

# total theatre

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## THE ART OF LEGISLATION

August Boal in  
conversation

## FLYING INTO THE NEW MILLENNIUM

The Circus Space

## DANCE OF DARKNESS

Butoh

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# total theatre

mime, physical theatre & visual performance

VOLUME 10 ♦ ISSUE 4 ♦ WINTER 1998/99

Amidst the cynicism that has characterised the media coverage of the Millennium Dome, it may have escaped your notice that The Circus Space is currently providing over 100 young performers with an intensive training in physical performance skills which they will showcase in the Dome throughout the year 2000.

It's easy to scoff, but the legacy the Millennium Dome will create for new circus and physical theatre in this country could be greater than any of us can now imagine. Purists may not have high artistic hopes for the Millennium Show, but everyone working in the sector should be pleased that such an extravagantly physical performance will provide the central attraction of the world's largest millennial celebration. In this issue, Ray Newe takes a look behind the scenes at The Circus Space as preparations for the Millennium Show move apace.

Another ambitious performance project that recently had tongues wagging in the corridors of power was staged by Augusto Boal at London's former GLC building in November. Boal, famous throughout the world for his Forum Theatre techniques, brought his unique brand of political theatre to an event which tackled issues of social relevance in London, from housing and transport to education. Rebecca Brown interviews Boal in this issue.

Also in this issue Emi Slater gets to the bottom of what Butoh is all about; Ian Grant profiles the UK's leading animated theatre company, Green Ginger; and Anne Louise Rentell sets out to discover why more and more puppets and animated objects are appearing in contemporary theatre shows.

As always the year gets off to a good start with various physical theatre festivals throughout the country. Watch out for mac's Moving Parts season next month and also for Beyond Words at The Hawth, Crawley and the Liverpool Unity's Real Action Festival in the following months.

It wouldn't be January in London without the International Mime Festival (LIMF). This year's mime festival features work with few or no spoken words. As the definitions of 'mime', 'physical' and 'visual' theatre continue to expand and blur with each passing year, Total Theatre hosts its fifth Critical Practice Debate as part of LIMF on January 16, and asks 'what is the new mime?' I hope we'll see you there.

**John Daniel, Editor**

Total Theatre magazine is published quarterly. If you would like to submit news, views, letters or advertise in the Spring issue, please note that the copy deadline is February 14th 1999. The next issue will cover the period April-July 1999.



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# THE ART OF LEGISL

The Brazilian teacher, theorist, director, playwright and social scientist Augusto Boal has worked prolifically in the years since he founded the Theatre of the Oppressed in 1976. In November Boal was in London to direct *The Art of Legislation* in the former GLC Debating Chamber at County Hall. This was the first time Boal has used his Forum Theatre technique to affect legislative change in the UK. **REBECCA BROWN** met him to discover if the technique that has proved so successful in affecting social change in Brazil can achieve similar results elsewhere in the world

**How will the Legislative Theatre experiment in London be carried out?**

The experiment here in London is going to be very symbolic. It is not real Forum Theatre. Adrian Jackson, of The London Bubble, is getting in touch with people concerned with housing, education and transportation - three major areas of public life affecting London. We will bring these people together to make plays. The event will be broadcast live via the Internet, so the world will know we are doing this experiment.

We will prepare scenes with people from these three different sectors and we will invite an audience, including MPs, to see the whole process. At the close of the event, we will submit to the consideration of the public the 'Laws' that are voted for. There's going to be a writer, a musician, a technical assistant for legislative matters and a lawyer. It will work as a normal Forum Theatre session, only it will happen inside the building that once housed the Greater London Council, until it was abolished in 1983.

**Will the process be the same as that used in Brazil?**

Usually, when we create Legislative Theatre in Brazil we send what we call an 'Interactive Mailing List' to one or two thousand people that are interested in the particular legislative theme we are exploring. These people call their own meetings and then send information back to us. Meetings of the Brazilian parliament's Legislative Chamber are simulated in the street or in the church, to gather responses from the public to different areas that affect public life. In this way we collect information during the months leading up to the event. In the UK, the process will have to be condensed into a three week period and will be conducted in specially organised workshops and via the Internet.

**Do you think that your techniques are transferable to different countries and political systems?**

I think that they are. Legislative Theatre is not a group of laws that tells people what to do, it's a method. The method can be used to suit the needs of the people in whatever context it is used. Of course, if Legislative Theatre was saying 'we have a law in Brazil that says this and that, so let's transplant it here,' it would not work. Conditions are not the same in the UK as they are in Brazil, for instance - what the people want is not the same. So there is no possibility of simply transplanting the results that Legislative Theatre has achieved in Brazil to the UK. But we can transplant the method.

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**“Each culture brings its own respective traditions to the technique, and that's what I find so beautiful”**

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**Do you think the technique could work in cultures and political systems as diverse as South Africa and Eastern Europe, for instance?**

Yes. For instance, if Polish people used the technique to address Polish problems, it would work. Of course they would have to use their own folk lore in the process. I was in South Africa last year working with different communities and cultures. What was beautiful about South Africa was that many of the interven-

tions made in the Forum Theatre experiments, were made through dance and not words. I realised that dance can be used as an alternative method for communication in Forum Theatre. In other words, each culture brings its own respective traditions to the technique, and that's what I find so beautiful.

**Will the participants in the London Legislative Theatre experiment represent a cross section of London's society?**

I don't like to say that only certain kinds of people can talk about certain things. We want dialogue with many kinds of people. I don't believe in saying 'I am a man, so I'm going to tell women how they should behave' or 'I am white, so I'm going to teach the blacks how they should behave' - that would be authoritarian. But on the other hand, to say no one can speak for people other than themselves, is also authoritarian.

Many of the people participating in the Legislative Theatre experiment at the GLC - the bus drivers and taxi drivers, for instance - will not know about my work. But they are concerned with the problems we are attempting to tackle. We can not hope to reach all sectors of society, however. In terms of the involvement of homeless people, for instance, those that are likely to attend are those that are already integrated with society in some way. These people naturally can not be said to represent the whole homeless community.

**How do you communicate your ideas about Legislative Theatre in Brazil?**

I give interviews on television. There is a television channel where I go and try to give my message. However, half of the Brazilian people don't have television sets. If I can find a publishing house, I publish my books. However, many people in Brazil don't even have

# ATION

the money to buy a newspaper, so they will not go and buy a book. But the fact that Brazilian people can't afford *en masse* to buy the book, is not a good reason not to publish it. Among those people who do buy the book, some of them will go on to use the techniques I teach. And in this way, finally my ideas will arrive at the people who live in the slums.

Thus, although they have no money to buy a newspaper, they can be influenced by my ideas in this way.

However, who spreads my techniques is not the only important issue - how those techniques are used is the vital issue. I work with women, blacks and peasants in Brazil, but I do not impose my opinions on them. I am not going to say 'I know better than you because I am an artist and you are not'. In Brazil sometimes we work in the slum areas. It is important to remember that the slum is made of many layers. We can only hope to visit a few layers of these slums and the rest

we don't have access to. But this does not mean we shouldn't work in the slum at all. I believe in the ripple effect - you throw a stone, there is a ripple. I am not so pretentious and powerful to believe my word is going to reverberate through the whole world; but the ripple effect is powerful.

For instance, when we ask for views from people across the world via the Internet - from Europe, Asia, USA, Canada, Africa, for instance - we can't possibly hope to get a representative cross section of views. How many people are on the Internet in Africa, for example? India has almost one Billion people, but they have only eight million telephone lines, and in the USA they have more than one line for each person. So even if the Internet is intended to be democratic because it is for the whole world, it is only for the whole world who are on the Internet. But it's still worth doing because through the Internet maybe you will get to the people who will get to people.

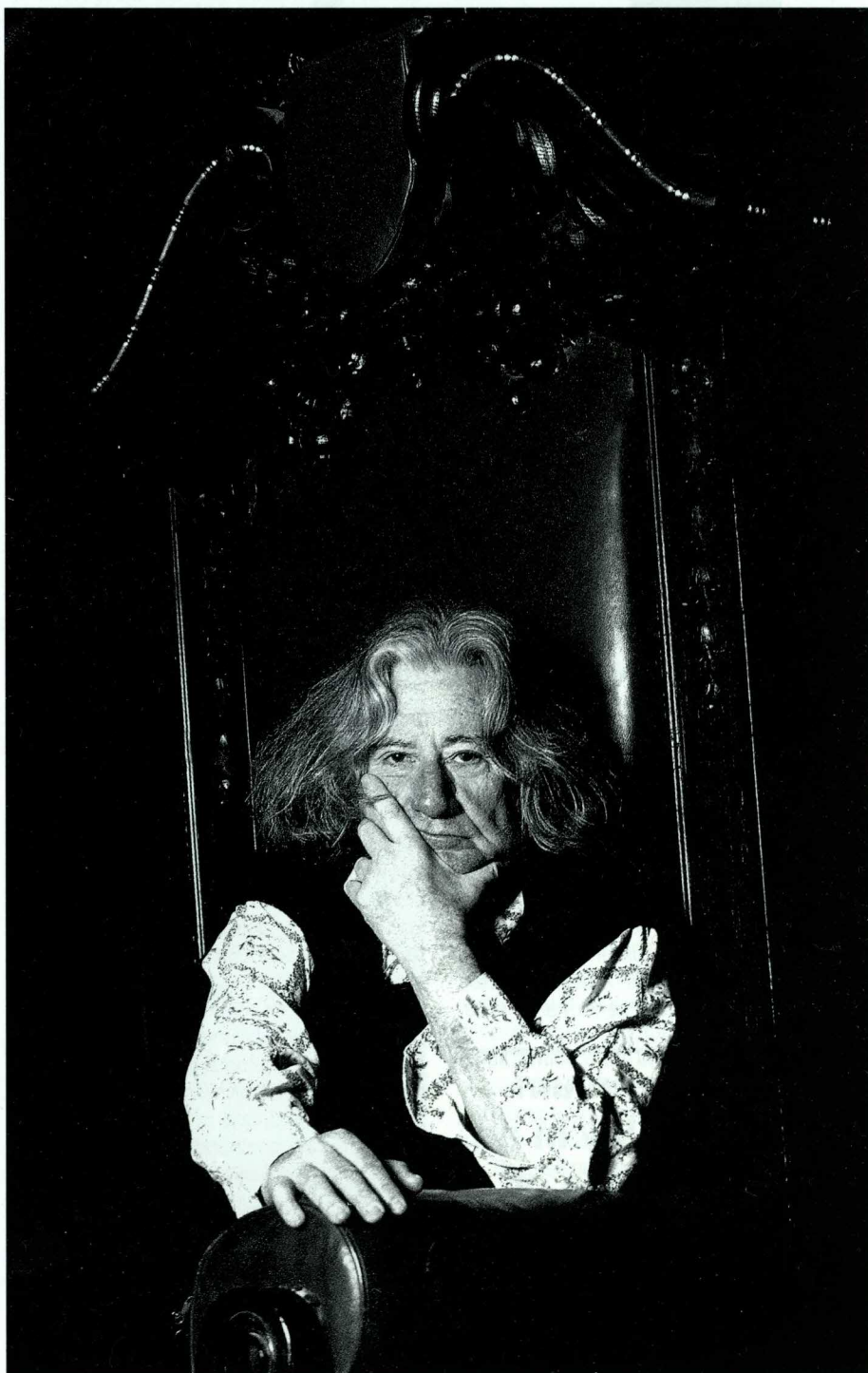
## **How important is the training of the actors and practitioners who use the Legislative Theatre technique?**

The most important aspect of the Theatre of the Oppressed is the training of those people who spread the method - who I call the 'multipliers'. The multipliers need to be passionately interested in the work, and they must study hard and spread the word so that more people become multipliers.

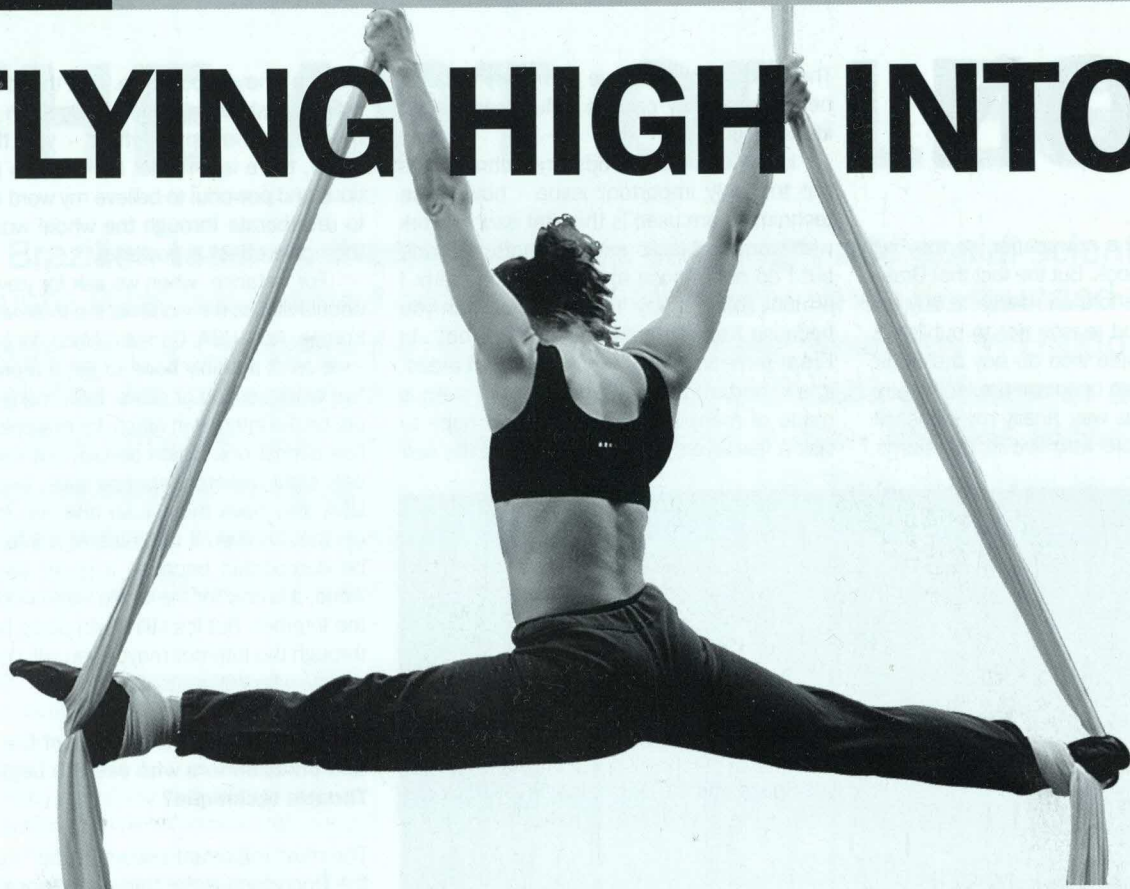
A great problem for the Theatre of the Oppressed around the world is to have the right people to spread the message. Wherever these people exist, the technique will flourish. In the region of Calcutta, for instance, there is a group that organise festivals of the Theatre of the Oppressed. In the Scandinavian countries every year there is a Theatre of the Oppressed festival. In Austria they have, from time to time, Forum Theatre festivals.

So our problem is how to create those multipliers, those animators, what we also call 'jokers', to spread the work. There are many people in the UK, the USA and Germany doing the Theatre of the Oppressed. In Germany there have been seven books published about the Theatre of the Oppressed. These books are not all written by me, but some of them are written by people who have picked up the message and developed my ideas. Maybe soon I can stop working and go home to the beach, and leave the work to these successors to continue. ■

*Augusto Boal's book, Legislative Theatre: Using Performance to Make Politics, is published by Routledge and available for £14.99 from bookshops or to order on 01264 342939.*



# FLYING HIGH INTO TH



With less than a year to go before it's official opening, The Millennium Dome has already received more than its' fair share of criticism. But for the 100 or so performers who will perform in the Millennium Show, the Dome is providing unprecedented training opportunities in aerial and other circus skills. **RAY NEWE** visited London's newly expanded Circus Space, and discovered that the legacy the Dome will create for contemporary circus in the UK should not be underestimated

Photos: Gideon Mendel/Network

**O**n New Year's Day 2000 the Millennium Dome in Greenwich will house the opening of a huge show, which will run five times daily throughout the Year 2000. The Millennium Show is currently being created by a team with backgrounds in circus, rock 'n roll, carnival and dance. It will be performed by young people trained at The Circus Space, London and is part of a unique initiative launched by the New Millennium Experience Company (NMEC).

The Creative Director of the show is Mark Fisher, a British architect best known for his extravagant stage sets for bands such as The Rolling Stones, Pink Floyd and U2. You might not know him by name, but you may remember his much talked about design for U2's massive PopMart world tour, which famously featured a 100 foot high cocktail stick spearing a 12 foot wide olive. The man clearly has excellent credentials when it comes to creating

large scale spectacles, and the Millennium Dome - the world's largest indoor auditorium - should push his ingenuity to the limit.

Peter Gabriel - ex-Genesis main man and Grammy award-winning solo artist - will direct the show's musical content and Micha Bergese is on board as Artistic Director. Bergese has thirty years of performance expe-

rience. He danced with London Contemporary Dance Theatre for ten years; directed his own all-male dance company Mantis; and has choreographed stage shows for Mick Jagger, Tina Turner and the Clothes Show. Keith Khan, who has a background in Carnival, will design the costumes for the show, which will be lit by Patrick Woodroffe. As you can see, the NMEC is thinking big: rock 'n roll, carnival and circus are the building blocks from which the Millennium Show will grow.

The Circus Space in London is providing training for the one hundred or so young performers who will appear in the Millennium Show. This is quite a task. The first intake of Dome hopefuls began training at The Circus Space in September and are to be joined by a second batch in April. Britain's leading circus training school has less than a year to train a large group, many of whom are complete beginners, in complex aerial and ground-

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**The Millennium Show will play in an area the size of Trafalgar Square and the height of Nelson's Column**

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# E NEW MILLENNIUM

based circus skills. However, there is no doubt that The Circus Space has the facilities, technical know-how and track record to achieve the desired results in such a short amount of time.

The Circus Space already runs a successful BTEC National Diploma in Performing Arts, Circus: the first circus course in Britain to form part of the mainstream educational system. Together with the NMEC and London's Central School of Speech and Drama, The Circus Space has now devised a new Certificate of Higher Education course. For the forty-four trainees who began the new course in September, The Circus Space is not only providing a training that is equivalent to the first year of a degree course, but also the first step to performing in the Dome. So how did this unique relationship between The Circus Space and the Millennium Dome come about?

Micha Bergese explains that the relationship, in part, evolved by accident rather than design: "Mark Fisher and I worked together on a Tina Turner show, and when Mark was asked to do the show for the Dome, he asked me if I would like to look after the artistic direction... He didn't know that I had an office at The Circus Space." Originally the plan had been for the Millennium Show to be performed by an ensemble of hired professionals, however when Bergese invited Fisher to a first meeting at his office at The Circus Space, both men saw the potential for something different. As Bergese explains, by training young people at The Circus Space to perform in the Millennium Show, there was an unique opportunity to create a legacy for British contemporary circus to carry into the next millennium. For Bergese the relationship between The Circus Space and the Dome was "a dream come true" - he had located himself at Circus Space's Hoxton site two years previously, because he dreamt of being "a part of the creation of a contemporary circus in a serious way in this country."

Charlie Holland, Deputy Chief Executive and Programme Director at The Circus Space, explains what it means for The Circus Space to have the millennium spotlight directed at them: "It's a challenge to the organisation to respond to the needs of the Millennium Show. It has meant our staff and users have had to cope with very significant changes. We had to cancel one of the intakes of the BTEC course because we had the millennium course instead. We have had to install a new phone and computer system. There are more teachers and administrative staff. It is a challenge and we are running to catch up. It's one of those opportunities that only come along once every thousand years. So you grab it."

