies.

The meeting recommended that the Drama department review the training of small and middle scale administrators and look at the Dance department's trainee apprenticeship schemes as an example of good practice.

A rapporteur from a previous NAMS meeting held to discuss training, analysed the conclusions from that meeting, (see below) which were then wholly endorsed by those present.

The points were:-

A) Investment in training is essential in order to effectively support creative work and enable arts organisations to respond to change. The training strategies must therefore be linked to an organisations aims and objectives.

## Mime and Physical Theatre Performers Training

The meeting felt that the only document to fully address the problems of training in this area was "A Way Through Mime Field" by Naseem Khan. Numerous points, which for the sake of brevity are not detailed, echoed the report's conclusions. It was recommended that the report should now be implemented. There was a note of dissent on the subject of initial training currently available in Britain. It was felt that Desmond Jones' contribution had been undervalued.

It was recommended that the Mime Action Group take on the co-ordinating function for workshops identified in the Khan report.

It was recognized that a fundamental barrier to developing mime education and training was the absence of mime from the National Curriculum. The meeting recommended that NAMS should address the problem of arts provision in the National Curriculum as education created both the audience and the performer.

The meeting further recommended that courses to learn to teach in the community (eg: people with special needs) would be extremely useful. It was established that the Arts Council does currently provide some opportunities in this area that might be better advertised to the mime profession.

## Mime in Education

The meeting identified as a problem the limited extent of the funding for animateur posts which it recommended should be looked at in the light of the Community Dance and Mime Foundation's Review document when published.

It was felt that it should be noted that some companies were better suited to present work and others to work within the community; different skills were required for each.

## Equal Opportunities and Access

It was pointed out to the meeting that much of the discussion, particularly in the area of training had been Euro-centric. It was felt to be equally true that there were some examples of good practise in the companies, but that on the whole they do not reflect cultural diversity.

On the question of access the meeting felt that mime was particularly advanced in comparison to the other art form areas.

## Criteria for Funding

The meeting felt strongly that the NAMS Assessment document was impenetrable and as a result felt unable to discuss this item in any detail. There was therefore little criticism of the current methods of assessment. It seemed that a combination of audience figures and informed comment was the current means.

The meeting recommended that nurturing artistic developments in mime should be the cornerstone of any future funding policy.

Abridged by Ruth Glick 28/11/91



Oct 5-30 - Le Jeu, Oct 10-11 - Le Jeu (weekend)  
Nov 2-27 - Neutral Mask, Nov 30-18 Dec- Tragedy  
There are two workshops per day & students can choose either morning or afternoon.  
Summer School 1992  
Jun 29-10 Jul - Clown (London), Aug 3-7 - Le Jeu (Oxford), Aug 17-28 - Le Jeu (Edinburgh)  
For booking information contact Paul Milican, PO Box 1815, London N5 1BG. Tel 071 359 0982

Apr 4-11  
7th international session of ISTA will be a practical workshop for directors, offering the unique opportunity to share and contribute to the work of this pioneering school.  
To book please contact CPR, Market Road, Canton Road, Cardiff CF5 1QE, Wales.  
Tel: 0222 345174 Fax : 0222 340687

# Training

## John Wright: the Archetypal Mask

May 27-29 (10-5pm)  
John Wright is an award winning theatre director and international teacher of physical theatre. He is generally regarded as Britain's leading expert on the mask and his workshops have a wide following. The work will be focussing and realising dramatic impulses and creating theatrical imagery. The aim of this workshop is to define a range of physical and vocal qualities in the performer that can inform the creation of a role, extend physicality on stage and examine presence and imaginative engagement in the action of a scene.  
£55 (limited places) deposit £25 by 5th May  
BSL interpreter available if required.  
All enquiries to Tragic Carpet 071 733 1435.  
At Thomas Carlton Centre, Alpha Street, Peckham, London, SE15 4NX. Buses 63, 78, 12, 37, P3 - all pass along Rye Lane. BR Peckham Rye (5 mins walk). By car accessible from Rye Lane only because of one way system.

## Theatre Skills

Various areas of theatre skills are to be explored in different workshops.  
Archetypal Mask & Movement Awareness, Until 29 April (Wed 6-9pm), Dancing With Masks, Thurs (7.30-9.30pm), Brige Bidell, Physical Theatre, Mon (7-9.30pm), Tutor Ruth Ben-Tovim.  
The venue runs another various courses in different areas of performance. Please contact for further details Holborn Centre for the Performing Arts, Three Cups Yard, Sandland Street, London WC1R 4PZ.  
Tel: 071 405 5334/2661.

## Physical State International

Training and Performance Projects in Manchester. At Zion Institute, Manchester.  
PSI is currently responding to the demand for training and performance projects across the spectrum of the live arts, from physical theatre to new writing, from dance to video production. PSI is open to participation from all.  
May 23-25 - Theatre Intensive 1, Led by Pete Brooks  
May 26-30 - Spring Moves, Focusing on the body and voice, the tools of the performer/dancer.  
June 19-21 - Theatre Intensive 2, Led by Mark Whitelaw & Martin Gent, July 3-5 Theatre Intensive 3, Led by Russell Maliphant, Niamh Dowling, Rivca Rubin  
Contact for further details, PSI, 3 Crossland Road, Manchester, M21 1DT. Tel: 061 860 6528.

## Fictive Bodies,

Fictive Bodies, Dilated Minds, Hidden Dances  
Short open conference on the work of the International School of Theatre Anthropology (ISTA)  
April 10-11. Hosted by the Centre for Performance Research, Cardiff  
in which members of the ISTA have been asked to present profiles of their research work associated with the concepts of historiography and pre-expressivity. Will be presented to the general public and to a group of 12 "beginners" drawn from theatre departments throughout the UK. The four main presentations will be Dramaturgy of the Performer; Dramaturgy of the Performance; Signs of Life; Perplexities and Uncertainties.  
To make a conference booking please contact CPR, Market Road, Canton Road, Cardiff CF5 1QE, Wales.  
Tel: 0222 345174 Fax : 0222 340687

## Movement Workshops, May 27-21 June

Touchdown Dance is holding their five day and weekend movement theatre workshops for people with visual impairment and the professionals that work with them.  
Contact Anne Kilcoyne, Touchdown Dance, 34 Bridgetown, Totness, Devon, TQ9 5AD.

## Acrobatic Skill Share

Tues (2-5)  
Thomas Carlton Centre See above)  
The aim of the skill share is to give performers a chance to practice, share and develop their skill on a regular basis with good facilities and at low cost. The charge for a 3 hour session is only £1.  
All enquiries to Tragic Carpet 071 733 1435.

## Movement Observation - Roots of Intuition The Amsterdam Summer University

1-3 May & 22-24 May  
This experimental weekend aims to promote space and time. We will use movement improvisation, drawing, group and interpersonal structures.  
Movement - The Inner Mind  
May 15-17  
Personal growth explored through Dance Movement Therapy. Body Work - Understanding expressive and functioning efficiency of our bodies  
June 20-21  
An introduction to Bartenieff Fundamentals on Saturday with an option to continue on Sunday.  
Understanding Movement  
July 11-18  
Supervision and personal process facilitated through dance movement therapy. The Body Seen & Heard  
July 18-25  
Experimental workshop in Gestalt, psycho-drama and dance movement therapy.  
For further details on any of the above courses, please contact: Kedzie Penfield, Salenside, Ashkirk, Selkirk, Scotland, TD7 4PF. Tel: 0750 32213  
Mask Making  
with Glenn Caulfield Fridays 7-9.30pm until April 10. Rudolf Steiner House, Regents Park, London. Further details from Glenn Caulfield Tel (0342) 823 891

Bolek Polivka.  
Workshop with the Czechoslovakian jester & director  
Aug 3-7  
Theatre and Stage Design  
Aug 10-21  
Led by Ping Chong, Asian/American director with 20 years experience in avante garde theatre.  
Theatre du Mouvement  
Aug 31-Sept 5  
Led by Yves Marc, artistic director of Theatre du Mouvement.  
Anatoli Vassiliev  
Director of Moscow Arts Theatre.  
Date TBC  
Prices range from NGL600 (approx £200) and NGL2000 (£650)  
Accommodation not included)  
These courses are intended for professionals and for people in the management of the performing arts. The ASU offer hotel rooms and private apartments and all courses are in the Felix Meritis building in central A'dam.  
For further information contact: The Amsterdam Summer University, PO Box 53066, 1007 RB Amsterdam, The Netherlands. Tel: 01031 (20) 6200225 (Fax 6249368).