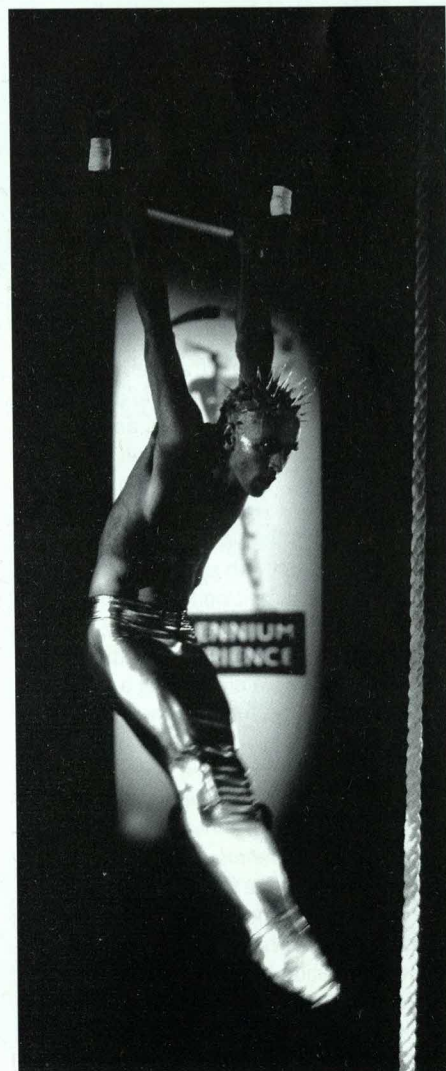
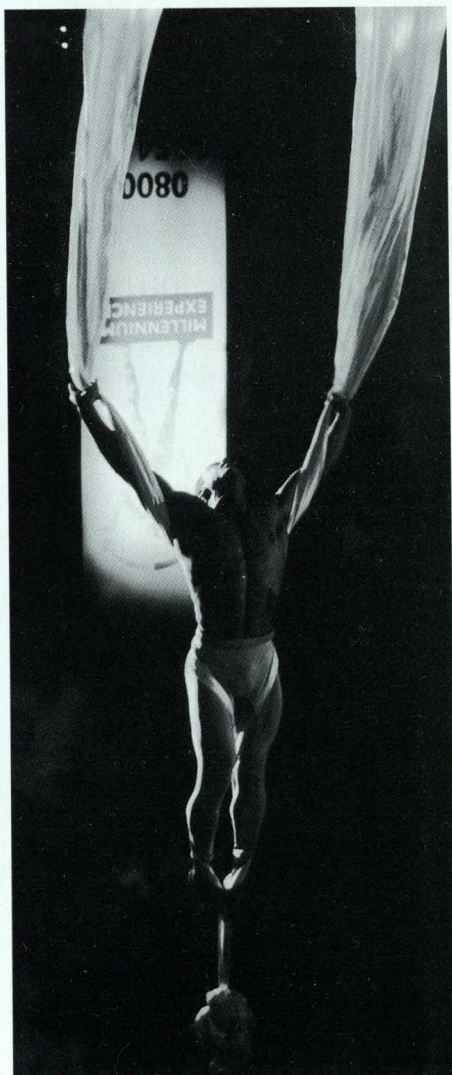
Certainly, the Certificate of Higher Education course is one of the most extraordinary training opportunities in the performance world at the moment. For the students currently on the course, and those about to join in April, they are guaranteed a year's full-time employment at the end of the training. "It's a unique opportunity," enthuses Holland. "It's just going to look stunning on anybody's CV. I think the offers will come flooding in."

Bergese believes that "this is what the Millennium Dome is all about". "It's bringing young people into the Dome, giving them an opportunity to be educated - to learn as well as work - and then sending them off into the world with a rucksack full of opportunities. Where in the world do you get an opportunity like that?"

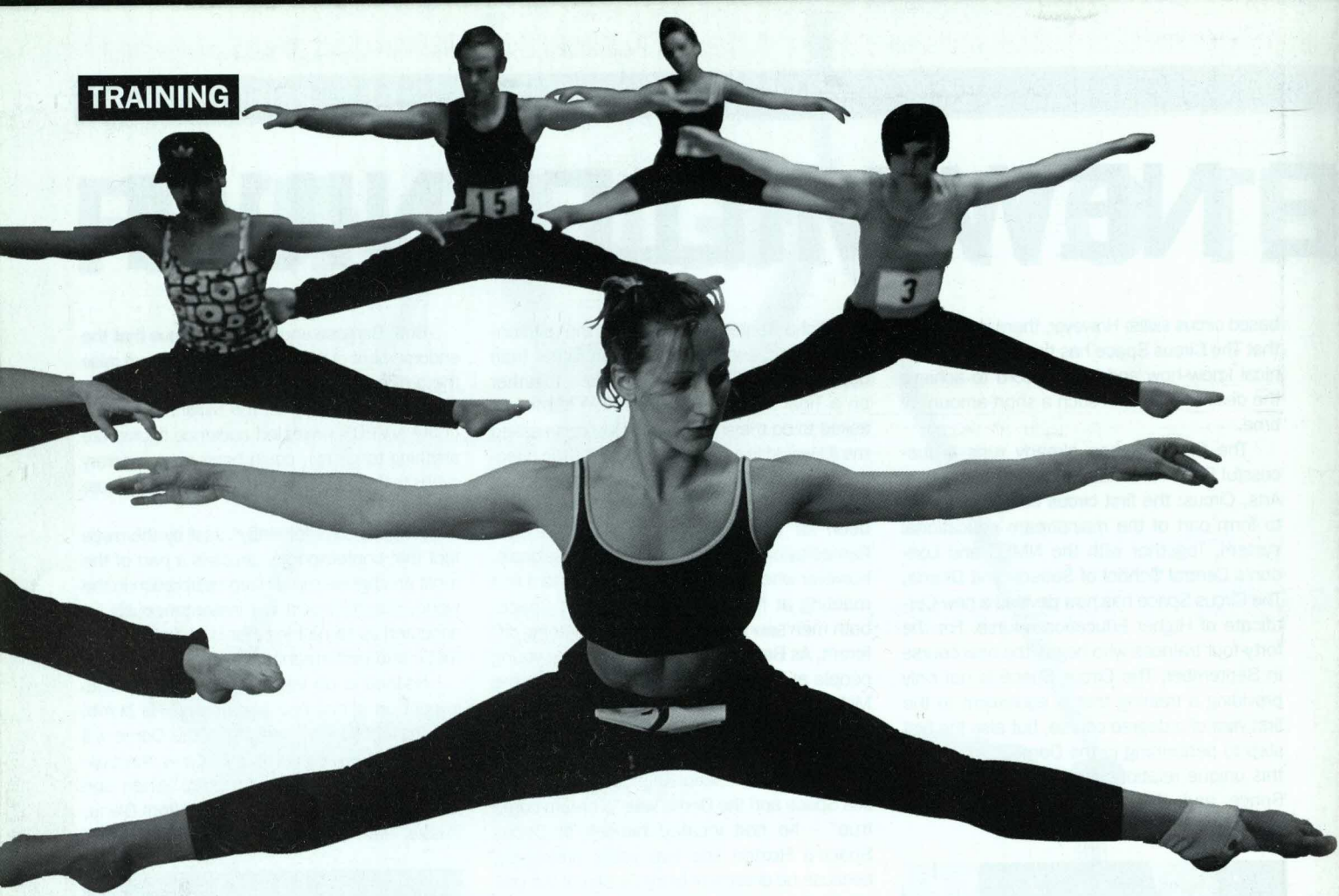
Both Bergese and Holland believe that the endorsement of the Millennium Dome will raise the profile of contemporary circus inestimably in this country. After all, the Millennium Show (if the NMEC's projected audience figures are anything to go by), could bring contemporary circus to the attention of some 36,000 or more people a day.

Bergese says fervently: "Just by the mere fact that contemporary circus is a part of the most prestigious millennium celebration in the world, means that it will instantaneously be accepted as something that is part of our aesthetic and performance life."

Holland is no less enthusiastic about its impact on circus and performers. He points out that those who perform in the Dome will be trained to a level of skill that was previously unimaginable in this country: "When one looks at the calibre of performers from China, Russia, France and Canada, one thinks that



## TRAINING



it would be amazing to have something like that in the UK - and now it's become possible. Furthermore, I think those seeing the show will become enthused and want to see more. I think that bodes well for future circus production and for the future employment of those doing the show."

So what of the show itself? All those involved in creating the show are currently contracted to secrecy as to its content. However, Bergese will reveal that the show has a story: "It has a beginning, middle and an end. It is, of course, time-related as any millennium show would be. It concerns itself with times past, time now and time in the future as it might be, or as we might like it, to be." The tone will be unquestionably up-beat, as Bergese points out with a laugh: "Looking into the new millennium, it would be rather dim to put a damper on it." More seriously, Bergese ponders: "Unless there is hope there is no future, and since we are making a piece that will incorporate the future we will build hope into the show."

For clues as to how the show may look, one must first of all consider the problems inherent in creating a show for an auditorium as huge as the Millennium Dome. As Holland says: "It's a challenge for the creative team in as much as the Dome is a big space; there will be other activities happening; and there is no blackout situation."

To talk statistics for a second, the Millennium Show will play in an area the size of Trafalgar Square and the height of Nel-

son's Column. As Bergese says: "The building itself is giving its own sort of nature to the piece." Given the massive size of the Dome, and that nearly all of those on the creative team have some experience of stadium-sized rock 'n roll events, is there not a danger that the performance content of the show will be dwarfed by the lavish, rock 'n roll-style pyrotechnics?

"I don't know," says Bergese honestly. "It's a large building, it's a large event, a large occasion. The millennium ought to be celebrated with large brush strokes - as well as little ones," "Whatever our background, what we are trying to give is something specific to the Dome. The stuff that we are doing, and the way that we are working is very deep. We are still working on the show, still developing it - nobody more so than Mark Fisher who never lets his inventiveness get a moment's peace."

For budding performers who are concerned that they've already missed the millennium boat, the good news is that it's not too late to get involved in what promises to be the greatest show on earth. Auditions are being held nationally throughout January and February, and The Circus Space is looking for an additional 46 potential Dome performers, to start training in April. The April course will be specifically geared to the development of skills required to work in the Millennium Show and will culminate in a Certificate of Higher Education.

Those wishing to apply do not need previous circus training, although obviously it would

be useful. The main criteria for selection are that individuals should have at least two years intensive training in a physical activity like gymnastics, athletics, martial arts, rock climbing, board diving etc. Excellent upper body strength is also an essential pre-requisite for selection, as is a head for heights and stage presence. Be warned, however, Dome trainees follow a gruelling schedule. A typical day starts before 9am with a warm-up, then the trainees are put through their paces in a variety of specialist techniques - including abseiling, trapeze, tumbling and trampolining. Before classes finish at around 5pm, the trainees will also have done some dance work. They are studying ballet, contemporary and African dance.

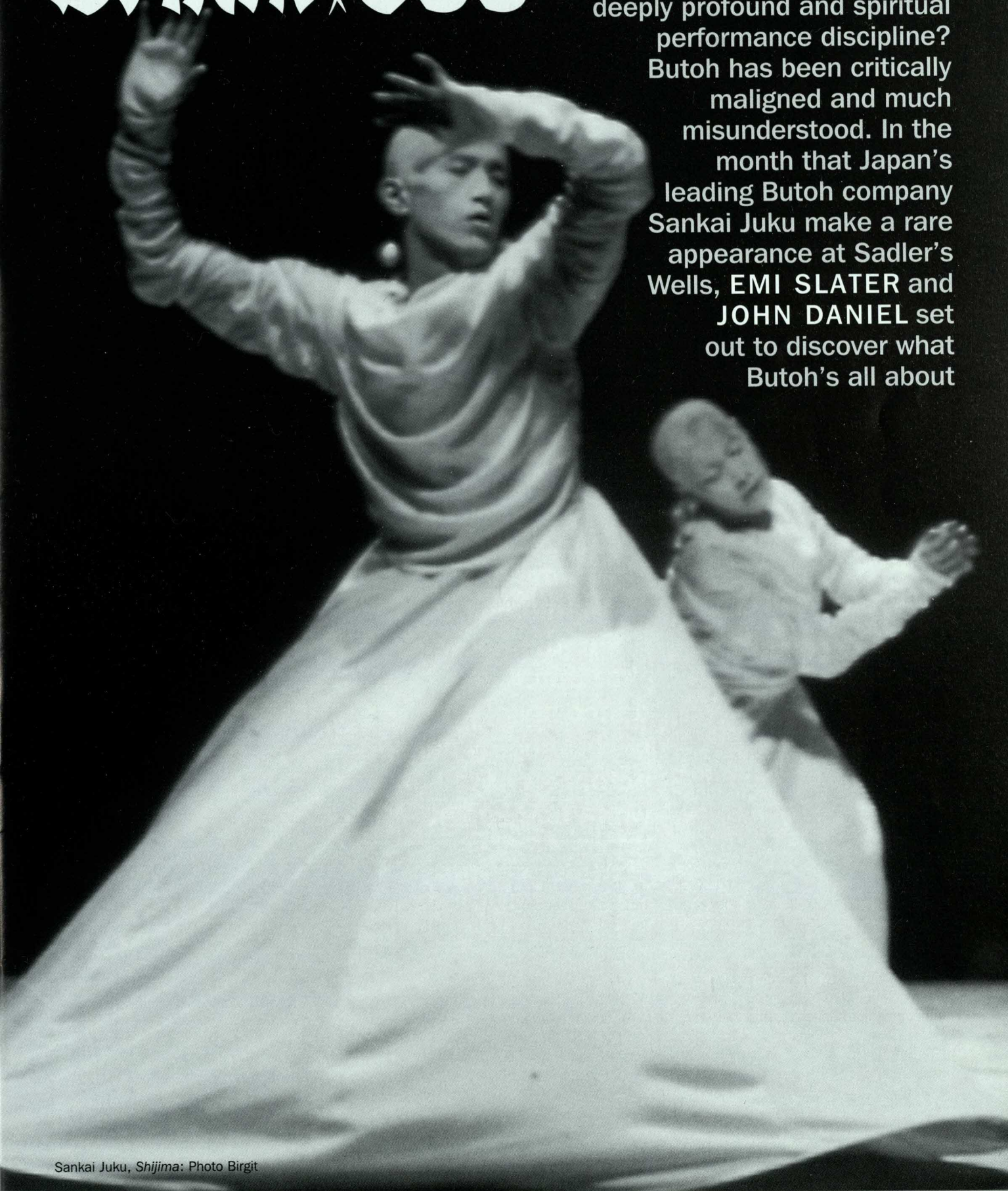
"It's not a regime your average person would relish," warns Holland. "The trainees are people who are used to a substantial amount of physical training," he says, before light-heartedly adding: "But you do get a lunch break!" ■

*If you've got what it takes to be a part of Millennium Show call 0800 665498 now for an application form. The closing date for applications for the April intake is January 18. The NMEC is also looking for professional performers trained in circus, dance or physical theatre to join the ground-based ensemble of the Millennium Show. To apply send a CV and photo to: Liz Ellis, NMEC, Gate 1, Drawdock Road, Greenwich, London SE10 0BB.*



# THE DANCE OF DARKNESS

A tortured vision of a post-nuclear world as seen through the eyes of naked Japanese performance artists? Or a deeply profound and spiritual performance discipline? Butoh has been critically maligned and much misunderstood. In the month that Japan's leading Butoh company Sankai Juku make a rare appearance at Sadler's Wells, **EMI SLATER** and **JOHN DANIEL** set out to discover what Butoh's all about





As Butoh began as a reaction to the 'westernization' of Japan after the end of World War II, it might seem strange that there is currently such a huge upsurge of interest in the artform among western performers. But on closer investigation, it can be argued that what has traditionally been considered as an entirely new and uniquely Japanese theatrical language, was in fact partly born out of an exchange of both eastern and western traditions.

In Japanese 'Butoh' literally translates as 'stamping dance'. The formal term for the artform that first emerged in Japan in the 1950s is 'Ankoku Butoh', which translates as 'dance of darkness'. Hijikata Tatsumi is widely regarded to be the founder of Butoh. He created his first performance, *Forbidden Colours*, for the Japan Dance Festival in 1959. It was a frenzy of stamping - an erotic, sacrificial ceremony in which a live chicken was killed by strangulation. One of Hijikata's sources of inspiration for *Forbidden Colours* was the French theatre maker and essayist Antonin Artaud. According to recent research Hijikata Tatsumi, who did not understand French, responded to Artaud's screams on a recording of the radio play *To have done with the Judgment of God*, which he acquired in the late 1950s. He would play the tape over and over again as inspiration for his performance. Many of Hijikata's associates went on to form their own companies in the 1960s and '70s and thus created the basis of a Japanese Butoh movement which still exists and tours internationally today. These companies most

notably include: Sankai Juku, Carlotta Ikeda and Ariadone, Musaki Iwana and Eiko and Koma, to name a few.

To define Butoh is in itself a mammoth task. There are many misunderstandings and preconceptions obscuring what is essentially a deeply spiritual artform. Butoh is in some

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## The commonly held view amongst those not in the know, is that Butoh is a dance style performed by naked actors smeared in white body paint

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ways not just an artform, but a philosophy and a way of life as well. The commonly held view amongst those not in the know, is that Butoh is a dance style performed by naked actors smeared in white body paint. This is the Butoh cliché: the shaven headed androgynous dancers, with contorted limbs and bandy legs; the agonisingly slow and deliberate movements; the uncompromising and provocative sexual imagery. No wonder it's known as the 'dance of darkness'. The Japanese dance critic, Nario Goda, sheds more light on the definition of Butoh, when

she explains that: "In all of us there is fifty percent darkness - a dark place that we know nothing about. It is that darkness that Ankoku Butoh strives to preserve. It is something we do not understand completely."

Every Butoh company, or solo performer, has a completely different style. Much Butoh does not even begin to resemble the stereotype of the artform described above. Carlotta Ikeda, who was recently seen at The Place with her company Ariadone, passionately believes that "Butoh belongs to no style, it refuses all stylisation, wipes away all techniques and therefore all aesthetic concepts that they generate." However, there remain many commonly held misconceptions about Butoh. One of these is that it developed as an artistic response to the nuclear attack on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. The gap of over a decade between World War II and the Japan Dance Festival of 1959, would seem to explode this myth, as Butoh dancer Masaki Iwana points out: "Over ten years passed between the bomb on Hiroshima and the beginning of Butoh, so who said Butoh was anything to do with the bomb? The image of the body in Butoh performances were thought to resemble the images of Hiroshima victims. But they just looked the same that's all, it is simply a coincidence."

Artaud was not merely an influence on Hijikata Tatsumi's work. He is also cited as an inspiration on the work of the experimental theatre director and poet, Tarayama (founder of the Tenjo Sajaki group), and in the work of the Gutai Group, both of whom were active in Japan in the 1950s. In addition to Artaud, there are further links between the Japanese performers of the 1950s and contemporary western performance and art movements of the 1950s and '60s. Parallels can be drawn between early Butoh performances and the Happenings of Allan Kaprow and Fluxus, which characterised the emerging performance art scene in the United States in the '60s. The work of John Cage and Nam June Paik, which embraced perceptions of body, music, space and time, also bears comparison. Additional western influences on the emerging Japanese artform also include: Dada and Surrealism; the literature of Genet, Bataille and Lautremont; the painting of Francis Bacon, Willem De Kooning, Bosch and Breugel; and of course German expressionist dance as taught in Japan through teacher Kazuo Ohno.

The Japanese Butoh company Sankai Juku, that arrives on British soil this month to perform at Sadler's Wells, is arguably responsible for the commonly held image of Butoh as an angry and subversive artform. The company, under the Artistic Direction of Ushio Amagatsu, gained widespread notoriety for the artform when it first performed in North America in the mid 1980s. Butoh was to become ever more associated with danger and

risk-taking, following Sankai Juku's famous performances in which company members were suspended from ropes, at heights of up to 80 feet, above city streets. Butoh's reputation as an extreme artform that blurs the boundaries between art and life, was sealed during a fatal performance in Seattle in 1985 when one of Sankai Juku's performers plunged to his death during a show.

Sankai Juku's latest performance *Shijima*, promises to be less risky and more contemplative. It is described as a religious ceremony in seven scenes, which begins and ends in silence. In it, a huge white mural imprinted with human shapes, envelopes the stage. With shaved heads and white painted bodies, five male dancers, robed in chalk-white dresses, perform a series of simple, controlled movements like ancient sculptures brought to life. Clearly the company still make work which conforms to the commonly held stereotype of the Butoh performance. Some detractors claim that Sankai Juku has been single-handedly responsible for deepening the misconceptions about Butoh and claim that the company has 'aestheticized' the artform to unhealthy and often damaging ends.

In the UK the Butoh flag is being flown by the London Butoh Network, established in 1997 to promote Butoh and to organise training opportunities in London. The Network was established by Marie-Gabrielle Rotie and Fran Barbe, both of whom trained as dancers and now teach and perform Butoh in London. Rotie combines visual art, Roy Hart Voice

techniques, release-based improvisation and Butoh in her solo performance works which to date have included: *Plaits*, *Angel Animal* and *Scapula*. In her own words, Rotie is on a "crusade to promote European Butoh." She is interested in the existential qualities of the artform and, far from considering Butoh to be a uniquely Japanese theatrical language, sees it as touching on the universal human

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## Butoh is when those memories from the womb are re-awakened

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condition: "We all experience life, birth and death regardless of cultural origin - Butoh tries to approach those things."

Both Barbe and Rotie are concerned to educate audiences about Butoh in order to correct the many "pre-conceived ideas and superficial observations" from which the artform suffers. Fran Barbe, who first came across Butoh in 1992, found the artform instantly liberating. "It opens up so many possibilities for me as a performer and choreographer," she says. "I had been seeking an escape from technique for its own sake and Butoh showed me an approach which put ideas and emotions first, and form and technique in their service." Rotie and

Barbe teach classes in Butoh at the Drill Hall which are attended by a varied selection of actors, physical theatre practitioners and non-performers. Interestingly, few dancers are numbered amongst the participants. On the individual who attends the class is actress Karin Heberlein. Heberlein explains that "Butoh is interesting for a performer because it gives you a new way to open your body - new physical vocabulary."

Clearly for Japanese and European Butoh practitioners alike, there is no simple definition for such a complex and varied artform. That Butoh is an intense and soul-searching journey for those performers who practice the form, is perhaps the one unifying link. Isamu Ohsuka, of the company Byakkō Sha, explains that Butoh is a process through which the dancer can learn to awaken the subconscious in performance and find a way to connect with some universal human truths. "When humans are in the womb it is said that the development process they go through is like the process of human evolution. For me Butoh is when those memories from the womb are re-awakened."

The 'dance of darkness' might perhaps be better described as a journey toward enlightenment. ■

*Emi Slater is Artistic Director of Perpetual Motion Theatre.*

Photos left & below: Eiko & Koma:  
Photos David Fullard





In October, Total Theatre gathered some of the country's leading theatre practitioners together to consider some of the reasons why object animation is emerging as a vital new force in contemporary performance. Are puppets taking over the stage? ANNE LOUISE RENTELL reports

# THE BREATH OF LIFE

A strange phenomenon is sweeping the country, infiltrating our theatres and attracting new audiences. It was recently the subject of heated discussion at Total Theatre's fourth Critical Practice Debate and has secured passionate advocacy from practitioners and audiences alike. The word on the streets is that after a long time out in the cold, puppets are back on the British stage. Freed from the confines of kid's performances and end of pier shows, puppets have arrived in the world of adult theatre.