## Festivals

### Northern International Festival of Mime, Dance and Visual Theatre.

May 4-9  
Compared with previous years festivals, Festival 92 is a theatrical event in miniature. With the host venue in amidst of building work to extend the main theatre facilities, the Festival transfers to the studio for an exhilarating week of hilarity which everyone from nine to ninety will enjoy.  
A visual feast, celebrated through movement and comedy, Festival 92 provides a choice selection of outrageously different contemporary shows to dazzle the eye, defy the expectations, delight the imagination - and make you helpless with laughter...  
The studio has been adapted specifically for Festival performances to offer comfortable, raked, but limited seating. So please don't wait to be disappointed - book early to ensure a week of pure enjoyment. Festival 92 is quite simply about fun, fun and more fun. We look forward to seeing you there.  
May 6 (7.30) Bim Mason "Fallen Arches"  
May 7 (7.30) The Right Size "Moose"  
May 8 (7.30) John Lee "Blue Moon"  
May 8 (10pm) Brouhaha "Fish Soup"  
May 9 (7.30) Commotion "Point of Departure"  
Contact The Brewery for free festival brochure or for more details: Brewery Arts Centre, Highgate, Kendal, Cumbria, LA9 4HE. Tel: 0539 725133.

## National Youth Arts Festival

June 28-July 3, Ilfracombe  
Featuring dance, art, drama & music. The Youth Festival is for you whether you are interested in performance, visual arts, technical skills or creative camping. Contact Penny Jackson, National Youth Arts Festival, The Lantern, High Street, Ilfracombe, Devon, EX34 9QB. Tel: 0271 862419.

## Denmark

A New Mime Festival is planned for 1993 and they are interested in hearing from companies/soloists who would like to perform during the 10 day festival. The festival will be situated in Odense, the city of Hans Christian Andersen, and will be the first ever festival in Denmark.  
Interested? Then please send publicity information, photos, videos etc to Attn. Mime Festival, Gert Pederson, Vesteregade 95b, 5000 Odense C, Denmark. What better way to break into Europe. Why not we are part of it.

# Performance

## The Right Size presents, "Moose"

A tale of uneasy alliances, eccentric landscapes and quick justice, as part of its international tour. Following its sell out success during the London International Mime Festival 92, the Right Size are returning to BAC for its celebratory 3 week run of "Moose" & "Flight to Finland".

Apr  
1 Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton  
3-4 Old bull AC, Barnet  
5 Blackpool, Grand  
9 Stanwix AC, Carlisle  
11-12 Colchester AC  
28 The Hawth, Surrey  
May  
1 Gulbenkian Theatre, Canterbury  
2 Bowen West Community Theatre, Bedford  
6 Nuffield Theatre Studio, Lancaster  
7 Northern International Mime Fest, Kendal  
8 Queens Hall AC, Hexham  
10 Brighton Pavilion, Brighton Festival  
14 Trith St Legee, N. France \*  
15 Henin Beaumont, N.France\*  
19-31 BAC, London

June  
2-6 BAC, London  
9-14 Nuns Island AC, Galway  
\* = Fight to Finland  
"Terra Amata" the new show by Jos Houben and Micheline Vandpoel will be touring in May 92 - a comic fable, a poem of gesture, a burlesque dance: direct tender, playful and very tender.  
May  
16 Hope Centre, Bristol  
19-20 Gulbenkian Theatre Studio, Newcastle  
22 Forest AC, New Milton  
23 Beaford AC, Devon  
26-27 Theatre-in-the-Mill, Bradford (TBC)  
29 Worcester Arts Workshop  
30 Exeter & Devon AC

## Mandella Theatre Company presents

"The Dorm" by Lance Flynn  
Apr  
1 Brigdale Complex, Castle Milk, Glasgow  
5-6 Tramway, Glasgow  
7 Rainbow Theatre, Montrose  
9 Cowane Theatre, Stirling  
10 Harbour AC, Irvine  
11 Greenock Arts Guild Theatre  
14 Skerry Hall, Sutherland  
15 Lyth AC, Nr Wick  
16 Rosehall Village Hall, Sutherland  
21 Wester Hailes Education Centre, Edinburgh  
22 Pilton Triangle AC, Edinburgh  
23 Muirhouse Festival Activities Centre, Edinburgh  
24 Craigmillar AC, Edinburgh  
25 Paisley AC  
28 York AC  
29 Albion Social Club  
30 Gulbenkian Studio Theatre, Newcastle  
May  
1-2 Theatre-in-the-Mill Bradford University  
5-9 Waterman's AC, London

## Turtle Key Arts Centre

Walk Our Talk Productions presents  
"Education of Little Tree"  
Mar 31-1 Apr  
Tale of Cherokee Indian childhood. Sell out show  
Apr 2  
Arthaus  
An evening of new performance  
Apr 4-5  
Desmond Jones School of Mime  
End of Term Show  
Apr 9 - Impro Eve  
Apr 30 - Arthaus  
May 28 - Arthaus  
Details contact Turtle Key Arts Centre, 74a Farm Lane, London, SW6. Tel: 071 385 4905.



## Unwind &amp; Recharge

April 7

Eight week residential blend of Alexander technique and Feldenkrais Method with Anja Dashwood and Barbara McCrea.

6.15-7.30pm - introductory course

7.45-9.15pm - courses for people who have done Feldenkrais/Alexander before.

Courses will be run in London, EC1, Old Street.

Contact 081 549 9583 or 071 735 8030 for info.

## Performance Exchange, Glasgow

Julian Maynard Smith (Station House Opera), Mar 23-27 - 10-5pm. Lithgow Theatre, Pearse Institute, Govan, Glasgow. This five day workshop will explore how manipulations of space and objects will generate relationships, and how those objects will retaliate. The world view based on cause and effect will be questioned.

For further information contact Floyd Kennedy, Performance Exchange, c/o SCET, 74 Victoria Crescent Road, Glasgow, G12 9JL. Tel 031 337 3363.

## Management Training

The Amsterdam Summer University

Introduction to European performing Arts Management  
Aug 31-Sept 5

Management of performing Arts in a changing European Context  
Sept 3-5

Prices range from NGL600 (approx £200) and NGL2000 (£650)

Accommodation not included)

These courses are intended for professionals and for people in the management of the performing arts. The ASU offer hotel rooms and private apartments and all courses are in the Felix Meritis building in central A'dam.

For further information contact: The Amsterdam

## Conferences

Dance in a Changing World

A two day conference exploring new directions for dance in the nineties and beyond.

April 1 - 2 (2.00 - 9.00pm & 9.30 - 4.00pm)

At Swarthmore Centre, Woodhouse Square, Leeds 3.

This conference comes at a turning point. Right now cultural values are shifting as we recognise the need to look after our planet and look after ourselves. The conference is designed to stimulate new ideas, to question what we do now and why we do it, and to provide a starting point for change.