The proof is clear to see: Julian Crouch and Phelim McDermott garnered rave reviews with *Shockheaded Peter* last year and are currently responsible for the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith's Christmas panto; Green Ginger Animations for Stage & Screen, Faulty Optic Theatre of Animation and Dynamic New Animation were all big hits with audiences at the visions98 festival of international animated theatre and the 1998 British Festival of Visual Theatre (BFVT); and of course *Dr Dolittle* is currently playing the West End com-

plete with a menagerie of animated animals from the Jim Henson puppetry workshop. It seems like everyone's getting in on the act: Theatre de Complicite employed a puppeteer to animate Grusha's baby in the Royal National Theatre production of the *Caucasian Chalk Circle* and the Royal Shakespeare Company called in the puppeteers when they staged *Bartholomew Fair*. The visions98 festival in Brighton, The London Festival of Puppetry for Adults last November and BAC's

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**On the practical side puppets, quite simply, can do more than people**

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weekend of object animation at the recent BFVT, all provide positive proof that puppetry is currently claiming a wider audience and

moving into the mainstream.

So why is animation becoming a staple ingredient of much innovative contemporary performance? Could the increased recognition of the potential for object animation in theatre prove to be a revolution in style not unlike the advent of realism in late nineteenth century theatre, which wiped away the prevailing obsession with stock characters and dramatic fluff. Could object animation - the world of the hyper-real and the magical - be poised to topple the mantle of the word?

Gavin Glover of Faulty Optic Theatre of Animation believes audiences are tired of the literary tradition. "People want to see!" he claims. His company create visually complex and surreal performances for adults which include no spoken word. On the eve of the millennium and after a century of constructing and deconstructing the word, have audiences had enough of just sitting and listening?

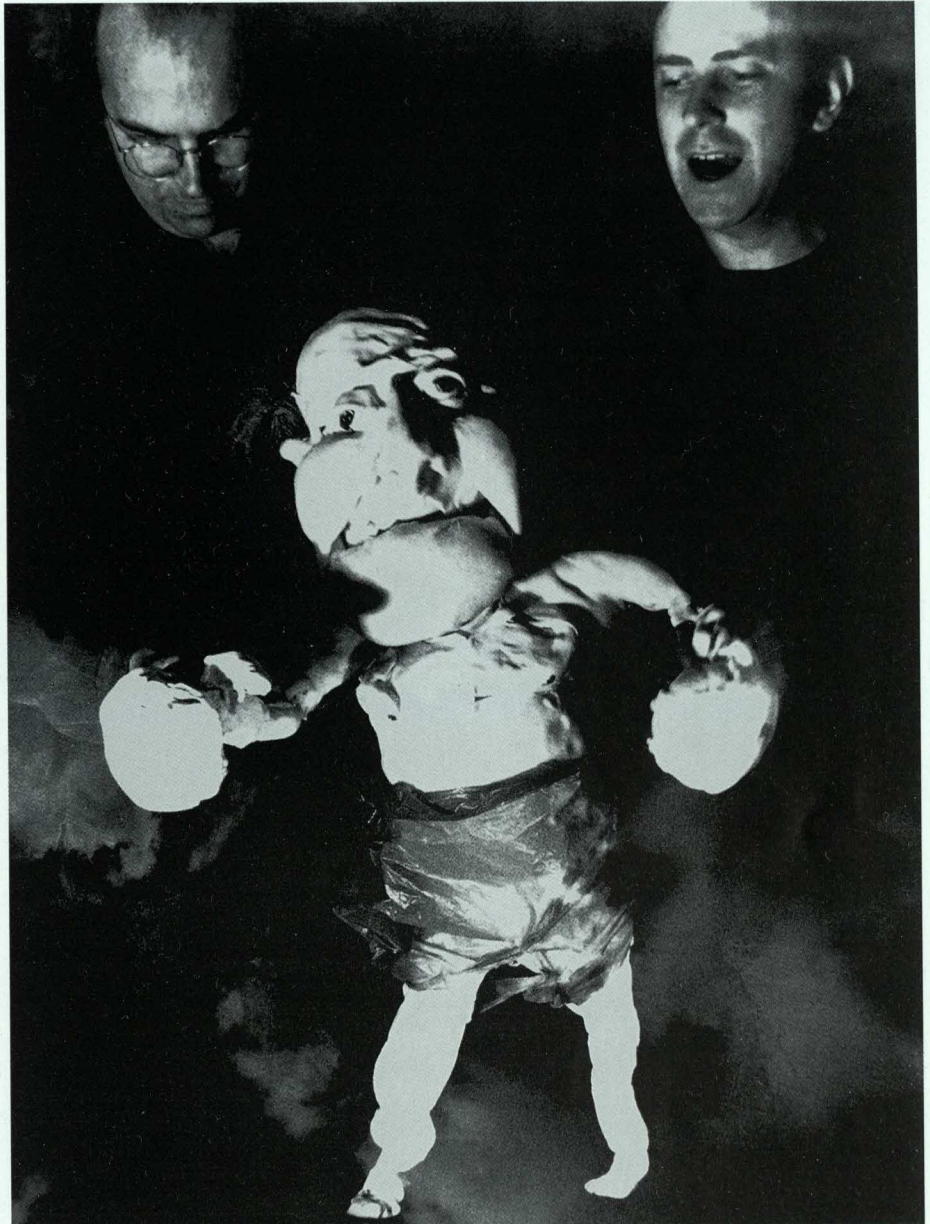
We are an increasingly visual society and one that is slave to the image, be it advertising, television or cinema. There is a constant

search for the ultimate in visual stimulation and contemporary theatre is buying into this. This is evident in the fact that auditoriums are full to capacity for Cirque du Soleil tours and musical extravaganzas like the *Phantom of the Opera*. Penny Bernand, Artistic Director of the London-based company Theatre-rites, believes that audience's have a desire to be transported in the theatre into new worlds: "Audiences don't want to go to the theatre to have their everyday life reflected back at them." Puppets can give the illusion of reality without themselves being real, thus they can potentially provide an instant theatricality to a stage production. Green Ginger prove this point beautifully in their currently touring production *Slaphead* - the puppets are life-size and to all intent and purpose 'real', but the comic-book nature of the visual style removes the theatrical representation from the everyday to present a world of super-human possibility.

On the practical side puppets, quite simply, can do more than people. Like film and computer animation, puppetry makes the impossible possible. In Green Ginger's *Slaphead*, heads explode and tongues are ripped-out live before an audience - in anarchic disregard for the impossible. In the show *Tunnel Vision*, Faulty Optic has created a large and complex world in miniature, put it into a small space and invited the audience to view it through live video projection. This method, ingenious in its simplicity, surmounts all kinds of normal practical limitations. Faulty Optic is able to focus their audience on the detail in their work, thus acting like cinema auteurs, showing the audience what they want them to see.

That said, it must be remembered that puppetry is one of the oldest forms of performance and surely it satisfies more than a desire for visual stimulus or practicality? There is something intrinsically precious about how an animated object is able to make an audience see and feel. In this sense, puppetry is a kind of magic realism. If we go back to the traditional story of Pinocchio and his master Gepetto, we can recall how an inanimate object was brought to life through the sheer force of belief and love. It is this kind of magic that invests the art and skill of puppetry with poetry.

Sue Buckmaster, also of Theatre-rites, believes that the relationship between an object and its animator is one that everyone can relate to from their childhood. A child's relationship with a favourite toy signifies an emotional investment without which the toy would be meaningless. A similar dynamic between animator and object exists when puppetry is performed on stage. For instance, in *Tunnel Vision*, the puppeteers' presence is both a sinister force and a comfort in an imagined world of solitude and darkness. Sinister because they are respon-



sible for the puppet's existence in that world, and comforting because through their presence the audience is re-assured that this existence is only imaginary and therefore temporary. Without the puppeteer, the puppets are not only free of this world, they cease to exist within it entirely.

For Sue Buckmaster, puppets have a unique power because rather than simply imitating life, they have the capacity to transform it alchemically. Puppetry can take the familiar and transform it, before an audience's eyes, into something new. This power is in the control of the animator, but also relies on the viewers willingness to suspend their disbelief. Green Ginger achieve this effect in their unsavoury, even disturbing, work and Faulty Optic question their audience's view of the world by presenting them with an alienating vision that is far removed from the everyday.

Animation is still an elusive form that defies any absolute definition. According to

Rachel Riggs of Dynamic New Animation, puppetry is situated somewhere between performance and visual art: "Its lack of definition is indicative of its' positive capacity to devour every other art form and make it its' own. It provides freedom, the joy of play and the possibility of constant imaginative invention."

So it would appear that the future is bright for a stage which welcomes the visually inventive. If theatre is on a downward spiral, it's probably because it can't, and shouldn't, try to compete with film and television. Rather, theatre should recreate its capacity to be a world in itself. In this world the audience should meet the performance halfway and engage with it with the wonder of a child. ■

Photos: (above) Improbable Theatre, *Animo*  
Photo Sheila Burnett (previous page) Faulty Optic, *Tunnel Vision*

# THE PUPPET REVO



The Welsh-based company Green Ginger is currently heralded as being at the forefront of a revolution in British puppetry, yet few people are aware the company has been creating work consistently for the last twenty years.

**IAN GRANT** celebrates the work of a company that enjoy high praise overseas yet struggle to maintain a profile in the UK

Anyone who thinks puppetry is an insular, conservative and dying artform, need look no further for remedy than the work of Terry Lee and his co-creators at Green Ginger. So remove the swizzle from your poodle, spit out those chess pieces, pour brandy butter down your wellies and scratch, scratch, scratch at your in-growing follicles - welcome to the world of Green Ginger!

Green Ginger Animations is made up of performers Terry Lee, Chris Pirie, and Dik Downey and technical wizard James Osborne. Downey, who is reported to have learnt his performing skills on the street, currently appears as Dibdin Todd in the company's touring production *Slaphead*. The image of Downey as the huge-headed Todd will be familiar to many from the photos which publicise the show and which appeared on the marketing brochure for 1998's British Festival of Visual Theatre. Pirie, who originally trained

in graphic design, not only performs with the company but is also its administrator. Lee is reputedly the obsessive member of the team. All three have skills in fine art and design. As a team Lee, Pirie, Downey and Osborne combine to make what is internationally recognised as one of the most technically proficient, visually inspired and talented companies ever to emerge from Wales.

From their conception in 1978, Green Ginger Animations for Street and Stage (full title) has worked both within and outside of theatre buildings. All the company's shows are in a continual process of development - even those permanently in the repertoire. Where shows seem 'fixed' for technical reasons, there is a fundamental spontaneity at the root of all their work. Currently in Green Ginger's repertoire are two walkabout shows, *P.R.A.T.s* and *Gaston and Pedro*, and two theatre pieces, *Frank Einstein*:

*Born to be Wired* and *Slaphead*: *Demon Barber*. Both shows are radical transformations of gothic Victoriana and the latter stormed international festivals world-wide in 1998, receiving rave reviews in the New York Times during its run at the Jim Henson International Puppet Festival.

The irony of speaking of a 'renaissance' or 'revival' in British puppet theatre is not lost on long-established companies like Green Ginger. British puppet companies have historically had to put up with puppet theatre's low status as a theatre art, as well as with the poverty of training provision at all levels and the neglect of the funding bodies. Green Ginger has survived through twenty years of under-investment and critical neglect. The company has sought to weather the storm by distancing themselves from the 'P' word, and for marketing purposes placing themselves 'at the hub of the miniature performing arts'.

If Green Ginger is riding high on the so-called 'puppetry revolution', it is thanks to the increasing recognition the company has received from overseas puppetry festivals. As a marginalised artform, puppetry would find it hard to survive outside the protective walls of such international festivals. There were at least six such festivals in the UK alone in 1998. All Green Ginger's performers are multi-lingual to some extent and the company has presented 'low-language' shows in French, German, Hebrew, Japanese, Russian, Greek and Spanish, but surprisingly not in their native Welsh.

The company's relatively unknown status in the UK may, perversely, be in small part due to their near continual absence from these shores. In the UK their profile suffers from the lowly status of puppet theatre and the marketing strategies of individual venues that



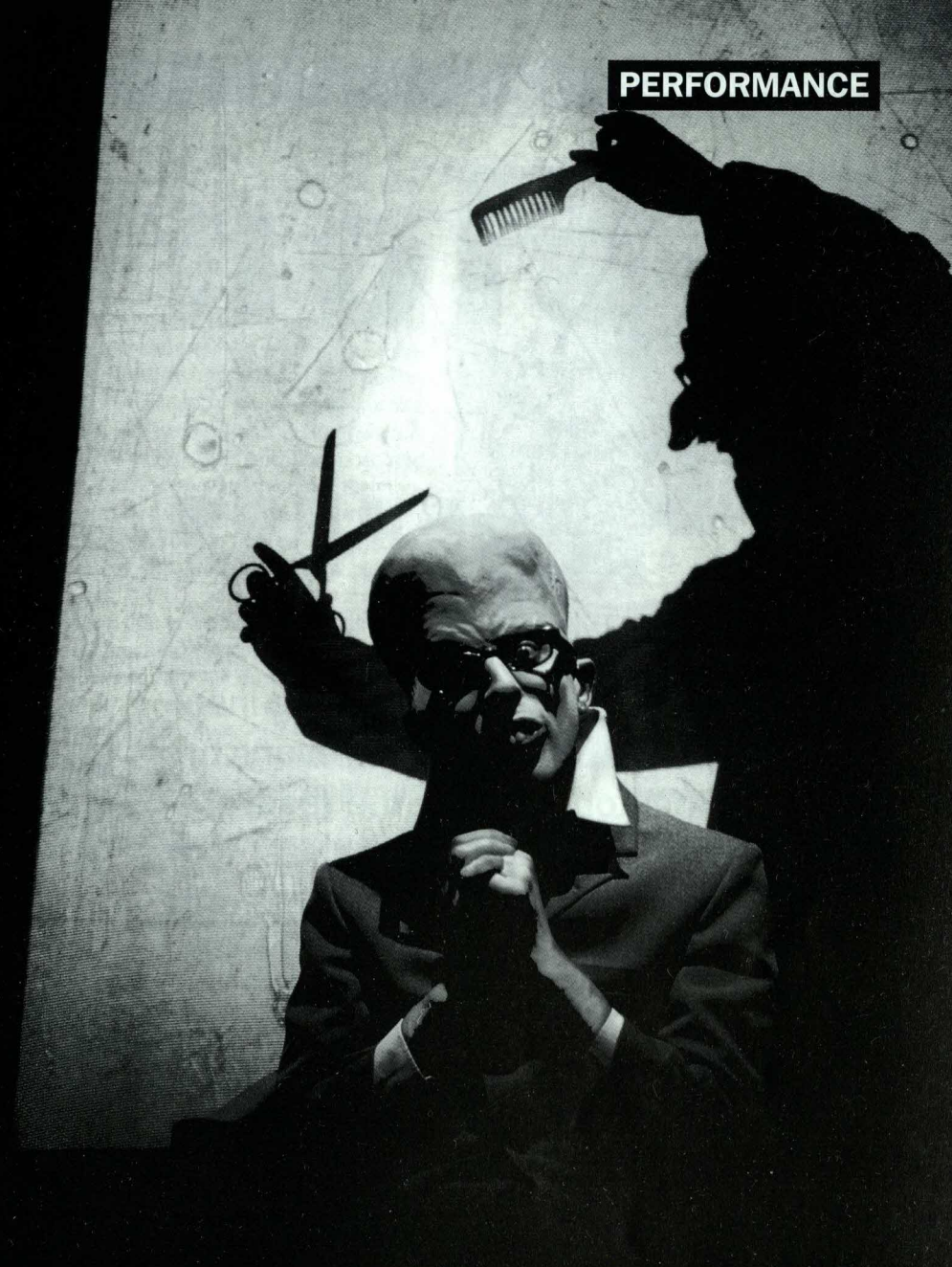
book their work. Undoubtedly, the company is frustrated that they fail to achieve the same status in Britain as they enjoy in more 'puppet-friendly' places overseas.

The company however is rooted in the history and tradition of British puppetry. Terry Lee was an early Puppet Centre bursary winner and was 'apprenticed' to Barry Smith (1930-1989), who founded his Theatre of Puppets in 1969. Smith has been long recognised as excelling within the field of children's entertainment whilst innovating and helping to establish British puppetry for adults. Lee, remembering Barry Smith five years after his premature death, reveals his take on recent stylistic trends in puppetry: "I'm sorry Barry missed the '90s. Europe now wants darker, more personal shows: text, fine manipulation, video animation and literature are 'in'. One good show can now last a lifetime." (Animations Magazine, No. 18.1)

By the mid '80s, Terry was established as a puppeteer on Central Television's *Spitting Image*. Green Ginger use puppets that are superficially similar to those made famous in *Spitting Image*. Basically, the style of caricature is similar, however the means of operation on the stage is different. The puppeteers (for the most part) supply the character voices, they are not supine and the mechanisms are durable and more articulated. These are improvements - in puppetry terms - on the *Spitting Image* figures. From his experience working for television, Terry brings a rigour and hard won professionalism. Lee and the company are well trained for the demands of their work, in which a huge number of puppet characters appear to be performed by many more than three manipulators. Terry identifies himself as "coming from the frantic school of puppeteers." He continues: "I tend to compensate with energy when confronted with problems in performance."

Despite the fine puppetry lineage of its seasoned member Terry Lee, Green Ginger is not solely a puppet company. *Slaphead* demonstrates the company's proficiency in most of the puppet-related arts. We see shadow puppets and animated human shadowgraphs, glove puppetry, multi-puppeteer rod operated near life-size puppets, and masked actors. These elements are wedded in a show which is highly adept technically. Theatre special effects inhabit an animated set that takes almost a whole working day to install.

Green Ginger's cruel, surreal, dark visual style is reminiscent of the films of Tim Burton and Terry Gilliam. The company are particular admirers of Gilliam's. Surrealism and absurdity are the engines for what is, at base level, narrative-based theatre. Terry uses a mantra to



inspire well-crafted popular theatre: "Barry Smith must have told me a dozen times, 'Tell them what you're going to do, do it, tell them you've done it, and get off'."

For their next production Green Ginger will transform the familiar, saccharine world of *Bambi*. Early indications promise the reclaiming of Felix Salten's tale from the putrefying touch of Disney. The pre-marketing blurb for *Bambi: The Wilderness Years* reads: "Whatever happened to that creature with the big watery eyes? Journey from yesterday's cartoon to the pock-marked adolescent of tomorrow. It's a jungle out there and *Bambi* has to learn fast." Green Ginger, with customary disrespect for the classic tale, will use grotesque puppets and masked actors within animated sets to throw new darkness on the famous children's tale.

If, in fact, the puppetry renaissance is upon us in Britain, funders should listen to Michael Knight - director of the Scottish Puppet and Mask Centre - when he calls for "rev-

enue funding for companies of long-standing and proven worth". Green Ginger innovate, excite and generate new audiences for a rejuvenated form. They have embraced new methods of funding, even winning a Business Arts Sponsorship award. The company deserve to be funded before its' members burn themselves out. If Britain had any living 'national treasures' (a status Japanese puppeteers often achieve), Terry Lee and Green Ginger surely would qualify. ■

Ian Grant is a puppeteer and Lecturer in Modern Drama Studies at Brunel University, Twickenham. Green Ginger can be contacted on Tel/Fax: 01834 842746 or Tel/Fax: 0117 942 321.

Photos left to right:  
*Slaphead* Photo Mick Brown/Effect Drop  
*Gaston & Pedro* Photo Carla Kogelman  
*Slaphead* Photo Marcus

# Vision On.....

A major international festival celebrating the theatrical tradition of bringing inanimate objects to life is held every two years in Brighton. *visions*, the festival of international animated theatre, last took place in the Autumn and helped to drag puppetry kicking and screaming into the 90s. **JOHN DANIEL** reports

There were some very special guests at the *visions98* festival in Brighton this Autumn. Many of them were old childhood friends I hadn't seen for years. Meeting them again in person - dusted down and brought out of retirement specially for the event - was a thrilling experience.

There was Orinocho from the *Wombles*, Parsley from *The Herbs*, Bagpuss (Emily's saggy cloth cat) and Basil Brush. Even the *Clangers* had been rescued from the cardboard boxes where they have been languishing for the last twenty four years. They were all there - inside their temporary glass homes - living (but not breathing) proof of the power that inanimate objects can wield over the human imagination.

But staring out from their glass display cabinets, these familiar faces didn't quite live up to the childhood memories that I - and probably all those other visitors who grew up in the '70s - have of them. They all still exude star quality (they were major celebrities in their day), but it is shocking how diminutive and dog-eared they are in person. The *Clangers* (Postgate & Firmin, 1969-1974) were hand-knitted by Peter Firmin's wife Joan - their little pink bodies are surprisingly home-spun and dowdy. The same can be said for Basil Brush, also a Peter Firmin creation, who cost just £12 to make back in the 1960s.

But I shouldn't really have been surprised. Because removed from the worlds in which they once lived - the *Clangers* from the moon, the *Wombles* from Wimbledon Common, Parsley from the Herb Garden - and transported to display cabinets in a gallery, they're no longer the living beings we remember. For the first time we can see them for what they really are - hand-crafted concoctions of fur, wool, felt and clay. To put it another way, being inside that gallery was like being in a mortuary full of all the long-deceased stars of animated children's television shows laid-out on slabs. After all, a puppet is just an inanimate object (a corpse) before it is manipulated into life.

So with this in mind you can see how, as well as providing a nostalgic trip down memory lane, this exhibition at the University of Brighton Gallery was an instructive gateway to the *visions* festival as a whole. For the festival is a celebration of those magical moments in theatre when an audience suspends its' disbelief and experiences inanimate objects coming to life. Okay, we always understood - even as children - that sooty and sweep were nothing more than glove puppets with Harry Corbett's hands inside. But we still believed they were separately living entities anyway. This is all thanks to the puppeteer's artistry. And at a time in which celluloid technology has advanced to the point in which animated

characters can convincingly co-exist in the same world as their human supporting cast (Who Killed Roger Rabbit? and *Toy Story*, for instance), festivals like *visions* provide a comforting reminder that audience's can still be delighted by the simplest sleights of hand. And that artist's don't need huge special effects budgets to create magical spectacles live on stage.

What they do need, however, is an extra special ability to imbue an inanimate object with the illusion of life. It's also useful if they can do this whilst simultaneously connecting with their audience, as they will require the complicity of the audience to sustain the act of make believe as they create it. The key to the puppeteer's art is not in the sophisticated mechanics of the puppets they manipulate, but rather in the relationship they develop with that puppet and also in the triangular connection that develops between the puppet, the puppeteer and the audience. Consequently, the skilled puppeteer can imbue a copper vase or a collection of mundane kitchen utensils with the illusion of life as convincingly as they can bring an intricately crafted puppet character to life. The *visions* festival made this point effectively with a varied programme of performances which ranged from the technically complex animated theatre shows of companies like *Green Ginger* and *Faulty Optic* to the pared down simplicity of





companies like Improbable and performers like Jozef Houben, Andrew Dawson and Gavin Robertson.

In the last case, Andrew Dawson and Gavin Robertson - in a performance called *Space Panorama* - re-create the Apollo 11 moon landing using nothing more than Dawson's expressive hands and Robertson's voice-over narration. Some may wonder why a show with no puppets or animated objects in it at all was part of an animated theatre festival. But Dawson and Robertson demonstrate that the skilled performer can create characters and scenarios out of the most basic raw materials - in this case just themselves. Improbable prove the same point in *Animo*, an improvised performance in which, using only a pile of everyday objects, the company construct scenarios suggested by the audience.

At the opposite end of the scale, the visions98 festival included work from companies that perhaps conform more to audience's expectations of what puppet theatre is all about. This naturally included puppet shows for children, in which the scale is small and the puppeteer conventionally adopts a traditional storytelling role. Children's companies like Folding Theatre Puppet Company, Garlic Theatre and Professor Pop-Up, whilst all displaying competent puppetry techniques, were disappointing choices for a Showcase of Animated Theatre, organised for promoters as part of the festival. All three companies regurgitate familiar fairy tales and folk myths (the legend of Icarus, Sinbad the Sailor, the Pied Piper of Hamelin) and somehow fail to convincingly bring their mostly beautifully crafted puppets to life. This could well be because there is sometimes just too much going on.

One British company that does make excellent animated theatre for children, how-

ever, is Theatre-rites. This London-based company creates work which is grand in scale, beautifully crafted in its detail and as imaginative and rewarding as any company creating work for adults you'll ever hope to see. Theatre-rites has attracted favourable critical attention over the past few years for its imaginative site specific installations and performances - most notably *Houseworks* (for Out of Lift '96), *Millworks* (for the Greenwich & Docklands Festival '98) and *The Lost and Moated Land*. Far from scaling-down their theatrical vision for the young audiences they play to, Theatre-rites produce work on a large-scale. For *The Lost and Moated Land*, a play for under-fives, the company worked with visual artist Sophie Clist to create an ambitious installation for studio theatre spaces. In this show, young audiences are introduced to a new born child, whose progression from babyhood to infancy in the performance so closely mirrors their own growth. The child is played by a puppet who is as convincing a protagonist as the adults it shares the stage with.

The believability of the child puppet is in part due to Sue Buckmaster's prowess as a puppet maker, but it is also borne out of the relationship between the actors and the puppet in the show. Key to the success of the puppetry, is the simple way in which the puppet is animated. There are no strings and no hidden mechanics. The puppet is brought to life through the human contact the actors have with it. The relationship between the object and its animators is explicit and uncoiled. This, paradoxically, is what creates the illusion of life. Because there are no complicated mechanics for the actors to master, there is also nothing to distract the audience from the parent/child dynamic that underpins the piece. The puppetry is hugely enjoyable to watch because, although you can see how



the child is being animated, you still believe in its living reality anyway.

Theatre-rites create the type of theatrical magic trick that only the most skilled and concentrated of performers can pull off. Now that it has become impossible for theatre to compete with the technical wizardry of television and film, the visions festival is important because it re-affirms what it is that makes theatre special and uniquely different from other mass-media artforms: that live performance creates an otherwise unachievable relationship between the audience and the stage.

As so much of the work in the visions98 festival proved, it is still possible for theatre to transmit an electric *frisson* through an audience - and often in the simplest and least technically complicated of ways. Theatre shouldn't strive to imitate film or television, or even to recreate real life on stage. Instead, theatre makers are supplied with the tantalising opportunity of creating new worlds that are real in themselves - worlds in which audience's can believe that new and strange creatures can really live. These worlds, audiences can witness with a sense of wonder.

That's why, even though they appeared to be dowdier and more home made than I'd ever have imagined, Orinocho, Parsley, the Clangers, Basil Brush et al, were all such welcome VIP's at the visions festival. Seeing them again helped me to understand the power that the human imagination has to create stories and characters out of the crudest of raw materials. This is the real power of theatre. ■



Photos from left to right:  
Storybox Theatre, *The Half Chick* at visions98; Zootrop, *iHello Yello!* at visions98; Freehand Theatre, *Norman's Ark* at visions98

# REFRACT '99

Following on from the 1997 Circus Symposium, and as a response to issues raised there, ReFract '99 is an opportunity for practitioners to look at performance practice in Circus and current developments in the artform.

ReFract '99 will be a short season of performances, masterclasses and seminars with international and British practitioners together with a programmed showcase of British artists.

For further details, and if you would like to be considered for inclusion in the showcase, please contact ReFract at D.R.A.M, Three Mills, Three Mill Lane, London E3 3RD.

tel +181 215 0122, fax: +181 215 1029  
or e-mail: di.robson@newham.gov.uk

ReFract '99  
is financially supported by the Arts Council of England,  
and Lee Valley Regional Park Authority

## MY THEATRE



## NOLA RAE

**What did you see the first time you went to the theatre?**  
Swan Lake with the Borovansky Ballet in Sydney at the age of 4.

**What is the most recent performance you've seen?**  
Bolek Polivka in his new autobiographical show *The Lady at the Balcony* in Kolin, Czech Republic in September.

**Which single performance has inspired you the most?**  
It's a toss up between Margot Fonteyn dancing the Pizzicato from *Sylvia*, in a recital programme in Sydney, where the entire audience stood up and stamped until she repeated the solo, or the first time I saw Marcel Marceau play in London, a performance that sealed my fate.

**Which actor, alive or dead, makes you laugh the most?**  
Hardy of Laurel and Hardy, followed closely by Gösta Ekman, a Swedish actor, the king of pratfall, in a film called *Picasso's Adventures*.

**Who is your favourite playwright?**  
William Shakespeare.

**When was the last time you walked out of a theatre before the end of a show?**  
In 1995 in Örebro, Sweden when I went to see a stage play starring Gösta Ekman... Too much Swedish, not enough 'pratfalls'.

**When was the last time you cried at the theatre?**  
In Lisbon watching the Colombaioni Brothers in 1994. These were tears of laughter, by the way.

**Who is your favourite actor?**  
Jean Louis Barrault for his intensity and Katherine Hunter for her virtuosity.

**If you could meet any theatre practitioner, alive or dead, who would it be?**  
Emanuel Schikanede, actor/singer/manager, who commissioned Mozart's *The Magic Flute*. It is said that he once put on 90 productions in one year. I would like to ask him "how?"

**Which contemporary theatre director's work do you most admire?**  
Simon McBurney, a director who has opened many eyes in established circles, with work that taps into his roots in fringe theatre.

**What does 'physical theatre' mean to you?**  
Theatre of sweat, where the performer delights and moves the audience without recourse to spoken language.

**What would you do if you didn't work in theatre?**  
I would like to be a musician, but it's probably too late for that...

**If you could send one message to Chris Smith, what would it be?**  
Listen to practising artists more. They are more important than the administrators. Help remove barriers of administration that hamstring art.

*Nola Rae performs Mozart Preposteroso at The Pleasance, London as part of The London International Mime Festival, 14-16 January. She is also teaching a one day mime workshop at The Pleasance on January 13. See page 34 for details.*

Answers compiled by Paul Williams

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# total theatre

mime, physical theatre & visual performance

## NEWS

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## Critical Practice 5: What is the New Mime?

Saturday 16 January 1999. 2.30-5pm,  
Voice Box, Royal Festival Hall. Chair:  
Dorothy Wilson, Director mac, Birmingham

2.30pm - Presentations  
3.25pm Questions  
3.45pm Tea Break  
4.00pm Discussion and Debate  
5.00pm Close

Tickets for the debate are free of charge to Total Theatre members and £5/£3 concessions for non members. Bookings should be made on 0171 729 7944 or Email: magtotaltheatre@easynet.co.uk

Critical Practice is a series of ongoing debates organised by Total Theatre. The next debate will be held as part of the London International Mime Festival in association with the Royal Festival Hall.

Every year the London International Mime Festival sparks a debate about what 'mime' is. In previous years more and more work classified as 'mime' has incorporated the spoken word. This year the Festival sees a return to work which eschews

the word in favour of purely physical and gestural modes of expression. But if the definition of mime has changed since the Festival begun in 1977, what is the new mime?

This question will be considered by a panel of distinguished practitioners and programmers at what promises to be a heated debate, organised by Total Theatre as part of this year's London International Mime Festival. After brief presentations from the speakers, the discussion will be thrown open to the floor. The panel for the debate was not confirmed at the time of going to press, but the event will be chaired by Dorothy Wilson, Director of mac, Birmingham and will include Joseph Seelig, programmer for the London International Mime Festival and Nola Rae. Please see the enclosed leaflet for details of the other speakers.

Tickets sold out fast for last year's Critical Practice Debate and the Voice Box at the Royal Festival Hall only holds a limited capacity. Please reserve tickets as soon as possible by calling the above number. This year's Critical Practice follows Total Theatre's Annual General Meeting. Total Theatre members are encouraged to arrive for 1pm in order to attend the AGM.

### Critical Practice 4

Total Theatre would like to thank all those who gave so generously of their time to contribute to Critical Practice 4 in October. In particular thanks go to the panel speakers: Penny Bernand and Sue Buckmaster of Theatre-rites; Gavin Glover of Faulty Optic; Rachel Riggs of DNA; and Toby Wilsher of Trestle. A special thanks to Penny Francis who chaired the Debate; Tom Morris and the BAC staff for hosting the event; and The Puppet Centre who provided refreshments.

### Personnel Changes

Total Theatre would like to say a big thank you to Jonathan Cohen, who left the organisation in November after nearly 18 months of invaluable service as an office volunteer. Jonathan was

particularly involved with handling membership enquiries and up-dating the member's database. His contribution to the organisation has been significant and the staff and board of Total Theatre would like to wish him success in his future endeavours.

In the meantime Total Theatre is happy to welcome Marion Wallis as the new volunteer Membership Officer. Marion will be in the office every Tuesday to keep the membership side of the organisation running smoothly and will also be looking at ways of enhancing Total Theatre's membership services. She is currently compiling information sheets giving details of workshop leaders, designers, photographers etc. If you wish to be included, please send details through to the office by Email, fax or post.

## Total Theatre AGM

Total Theatre holds its Annual General Meeting on Saturday 16th January at 1pm in the Voice Box, Royal Festival Hall, London. A formal notice of the AGM is enclosed with this mailing. This document invites members to submit nominations for the board to stand for election at the AGM. In advance of the AGM, Total Theatre will only circulate details of the nominees if they exceed the number of spaces on the board. All other information will be tabled at the AGM.

## Real Action

In March 1999 four companies will participate in a workshop exchange event as part of the Unity Theatre, Liverpool's Real Action Festival. These include: Bouge de la, Nola Rae, Foursight, Company Paradiso and Rculusmus.

The purpose of this event is to provide an opportunity for the companies involved to share creative processes and to look at ways of creating and developing material. The workshop will be facilitated by Mick Barnfather (Theatre de Complicite, The Right Size).

Total Theatre will be hosting an informal networking meeting on Thursday 18th March at the Unity Theatre, Liverpool as part of the Real Action Festival. All members are invited to attend. If you would like more information about the Real Action Residency please call Chenine at Bhatthana-Jancovich on 0181 348 0203.

### Discovery

Total Theatre will be holding another of the popular Discovery workshop weeks in the early Summer of 1999. Discovery weeks are for practitioners to meet on an informal basis and exchange working practices. Previous events have been held at Centre Selavy, France and at The Hawth, Crawley.

The venue and dates for the next Discovery are yet to be confirmed and will be announced in the April issue of Total Theatre.

### Volunteers Wanted

Total Theatre is in the midst of re-organising its extensive archive and is looking for volunteers who are interested in improving the accessibility and indexing of this valuable resource.

Cartoon de Salvo. Here Be Dragons

been devised to a previously tried and tested formula, which no doubt has been found to work in the past.

With some very funny details (such as a synchronised hand dance performed in long white night-shirts and a farcical choreographed shaving routine), much action to music, some funny facial expressions and all-round zesty performances from Elizabeth Besbrobe and Jason Hird, the piece just about holds interest. The relationship between the performers is thankfully compelling enough to invest what is essentially an empty concept with some life.

But it all seems rather familiar and tame - theatre for theatre's sake. The clowning is reasonably well executed and I did leave the theatre with a smile on my face, but this is essentially a weak show - contrived and forgettable.

**Emi Slater**

## The People Show People Show 106

Wessex Rooms, Battersea,  
October 1998

In their thirty-plus year history, the People Show has garnered a reputation for challenging, exciting and provocative new work devised and presented by an eclectic mix of performers and artists. This latest offering is a dense and confusing piece, populated by a number of bizarre characters seemingly thrown unexpectedly together in the kitsch glamour of the Wessex Rooms' bar.

Presented as a series of isolated narratives, the show has little dramatic structure to speak of and generally disregards theatrical conventions to opt instead for a cockney cabaret kind of format. Different characters (a murderous adolescent, an excitable Middle-Eastern guide, a drunken bar fly, an awful electric guitar and pub singer combo) spend the duration of the piece doing not much of interest at all; occasionally spicing up the action with much faux eroticism and licking of furniture. This, no doubt, is intended to be tongue in cheek, but the tongue and the cheek don't quite meet and it becomes not only dull to watch but also embarrassing at times.

This lack of clarity of intention is the biggest flaw. This kind of work, which hovers between theatre and performance art, inevitably demands that audiences reconsid-

er how they appraise performance. To criticise it for lack of structure, narrative or logic is to miss the point. But if an audience is left unsure whether to laugh with the performers or at them, then one inevitably wonders for whom the work is being made.

On the strength of this piece, I'm amazed the People Show has clocked up over a hundred works. Yet, paradoxically, I am left awaiting *People Show 107* with anticipation. Maybe I just missed the point after all.

**David Harradine**

## Faulty Optic Theatre of Animation

**Tunnel Vision**

BAC, October 1998

Faulty Optic create a world that's so grim, they even surpass Beckett on the pessimism scale. Despite being witty and even charming at times, *Tunnel Vision* is a journey into a world inhabited by puppet characters who are prisoners of solitude, with dreams of escape as their only comfort. In one poignant moment, a puppet character offers friendship to his fellow cell-mate, only to be rejected for the company of rotting flesh and bones.

Escape does finally come through a secret door in the floor. But whether it's an escape to a better world or merely another hell, it's hard to say. This new world is dominated by a harrowing helter skelter ride. Through the ingenious use of live projected footage from a miniature video camera, Faulty Optic take the audience on a nightmarish trip through a post-apocalyptic landscape.

The puppeteers are all in black and yet the audience are, for the most part, aware of their presence. This creates a strange but interesting effect. It is as if they are agents of the puppets' misery as well as a benign presence. As puppeteers they are the link between the audience and the alienating world on the stage. The audience feel the existential despair and yet are comforted by the fact that, at the end of the day, it is only imaginary.

This is an achingly beautiful work, the final image of which lingers for days afterwards in the mind. *Tunnel Vision* is haunting and yet strangely uplifting, and with it Faulty Optic create a work that resonates with original vision.

**Anne-Louise Rentell**

## Cartoon de Salvo Here Be Dragons

BAC, October 1998

One of life's most joyous sights is the vision of adults at play, and Cartoon de Salvo (Molly Bertrand, Brian Logan, and Alex Murdoch) certainly know how to party.

These extremely talented young comic actors seduce their audience into following the delightfully daft tale of three back-packing dragons who one day visit a small town which lies somewhere between Cardiff and Mexico City. All is not well, and small-town bigotry leads to tragedy, but not before a tremendous amount of fun is had on the way. The comedy emanates from a dramatic structure which uses monologue, sketch and physical set-pieces, and from the performers' consummate acting skills. Visual inventiveness is displayed in the use of inexpensive props, such as fragments of umbrellas for dragon's wings.

The team would benefit from a little more physical discipline, but

this is a small criticism. Their strength lies in their individual distinctiveness as performers and their collective enjoyment. The fourth wall is broken down, not by the use of self-conscious Brechtian techniques, but by simply allowing the audience to join in the fun.

Come in Vic and Bob, your time is up.

**Paul Williams**

## Leikin Loppu The Tailors

BAC, October 1998

As the title of the show bears no relation to the content (the company explain in the programme that copy had to be sent to venues and promoters before the devising process began), one wonders at the soul of the thing. A man and a woman (Mr and Mrs Tailor) are doubled-booked into the same hotel room and both are insistent on staying. After much chasing, fighting and fantasising they end up in bed together. Predictable to say the least. *The Tailors* is a bit too comfortable, as though it's

### Yellow Earth Theatre

#### The Whisper of a Leaf Falling

BAC, October 1998

Few can beat Yellow Earth Theatre when it comes to sheer physical dexterity. The company fill a restricted studio space with acrobatic and Commedia dell'Arte routines of pin-point accuracy.



Yellow Earth Theatre, *The Whisper of a Leaf Falling*: Photo Richard Heeps

Yellow Earth Theatre's new piece concerns the story of a young man whose decision to climb a mountain becomes a spiritual journey after he encounters a demon on the way. The demon, excellently played by Tom Wu, leads the young man into the circles of hell and shows him first-hand how various mortal sins are punished in the netherworld. He also sees how his actions have caused great suffering to his wife, a situation which is resolved upon his return to the living world.

One cannot help but admire each actor's sense of concentration and their awareness of the ensemble. The pacing is beautifully controlled - from the opening momentum of Tai Chi reflectiveness, through bursts of frenetic energy - and the scenes are linked by rhythmic foot stamping and song created by the cast. The performance, like the Kabuki ramp which twists onto the stage, manages to bridge two worlds. It is entertaining for children, and disciplined enough to satisfy an adult audience.

If I had any negative criticism it would be that at times the vocal delivery is under-powered and somewhat lacking in emotional depth. It would also be interesting to see the company tackle more contemporary issues. On the whole, however, this is a hugely enjoyable show from a talented company.

Paul Williams

### Shifting Sands

#### The Donkey and his Masters

BAC, October 1998

*The Donkey and his Masters* is the result of four weeks of workshops with Gerry Flanagan, formerly of Commotion. Six performers work around Aesop's fable of The Wolf in Sheep's Clothing. How might a clown re-tell the tale? As an anarchic deconstruction of a universal truth perhaps? The possibilities could be exciting.

Unfortunately however, the performance suffers as a result of its own methods and the style ends up suffocating the substance. Clowning techniques are put to good use, with small moments given time and focus. There is even some object animation too, but nothing new - umbrellas and scissors masquerade as sheep and wolves and their animators put on silly voices. There are also some

excellent surreal moments, especially the beginning when heads bob up and down anonymously above the backdrop to a chorus of 'baa-ing'.

But overall, any attempt to break new ground with Aesop's fable is stayed by the performance's failure to move beyond what appears to be a collection of clown workshop exercises strung together. Additionally, the fact that each performer has their own 'star-turn' does nothing to further the production's purpose but rather makes it longer than necessary. *The Donkey and his Masters* is still in its early stages of development. With further work, and perhaps some simplification, *Shifting Sands* could find its way to breathing new life into a familiar tale and even claiming it as its own.

Anne Louise Rentell

### Guy Darnell

#### Would Say Something

BAC, October 1998

Guy Darnell - the man and the performer - distances himself from his audience before the show even starts, with his continuous running commentary on his own actions. He does Brecht proud. *Would Say Something*, as the title suggests, is one man's foray into the realm of communication. One man, 'trying to get something across', with the aid of assorted musical instruments - keyboards, sax, flute and guitar.

In *Would Say Something*, Guy Darnell and the excellent actor/musician Toby Park create a series of vocal text-scapes. These range from an ingenious play on the words 'man' and 'woman' (which both reveals and lays open to question a whole range of perceptions about the nature of male/female relationships); a speech delivered from behind a lectern about lying; a hilarious parody of every rock 'n roll love song ever written; through to a list of every country in the world.