Contact Pat Hilton (project Co-ordinator) JABADAO 45 Elder Road, Leeds, LS13 4DB. Tel: 0532 562287.

## The Working Party present. Thomas Kampf

Sculpture Struggle

Mar 21 (10-12noon)

Moving Objects: this 3 hour workshop will be centred on the use of objects in danced performances

Blast Theory

April 3 (7-9)

April 4 (10-5)

The workshop will deal with the compositional procedures and themes involved in the development of a new peace of performance. Blast Theory are a new performance company who will be performing this work at the ICA during the Ripple Effect later on this year.

No Mean Feat

The Assignment 2: The Excavation

May 22 (7-9)

May 23 (10-5)

The workshop will deal with building installations for performance and devising structures for improvisation within built spaces, using projections, objects, texts and the body.

Energy into Performance

Mar 21 & April 25

Using the five elements of Chi (energy/life force) as used in Chinese medicine. The workshop will go deeply into areas already explored using visualisations and body work to access the energy of the different elements to produce material for improvised performance.

For information of the above workshops contact The Working Party, Holborn Centre for the Performing Arts, Three Cups Yard, Sandland Street, London WC1R 4PZ.

Tel: 071 405 5334/2661.

## Circus Space

Intensive Courses

Clown, Devising & Performance

Mar 16-27 (weekdays 10-5pm)

Led by Commotion Theatre Company. Physical comedy, exaggerated performance, the simplicity of the clown. Play with your own inherent (or inherited) stupidity.

£175/£145 (membs & concs)

Tumbling Routines

Mar 30-Apr 3 (weekdays 10-12noon)

Led by Geoff Davies, ex-UK Gymnastics Squad champion turned performer. This module is suitable for people of different aerobic ability, is intended to develop specific tumbling skills and creates routines using slapstick, trampette, box and tables.

£60/£40 (membs & concs)

Commedia dell'Arte

Mar 30-Apr 3 (weekdays 1-5pm)

Led by John Broadbent who studied with Carlo Boso of the Piccolo Theatre and has performed with TAG Teatro, as well as his own award winning troupe, The Carnivali.

This module will explore the wide range of Commedia, "the comedy of the profession". Come and meet the forerunners of the Marx Brothers - Zanni Harlequin & Pantalone. Character, masks, movement & tumbling

£65/£45 (membs & concs)

To book please contact Circus Space on 071 700 0868 to check availability. The Circus Space brochure until July 92 is available now from: Circus Space, United House, 39-41 North Road, London N7 9DP. Tel: 071 700 0868.

## Independent Theatre Council

A development programme for people working in small scale performing arts companies.

Starting a Theatre Company

Mar 24, May 6, July 30 - London

Making Marketing Work For You

Mar 4-Manchester

June 4-London

Booking A Tour

Mar 25, July 8 - London

Contracts

Apr 7/8 - Edinburgh

Finance Level 1 - London

May 13/14

Finance Level 2

June 10/11 - London

Touring Abroad

May 20 - London

Managing Your Company on the Equity/ITC Contract

9 July - London

Sales Techniques

May 7/8 London

A detailed booklet giving definitions/prices is available from Deb Durrant, Training Department, ITC, PO Box 494, London SE11. Tel: 071 403 1727

## Dancing Inside

Developing Dance Activities in Prisons

National Conference and Seminars

HM Prison Littlehay

April 3

Co-ordinated by Information Management Associates on behalf of SHAPE EAST and Motionhouse. The conference will: report on a range of recent experience of conducting dance/performance activities in prisons; show the use of creative activity in prisons as a means of cultural expression and in forging community links; explore some of the problems associated with approaches now being used; and give participants a chance to involve themselves in activities or to pursue specific areas of interest in seminar working groups.

Although the conference is titled dance the organisers feel this course will be relevant to mime practitioners as the target audience will be prison governors, senior managers, prison officers and prison educators plus arts organisers, dance & drama workers and prison policy makers. A report will be available after the conference.

For booking information contact David Streatfield, Information Management Associates, 28 Albion Road, Twickenham, TW2 6QZ. Tel: 081 755 0471 or Fax 081 891 5567.

## Du Bois

Du Bois Productions are taking the "Mayor of Casterbridge" by Thomas Hardy to the Kingston May Arts Festival 20-22 May & Turtle Key Arts Centre London, June 1-20. School & college workshops available. For further details contact Joanne Richards 081 541 4326.

## Inside Out Theatre Company present

"The House That Henry Built".

Mar 31 - April 18 Tickets £7/£5 (reductions)

An enthralling tale which will have you laughing. Its the ultimate comedy thriller.

## New Venue

As you may have heard London has its first integrated black theatre venue at the Cochrane Theatre, just off Covent Garden (Holborn). Talawa TC are the resident company. Please contact the venue for further details  
Tel 071 404 5662.

## Ra Ra Zoo presents, "The Gravity Swing"

April

7-25 Riverside Studios, London

28-29 Warwick AC, Coventry

May

1-2 Forum 28 Barrow in Furness

8-9 Theatre Royal, Bury St Edmunds

12 Orchard Theatre, Dartford

14-16 Crucible Theatre, Sheffield

18-19 Wyvern Theatre, Swindon

20 Swan Theatre, Worcester

23-24 Arts Festival, Irvine

28-1 Linkhopping, Sweden

June

2-3 Palace Theatre, Newark

8-10 Octagon Theatre, Yeovil

15-16 Grand Theatre, Swansea

18-20 Alhambra Studio, Bradford

21 Barbican Centre, York

26-27 Little Theatre, Middlesbrough

29-6 New York International Theatre Fest

## Angels &amp; Amazons

Apr

1 The Arts Workshop, Newbury

2 Beaford AC, Devon

3 Kings Lynn AC

4 Prema AC, Dursley

6 Strode Theatre, Street, Somerset

7 Parr Theatre, Warrington

8 21 South Street, Reading

9-10 Chipping Norton Theatre, Oxon

11 Limelight Theatre, Aylesbury

14 Green Rooms, Manchester

17 Civic Centre, Ayr, Strathclyde

18 MacRoberts AC, Stirling

21 The Junction, Cambridge

22 Trinity AC, Gainsborough

23 West End Centre, Aldershot

24 Island AC, Broadstairs, Kent

28-16 Drill Hall, London

May

18-23 Mayfest, Glasgow

29 Bluecoats Centre, Liverpool

30 The Gantry, Southampton

June

3 Leigh Drama Centre

4 Civic Centre, Oswaldtwistle

6 Harlequin Theatre, Northwich

12 Blackwood Miners, Gwent

13-14 Arts Centre, Colchester

16 Pavilion Centre, Weymouth

17-18 York AC

19-20 MAC, Birmingham

23-28 Highlands & Islands Tour, Scotland

30-1 Tron Theatre, Glasgow

Contact RaRa Zoo, The Diorama, 18 Park Square East, London NW1 4DT. Tel: 071 487 4823.

## Natural Theatre Company

Apr 13-Sept 11 Columbus, Ohio, USA

Apr 24-May3 Festival of Europe in Avon

May

11-17 Caracas, Venezuela

24 "Scarlatti's Wedding" Frome, Somerset

25 "Scarlatti's Wedding" Hay on Wye

30-June3 "Scarlatti's Wedding" Brunswick

29-June5 Singapore Festival

30-June4 Ayrshire Arts Festival

June

6 South of England Agricultural Show

8-13 Greenwich Festival, London

8-9 "Scarlatti's Wedding" Greenwich Festival, London\*

26-28 Gladstonbury Festival

29-3 July Aubagne Festival, France

\* denotes indoor stage show

Current tours include "Nutcrackers" & "Scarlatti's Wedding". Contact 0225 469131.