It sounds dull perhaps, but Darnell and Park are experimenting with a fascinating range of aural expression. The strength of the show lies in this technical experimentation with language and sound, reminiscent of Laurie Anderson, Samuel Beckett and even Artaud. The most arresting parts, however, are when Darnell is at his most humble, this is when the magic comes. If he can resist the temptation of the 'gag', and

really render himself vulnerable before an audience, this show could develop into something beautiful and brilliant.

Emi Slater

### Doo Cot

#### Probe

BAC, October 1998

Billed as a 'durational performance installation', *Probe* explores scientific and medical perspectives on the human body; themes that run through Mary Shelley's Frankenstein, which the company is adapting for its next major project. The piece is full of 'big ideas', which invariably means that only those in the know are able to decipher the imagery and follow the implications of what actually happens in the performance.

Upon entering a darkened space that stinks of disinfectant, the audience exchange their shoes for plastic slippers (the kind surgeon's wear) in order not to contaminate the 'operating theatre'. Seated on two sides, they are presented with the construction of a monstrous body, as a solo performer sombrely brings on various latex limbs and begins to stitch them together in a ritualised and overly significant manner. Supporting this, a digitised soundscape and multiple projections create an effectively oppressive and confusing background of scientific imagery.

The problem with this piece, aside from being rather too ponderously postmodern for its own good, is that despite being billed as an installation it is actually set up as a performance, and yet its content is not capable of holding a passive audience's attention. The audience is encouraged to come and go as they please, but this gesture toward audience interactivity inadvertently creates a sense of there being nothing so important happening on stage that one couldn't miss it.

The lack of any kind of dramatic structure and little variation in pace and content, left me wondering why the company don't just condense the piece into an interesting five minute section of a developed show. Instead, audiences are invited to pay to experience Doo Cot's flirtation with trendy terminology ('durational installation performance'), when in the end the piece just slips away through the cracks in its own self-definition.

David Harradine

## Frantic Assembly Sell Out

BAC, October 1998

It all starts with a birthday party. Four friends exchanging gifts. A banal enough scenario, but one that provides the catalyst for a maelstrom of jealousy, manipulation, deceit and betrayal.

*Sell Out* uses text, movement and music to show the lives and loves of a bunch of today's white, middle-class, heterosexual twenty-somethings. Judging from the warm response of its largely youthful audience, it is an accurate por-

## Green Ginger Slaphead

BAC, October 1998

Slaphead is the life story of Dibdin Todd. Ever since his healthy crop of hair was untimely ripped from his scalp by Dr Sprout, Dibdin's life has been a round of rejection and humiliation. When he discovers a vengeful lust for snipping the luxuriant locks off other people's heads, Todd sets about settling a few scores. Green Ginger re-work the Sweeney Todd story to tell a dark tale that is both wonderfully grisly and gloriously entertaining.

the monstrous proportion of his vengefulness.

Anne-Louise Rentell

## Triangle

Looking for the Tallyman

BAC, October 1998

The English media and chattering classes are currently obsessed with the question of national identity, particularly as European unification and Scottish and Welsh devolution continue to move apace. With England's global power diminished and her national institutions being reassessed, it's hardly surprising that the English are suffering a crisis of

lazy use of music created for other productions, such as Philip Glass's *Einstein on the Beach*. The whole performance seems to ignore the potential of the space, and Janet Vaughan's creaky set reduces the already limited playing area, restricting the ability of the actors to give full physical expression to their roles.

The English really do deserve a more imaginative obituary.

Paul Williams

## Company Paradiso

I Only Came to Use the Phone

BAC, October 1998

There is an apocryphal story of a journalist who has himself committed to a mental hospital in order to write an expose. Whilst there he makes copious notes. When the time comes to leave, however, the hapless journalist is unable to convince the doctors of his sanity. Chief amongst the symptoms noted by the psychiatrists is one that reads: 'patient displays a writing compulsion.'

I am reminded of this cautionary tale by Company Paradiso's modest but engaging show, *I Only Came to Use the Phone*. In this piece, Maria - a magician's wife and assistant - is taken to a mental hospital after her car breaks down. Her desperation to telephone her jealous husband, El Eslapendo, are read by hospital staff as irrefutable evidence of her madness. Meanwhile, her husband takes her sudden disappearance as evidence of her infidelity, and he convinces himself that his wife has left him for a side-walk musician she met in a cafe. During his wife's absence, both El Eslapendo's magic show and his life become increasingly ragged. As the show reaches its conclusion, the hospital staff recount the events to El Eslapendo as they believe they happened and, just at the moment when the muddy situation should become clear, another misunderstanding, just as erroneous and tragic, is born.

In *I Only Came to Use the Phone*, reality, facts and history - even our own - are shown to be as illusory and sleight as any of El Eslapendo's magic tricks. This potentially clunky metaphor is made tolerable by the show's lightness of touch. The audience alone is able to understand all the versions of events, yet this only serves to underline the show's bleak central message: that we are all prisoners of our own point of view.

Ray Newe



Frantic Assembly, *Sell Out* Photo: Jonathan Littlejohn

trait. There is no disputing the calibre of talent involved in this show. Movement and text are rarely this well combined - each serving to expand and illuminate the other in a manner that could serve as a useful lesson for many lesser companies. The performers are uniformly excellent.

Yet *Sell Out* fails as a piece. Perhaps all of those involved are too close to their characters to be able to dissect, rather than merely reflect, their dilemmas (revealingly, the performers share the same names as their characters). Too often, in this show soundbite is mistaken for insight - as demonstrated by the constant mantra: 'same world, different plant'.

*Sell Out* is the fag-end of the 'me generation'; narcissistically staring at its own reflection, unable to see the larger picture, blinded by its own self-importance.

Ray Newe

The company was undoubtedly the highlight of BAC's weekend of puppetry and object animation. Green Ginger create a world in which reality and fantasy collide. Puppets look like people and people look like puppets; the two become almost indistinguishable. Some characters alternate from puppet to performer and back again. Anything is possible. The torture scenes are genuinely horrifying - the audience squeal as a tongue is swiftly removed from its owner's mouth. The black humour is all the more delightful because it is daring, wicked and constantly surprising.

Green Ginger create a theatrical style in which, metaphorically, they get away with murder. Their irreverence thrills as well as shocks, but never appals. Cruelty is followed by a jolly dance routine, which in turn is followed by a fatal stabbing. This is theatre in which everything is big - from Dibdin's out-sized head to

identity as the new Millennium approaches.

This theme provides the motif which threads through Triangle's patchy production of *Looking for the Tallyman*. Wartime memories, folk tales and archetypal images of England are all woven into a rather frayed dramatic quilt. In the quintessentially English setting of a garden, two children (played by Richard Talbot and Carran Waterfield) investigate their heritage through role-play and song. National symbols are used as building blocks. Talbot covers his nakedness with a Union Jack and later poses as St. George, and both children become aeroplanes to act out their own version of the Battle of Britain.

Both actors are obviously talented. However in this performance, Waterfield confuses shouting for dramatic power, and Talbot's performance lacks energy and attack. Much of the play's atmosphere and tension comes from the somewhat



Stuffed Puppet Theatre, Salomé

## Stuffed Puppet Theatre

### Salomé

visions98 festival of international animated theatre, Brighton, October 1998

Stuffed Puppet Theatre of Amsterdam build upon the many interpretations over the centuries of the story of Salomé, - from St. Matthew's Gospel to the play by Oscar Wilde - to create a visually rich and entertaining performance. The company claims to 'engage in an archaeological enterprise to excavate the essence of the story from beneath the accumulation of centuries', but arguably it is this very accumulation that informs the production; which in typically post-modern style ransacks all history, art and popular culture - from classical painting to TV game shows via the opera of Richard Strauss - to tell its tale.

The strongest aspects of the production are the sumptuous visual images (a veil blowing in the breeze, a shattered crystal chandelier) and the performance skills of actor/puppeteer Neville Tranter. Tranter single-handedly manipulates and interacts the five beautifully crafted puppets, sometimes ventriloquist and sometimes expressive actor. The occasional use of stillness in the production creates wonderful moments of sculptural silence in what is other-

wise a fast-moving show with a racy spoken text. It is the text which I was not altogether comfortable with, however, finding the sledgehammer crudity unfunny at times. To give writer/director Luk van Meerbeke the benefit of the doubt, it may be that something was lost in translation.

This was Stuffed Puppet Theatre's debut performance in the UK, although the company is known throughout mainland Europe, Australasia and America. With the renewal of interest in adult puppetry, hopefully Tranter's newest production, *Molière*, will be seen here soon.

Dorothy Max Prior

## Kaos Theatre

### The Kaos Master and Margarita

Ridings Arts Centre, Bristol, October 1998

Kaos Theatre is committed to performance research including Butoh, Kathak and Commedia dell'Arte. The sense of thorough training is very apparent in the work, but happily there are no obvious or superficial borrowings in the performance. What is obvious is a highly developed sense of rhythm, space, gesture, physical attitude and ensemble awareness. Like Footsbarn (who presented the same piece in 1988), the company has trained thoroughly vocally, enabling some

excellent unaccompanied, harmony singing. The images are transposed simply, effectively and imaginatively, so that at no time are the audience unclear of the story, despite its complexity.

The pace is aided by the sudden, dynamic transitions between scenes or physical images, which sometime occur in such rapid succession as to give a percussive quality. The danger with such energetic stylisation, however, is that the physical pyrotechnics are liable to obscure the human story - the audience is wowed but not touched. Only at the very end is there any emotional impact, in the final speech which relates to the parallel story of Pontius Pilate.

Kaos spent six months working on and around this piece. In the current climate of low-cost, fast-product artistic practice this is most unusual and very welcome. It demonstrates how effective such investment can be.

Bim Mason

## The Tell Tale Hearts

### The Adventure of Your Life

Hoxton Hall Theatre, November 1998

The Tell Tale Hearts explore stories and storytelling through Eastern and Western forms. In *The Adventure of Your Life*, two aliens collect Earth stories for their home planet. The stories, which are devised from existing texts, consist of two neat parables from Japan and India respectively and a spoof melodrama from Ireland. The performers' skills are not always up to task, but they succeed in charming the junior audience with their generosity and inventiveness. There are moments of theatrical brilliance. For instance, the two miniature aliens are shown growing to human-size, simply by the performers' removing their glove puppets and revealing themselves in costume.

But the piece falls down in its framing device. Between stories the puppet-form extra-terrestrials bicker and gad about inanely. It turns out that they are killing time while the rather distracted puppeteers change their costumes behind a screen. The kids aren't fooled and what goes on amongst the audience becomes more entertaining than the on-stage antics. Also the intriguing stories are never really allowed space to

resonate. What parallels can these stories draw between cultures? Why do we need stories? The premise raises questions that are conspicuously ignored by the narrative. The result is a well-intentioned, amusing, but ultimately frustrating diversion.

Alex Mermikides

## Sasha Pepelyaev's Kinetic Theatre

### The View of the Russian Grave from Germany/Violators of Disorders

Dance Umbrella, The Place, November 1998

The Russian company Kinetic Theatre is so unusual and original, it is without comparison. Sasha Pepelyaev presents what can only be described as Whirling Dervish Dance Theatre. The first of the two pieces this evening, *The View of the Russian Grave from Germany*, is for two men and two women (Tatiana Gordeeva, Konstantin Surikov, choreographer Sasha Pepelyaev and Natalia Korolokhina). It combines asymmetrical patterns of movements, phrases and emotional outbursts which whisk the dancers through elusive, repetitive choreography - ranging from a hilarious mockery of the Russian folk dance tradition to more serious and very clever and elaborate movement sequences.

The second piece, *Violators of Disorders*, is even funnier and full of magic in parts. Performed by both teachers and students of the School of Contemporary Dance in Ekaterinburg, Russia, *Violators of Disorders* explores the ambiguous crossover between youth and adulthood. Within the structure of the teacher/pupil dynamic a whole range of interactions are presented - child/parent, student/student, young child/older child, adolescent girl/prepubescent boy. The most striking and mesmerising of these is a sequence in which three pupils, with heads of red, yellow and green hair respectively, repeat scenarios of teenage rebellion in numerous different combinations. It is as moving as it is comic. The dancers create disorder and take their audience into new planes of excitement and inspiration. Kinetic Theatre is truly doing something new - see the company if you can.

Emi Slater

**Stolen Kisses/Pounds, Dollars and Cents Octopus Pie**

Lion and Unicorn Pub Theatre, London, November 1998

The company describe *Octopus Pie* as the 'unearthing of a play as we see it', and they certainly have dug around in this new piece of writing by Oliver Snowball, and pulled out something quite interesting. Two young performers (Edward de Chazal and Emma Louise) tread carefully over a black wooden grid. They construct the performance space whilst the audience take their seats. The patterned squares which form the set are slowly re-arranged during the course of the show, until each segment is in its rightful place. The unfolding of the plot is not nearly as simple.

Taking a full length absurdist comedy set at a family dinner party, the company investigate how the

play works, and in the process create a physical and visual experiment in theatrical form. What the audience see are fragments of the original text, viewed through different lenses. The structure of the dinner party and its characters are removed, but fragments of dialogue and key moments of conflict and miscommunication remain.

It's interesting to see a company's view of the bare bones of a piece of writing and the performers push notions of rhythm and timing to the limit. The opening phrase lasts a tortuously long time as de Chazal builds up a sentence one word at a time with a deep breath and rotation of the arms between each. Another fragment of dialogue is repeated so many times the original meaning is lost. The audience is forced to look closely at the dinner party - a familiar theatrical device - and see its inherent dramatic possibilities.

This is a very clever exercise, but the superficiality of the material itself prevents it being much more than that.

Rebecca Loukes

**Leandre The Clown**

Hackney Empire, September 1998

The Catalan clown Leandre begins his solo show by pissing in the four corners of the stage. He then uses two colourful umbrellas to create images and characters remarkably similar to those seen in Victoria Chaplin's *Le Cercle Invisible*.

However, the show climbs to a higher comic level, when Leandre fishes an audience member out of their seat with the aid of a £5 note hooked to the end of a fishing rod. He also uses his experience of street theatre to good comic effect in a hilarious gun fight sequence. The final sequence of the show is also amazing and begins with a large red circle, like a light reflector in photography, with a zip in the centre. Leandre adds a wig to the red circle and unzips it to create a close-up image of the female genital region. His purpose is not merely lewd however, as there follows a birthing sequence in which a 'sperm' is seen to penetrate a large climb-in balloon. This has the audience in fits of laughter.

The end of the show, in which Leandre departs on a toy train, is reminiscent of Slava Polunin's *Snow Show*. Leandre is billed as following in Polunin's footsteps, however this

show is superior to Polunin's, because it is fast-paced and charming without any of the sentimentality that is evident in *Snow Show*. If Slava Polunin is of the old school of clowning, Leandre is definitely top of the class of contemporary clowns. This show, with its charm, gentle playfulness, beautifully crafted visual and physical humour, is a hit!

Danny Schlesinger

**Two's Company**

*Rose is a Rose is a Rose is a Rose*

The Colour House Theatre, London, August 1998

Gertrude Stein's plays are a challenge for any director. They read like short poems; with no designated characters, settings, stage directions or dramatic structure at all. Some of them are no more than a few pages long. The plays are so unconventional that they are performed as rarely today as they were during Stein's lifetime (1874-1946). But for the imaginative director, Stein's plays are witty and challenging experiments in theatrical form - as Anne Louise Rentell demonstrates in her intelligent and sympathetic staging of five of the early plays for *Two's Company* at The Colour Box Theatre.

Gertrude Stein did for the written word what Picasso and the Cubist movement did for modern art. She re-defined the relationship between form and content in literature. Stein rejected narrative storytelling techniques and instead used language - often separating words from their meanings in the process - to create an emotional response to reality as she saw it. What *Two's Company* excavate from these five early plays is the irrepressible *joie de vivre* in Stein's writing. The company share Stein's love of language for language sake and find within these short plays three distinct dramatic voices.

The performers - Natasha Bolonkin, Anne-Louise Wildman and Anne Louise Rentell - make beautiful sense of what at first sight appear as the most opaque passages on paper. The dialogue often overlaps, questions go unanswered and unconnected expressions hang enigmatically in the air, but the effect is far from confusing. Instead, the performance vibrantly captures something of the real way in which people interact. On a cubist set designed by Anika Carpenter, *Two's Company* breath life

into the words of one of this century's most under-rated and inspirational literary geniuses.

John Daniel

**Perpetual Motion Theatre**

*'One' - (the Other)*

BFVT, BAC, London, October 1998

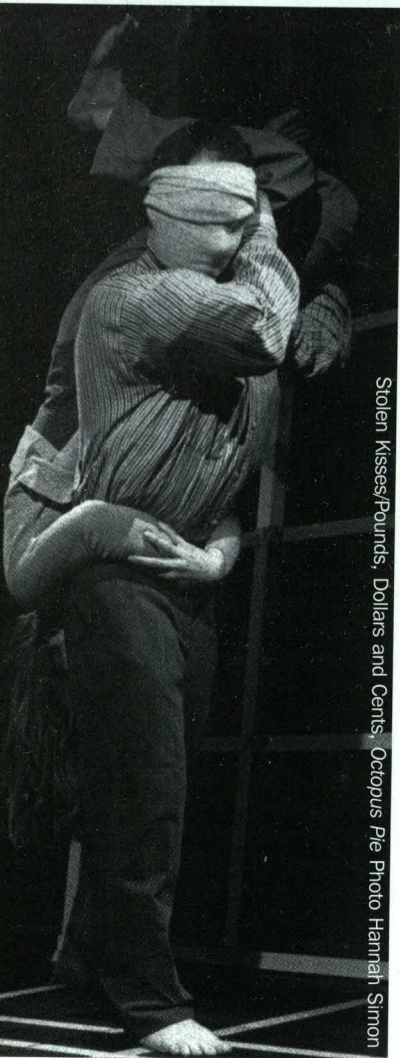
Perpetual Motion Theatre's latest production *'One' - (the Other)* is a journey through the over-crowded, unfriendly and automated city. The piece, performed in a variety of languages and in an exuberant physical style by an international cast of four actors, is directed by Emi Slater.

As a study of alienation in contemporary urban life - from the suited and booted city execs who shout into their cellphones, to the rush hour tube trains in which the commuters are packed tight as sardines - Perpetual Motion paint a familiar picture. Fecund Theatre, whose show *Fascinations from the Crowd* is also currently doing the rounds, has a similar tale to tell of city life. However, Perpetual Motion use an infinitely superior and more distinctive physical and dramatic vocabulary. The company also take some unusual stylistic risks - particularly in the pacing of the performance - which ensure the show remains consistently interesting to watch. Consequently, whilst it undoubtedly tramps familiar territory, the performance always strikes an original chord.

This must in large part be due to Emi Slater's direction, which manages to be philosophical and sardonic at the same time. She layers the performance in such a way that it remains constantly fresh and surprising. For instance, a rapid movement sequence will be inter-cut with a ponderous monologue or a lengthy dramatic interchange. The cast - Karin Heberlein, Alexandra Hingst, Toby Hughes and Alan Marni - work slickly in ensemble and Marni in particular has considerable presence - weaving an hypnotic spell as he switches from text spoken in Farsi to English.

What the performers lack in physical virtuoso they more than make up for in energy and enthusiasm. Thus Slater's sometimes ambitious choreography, which is reminiscent of CandoCo and DV8, is executed with gusto and commitment.

John Daniel

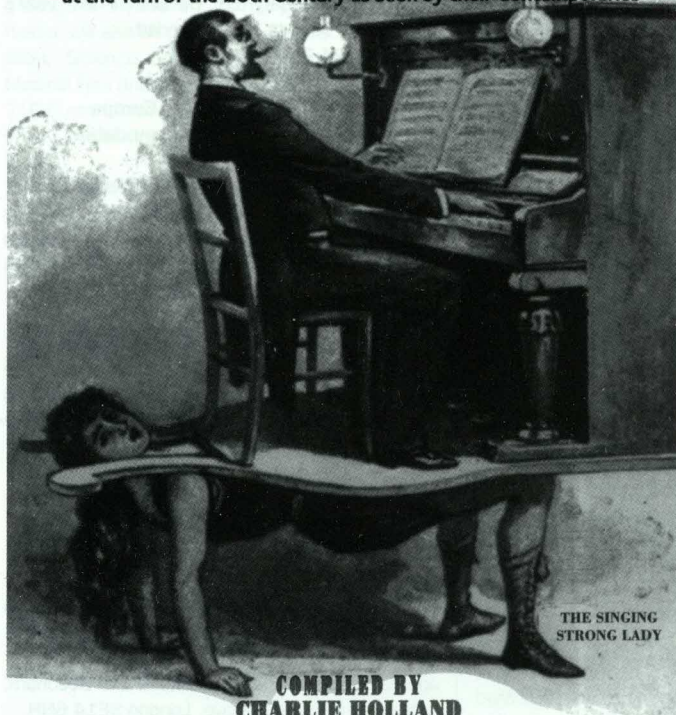


Stolen Kisses/Pounds, Dollars and Cents, Octopus Pie Photo Hannah Simon



# STRANGE FEATS & CLEVER TURNS

Remarkable Speciality Acts in Variety, Vaudeville and Sideshows at the Turn of the 20th Century as seen by their Contemporaries



## Strange Feats and Clever Turns Charlie Holland

Published by Holland & Palmer, £12.99

This book is a compilation of magazine articles published between 1894 and 1904, which describe in great detail the variety acts of the day. Included are jugglers, contortionists, acrobats, sword swallowers, animal acts, strong men and women, side-shows and freaks.

The subject matter - which ranges from the exotic, the dangerous and the downright daft (such as the couple whose act is to play cards whilst holding their breath in a tank of water) - clearly has appeal. The photographs are evocative of this lost world of entertainment, but most of the lengthy descriptions are likely to be of greater interest to the specialist practitioner than to the general reader. There is some additional background information but no analysis or commentary, which is a shame because there are interesting parallels and contrasts to be drawn with contemporary 'new variety'.

Not surprisingly, given the far greater numbers of acts touring the variety circuit at the turn of the century, one is struck by the superior range and inventiveness of the acts described here than those that we see today - the Jim Rose Circus included.

**Bim Mason**

*Strange Feats and Clever Turns* is available to order from: Holland & Palmer, 22 Gilbert Road, London SE11 4NL. Priced £12.99 (inc. p+p).

## Le Corps Poetique Jacques Lecoq

Published by Actes Sud Papiers, France

This is Lecoq's second book and is currently only available in French. An English version is due out in November 1999, published by Methuen Drama. Lecoq's first book, *Théâtre Du Geste* (now out of print), dealt with his general approach to theatre, whereas *Le Corps Poetique* is about his teaching.

This book is an insight into Lecoq's vast experience, built up over the last four decades, and it

gives an incisive insight into how and why his processes work. The book is the result of a series of interviews with Jean-Gabriel Carasso and Jean-Claud Lallias and as such has a fresh, clear and accessible style. Where code words which have a specific meaning in the teaching are used, they are defined in a step by step approach.

The book covers all the areas of Lecoq's two-year course but concentrates predominantly on the early stages. There is no mention at all of the 'Commandes' that finish the course, for instance. It explains how Lecoq arrived at his central principles during his early career and lays out all the interlocking strands of the course and how they inter-relate. This 'architecture' of the teaching will be fascinating to Lecoq's thousands of ex-students since, in the thick- et of the course, it is sometimes hard to see the wood for the trees. Ex-students will also be interested to see how certain aspects have been developed, re-ordered or given a new slant in recent years, confirming the impression of a school that is continually engaged in creative flow, despite the apparent solidity of its systematic approach.

*Le Corps Poetique* will also be immensely interesting for all theatre teachers, especially those who use Lecoq methods but have received them third hand via workshops. Although there are far-ranging statements of fundamental principle, for example in the definition of the 'seven laws of movement', there are also some detailed briefs for specific improvisations, including what the teacher needs to look out for.

Lecoq is not afraid of unequivocally stating the 'constants' which he has discovered in his quest for the 'permanences'. Newcomers to his work have to take these on trust because, in a book that is as concise as this (170 pages), there is clearly no possibility of demonstrating their effectiveness. For this reason it is not recommended for student performers themselves, because reading is no substitute for research through observation and action, which is at the core of Lecoq's method.

**Bim Mason**

*Le Corps Poetique* is available to order for 90FRS plus 30FRS p+p from the Ecole Internationale de Théâtre Jacques Lecoq, 57 rue de Faubourg St. Denis, 75010 Paris or from A.N.R.A.T. on Tel: +1 45 262222 Fax: +1 45 261620.

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## MANAGEMENT NEWS

### Artsites, Birmingham

Is a new arts scheme launched in the Autumn by mac and Birmingham City Council to develop arts events and activities in local centres around the city. The first Artsites season includes performances by: Negative Equity, Hoipolloi, Trading Faces and Yellow Earth Theatre.

Details: 0121 303 2434

### ACE

Has announced plans to devolve 36 arts companies and an annual total of more than £122 million to the Regional Arts Boards as part of its ongoing transformation. Grant-in-aid to the 10 RABs will increase by 11%, 19% and 4% over the next three years, so that by the year 2001/02 they will be responsible for funds of over £100,200,000. For the first time, some National Lottery cash will be delegated to the regions. As well as a sum of £6.5 million each year to cover small capital grants, the RABs will also receive lottery revenue worth £13 million in 1999/2000 and rising to £15.5 million in 2001/02. ACE is still left with 129 companies on its books. The Arts Council will continue to consider fresh candidates for devolution over the next few years. Companies currently proposed for devolution include: Artangel, ArtsAdmin, English Stage Company, ICA, London Dance Network, Moti Roti, Dance City, Arnolfini, DanceXchange and Yorkshire Dance.

### The Year of the Artist 2000-2001

Is to be launched in June 2000 as part of the Millennium Festival and will be a nationwide celebration of the artist, delivered through the ten Regional Arts Boards. This will be achieved through 1000 artist's residencies and commissions supported by conferences, seminars, events, education projects, training and celebrations of Britain's creativity. Each RAB has its own Artist's Advisory Panel chaired by a member of the RAB Board. David Johnstone has recently been appointed Chief Executive of the Year of the Artist. ACE has committed £3.5 million to the year. The application process for artists to participate in the Year will be announced in the Spring. Contact your RAB for details.

## MANAGEMENT SERVICES

### The Factory

Specialises in fundraising research for the not-for-profit sector. The company can identify companies, trusts and individuals to meet specific briefs. Details: 0117 924 0663

### International Arts Bureau

Provides information on a range of international arts issues including: cultural policies, networks and funding programmes from around the world. The Bureau offers arts organisations and individual practitioners a free enquiry service and also provides information and guidance on Culture 2000, the successor programme to Kaleidoscope, Raphael and Ariane. Details: 0171 403 7001

### The National Consultants' & Trainers' Database

Was launched on-line in September to match the needs of artists and arts organisations with experts

who can assist them. Funded by the Arts Council and the RABs, the site consists of a database of consultants and trainers who can fulfil needs in the arts sector.

Visit the site at [www.arts-consultants.org.uk](http://www.arts-consultants.org.uk)

### RAB's Website

Is the largest arts website and Email directory in the UK and has been relaunched by the ten RABs. The site features development and funding guides and up to date information on the rapidly changing landscape of the nation's creative sector. Visit the site at [www.arts.org.uk](http://www.arts.org.uk)

## AWARDS RECEIVED

### ACE New Audience Awards

CandoCo Dance Company, £7,000; Moti Roti, £33,500; Oxfordshire Touring Theatre Company, £9,070; Shared Experience, £20,000; V-Tol, £9,000; Yorkshire Dance, £40,000.

### Arts for Everyone (A4E)

Action Space, London, £95,931; Brewery Arts, Cirencester, £98,500; Brouhaha International, Liverpool, £57,197; The Bull Theatre Gallery Studios, London, £50,000; CandoCo Dance Company, £83,188; Clean Break Theatre Company, £250,000; Dartington Summer Arts Foundation, £40,000; Doo Cot, £93,000; Eastern Touring Agency, £250,000; Emergency Exit Arts, £150,000; First Bite TIE, Liverpool, £50,547; Forced Entertainment, £80,000; Rambert Dance Company, £200,000; Siobhan Davies Dance Company, £27,646; Unity Theatre, Liverpool, £90,000; V-Tol Dance Company £150,000; Wyrld Arts Ltd, £50,000.

### Arts Council Lottery Capital Awards

Laban Centre, London £557,634 to develop plans for a new building at Deptford Creekside including: dance studios, a 300 seat theatre, library, multimedia centre, dance and health facility, outdoor amphitheatre and garden; London Bubble, £86,490 towards the purchase of technical and front of house equipment and a vehicle; Scarabeus Theatre, London £56,959 towards the purchase of a van and staging and office equipment.

## AWARDS & COMMISSIONS OFFERED

### Artsadmin Bursaries

Are offered by Artsadmin, with support from the National Lottery A4E Fund, to assist practitioners working in the areas of live art, time based media, new performance, installation, text, sound and projected image. Bursaries ranging from £1,500 to £4,000 each year for three years are offered to cover space costs, materials and artist's fees. Artsadmin also offer: a New Media Bursary offering free hire and use of Artsadmin's equipment; an Arts Education Residency at Canon Barnett Primary School, in Tower Hamlets, London; a Mentoring Support Scheme; and an Advice and Information Service. Priority will be given to artists who live locally and who have not received a research grant or fellowship within six months of the closing date and who do not receive fixed term or revenue funding from the Arts Councils or RABs. The Closing date for

applications is 22 January. Send an A4 SAE to Manick Govinda, Artists Advisor, Artsadmin, Toynbee Studios, 28 Commercial Street, London E1 6LS. Tel: 0171 247 5102.

### Association of Business Sponsorship of the Arts (ABSA)

Has £70,000 available as matched funding until April. The final deadline for projects commencing in March is January 18. Details of next year's scheme are soon to be announced.

Details: 0171 378 8143

### APEXchanges Central/Eastern Europe Collaborations Travel & Accommodation Grants

Are designed to encourage artists (theatre, dance, music) to work together on collaborative projects and joint initiatives. They offer Initial Travel Grants and Travel & Accommodation Grants for Final Projects. Details: +31 20 676 0222

### The Baring Foundation

For a copy of the application guidelines for the Small Projects Fund and Knowledge and Skills Exchange Fund contact: Baring Foundation, 60 London Wall, London EC2M 5TQ.

Tel: 0171 767 1348.

### Bonnie Bird Choreography Awards

Are offered to three choreographers at an early stage in their career, or those who have reached a professional crossroads and are dedicated to a reassessment of their work. Three awards at £1,500 each are available. The closing date for applications is 16 February. Details: Ellie Beedham, Laban Centre, Laurie Grove, London SE14 6NH.

### Grants for New Writing

Are available from ACE, offering half of the cost of paying a writer a commission or fee to write a new play. Details: John Johnstone, Drama Department, ACE, 14 Great Peter Street, London SW1P 3NQ. Tel: 0171 333 0100.

### Kaleidoscope

Is the EU's programme to encourage artistic and cultural creation and to promote knowledge and dissemination of the culture and cultural life of the EU. Eligible sectors include theatre, music, dance and multi-media arts. Details: 1st Floor, 46-48 Mount Pleasant, Liverpool L3 5SD.

Tel: 0151 709 2564.

### Lisa Ullmann Travelling Scholarship Fund

Offers scholarships towards the cost of travel abroad for movement and dance practitioners to undertake studies or research. The deadline for 1999-2000 applications is January 25 1999. For an application form send an A5 SAE to Vivian Gear, Honorary Secretary, 24 Cuppin Street, Chester CH1 2BN after September 1.

### Millennium Festival Community Grants

Of between £500 and £5,000 are available from the Arts Council, Sports Council, Heritage Lottery Fund, Millennium Commission and the Millennium Experience Company for groups that aim to meet the Festival's aims which include: encouraging social inclusion, supporting the potential of people with disabilities, supporting community projects, developing the environment

and promoting artistic and sporting activities. The application deadline for Community Awards is in March 1999. Details: 0870 600 2000

**Science on Stage & Screen**

Is an awards scheme that provides funding for productions which deal with medical-scientific themes and is open to dramatists, theatre directors and producers. Hybrid art forms, particularly multi-media, will also be considered. Details: Lorna McAllister, Science on Stage and Screen Project, Medical Film and Video Library, The Wellcome Trust, 210 Euston Road, London NW1 2BE. Email: l.mcallister@wellcome.ac.uk

**The St Hugh's Foundation Awards**

Support innovative arts projects in Lincolnshire and the areas of former Humberside and are offered to experienced artists to undertake personal programmes of research and development. Details:

The Administrator, The St Hugh's Foundation, Andrew & Company Solicitors, St Swithin's Square, Lincoln LN2 1HB.

**The Times/Artangel Open**

Offer a unique opportunity for artists, living and working in the UK, to propose ambitious ideas or projects in any form or medium conceived in response to a particular place, building or environment which is not habitually used for the arts. Two commissions will be produced, one this year and one in 2000, with a combined minimum budget of £200,000. Details: Artangel, PO Box 18103, London EC1M 4JQ. Tel: 0171 490 0226.

**Wingate Scholarships**

Offer grants of between £6,500 and £10,000 to people undertaking work of artistic, social or scientific value. Details: send SAE to The Administrator, Wingate Scholarships, 38 Curzon Street, London W1Y 8EY.

**ON-LINE CONTACTS**

**Arts Council of England**

<http://www.artscouncil.org.uk>

**ACE Drama Department**

Email: [info.drama@artscouncil.org.uk](mailto:info.drama@artscouncil.org.uk)

**Artangel**

[www.ecna.org/artangel](http://www.ecna.org/artangel)

**Artsadmin**

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

**Arts Business**

[www.arts-business.co.uk](http://www.arts-business.co.uk)

**Arts Council Lottery Department**

<http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/departments/Lot.htm>

**British Centre of the International Theatre Institute**

Email: [iti@gold.ac.uk](mailto:iti@gold.ac.uk)

**Centre for Performance Research**

<http://www.aber.ac.uk/~cprwww>  
Email: [cprwww@aber.ac.uk](mailto:cprwww@aber.ac.uk)

**Circomedia**

Email: [info@circomedia.demon.co.uk](mailto:info@circomedia.demon.co.uk)

**Consultants' & Trainers' Database**

[www.arts-consultants.org.uk](http://www.arts-consultants.org.uk)

**Department for Culture, Media and Sport Lottery Site**

<http://www.lottery.culture.gov.uk>

**England's Regional Arts Pages**

<http://www.poptel.org.uk/arts>

**International Arts Bureau**

Email: [enquiry.iab@mccmail.com](mailto:enquiry.iab@mccmail.com)

**International Theatre Institute**

<http://iti-worldwide.org/>

**Kaizen**

Email: [kaizen@idea.org.uk](mailto:kaizen@idea.org.uk)

**International Workshop Festival**

<http://www.i-w-f.demon.co.uk>  
Email: [i-w-f@i-w-f.demon.co.uk](mailto:i-w-f@i-w-f.demon.co.uk)

**Live Art Magazine**

<http://art.ntu.ac.uk/livemag/>  
Email: [live.art.magazine@ntu.ac.uk](mailto:live.art.magazine@ntu.ac.uk)

**London Butoh Network**

Email: [tntfabarbe@tsnxt.co.uk](mailto:tntfabarbe@tsnxt.co.uk)

**Natural Theatre Company**

<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/naturals>  
Email: [naturals@compuserve.com](mailto:naturals@compuserve.com)

**National Association of Youth Circus**

Email: [nayc@skylight-circus-arts.otg.uk](mailto:nayc@skylight-circus-arts.otg.uk)

**New Playwright's Trust**

Email: [npt@easynet.co.uk](mailto:npt@easynet.co.uk)

**New Work Network**

[www.active-ingredient.co.uk/nwn/](http://www.active-ingredient.co.uk/nwn/)

**Performance Studies International**

Email: [psiwww@aber.ac.uk](mailto:psiwww@aber.ac.uk)

**Regional Arts Boards**

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

**Spit and Polish**

Email: [spitandpolish.bogen.keme.co.uk](mailto:spitandpolish.bogen.keme.co.uk)

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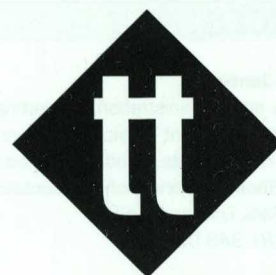
Email: [triangletheatre@demon.co.uk](mailto:triangletheatre@demon.co.uk)

**Unlimited Theatre**

Email: [unlimited@pop3.poptel.org.uk](mailto:unlimited@pop3.poptel.org.uk)

**The World of Mime Theatre**

<http://www.geocities.com/Broadway/5222/>  
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### Bhathena-Jancovich

Provide an arts administration, marketing, event and tour management service. They are always looking for new projects. Send tour schedules and videos to: Bhathena-Jancovich, Lauderdale House, Waterlow Park, London N6 5HG. Details: 0181 348 0203

### Paul Bull Sound for Performance

Freelance sound designer, Paul Bull, offers high-quality, low cost sound services to all forms of performing arts. Paul has established an extensive sound effects and music library over his twenty years as a professional sound technician. In addition he has set up a sound effects production studio, with mobile capability so that he can tailor recordings to your productions. Details: Paul Bull Sound for Performance, 32 Triumph Road, Glenfield, Leicester LE3 8FR. Tel: 0116 231 4227.

### Circomedia, Bristol

Is now able to offer advanced aerial classes for performers in flying trapeze, swinging trapeze, corde lisse, silks and bungees with internationally acclaimed flying artist Mike Wright. The classes will run on Monday and Thursday evenings, building up to intensive courses in Spring 1999. Performers (individuals and groups) who want to experiment 'in the air' should contact Circomedia for details of more tailored training programmes. Tel: 0117 9477288.

Email: info@circomedia.demon.co.uk

### Kaizen

Offer personal development programmes and career coaching for those involved in the arts. Kaizen work specifically with arts professionals, students and young people involved in the arts to help develop personal strengths, deal with limitations, overcome obstacles, as well as offering advice and coaching for career planning, developments and career changes. If you are interested in developing yourself or if you would like to offer this service regularly to a group, please contact Rivca Rubin on 0161 8606528 to discuss possibilities.

### Performance Studies International

Is a world-wide professional association, founded in 1997, for scholars and practitioners in the field of performance. PSI co-ordinates international conferences, performances and workshops, an electronic bulletin board, a discussion list and electronic forum in which members can post research, a biannual newsletter, a directory and discounts on subscriptions to a number of international journals. For information about the forthcoming 5th PSI Conference see page 34. Details: 01970 621517.

Email: psiwww@aber.ac.uk

### Rehearsal Space

For rent from £5 per hour. 7x10m dance studio in Stoke Newington, London. Details: 0171 249 7141

### Rehearsal Space

Available at reasonable rates at Oxford House, Bethnal Green, London. Facilities include a cafe

photocopying and fax. Bookings can be made seven days a week.

Details: Olu or Remi on 0171 739 9001

### Rehearsal Space

Available at competitive rates in London N1. Bright spacious studio 6mx10m with attached green room and parking. Details: The Glasshouse, 4 Enfield Road, London N1 5AZ.

Tel: 0171 241 2942 Fax: 0171 254 3119

### Rehearsal Space

Available at the Half Moon Theatre, London. Very reasonable rates.

Details: Daniel Long on 0171 265 8138

### Rehearsal Space

Available at Rush House, Three Mills Film and TV Studios, London. Five spaces, of varying sizes, available on flexible short and long term lets.

Details: 0171 377 1154

### Rehearsal Space

Available from £6 per hour at Chisenhale Dance Space, London. Details: 0181 981 6617

### Rehearsal Space

Available to hire from Clean Break Theatre Company in London NW5. Studio, meeting room and workshop space available. Details: 0171 482 8600

### Sarah Williamson, Set and Costume Design

Experienced designer is looking to work with mime and physical theatre companies or performers. Full set and costume design service offered from London studio. Details: 71 Maltings Place, London SW6 2BY. Tel/Fax: 0171 736 9146.

### Stan's Cafe Theatre Ltd

Have the following video and audio equipment available for hire: Avid off & on-line edit suite, BetaSP camera and recorder/player, SVHS camera and recorder/player, video projector and P.A. system. Rates are reasonable. Details: James or Paulette on 0121 446 4526.

## OPPORTUNITIES

### Kaizen/The Manchester Metropolitan University

Are organising an international conference in Dance Theatre in September and are currently calling for papers from practitioners and scholars interested in attending. Abstracts should be sent by 15 January and full proposals by 26 March to: Professor Leigh Landy, Department of Contemporary Arts, The Manchester Metropolitan University, Hassall Road, Alsager ST7 2HL. Tel: 0161 2475303. Email: l.landy@mmu.ac.uk. For further information contact Rivca Rubin or Beate Mielemeier at Kaizen, 29 Beech Road, Manchester M21 8BX. Tel: 0161 3742353. Email: kaizen@idea.org.uk

### London Butoh Network

Is a non-profit organisation devoted to the promotion of Butoh and the creation of performance and training opportunities in Britain. The emphasis is on nurturing European interpretations of Butoh and cross-cultural dialogue. To receive regular information please send a cheque for £3.50 payable to 'L.B.N.' to: Gabrielle Rotie, 7 Trinity Rise, London SW2 2QP. Tel: 0181 674 1518.

### Moving Parts Festival of Puppetry and Animation

Takes place in Huddersfield from 22-25 March and 7-11 April, and would like to hear from companies planning interesting new productions for the Spring. Details: Mary Walker on 01484 685577

### Ridiculusmus

Is a Northern Irish based company on the look out for new ensemble members. Applicants must be serious about comedy, able to act and willing to work in Northern Ireland. Send CVs and photos to David or Jon at 10F Owen O'Cork Mill, 288 Beersbridge Road, Belfast BT5 5DX. Email: ridiculu@dircon.co.uk.



Photo: David Woods

### Zone 3

Is a series of commissions from new, exciting and innovative choreographers and dance artists taking place from May 21 to June 26 at Jacksons Lane, London. Zone 3 will support production of new work; research and development; and artist support and training. Details: Send a SAE to Zone 3, Jacksons Lane Dancebase, 269a Archway Road, London N6 5AA.

## EVENTS

### National Association of Youth Circus

Is hosting an Organisation Development Weekend in late January to include discussions and training workshops. Details: 01706 650676. NAYC also plans to produce a regular newsletter. Information for inclusion should be sent to Jackie at Circus Maniacs, 43 Kingsway Avenue, Kingswood, Bristol. Tel: 0117 947 7042.

### South West New Circus Meeting

Will be held at Circomedia, Centre for Contemporary Circus and Physical Performance, Bristol on 19 February and is open to anyone who uses, or is interested in using, circus skills in performance or education (dancers, actors, street performers, teachers). The meeting will try to identify common issues and look at possible areas of co-operation. Details: 0117 947 7288

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS

### Action Space London Events

Cockpit Arts, Cockpit Yard, Northington Street, London WC1N 2NP. Tel: 0171 2009 4298. Fax: 0171 209 0198.