## Triangle Projects present "The Dig"

Apr

4 Bedworth A.C.

7-8 George Elliot School - Northampton

9 Sidney Stringer School, Coventry.

30 Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

May

2 MB Brewhouse, Staffs

8 Josiah Mason, Birmingham

14 Knighton Fields, Leics

18 Whitchurch Civic Centre, Shrops

21 King Edward College, Leics

MB=Married Blitz

"The Dig" & "Married Blitz" will be touring throughout the year, please contact Triangle should you require further information. Tel: 0203 362210

## New Choreographers

at Chisenhale Dance Space

Apr9-11

A window on tomorrows' choreographers

Spring Commission

Apr15-18

Celebratory mini-season of New Spring commissions, some of the best experimental work in performance.

Chisenhale presents a weekly series of classes and workshops, as well as performance, representing the dance/theatre movement areas. For more information contact Chisenhale Dance Space, 64, Chisenhale Road, London E3 5QZ. Tel: 081 981 6617.

## Talawa TC presents

"The Road" by Wole Soyinka

The Cochrane Theatre, Southampton Row, London WC1B

Tel 071 404 5662

## Vestris presents

On Wuthering Heights: "The Ballad of Bramwell Bronte"

"A Discourse on the Pleasures of Smoking Given by the Last 3 point clay-pipe smoker of Ireland"

"the Birthday of the Infanta"

Springfield Theatre Club, Bounds Green Road, London N11

Tel: 081 881 2741

## Kaboodle Productions

Winners of Granada TV's "Flying Start" Award 1991 continue to tour their two shows "Threepenny Story" and "A View From The Bridge". May - September will see the German premiere of the "Threepenny Story".

Contact Kaboodle, The Unity Theatre, 1 Hope Place, Liverpool, L1 9BG. Tel: 051 709 2818.

## Garden productions presents

"Fallen Arches"

A new solo show from Bim Mason. A comic physical theatre combining highly skilled clowning, dance, acrobatics, mime and mask with visual surprises and animated contraptions. Its about feet.

Apr

2 West End Centre, Aldershot, 0252 21158

15 Beaford Centre, Winkeigh, Devon, 08053 201

13-17 Workshop, Beaford Centre, Winkeigh, Devon

May

5 Exeter & Devon AC 0392 219741

6 Brewery AC, Kendal 0539 725133

9 Hope Centre, Bristol 0272 215271

## Circus Space presents

Summertime Starting Cabaret featuring Commotion TC, Circus Space Clowns & more. Go see.  
Tel: 071 700 0868

## Antic Hay Theatre Company present

"Therese Desqueroix"

Mar 10 28

Physical theatre with classical text.

Turtle Key Arts Centre, 74a Farm Lane, London, SW6. Tel: 071 385 4905.



The theatre-going public may certainly be aware of mime as a dynamic art form, but what is the perception of mime in schools? Those performers who have conducted schools workshops will probably confirm that very little is known about it and most teachers would hardly know where to start. Besides, they have a hard enough time finding a place for any kind of drama in the curriculum. It is probably more pertinent to ask: what is the place of drama in schools?

With the intention of answering this question, for teachers, parents and governors, the Arts Council has just launched its report, *Drama in Schools*. The purpose of the report, initiated by the drama officer, Sian Ede, is three-fold: to raise the status of drama, to give clear guidance to schools, both primary and secondary, on how they can use drama throughout the curriculum and as a subject in its own right, and to foster stronger links with the theatre profession.

This is where mime companies come in. Mime is highlighted in the report as a vital part of drama and an element that is highly accessible to pupils of all ages. *Drama in Schools* is the first document of its kind to give schools a clear idea of what should be taught at various age levels, or key stages as they are known, and how to develop feasible programmes of study. But what teachers are likely to be left asking is: how do I put this into practice?

As a result of the interest stimulated by *Drama in Schools* there is likely to be a nation-wide demand for in-service training and for workshops by professionals. There is no reason why mime should not be a part of this. Now is the moment for some vigorous public relations. It will help build future audiences.

As the report states, "Because drama makes a key contribution to the national curriculum, the skills of using drama as a learning method should be incorporated into all initial teacher training courses...[But] in 1988, a quarter of those teaching drama had no higher education qualifications in the subject. In the face of this national picture, the provision of in-service training for drama teachers must be seen as a priority..."

"In practice, in-service training in drama is likely to be available from a variety of different sources. Schools may be able to buy support from their local education authority, or from a local university or higher education college...Professional companies and practitioners may also offer in-service sessions for teachers focussing on specialist aspects of work in the theatre... If they have the capacity, some companies will also accept teachers on placement schemes."

*Drama in Schools* is published by the Arts Council and is available from The Drama Department, Arts Council, 14 Great Peter Street, London SW1P 3NQ or from regional arts boards. Copies will automatically be distributed to Arts Council and RAB funded companies.

# Beyond Words

Mimescope's **Beyond Words** with Wayne Pritchett will be presented at the London Lighthouse, a centre for people facing the challenge of **AIDS**. The performances are to be held on 8,9 and 10 April at 7.30pm. Admission is free but voluntary donations are welcome. The aim is to raise funds for complementary therapies - acupuncture, aromatherapy, massage, relaxation etc - as the cost of these services falls outside the mainstream of medical care. The address of the London Lighthouse - 111-117 Lancaster Road, London W11. Nearest tube is Ladbroke Grove. Box office number - 071-792 1200.

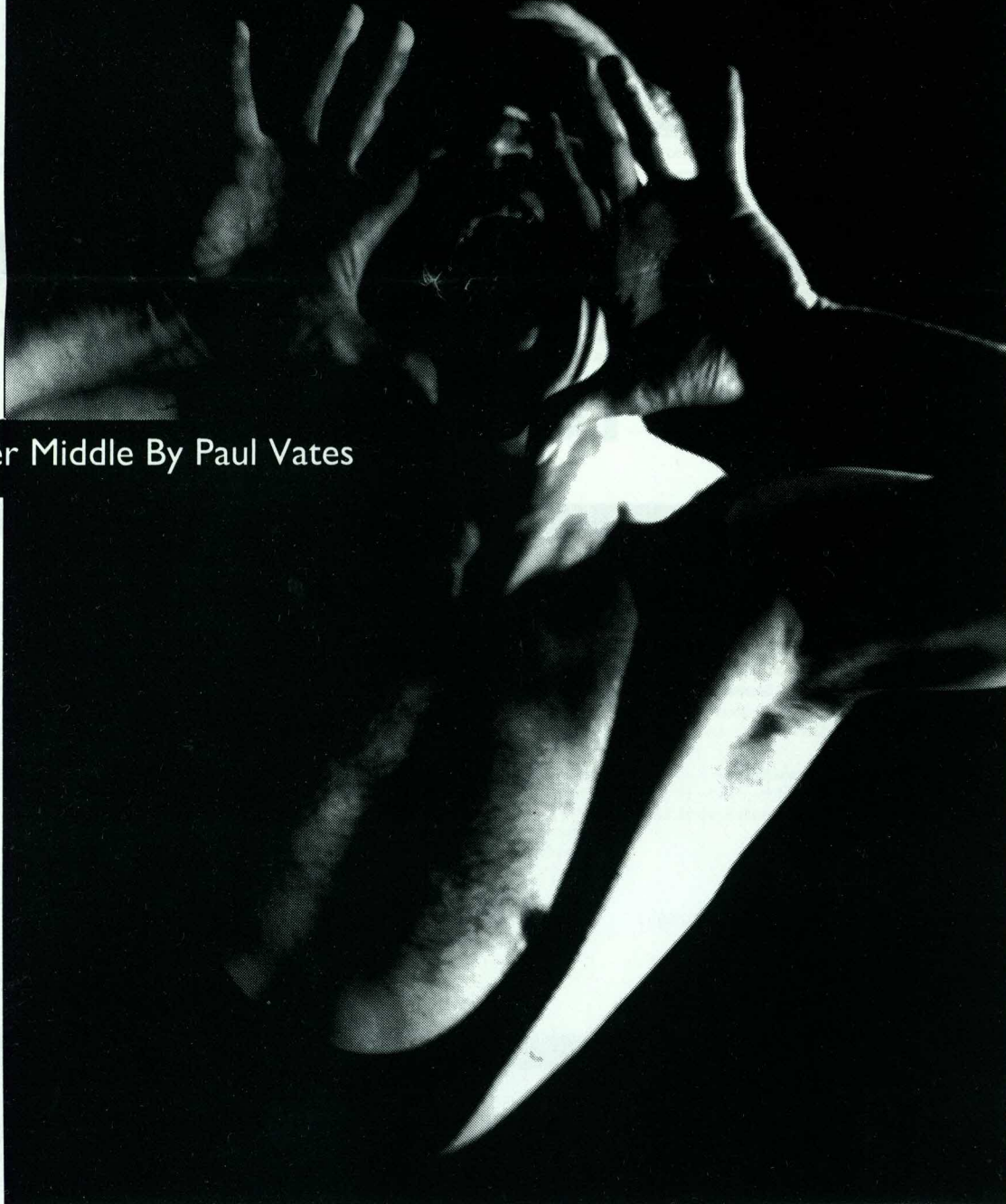
Mimescope feels that raising funds for these complementary therapies is in keeping with the theme of their current show. **Beyond Words** is about the physicalisation of our lives, in regard to the way we communicate through our body expression. This is a universal language. **Beyond Words** visits places where we have all been. It explores human evolution from apes to homo sapiens, and shows how in times of stress, we are still physiological cavemen; it traces our footsteps from toddlers to adults. The contents include a journey around the world in global bodytalk and proposes that "We are the same and we are different."