### Clean Break

2 Patshull Road, London NW2 2LB. Tel: 0171 482 8600. Fax: 0171 380 0308

## PUBLICATIONS

**Certain Fragments**

Is an extraordinary exploration of what lies at the heart of contemporary theatre. Written by Tim Etchells, Artistic Director of Forced Entertainment, it investigates: the process of devising performance; the role of writing in an interdisciplinary theatre; and the influence of the city on contemporary art practice. Published by Routledge, *Certain Fragments* will be available in April 1999. Details: 01264 342939

**Endland Stories**

Is the first book of short stories by Tim Etchells, Artistic Director of Forced Entertainment. It confirms his standing as one of Britain's most original writers. This series of cautionary tales is a 'must-read' for anyone interested in the impact of globalisation and new technology on the construction of our sense of identity. *Endland Stories* is published by Pulp Books and will be available from bookshops from January 1999.

**Gardzienice: Polish Theatre in Transition**

Is the first detailed attempt to assess critically the development of Polish theatre since 1989. Written by Paul Allain of Goldsmith's College, London, the book describes and analyses performances by the Gardzienice Theatre Association, an experimental company established in 1977 in a tiny Polish village. Published by Harwood Academic, *Gardzienice: Polish Theatre in Transition* is priced £16.99 and is available from bookshops.

**House of Games: Making Theatre from Everyday Life**

Is a resource book of drama games and exercises by Chris Johnston. Drawing on the work of Clive Barker and Keith Johnstone, *House of Games* includes sections on theory, practice and the role of the facilitator. Published by Nick Hern Books, *House of Games* is available for £9.99. Details: 0181 749 4953

**InFocus 5 - International Residencies for Arts Practitioners**

Includes details of non-profit organisations worldwide that provide the time, space and support for artist's creative research and experimentation. Available for £8 to practitioners or £15 to organisations from the International Cultural Desk, 6 Belmont Crescent, Glasgow G12 8ES. Details: 0141 339 0090

**InFocus 6 - Grants/Awards/Fellowships for Arts Projects**

Is a funding guide for international projects that includes details of UK and international grants for international travel and research, collaboration and networking. Available from the International Cultural Desk, 6 Belmont Crescent, Glasgow G12 8ES. Details: 0141 339 0090

**Legislative Theatre: Using Performance to Make Politics**

Is the new book by Augusto Boal, translated by Adrián Jackson of the London Bubble Theatre. In it, Boal explains how he has sought to use his Forum

theatre method within a political system to create a truer form of democracy. As a politician in his native Rio de Janeiro, Boal has used Forum Theatre to motivate the local populace in generating relevant legislation. Published by Routledge, *Legislative Theatre* is available for £14.99 from bookshops or to order on 01264 342939.

**Over the Footlights and Far Away**

Is a new book by Lorna M. Pobjoy that chronicles the old days of Repertory travelling theatre companies. Repertory companies disappeared with the advent of TV in the early '50s. This book is a nostalgic account of the way of life of those travelling players who had no homes and who moved around the countryside in search of audiences. *Over the Footlights and Far Away* is published by Gazelle at £6.95 in paperback and is available from bookshops. Details: 01524 68765

**Performance: Live Art since the '60s**

Juxtaposes more than three hundred startling images and texts to present the entire range of the multi-faceted art form. Published by Thames and Hudson, the book is available priced £32 from bookshops.

**The Radical in Performance**

Is a new book by Baz Kershaw that argues that political theatre is dead and has been replaced by fresh forms of subversive performance which have flourished beyond theatre. Published by Routledge in April, *The Radical in Performance* will be priced £13.99 and will be available from bookshops or to order on 01264 342939.

**To Travel Hopefully!**

Is a guide, available from ACE, to travel grant opportunities. The directory contains information on organisations that administer travel grants for UK practitioners wishing to visit, network, undertake reconnaissance or research and develop work overseas. It is available, priced £7.50, from ACE, 14 Great Peter Street, London SW1P 3NQ. Details: 0171 333 0100

**The Year 2000 Problem**

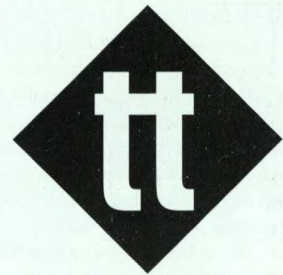
Is a new information sheet produced by the Regional Arts Boards Information Officers Group. It provides sources of advice and information on steps that can be taken to help prepare your business for the millennium. Contact your RAB for copies.

**Theatre First**

Is a new magazine for Children and Young People's Theatre published by A.P.T. (The Association of Professional Theatre for Children and Young People). Published three times a year, *Theatre First* is edited by John Daniel (Editor, *Total Theatre*) and has contributions from Mary Brennan (*Glasgow Herald*), Lyn Gardner (*The Guardian*) and Ronnie Haydon (*Time Out*). *Theatre First* is available on subscription for £12. Details: 0171 241 2942

**Update**

Is the quarterly magazine of the Voluntary Arts Network, available on subscription. VAN also produce an annual Directory of 300 national umbrella bodies for the voluntary arts. Details: 01222 395395



## total theatre

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

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

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

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MIME ACTION GROUP REG. CHARITY NO: 1052358. REG. COMPANY NO. 3133599

## Bhathena-Jancovich

Worked with a number of British touring companies in 1998 including Arc Theatre, Hoipolloi Theatre, Graeae, Bouge de la, Yellow Earth Theatre Company, Scarlet Theatre Company, Tango & Crash, Triangle, Alice Power & Alice Purcell, as well as linking up with international companies such as Yllana (Spain), Legs on the Wall, Desoxy and Hubcap Productions (Australia) and Derevo (Russia). They also co-ordinated the marketing campaign for the British Festival of Visual Theatre. In 1999 they are planning to work with Slakdance, Hoipolloi, Legs on the Wall, Yellow Earth, Arc and Yllana. They are also co-ordinating Real Action, a development programme for professional touring companies in Liverpool with the Unity Theatre. After the success of the Total Theatre Awards in 1997 they plan to run them again in Edinburgh this year. Details: 0181 348 0203

## Crying in Public Places

Stormed the Edinburgh Festival with *Jump* last year and return to the UK for a 5 week tour with their foot-stomping, body-jingling, vocally-rapturous show. The company will also be leading a number of workshops and are available for one-off events whilst in the UK. Details: 0181 348 0203

## Desperate Men

Was formed in 1980 in Berlin by Jon Beedell and Richie Smith and celebrated 18 years of work in 1998. After successfully completing a second summer season of touring with *The Lighthouse*, the company is taking a break to consider future plans. Since 1980 Desperate Men has presented cabaret, street theatre, street animations, indoor theatre, large scale community theatre, experimental commissions and even a brass band. Now based in Bristol and Odemira, Portugal, the company is in the process of redefining process, profile and direction. One feature of this reflection is to produce the first Desperate Newsletter. The company invites comments, thoughts, stories and fabrications from anyone who has ever worked with them, booked them or seen them perform. Desperate Men is also considering setting up a cheap and accessible rehearsal and workshop centre in Portugal. Future projects include: a proposal for Porto 2001 Cultural Capital of Europe; collaboration with UZ Events, Glasgow and 'O a Caso', Lisbon on large scale outdoor events in Iberia; continuing animations and projects in the UK; and promoting the world's first Washing Up Championships for the Millennium. Details: 0117 939 3902

## Desperate Optimists

Premiered its sixth performance, *Play-boy*, at Prema Arts Centre, Gloucester in November. Directed and performed by Christine Molloy and Joe Lawlor, the show explores the fear of loneliness, the seductive pull of violence, the need to find everlasting love and the act of storytelling as a strategy for survival. The performers are joined on stage through video technology by various characters who attempt to complicate things, as they discuss the ethical issues at the heart of Ireland's most controversial play - Synge's *Playboy of the Western World*.

## English Eurythmy Theatre

Is currently rehearsing two new shows: *Don't I Know You?* and *Idunn and the Golden Apples*. *Don't I Know You?* explores re-incarnation and considers

the awakening interest in ecology, psychology and religion which the Twentieth Century has witnessed. Movement, theatre and Eurythmy are combined to present a serious and humorous exploration of lives, present and past. Devised by the company, written by Martin Schmandt and directed by Philip Beaven, the show begins touring this month. The company's second show, *Idunn and the Golden Apples*, is for children. Details: 01342 825051

## Faulty Optic Theatre of Animation

Complete an extensive UK tour this month, when they perform *Tunnel Vision* at the ICA as part of the London International Mime Festival. Faulty Optic produce visual and surreal adult puppetry. In *Tunnel Vision*, half heard screams, distant rumbles and dreams of Zeppelins are the only things that distract a prison inmate from his solitude. Last September Faulty Optic performed as part of the Henson International Puppet Festival in New York and the company was also part of the visions98 festival of international animated theatre in Brighton last Autumn. Details: 01484 536027

## Forced Entertainment

Tours its seventeenth full scale theatre piece, *Dirty Work*, throughout the Spring. Directed by Tim Etchells, the piece attempts to map contemporary experience in a language that both comes from and responds to our times. The style lies somewhere between brutal desperation, unashamed comedy and unexpected intimacy. Four performers sit dressed as apes on a crude wooden platform. Their costumes come from a joke shop and their attitude comes from the zoo. Forced Entertainment has recently released two new projects on CD-ROM in collaboration with photographer Hugo Glendinning: *Frozen Palaces* and *Nightwalks*. Details: 0113 279 8977

## Frantic Assembly

Premiered *Sell Out* at the British Festival of Visual Theatre at BAC in October. Whilst the show continues the company's aim of producing accessible physical theatre and provocative new writing, *Sell Out* moves into harder and darker territory. With choreography from T.C Howard (David Glass Ensemble, V-Tol), Frantic Assembly link up with writer Michael Wynne to stage a night of hard truths and raw nerves that implodes from street to club to home. *Sell Out* incorporates the premiere of material by Incidents Company, which includes international award-winning DJ Andy Cleeton. Details: 01792 774888

## Tiago Gambogi

Worked in Brazil from 1991 to 1995 before moving to London in 1996. Since then he has performed at the International Choreography Competition in Holland with Backstage Company. Recently he has worked with the Portugese Paulo Ribeiro Company in Lisbon and punk-industrial band 2nd Generation. *Carrot King* is his new solo show, directed by Mark Phoenix, full of love, passion, angst, depression and joy. Details: 0171 562 0080

## Heir of Insanity

Performed in a production of *Mother Goose* at the Theatre Royal, Brighton over Christmas. The company has won an indoor dance commission to commence

rehearsing in March with choreographer John Paul Zaccarini. The company will premiere its new outdoor show, *CrystalMTA*, in May. It will be set in the make-believe land of fairy tales, against a stunning inflatable set and trapeze rig. Three performers will weave together the skills of trapeze, acrobatic balance and stilts. Details: 01449 672 866

## Hoodwink

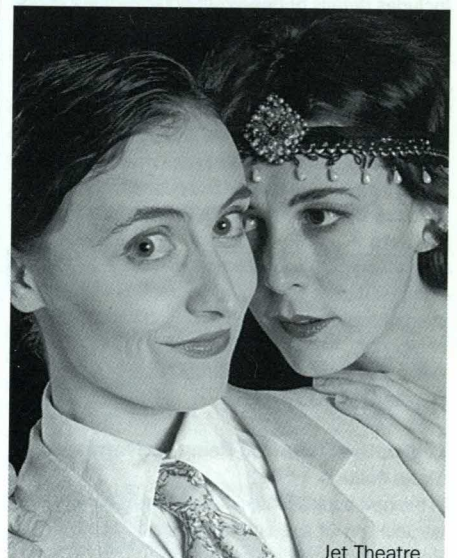
Is currently touring *Paradise*, a darkly comic tale inspired by a true story of misplaced inheritance and contested wills. A man sows the seed of his future in the garden of his dreams. The outdoors is brought inside for a magical delve into gardening and desire and to wonder where or what paradise is. Fantastical visual theatre, comedy and original music. Details: 01703 787130

## Improbable Theatre

Will tour its latest production, *Coma*, throughout the UK from mid-March. Jointly commissioned by Nottinghamshire Stages, the South Bank Centre and Wexner Centre for Arts, *Coma* is an investigation of stories and visionary experiences of people who have returned from near death experiences. Using a mixture of storytelling, improvisation, live music and object animation, the Improbable team will create a show which is as spectacular in the imaginations of the audience as it is on the stage. *Coma* will tour to: The Liverpool Everyman; The Traverse, Edinburgh; Phoenix Arts, Leicester; Warwick Arts Centre; The Crucible, Sheffield; the South Bank Centre, London; and various venues throughout Nottinghamshire. Details: 0171 978 4200

## Jet Theatre

Tour *The Deceived* throughout January, including a three week run at Riverside Studios, London. Directed by Kenneth Rae, Artistic Director of Jet Theatre, *The Deceived* is the source play for Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* and this tour marks the first time the play has been performed in Britain in the 465 years since it was written. The play is an overtly sexual romp through 16th Century Italian society. Set against a backdrop of Carnival, it portrays a world of teenage sexual adventure, lustful nuns, scheming servants and horny old men. Kenneth Rae's highly physical production relocates the action to the late 1920s. Details: 0171 636 3750



Jet Theatre

**Kaos Theatre**

Completed a comprehensive UK tour of *The Kaos Master and Margarita* in November. Based on the classic Russian novel by Mikhail Bulgakov, the play combines a love story with a satanic ball and a magic show of hellish proportions. Details: 01285 641781

**Leikin Loppu**

Continue to tour *The Tailors* this Spring and Summer. The company toured England with *The Tailors* last Autumn, taking in the British Festival of Visual Theatre and Leeds International Dance Festival. The show is about two people who are double-booked into the same hotel room and who are both insistent on staying. It follows their misunderstandings on a stormy night. Details: 0113 217 8827

**Natural Theatre Company**

Has been touring street theatre world-wide for the past few months. As well as appearing throughout Britain, the company has been gracing the shopping centres, markets and squares of Slovakia, Ecuador, Osaka, Athens, France, Germany and Canada. Natural Theatre has also just finished a successful six month residency at Expo '98, Lisbon. The company has a full programme of street theatre planned for 1999, with Summer dates filling quickly. Meanwhile the company's indoor department will be presenting the third in a series of spectacular classical music spoofs, *Scarlati's Revenge*, in Hamburg in January and February. A re-tour of *William Tell*, directed by John Abulafia (National Opera) with musical direction by Steve Edis (Royal National Theatre), will take place in the Autumn throughout Britain, arranged by UK Arts International. Details: 01225 469131

**Opera Circus**

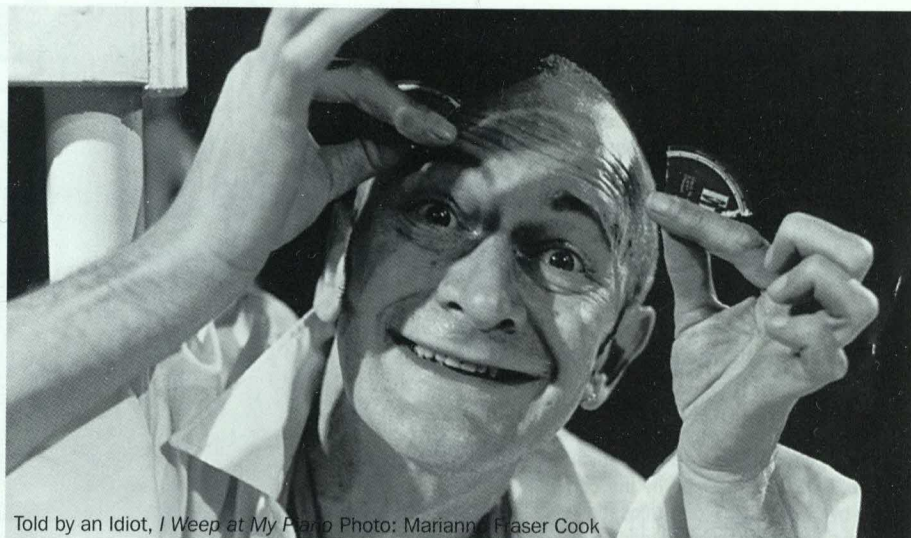
Spent the spring and summer touring *Cat Man's Tale* and developing a new small scale version of *King Stag*. The company is currently touring England with *Impropera* and *King Stag* and touring abroad with *Shameless!* In December, Opera Circus performed *Shameless!* at the Cinars in Montreal. The company tour *King Stag* this spring in the UK and abroad and will be visiting Bangkok with *Shameless!* Details: 0171 288 1222

**Pathways Theatre Company**

Has adapted the successful stage production *Tandem* into a short film, with an award from the National Lottery through the Coventry Theatre Network. The film is now available for distribution and will be used within the company's Education Programme, as well as being marketed as a short film. The stage production of *Tandem* - a highly physical piece exploring the changing roles of men and women - will be re-touring this Spring. Pathways also offer residencies to colleges, youth theatre and dance groups exploring the company's devising methods. Details: 01865 396778

**Ridiculusmus**

Is touring *The Exhibitionists*, a silent minimalist comedy, throughout 1999. The piece features four security guards in a gallery of modern art who pass the time with ballroom dancing lessons, clothes swapping and episodes of Coronation Street. Based in Northern Ireland, Ridiculusmus tour Germany,



Told by an Idiot, *I Weep at My Piano* Photo: Marianna Fraser Cook

Denmark and the Czech Republic in January and February and will tour Britain in May and June. Details: 01504 373800

**Spit and Polish (formerly Dodge Theatre)**

Will be premiering *The Gilded Cage* at The Junction, Cambridge this month, followed by a short Eastern Region tour. Combining performance, video and visual art, *The Gilded Cage* is a performance on the theme of national identity, emigration and cultures in conflict. The company has recently returned from Poland where the show was devised in collaboration with six visual artists from the Gdansk-based group Grupa Reklama Kreater. During performances of the show, the Polish artists will send images by fax and the Internet on the themes of the performance to an artist painting live on stage in the UK. A video, shot in Poland during the research and devising of *The Gilded Cage*, will also be screened as part of the performance. Spit and Polish (formerly Dodge Theatre) was founded in 1994 by Artistic Director Mila Stolarska and a core of performance and media arts graduates. Details: 01223 524219

**Spymonkey**

Is a new Brighton-based physical theatre company that brings together performers Toby Park and Petra Massey from Britain, Aitor Basauri from Spain, and Paul Weilenmann from Switzerland, founder of the Zurich open-air spectacular Karl's Kuehne Gassenschau Company. The company plan to collaborate on an annual basis in more intimate performance spaces. Spymonkey's first show, *Stiff*, is a physical comedy directed by Cal McCrystal that explores the world of funeral parlours. The show tours until March and is available for bookings again from Winter 1999. Details: 01273 600779

**Strangelings**

Create statues, human sculpture and animation for the street. In August last year the company performed *The Souls*, a new walkabout commissioned by Zap Productions and Eastbourne Council as part of the National Street Arts Festival. Directed by Flick Ferdinando, *The Souls* uses five performers to create a wandering crowd of weathered copper statues that come to rest on a stone plinth. Also in 1998 Strangelings created a Pre-Raphaelite themed statue event for Birmingham Council. Ten performers recreated images from the paintings of Burne-Jones. The

company continues to tour its various walkabouts in 1999 and is always interested in working with other companies and performers. Details: 07957 237177

**Theatre Cryptic**

Has been collaborating with The Shamans on *Prologue*, which toured Scotland and Northern Ireland in November. Inspired by the prologue to Isabel Allende's *The Stories of Eva Luna*, Scotland's leading music theatre company and Hungary's leading physical theatre company have united to explore the use of language through music, dance, visuals and text. *Prologue* also features a live commissioned score and soundscape by Scottish composer Anthea Haddow. Details: 0141 338 6929

**Theatre de Complicite**

Recently toured to New York, Toronto, Minneapolis and Tokyo with a revival of *The Street of Crocodiles*. The production will play London in January and February and then Stockholm in March. Later in the year, the company will produce a new work, a co-production with the Salzburg Festival, which will premier in August. Details: 0171 700 0233

**Told by an Idiot**

Will be presenting *I Weep at My Piano* as part of the London International Mime Festival this month at BAC. Inspired by the tempestuous relationship between Spain's greatest and most influential artists - Dali, Lorca and Bunuel - the show is a fictional account of their first meeting. Lorca waits in a government building, hours before his execution, and remembers his first meeting with Dali and Bunuel at the Residencia in Madrid in 1923. *I Weep at my Piano* promises to be a wildly inventive tribute to the creative genius, glamour, passion and sheer naughtiness of these three extraordinary artists. Later this year, Told by an Idiot will be working on a new production, *Suddenly it Jumped*, in collaboration with the acclaimed Nigerian writer Biyi Bandele Thomas. *Suddenly it Jumped* will tour from August. Details: 0171 978 4200

**Triangle**

Is currently preparing a major project for the millennium. A large-scale development of the company's previous show *Godiva*, the project will take place along Coventry Canal and under a big top in the Coventry Canal Basin. Carran Waterfield and Richard Talbot of Triangle have also been

## PERFORMER & COMPANY UPDATES

busy with their latest incarnation Nina and Frederick, who created a stir when they took up residence in the Belgrade Theatre foyer during the 1998 Coventry Arts Alive Festival. The pair were in residence again recently at the Belgrade, with a populist live art installation around the theme of *Sleeping Beauty*. Nina and Frederick have also begun a programme of Customer Services and other Work Training, with recent clients including Maersk Airways.