The universal subject of body language can appeal to many different sectors of the community. Mimescope provides customised letters and noticeboard displays for target groups such as parents with older children, ethnic groups for whom English is a second language, the deaf and hard of hearing, educational groups, visual arts groups etc.

Other projects over the next few months include an outreach programme for children with special needs at London Zoo. Mimescope is also touring widely to the regions, including Southern England, for example, the Jellicoe Theatre in Poole and Barbados House in Bordon, Hampshire. This April **Beyond Words** will also be in Wales at the newly opened Ucheldre Centre in Holyhead and Theatr Mwldan in Cardigan.

The BBC television series **Body Talk**, written and presented by Wayne Pritchett, has attracted world wide sales and is currently being shown in Holland and Belgium.

If you would like further information about Mimescope's activities please contact: Kath Gorman, Administrator, Mimescope, 17 Grange Avenue, Woodford Green, Essex IG8 9JT Tel: 081 505 1677 Fax: 081 504 9137.



## A Beginning a Middle and Another Middle By Paul Vates

I enjoyed the Mime Festival that seemed to swarm over the capital recently. Let me strongly state that. For I saw some original and, in places, some very funny theatre.

Yes, I left many productions with a nagging itch of displeasure that spoilt my enjoyment. What could it be? Thankfully a pattern began to emerge. For what is at question here is writing. All too often I read the publicity for the many productions and saw the same wicked word: 'devised'. This to me means to plan, invent, create, to make-up-as-you-go-along, to conceive. In theatrical terms I suppose it means 'based on an idea'. This is my gripe. I smiled with satisfaction on spotting the problem that really needs addressing: were any of the productions in the recent festival written? Are there any scripts lying around rehearsal room floors? Very few, I expect.

I am sure we are all well aware of the old adage that a story of any form needs a new beginning, a middle and an end. Preferably in that order. Yet I think back to the stories I witnessed and I can see clearly gaping holes into which most shows fell: lack of endings.

Every play I saw had a magnificent opening. Very amusing and watchable. Characters were clearly defined and all counts of exposition were addressed. All the questions an audience need to ask were answered: where, who, when, how and why. The stories all began and off we trundled down the journey of story telling. Middles - usually consisting of some kind of upset or problem to overcome - were always to be seen. But then came the tricky bits... once one has a marvellous idea and stretched and explored it in many ways, making an audience laugh or cry, one needs to end it does one not? Some kind of resolution is required. A reader, viewer, listener, an audience of any kind needs a conclusion.

And this is mime. As brilliant as the festival was, I was upset by the lack of clear endings. I can as a writer and actor myself, fully appreciate the process of 'from page to stage', but many of the story-lines I witnessed seemed to fall into the 'from a good idea into the stage' process without being fully thought out. A great deal of milking and padding filled the final ten to fifteen minutes of many plays. There were exceptions, but I write about the majority.

These days, a new programme member has sneaked in to the programme listings - although I have yet to meet one in person. Whatever he/she does, I guess it has something to do with making the story line adhered to. An action I would have deeply recommend many companies to do - or have 'written by' boldly stamped under the title. I appreciate that mime needs creating like any other

art form and I suggest that it needs those people who bravely stand up and say "I wrote that".

Editor notes: Following the recent birth of the European Mime Federation, a Dramaturgy Model Project is currently being researched by its European partners (through the auspices of the Centre For New Dramaturgy in Amsterdam). The Model Project will be ready for publication in July and is expected to be printed in full in a following edition of this publication.



# "Jest As A Way Of Thinking"

The course was a rich experience for many reasons; it provided insights into the character and way of working of Polivka himself; it was an opportunity to meet other European artists and to understand their predicaments, particularly those from the Eastern Europe. There was course content, which although not particularly new to me, did suggest some fresh approaches, and finally, there was Amsterdam itself, a favourite city, as relaxed and open and friendly as any city I know.

#### The Members:

The Course consisted of twelve members - six men and six women - surprisingly there was not more for such a successful, international performer as Bolek Polivka. There were two young mime artists from Russia; a rather gloomy Bulgarian actor; a Hungarian actress; two sprightly Spanish actors; four from Holland, and Pete Baynes and myself from Scotland. (Interestingly one of the Dutch contingent was a woman from Edinburgh who had married a Dutchman fifteen years ago and had lived and worked in Holland ever since).

#### The Tutor:

Polivka is no teacher. He doesn't pretend to be. In a newspaper interview he said he didn't want to teach or to criticize people, he just wanted to try out ideas. Many years ago I attended a course at Morley College in London run by the innovative director, Keith Johnstone. He was clearly using the group to try out his own ideas, and had no interest whatsoever in the development or achievements of the students. This incensed me greatly at the time, and although Polivka was doing more or less the same thing, I was surprised to find it no longer annoyed me. Some of the younger people did not get angry at being left sitting watching for long stretches of time because they wanted to be up and doing. Polivka had a way of choosing people to try out his ideas on the basis of who he thought would be the most successful at realising them, whereas the true teacher is duty bound to help the least likely as well as the most (Lecoq, for instance, will always make everyone 'pass' as he puts it, so that no one misses out on the experience). However, on second thoughts, the comparison with Keith Johnstone is not really valid because Polivka gave of himself and of his own talent most generously during the course, and he did give up time to watch and advise on individual acts that some students were developing and wanted to show him.

Although I enjoyed the general acting exercises, and was pleased to find my mimes observant eye and gift for physical characterisation still stood me in good stead. I have no ambitions to be a solo performer and was quite happy to watch Polivka's demonstrations (which were quite brilliant) and to see how the various ideas worked out. There was no structure to the course. At times he was at a complete loss as to what to do next, and would wander about thinking or having another break. Then another idea would come, or he would tell a story, convulsing with laughter as he did so. At most a delightful man who can see the humour and absurdity in any situation, but at the same time is aware of the underlying sadness as well. I loved the way he pretended to speak Russian to the two girls from Moscow who were very shy and solemn but he made them laugh.

#### The Content:

The Course began with a relaxed discussion on the nature of jester in its historical context, i.e. having to amuse and entertain the master or mistress whilst living in a dangerous and tragic situation. I asked if he saw any connection between the jester and the Arlecchino character in Commedia dell'Arte. He said there were some similarities but the main difference was that Arlecchino, although a servant, was essentially a free spirit, whereas the traditional jester was always owned, like a dog (hence the collar and lead he wears at the beginning of his own show, "The Queen and the Jester").

Over the next four days we examined and experimented with the different aspects of the jester, i.e. the animal; youth and age; the child; the fool and the madman. During the latter series of exercise, Bolek told the story of how he avoided military conscription in Czechoslovakia by pretending to be mad. The authorities were suspicious because they knew he was an actor, but he got away with it. He never had to do military service. His tale about other inmates were both hilarious and tragic. All the exercises were spontaneous; he gave no time for preparation, which was at times frustrating and very difficult. However, many of the results were successful and reached a level of performance, due mainly to the Spanish actors who were experienced and gifted with comic personalities. I learnt a lot from learning about their subtle and dead-pan way of reacting to the most extreme provocation. Polivka laughed at them a great deal.

It was interesting to note how little language mattered in this

physical/visual work. English was only natural to Pete and me; Polivka had to search for words and the others were very halting, so when they needed to speak they tended to use their own language. It didn't matter, because the real meaning of the scene was in the action and reaction. Everyone understood what was going on. Another great point of interest to me was Polivka's insistence on what he called 'the changement' - the physical changes which register a shifting in the situation. I always emphasize the importance of this factor in my own classes and the course certainly gave me some new ways of achieving this.

Another important point that was demonstrated over and over again was the significance of playing on different levels. All too often actors play on one persistent level and this becomes tedious. Motivations and feeling are very mixed in any given moment; i.e. the jester is tired and afraid but he tries hard to be funny and entertaining, not only because that is what his master wants but because he needs to be praised and petted. Or - the audience is very bored but tries to cover up its boredom by being excessively polite. This scene was extremely funny and gave full scope for Spanish facial expression. 'The Queen and The Jester'

Although I have seen this show in the 'London International Mime Festival' some years ago, I took advantage of the fact it was on in the "Felix Meritis" Summer University building and free to enrolled students. I saw it twice during the week.

Normally I do not like performers who confront the audience in the Old Music Hall style, but Polivka does it with such charm, and with such artistry, he enhances the character he is playing rather than coming out of it.

His miming of the eagle is superb; and so is the sequence with the hobby horse when it tries to go in the opposite direction to the one in which the jester wants it to go (reminiscent of Jacques Tati and his early equestrian displays in the Mime Circus). Polivka certainly demonstrates all the principles and tenants of the course in this

performance. Amongst all the comic business and laughter there are moments of genuine hostility, and genuine tenderness between himself and the Queen, so well acted, grabbing the audience with moments of real drama every now and then. When he mimics the old decrepit King for the amusement of his mistress, she laughs and then turns on him in fury for daring to ridicule her husband, and we realise that she is just as much a victim as the Jester. It was so interesting to learn that this show became a cult in Czechoslovakia because people identified with the Jester as a symbol of fun and creativity in conflict with the forces of rigidity and authoritarianism; the bird theme expressed freedom for them - the struggle to remain a free spirit in the face of a military regime. All this never occurred to me the first time I saw it in London. After the revolution, someone said to Polivka, "what shall we do now there is no enemy?". All the Eastern Bloc people felt the same. Art had been subversive and political for so long, they felt lost without the repression. But Polivka said, "Now it is Nationalism. There is always something to fight against".

The whole philosophy of this unique artist was summed up when he said "It is important not just to show what you can do, but to remain creative and sensitive. If you stop trying to create, you may become less sensitive and hardened by the competition, the money, the success, the corruption". Easy to say perhaps when you are at the height of your success, but somehow, I think he will always manage to do it.

#### The Mime Centre:

Once the course was over, I visited the Mime Centre and had a two-hour discussion with its director, Ide van Heiningen, about the development of the E.M.F. (European Mime Federation) which met on 13th - 15th September 1991, and on his recent visit to London, but this is really the subject of another paper.

Note: The EMF will be holding their next congress in Berlin 1992, hopefully to hold the Conference in Autumn. Further details will be published in another edition of Total Theatre.

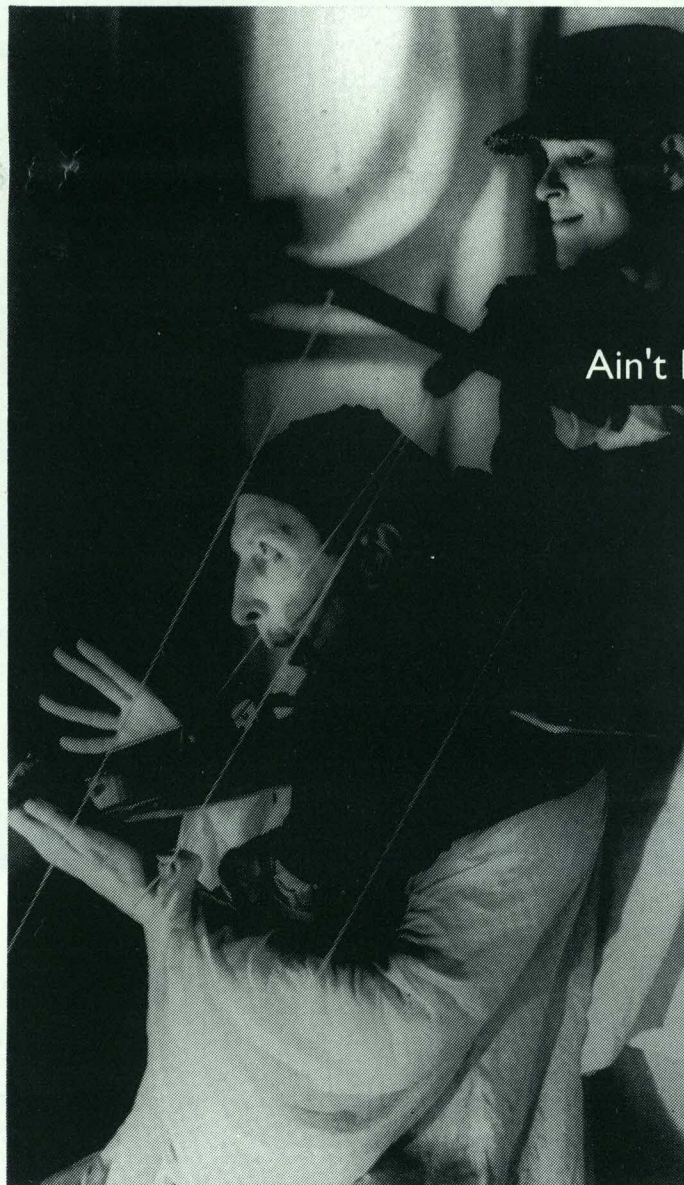


Photo: Bolek Polivka and Company in "Seance"

## Ain't Nothing Revolutionary

Michael Harvey, who recently directed the Gambolling Guizers, reports on a workshop residency, based on Bruckners' "Woyzeck", led by Polish director Tadeusz Bradecki\*. 22 - 29 February 1992

Centre for Performance Research, Cardiff.

Tadeusz Bradecki's nine day workshop managed somehow to combine and fuse elements of the "real" world and the actors' sensibility without sacrifice to the importance of text and technique.

Our aim was to prepare a number of scenes from the "Woyzeck" and finish with an informal showing to a small invited audience. The assumption was based on the premise that no theatrical activity is complete without the public.

This premise gave a focus to the work which might have been missed in a more leisurely exploration of the text. Watching Tadeusz Bradecki at work, it becomes apparent that concentration is a key factor as he continually interjects with suggestions for breath, diction or motivation to bring actors and text together.

Fascinating as this process was, what took the work beyond just working on scenes was Bradecki's conviction that the actor's work extends beyond their own moments on stage to the other characters, the play as a whole and the scripts' fundamental meaning.

As with any other project inertia took over two thirds of the way through and we appeared to be working towards no conclusion. At this stage we felt that we should abandon the show but eventually a decision to work through this block made the workshop something special to all involved. There was nothing revolutionary about what happened over the nine days, indeed, Tadeusz repeatedly apologised for offering "banal" advice. What, in essence, he revealed to us was a simple and honest way of working that avoided externals and effect - executed theatrically and with integrity. The points of challenge raised by the work were; when asked to work from text or any other premise and are confronted by problems, do we proceed by digging deeper into the material or paper over the cracks with technical pyrotechnics?

That leaves the performer with a sobering thought - 'am I serving the material or am I more interested in looking good?' For further information on workshops contact: The Centre For Performance Research, Market Road, Canton, Cardiff, CF5 1QE. Tel: 0222 345174. \* Tadeusz Bradecki is currently Artistic Director of the Stary National Theatre, Krakow, Poland.





Photo's: Taken from "A stain upon the silence". Featuring Bob Horne and Rowan Tolley.

Perhaps we should not be astonished that a playwright and theatre director who was an outstanding athlete, played professional cricket, was exceptionally skilled at billiards and who only watched television [albeit furtively] to see physicality and movement qualities of theatrical performance. That this man was Sam Beckett does provoke a degree of mild surprise, for surely - in conventional wisdom - this was the creator of bleakly poetic texts, of "perpetual talking", where there's no action and nothing happens.

Over the last few months I've been reading Jonathan Kalb's new book "Beckett in Performance", re-reading a number of the great man's plays and watching "Happy Days", "Endgame", "Krapp's Last Tape" and "Eh Joe" on video. The experience has raised all sorts of questions in my head about the "debate" [is there one?] on the nature of modern mime and physical theatre and challenged a handful of preconceptions I held about Beckett's work. Of course, there are certain common threads between Beckett's plays and modern mime: an absence of naturalism and linear narrative [or conventional plot] certainly are characteristic of the former and often of much physical theatre. Over the last twenty years both "Waiting for Godot" and "Endgame" have regularly been staged as vehicles for the clown and played with the internal- light spirited and physical - logic of clowning. Comic actors [Bert Lahr], ex music-hall performers [Max Wall], "alternative" comedians [Rik Mayall] and not so alternative ones [Charlie Drake] have all taken leading roles. Students of Jacques Lecoq will know that the Frenchman believes Beckett to be the greatest author of modern mime because he understands the true nature of the clown.

Beyond these more or less obvious comparisons, however, there are I believe a number of other common characteristics which place Beckett firmly within a theatre tradition whose defining features are at least as much physical as they are literary. The more one studies Beckett's plays and reads of how he directed his own work the clearer it becomes that here is not simply a "playwright" but also a choreographer of movement and a painter of visual images on stage. Kalb's book quotes extensively from 'Beckett actors' and contains transcripts of recorded interviews with some of the great players of Beckett roles (eg Billy Whitelaw, David Warrilow, Alvin Epstein). Time and again these actors (none of whom, as far as I know, come from a mime tradition refer to a physical "way in" to finding and defending their character. Similarly, when directed by Beckett himself, they recount his refusal to offer any kind of Stanislavskian psychological guidance, rather a movement instruction or conceptual image that is often sculptural and rooted in physicality - "Gogo belongs to the stone, Didi to the tree."

Of course if one believes movement theatre should also possess large, expansive and possibly aerobic physical action then one does not look to Beckett to find it - except perhaps in "Endgame" and "Godot". However, I would argue that the conscious choreography of a blink, the precise rhythmical movement of a finger and the repeated delicate and graceful sweep of an arm (as in "Ohio Impromptu") are as much the vocabulary

Simon Henderson.

## Another Blot on Silence: Beckett and Modern Mime.



of a "physical" theatre as the clowns' pratfall or Pantalone's backward somersault when enraged. Rosemary Butcher's minimalist choreography is no less dance than the grander extravagancies of Swan Lake or Coppelia. Beckett and Butcher's choreography may not be to one's taste, but that's another matter.

Beckett's concern with physical action covers the whole range of his work for the theatre - from the comparatively well known Endgame, Happy Days and Godot, through his productions for television ("Eh Joe", "Night of Dreams" etc...) to those plays rarely performed to British audience, such as "Rockaby" and "Ohio Impromptu". Unlike the often heard injunction of our great Shakespearian directors, "Beckett never leaves the words to "speak for themselves". Both as playwright and director he was concerned with precision of gesture and movement. in space as



# What the Papers Say.

## How important are the critics?

Certainly they have access to the media and their views are both powerful & sensitive, therefore, important to us. An underlying problem is of paced delivery with which their supposed educated truth is communicated to an unsuspecting world. A gross overstatement perhaps, but at some stage in every critics life they will hurt someone (usually understood in a negative context by the injured party) and thus gain a reputation and a prejudice in which they in turn will be viewed by the world outside.

Writings from the Dance critics on this years "Spring Loaded" Festival have been interesting. The following are two reviews, by two different critics, of the respective styles and choreography of two different performances.

In the case of Laurie Booth & Company, the almost over eloquent Ann Nugent (Stage 27.2.92), hits the nail on the head in one of the best, to the point, articles I have read to date. Sometimes, however, I do think her jargon is definitely not only for the educated theatrical reader but for the connoisseur. "It is Laurie Booth's concern with conceptual change and his creation of unique spacial and temporal structures, that mark him out."

This opening introduction sums up the choreographer both chronologically & artistically, it's brilliant. But it has to be viewed in an interpretative context because it still is an opinion.

When I first saw Laurie Booth (just back from his South American travels) in a lecture demonstration at the Laban Centre in 1983, he had just discovered Copacabana in Brazil. This is a South American movement style incorporating cultural self-defence movement, married with explosive acrobatics. Normally Westerners would come across this form by chance in town market places, its most flamboyant practitioners being young males in direct macho competition.

At the time (quite unfairly in retrospect) I found Booth's observations quite pretentious and anachronistic because they seemed to be no different from what was happening in the United Kingdom and the United States (during the era of body popping and break dancing). This pretension I thought was compiled by the fact that London Contemporary Dance Theatre's, Robert North, in the 1970's had based the brilliant "Troy Games" on the same subject, with consummate symbolism & athletic choreography. Now Mr Booth has collated and digested, over the years, the rhythms, pace and sheer purity of the form and

adapted this to present a most stunning style, that as Ms Nugent notices is,

"a mystical world of shapes and symbols...Moments become marvellous encapsulations of balance and harmony even when the movement is off-centre, the impression is of the individual at peace within her/himself".

Edward Thorpe's review of Mark Murphy's "Time Spent In The Company Of Bad People" performed by V-Tol Dance Company (London Standard 28.2.92) is of a derisory nature. Its not the fact that Mr Thorpe was not over impressed, but, he states his dislike from the opening paragraph onwards through sarcastic phrases and wordplay. Wording like "swiped" and "presumably" are potent words to indicate the forthcoming indictments. What Mr Thorpe actually says is the choreography has little depth (what it says in 70 minutes should have been said in less time, lets say 20 minutes).

The good parts of the show are described as "...briefly amusing and leads one to expect something more significant." Poignant points like the undressing scene, where clarity of statement is necessary, is described as "...they slowly and laboriously undress each other down to their underwear and then with baleful looks take up coital positions on the floor. Then its dressing again, back(s) to the wall and another round of changed partners". Mr Thorpe seems by descriptive assassination to achieve to criticise certain theatrical rules and patterning that must be present in any choreography as regards subject matter.

This article I find misleading because it seems the reviewer is placing a prejudice on what he believes to be contemporary dance. This is achieved by comparing V-Tol to the values and execution of DV8. He states that a company should "...hold a mirror up to nature" yet he also states he would have liked "...something more significant such as new insights in to human behaviour". What does the critic expect from

a company, insight or reflection? Why dress informed opinion with poetic contradiction? Why dress up mutton as beef?

So what function do critics really serve? Certainly language can mis-lead and mis-represent. Everything is open to interpretation, it can be taken out of context. Language and opinion are subjective. The crux of the matter is, if it's the critics' role to inform us, we assume they know what's going on. This assumption can make them almost seem to be telepathic and if they are, we probably are too. If they are that sensitive and we are not, then that is their function. Perhaps like Ancient Greece they should be exalted like the philosophers and great sages? If this is not the case what really is the critics purpose? If everything is understood, there is no point in visual theatre, or any theatre for that matter.

For example it's like asking your mentor a question and the answer is on such an educated level that it becomes semantically enigmatic. The question becomes redundant and the answer irrelevant. This is a paradox.

Question: "What does Y mean?"

Answer: "Y is X."

Question: "What does X mean?"

Answer: "X? That's Y."

The answer is a metaphor of the question.

Coming back to earth the importance of the critic has to be viewed in certain ways. It is simply not who takes notice, but, who believes who else takes notice. For example New York critics are exalted and it is agreed a shows life-span can be influenced on what they say. The prospective audiences trust and are influenced by the critics' judgement. Leading commercial dance choreographer, Jack Gunn, informed me that it is common practise for a mobile elite "A team" of dancers to open various Broadway shows in order to counteract the possibility of bad reviews. The now launched show proceeds with a "B team" of performers.

In Britain, with its relatively smaller performance industry, the influence of the critics is best summed up by Anne Millman (Marketing Research Consultant from McCann, Matthews, Millman) at a Marketing & Research seminar for Southwark Arts during April 1991. She stated that the critics of theatre shows in this country have no direct bearing upon ticket sales whatsoever. The only people who read reviews are the people involved (the artists themselves), the theatre administration and people with vested interests (funding bodies, sponsors, friends and relatives).

any painter or choreographer of dance. But 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 important as the text. I believe you could turn down the sound when watching your video of "Eh Joe" or "Happy Days" and be transfixed by the movement qualities of Jack MacGowran's face or Billie Whitelaw's arms, head and upper body.

In his book Jonathan Kalb compares and contrasts performances of Beckett's work and it is interesting to note some of the differences between MacGowran's portrayal of Joe and Jean-Louis Barrault's version (with Madeline Renaud=d) in 1968. Beckett did not direct the latter and of course "Eh Joe" was written for MacGowran, his close and much loved friend. I've watched the BBC/MacGowran version many times and it's compulsive viewing. The performance lasts about twenty minutes and the actor is silent throughout, listening and reacting to the voice spoken by Sian Phillips. We know not whether the voice is in Joe's own head or actually comes from behind the camera - it doesn't matter. After the first few minutes the entire action rests on Joe's face with the camera's positioning and angle precisely designated in Beckett's stage instructions: "...camera has nine slight moves in towards the face, say four inches each time. Each move is stopped by the voice resuming, never camera move and voice together." We watch MacGowran's every facial reaction to Voices words (an indictment of Joe's behaviour from an ex-lover/wife) and the movements convey we imagine his denial, remorse, resentment. the point is that what we see is rarely straight forward or immediate - there is ambiguity and enigma in MacGowran's facial movements and never a hint of histrionics or over-statement. Ironically, when the great French actor/mime

artist played Joe, Barrault - according to Kalb - sentimentalised the character's reactions, overstating and exaggerating the facial acting in an "attempt to portray an inappropriately realistic sense of paranoia." One imagines that Etienne Decroux (who trained Barrault) would not have been amused.

Note: Apart from Lecoq's words and those drawn from Beckett's obituaries all quotations are taken from "Beckett in Performance" by Jonathan Kalb, Cambridge University Press, 1991.





The Return of the Saturday Morning Flicks

# “LE SENOR Z”

Tom Bushe reviews Strasbourg based company “Amoros Et Augustin” featured during the recent Vision Mix Festival.

The prospect of travelling to a Puppet show at Battersea Arts Centre? For the uninitiated (like myself) felt somewhat masochistic. A long day's journey into sooty?

On arrival, the situation improves with an invitation to meet Lady Penelope, resplendent in sparkly gown. Alas wrong day. The auditorium is packed, polite and nondescript looking, but not an ankle biter in sight. Mercifully all pre-conceptions end here.

The set reveals a large paper-like screen illuminated by flickering lights placed front and behind. Clearly visible either side are two of the performers, one operating synth-keyboard, the other festooned with percussion and sound effect devices - complete with gravel under foot.

Lights down, flamenco guitar, enter wailing trumpets, a surging concoction builds complete with whistling and chanting. We are in Samurai/Spaghetti Western country. Furious galloping precedes the image of our champion -“Zorro”- bat cape swirling in the wind pursued by bandito nasties. Black stroboscopic images rush at you in three dimensional form. Titles are lashed in, with a comic books style and detail. All action is structured in cinematic story board sequence. Long shot - sleepy, church bell village; Mid shot - ragged, pitiful local; Close up - eye balls dilating. The sound of chains, clink of swords; Point of view shot - approaching shadows of bad news...

Much of the humour comes from the manic D.I.Y. silent movie style. At one point a strip of clear film is projected on to the screen. We now see two characters -Zorro versus ‘Sancho Panza’ - consciously ‘acting’ within the constraint of each frame. An acrobatic swashbuckling manoeuvre is beyond the fat villain, he trips and falls off the frame. The action is stopped, Zorro helps him back, a brief chat - fighting continues.

Only at one point does the production flounder. The surreal ‘tea break’ gag is repeated. A prolonged fight scene becomes progressively more abstract (characters walking on the ceiling etc). Emphasising a quality already apparent it became distracting and tedious. This was quickly remedied with the climatic show-down.

The chief villain (eye patch, sweaty quiff, spiked beard) and henchman ride into town for the regular spot of rape, pillage and poll tax. The front screen is raised revealing three smaller scenes staggered at various distances. Each representing the same location from a long shot to close-up. Its fiesta time at Bar Sol: frantic maracas, gringo guzzlers, loud vocal/physical traffic, the door creaks - silence - two swords clash. Eyeball to eyeball, Zorro's identity causes amazement. Clink clank - cutlery on overdrive. The final apocalyptic battle. The Masked defender rides again, till next Sat morning.

The term “shadow theatre” is misleading and a disservice for this production. It evokes images of crude silhouettes lacking detail and mobility. ‘Augustin’ create a dynamic that works both as a pastiche of the film genre while also creating a very surreal identity. This is a funky show, imaginative and performed with zest. A skilful ensemble, essentially fun rather than pretentious. A welcome reminder that puppetry can be anything that is animated. R I P Sooty.

P.S. Don't discriminate against the ankle biters.

Note: Amoros et Augustin are expected to return to Britain in the Spring of '93. The Puppet Centre are hoping to organise a workshop/residency with the company. An opportunity not to be missed. For further detail contact Vision Mix Festival, The Puppet Centre, BAC, Lavender Hill, London SW11 5TF. Tel: 071 228 5335.