Details: 01203 362210

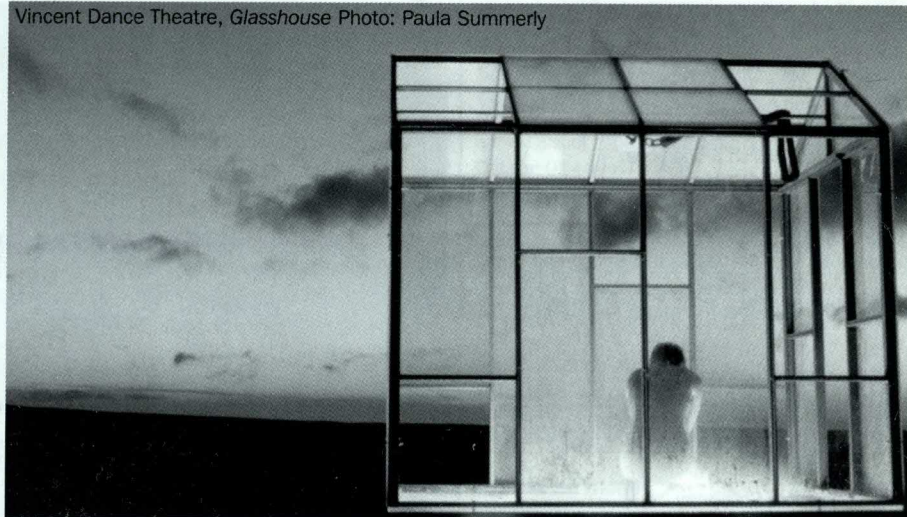
### Unlimited Theatre

Is a Leeds-based arts organisation currently in residence at the Workshop Theatre, University of Leeds. Founded in 1996, the company has recently completed a tour of its third show, *Shades*. Premiered at the 1998 British Festival of Visual Theatre, *Shades* is devised by the company and written by Clare Duffy. From suffocating each other with cling-film and murdering teddy bears by lethal injection in previous shows, *Shades* looks at how love and madness might be able to save the world. Details: 0113 234 5400

### Vincent Dance Theatre

Premiered *Glasshouse* in the Autumn, a ten minute film conceived and performed by Artistic Director, Charlotte Vincent and Forced Entertainment's Richard Lowden. *Glasshouse* was shot on Ringinglow Moor in Sheffield by film maker Robert Hardy and has an original score composed by John Avery. Set in a small glass shed at night, the film is a hard hitting duet about how actions speak louder than words. *Glasshouse* was funded

Vincent Dance Theatre, *Glasshouse* Photo: Paula Summerly



by Yorkshire Dance, Yorkshire Media Production Agency and by the National Lottery through ACE. The film has so far been screened in Leeds, Sheffield, London, Penzance, Lincoln and Groningen in the Netherlands. Vincent Dance Theatre has been commissioned by the Arnolfini, Bristol to make *Transparencies*, a live, durational installation involving the film. With funding from YHA, *Transparencies* will tour to industrial spaces nation-wide in 1999. The company's next live show, *Falling from the High Rise of Love*, will feature five performers and tour from Autumn 1999. Details: 0114 221 0369

### The Weird Sisters

The Weird Sisters toured Holland between October and December last year. Performances included several shows at the Images Theatre Festival in Arnhem. The company spent the Summer of 1998 touring North America with the hit comedy *It's Uncanny!* The show was voted Best Show by audiences at the Victoria Fringe Festival and won the Vancouver Sun People's Choice Award for Best Production at the Vancouver Fringe. This year, The Weird Sisters will tour a new show, *Loveplay*, that will receive its world premiere at the Wimbledon Studio Theatre, London in February.

Details: 0171 328 2619

## PERFORMANCE & FESTIVALS

### PERFORMANCE

#### Bouge de la EVOLUTION:BODY

Details: 0181 348 0203

#### JANUARY

- 22-23 The Pegasus, Oxford
- 26 York Arts Centre
- 27 Bonnington Theatre, Nottingham
- 28 Northbrook Theatre, Worthing

#### FEBRUARY

- 1-3 Jackson's Lane Theatre, London
- 4 Miskin Theatre, Dartford
- 5-6 Royal Exchange, Manchester
- 10 Felstead School, Great Dunmow
- 11 Watermans Arts Centre, Brentford
- 12 Portsmouth Arts Centre
- 16-18 Komedia, Brighton
- 19 Riverhouse Barn, Walton on Thames
- 25 Guildhall Theatre, Derby
- 26 Yvonne Arnaud, Guildford

#### MARCH

- 2 West End Centre, Aldershot
- 3 Redbridge Drama Centre
- 4 The Bull, Barnet
- 11 Hartlepool Town Hall Theatre
- 12 MAC, Birmingham
- 15 The Studio, Bodmin Community Theatre
- 16 The Theatre, Truro College
- 17 Old Town Hall Arts Centre, Hemel Hempstead
- 18 Ashcroft Arts Centre, Fareham

- 19 Unity Theatre, Liverpool
- 23 Exeter & Devon Arts Centre
- 25 The Hawth, Crawley

#### Company Paradiso I ONLY CAME TO USE THE PHONE

Details: 0161 238 8826

#### MARCH

- 5 Plymouth University
- 6 Salisbury Arts Centre
- 7-8 Bridgewater Hall, Manchester (tbc)
- 11 Blackpool & Fylde College
- 18 Unity Theatre Liverpool (Real Action)
- 25 South Cheshire College, Crewe
- 26 Galsworth Theatre, Cheshire

#### Crying in Public Places JUMP

Details: 0181 348 0203

#### FEBRUARY

- 23-24 Komedia, Brighton
- 26 Northbrook Theatre, Worthing
- 27 Merlin Theatre, Frome

#### MARCH

- 1 Park College, Eastbourne
- 2 Old Town Hall, Hemel Hempstead
- 3 Yvonne Arnaud, Guildford
- 5 Music Hall, Shrewsbury
- 6 The Pegasus Theatre, Oxford
- 8 Project Arts, Dublin
- 9 Derry Playhouse

- 10-13 OMAC, Belfast
- 15-17 Jackson's Lane, London
- 18 Theatre Royal, Bury St Edmunds
- 19 Kings of Wessex Leisure Centre, Cheddar
- 20 Bruton Girls School, Bruton
- 22 Felstead School, Great Dunmow
- 23 Black Country Touring
- 24 Mid Penine Arts
- 25 Guildhall, Gloucester
- 27 The Gantry, Southampton
- 28 Phoenix Arts, Leicester

#### Faulty Optic Theatre of Animation TUNNEL VISION

Details: 01484 536027

#### JANUARY

- 8 The Hawth, Crawley
- 11-13 ICA, London (LIMF)

#### Forced Entertainment DIRTY WORK

Details: 0114 279 8977

#### JANUARY

- 13-14 Dartington Arts, Totnes
- 20-23 Forced Entertainment Studio Sheffield

#### FEBRUARY

- 1-6 ICA, London
- 12-13 Chapter Arts, Cardiff
- 19-20 Warwick Arts Centre

#### Tiago Gambogi CARROT KING

Details: 0171 562 0080

#### JANUARY

- 14-17 Oval House, London

#### Heir of Insanity CRYSTALVITA

Details: 01449 672 866

#### MARCH

- 25-27 Dance Commission, Lincolnshire

#### MAY

- 30 Oxford Park, Cheshire
- 31 Brampton Park, Newcastle under Lyme

#### Hoodwink PARADISE

Details: 01703 787130

#### JANUARY

- 15 Square Chapel Centre for Arts, Halifax
- 21 QEH Theatre, Bristol
- 22 Dorchester Arts Centre
- 29 Bridgewater Arts Centre

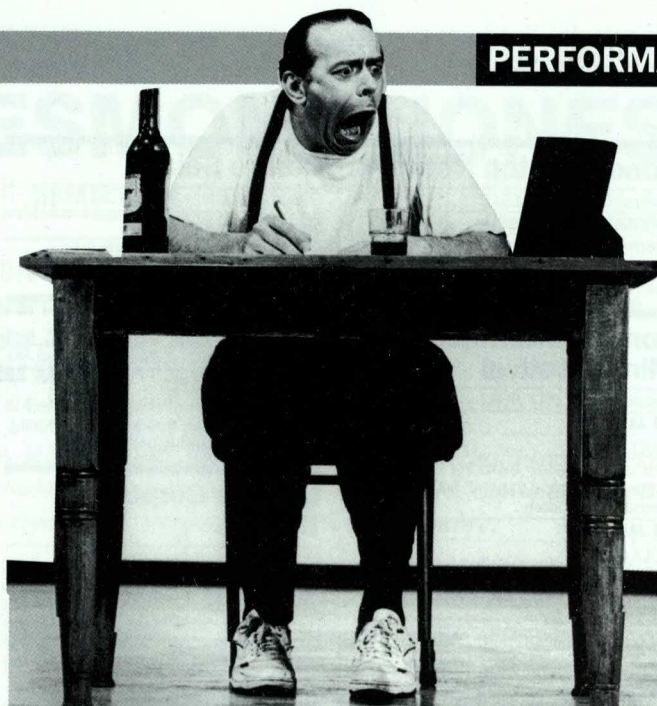
#### FEBRUARY

- 10 The West End Centre, Aldershot
- 12 The Cricklade Theatre, Andover
- 13 Salisbury Arts Centre
- 26-27 Pegasus Theatre, Oxford

#### MARCH

- 4 Forest Arts Centre, New Milton





Paolo Nani, *The Letter at the London International Mime Festival*

**Jet Theatre**  
**THE DECEIVED**

Details: 0181 237 1111

**JANUARY**

- 5 The Hawth, Crawley
- 6-7 The Bull, Barnet
- 9 Epsom Playhouse
- 12 Wycombe Arts Centre
- 13 Peterborough Italian Arts Centre
- 14 Windsor Arts Centre
- 15 Riverhouse Barn, Walton-on-Thames
- 16 Harrow Arts Centre
- 19-7 Riverside Studios, London

**Nola Rae**  
**MOZART**  
**PREPOSTEROSO**

Details: 0181 444 6248

**JANUARY**

- 14-16 The Pleasance, London
- 28-30 The Komedia, Brighton (And the Ship Sailed On)

**FEBRUARY**

- 25 Epsom Playhouse

**Ridiculusmus**  
**THE EXHIBITIONISTS**

Details: 01504 737800

**JANUARY**

- 12 Studio Theatre, North Westminster School, London
- 15-17 Schaubuhne im Lindenfels, Leipzig
- 20-23 Hackasches Hof Theater, Mitte, Berlin

**APRIL**

- 3 Ennis Arts Festival. Co. Clare, Ireland

**Spit and Polish**  
**THE GILDED CAGE**

Details: 01223 524219

**JANUARY**

- 19-21 The Junction, Cambridge

**Spymonkey**  
**STIFF**

Details: 01273 600779

**JANUARY**

- 11-16 Tristan Bates, Actors Centre, London
- 18 Quay Theatre, Sudbury
- 20 West End Theatre, Aldershot
- 21 Ashcroft Theatre, Farnham
- 22 Forest Arts Centre, New Milton
- 23 Tower Theatre, Winchester
- 24 Fairfield Arts Centre, Basingstoke

**State of Play**  
**TITONIC**

Details: 01832 272846

**JANUARY**

- 22 Bridgwater Arts Centre
- 23 Hope Centre, Bristol

**FEBRUARY**

- 24 Stamford Arts Centre

**MARCH**

- 13 Arts Theatre, Trowbridge

**Theatre de Complicite**  
**STREET OF CROCODILES**

Details: 0171 700 0233

**JANUARY**

- 14-31 Queen's Theatre, London

**FEBRUARY**

- 1-20 Queen's Theatre, London

**The Weird Sisters**  
**IT'S UNCANNY!**  
**LOVEPLAY**

Details: 0171 328 2619

**JANUARY**

- 22 Netherhall School, Cambridge (Uncanny)
- 30 Felstead School, Essex (Uncanny)

**FEBRUARY**

- 28 Wimbledon Studio, (Loveplay)

**MARCH**

- 1 Wimbledon Studio, (Loveplay)

**FESTIVALS**

**London International**  
**Mime Festival**

Details: 0171 637 5661

**9-24 JANUARY**

- 9-12 Josef Nadj Company, Woyzeck (Purcell Room)
- 9-24 Blue Boys (Natural History Museum)
- 11-13 Faulty Optic, *Tunnel Vision* (ICA)
- 11-23 Alice Power & Alice Purcell, *A Special Offer* (Young Vic)
- 13 Figurentheater Tubingen, *Faces of the Night* (Watermans)
- 13-17 B.P. Zoom (Purcell Room)
- 13-21 Told by an Idiot, *I Weep at My Piano* (BAC)
- 14-16 Nola Rae, *Mozart Preposteroso* (Pleasance)
- 14-16 Figurentheater Tubingen, *Faces of the Night* (ICA)
- 15-17 Derevo, *Once* (QEH)
- 16 Paolo Nani, *The Letter* (Watermans)
- 16-17 Yvan the Impossible (QEH Foyer)
- 17 MTP Productions, *Space Panorama* (ICA)
- 18-19 Paolo Nani, *The Letter* (Purcell Room)
- 19-20 Stretch People, *There's Another One* (Pleasance)
- 19-21 Gilles Jobin, *A+B=X* (ICA)
- 20-24 Pep Bou, *Ambrosia* (Purcell Room)

- 21-23 Vis a Vis, *Visa Pour l'Amour* (Pleasance)

**Moving Parts**

MAC, Birmingham  
Details: 0121 440 4221

**FEBRUARY**

- 17-18 Stan's Cafe, *It's Your Film*
- 18 Frantic Assembly, *Sell Out*
- 19-20 David Glass Ensemble, *The Lost Child*
- 25 RJC Dance Company, *Language and Life*
- 26 Bobby Baker, *How to Shop*

**MARCH**

- 4 Asphasia Dance Company, *In the Emptiness*
- 5-6 Motionhouse, *Twisted*
- 12 Bouge de la, *Evolution Body*
- 25 Volcano, *Macbeth*
- 26-27 Foursight Theatre, *Six Dead Queens*

**Resolution!**

The Place, London  
Details: 0171 0161

**5 JANUARY-13 FEBRUARY**

**JANUARY**

- 7 Neil Breyer/Sirens Crossing/Scopic Dance Co.
- 8 Eidotrope/Grace & Danger/Raucous Set Dance Co.
- 9 Litzabixler Performance Co. & Third Angel/Barak/Kaotic Dance Theatre
- 11 Henrietta Hale & Co./Scherzo Dance Co./Stamina T
- 12 Influx Dance Co./Julia Thomeycroft & Co./No Mean Feet
- 13 Lisa Torun/Tranzensual/Painted Eye Movement Theatre
- 14 Hiyokomame/Dance Co. Lab/Jane Mason
- 15 Barry Eaton & Co./Just Desert Dance Co./Klimacek & Mihalov
- 16 Live Bait/Angika/Ari Tenhula
- 18 Tabula Rasa Dance Co./riverrun/Anti Status Quo Dance Co.
- 19 Caustic Soda/Sanchari Dance/Catherine Seymour Co.
- 20 Martin Lawrence/Siobhan O'Neill/Misnomer Dance Co.
- 21 Damadanse/Alison Ray's Dance Co./Prang
- 22 Birnba Dance Co./The Sahara Club/Vava's
- 23 Ground Level/Jason Piper & Dancers/Oktana Dance Co.

- 27 Oracle Dance Co./Rani Nair/Music in Motion
- 28 Karen Greenhough/and dance company/Alamall Palim Dance Co.
- 29 Sarah Goldfarb/The Five Andrews/Happy Tales
- 30 In Transit Dance Co./Mumble/Sol Pico

**FEBRUARY**

- 1 Lulu's Living Room/IDC/Down, Under, Up and Over
- 2 Matuach/Lea Dance/Ross Hounslow
- 3 Bombard & Absorb/Mercury & Co./Dance House Dance Co.
- 4 Yelp Dance Co./The Shoal Collective/I.D. Dance
- 5 First Person/Backstage/Thomas Lehmen
- 6 Regis & Matthias/Daniela Graca/Simon Fearson
- 10 Blindspot/dance group ra/Lydia Ariken
- 11 Step 21/Raw Head/Sato E Bosa
- 12 Rachel Krische/me parker/EI Ojo de la Faraona
- 13 Protein Dance/Stephen Kirkham/AD-HOC

**Spring Loaded**

The Place & QEH, London  
Details: 0171 387 0031

**16 FEBRUARY-1 MAY**

**FEBRUARY**

- 16-17 Jeremy James & Co., *Juice/Parts/The Day I Stopped*
- 19-20 La Ribot & Zbang, *Tete*
- 22 Retina, *Hard Shoulder*
- 23 Chris Nash, *Bash*
- 25-27 Charles Linehan, *Number Stations/The Secret/Preludes & Feuges*

**MARCH**

- 2-6 Shobana Jeyasingh, *Memory & Other Props/A Fine Frenzy*
- 8 Paula Hampton & Andrea Buckley, *Hermeus*
- 10 Ted Stoffer, *In the Emptiness*
- 12-13 Carol Brown, *Like a House on Fire/FLESH.txt*
- 16-17 Arthur Pita/Mark Bruce/Colin Poole
- 25-27 Seven Sister Group, *Salome*
- 30 Stephen Hughes, *Triple Bill*
- 1-3 Featherstonehaughs, *Drawing on the Sketh Books of Egon Schiele*

**APRIL**

- 6-10 Funny Bone/John Hegley/Wendy Houstoun/Stephen Whinney
- 13-14 Stephen Hawkins, *Dances from the New Territories*
- 16-17 Physical Recall Dance Co.
- 20-24 Graeme Miller, *Country Dance*
- 26-27 Gary Carter, *Nightlight*
- 29-1 Jonzi D, *Aeroplane Man*

**Yarn**

The Oval House, London  
Details: 0171 582 7680

**JANUARY 14-MARCH 28**

**JANUARY**

- 14-17 Tiago Gambogi, *The Carrot King*
- 14-31 Queenie Productions, *Brown Girl in the Ring*
- 21-24 Elizabeth Lee, *Sensus and Tala/Rasa, Hellas and Back*

**FEBRUARY**

- 4-21 Siddiqua Akhtar, *A Dialogue with Mhusibhat*
- 4-28 Talawa, *Coups and Calypsos*
- 25-7 Lorna Sykers, *All of a Sudden*

**MARCH**

- 4-14 Kali Theatre, *Love Comes in at the Window: A Double Bill*

## WORKSHOPS & TRAINING

### Bodily Functions

Brighton  
Details: 01273 385928

FIRST MONDAY OF THE MONTH  
OPEN DOOR SESSIONS

### Chisenhale Dance Space

London, Details: 0181 981 6617

11-15 JANUARY

MIND/BODY CENTERING  
With Roseanne Spradlin.

18-22 JANUARY

KLEIN TECHNIQUE  
With Neil Greenberg.

### Chrysalis Theatre

London, Details: 0181 673 4881

FEBRUARY-JUNE

THE LIBERATION OF THE ACTOR

Five day courses in Rudolf Laban, Rudolf Steiner and Gordon Craig.

### Circomedia

Bristol, Details: 0117 947 7288

ONE YEAR FOUNDATION IN CIRCUS  
SKILLS & PHYSICAL THEATRE  
1999/2000

Auditions held throughout the spring.  
THREE MONTH INTRODUCTORY COURSE  
Auditions held throughout the spring

### Dartington College of Arts

Totnes, Devon, Details: 01803 862224

Offers BA (Hons) degree courses in Music,  
Theatre, Performance Writing, Visual  
Performance and Arts Management.  
Plus MA and MPhil/PhD Research  
programmes.

### Ecole de Mime Corporel Dramatique

London,  
Details: 0171 607 0561/0171 272 8627

MOVEMENT THEATRE AND CORPOREAL  
MIME (DECROUX TECHNIQUE)

Regular weekly session with Steve Wasson  
& Corinne Soum.

### The Horse + Bamboo Centre

Rossendale, Details 01706 220241

23-24 JANUARY 1999

HIGH-HEAD MASKS

An exploration of the animation of high-  
head (worn above the head) masks. The  
course is suitable for performers/directors  
interested in the use of these masks in  
the theatre, street performance and  
carnival. Led by Victoria Lee.

### Laban Centre

London, Details: 0181 692 4070

27-28 FEBRUARY

PHOTOGRAPHING DANCE

### Peta Lily and Barb Jung

London, Details: 0171 559 3990

30-31 JANUARY

DEEP VOICE FEELING BODY

Internationally reknowned workshop  
leaders and performers Peta Lily and Barb  
Jung enable participants to find new  
physical and vocal freedom of expression in  
a workshop created for participants to find  
emotion, immediacy and physicality in their  
lives and work.

### London Butoh Network

Details: 0181 674 1518

5 FEBRUARY-5 MARCH

CONTEMPORARY BUTOH CLASSES

Weekly Friday evening classes held at the  
Drill Hall, Chenies Street, London.

### London International Mime Festival

Details: 0171 637 5661

12 JANUARY

FAULTY OPTIC

One day workshop exploring two-person  
puppets and 'hand in head' figures at The  
Pleasance, London.

13 JANUARY

NOLA RAE

One day mime workshop for all levels of  
ability at The Pleasance, London.

16-17 JANUARY

TOLD BY AN IDIOT

Two day workshop exploring the  
collaborative process, devising, design and  
composition at BAC, London.

18 JANUARY

DEREVO

One day workshop with Anton Adassinsky  
at The Pleasance, London.

### Skylight Circus Arts

Rochdale, Details: 01706 650676

9 JANUARY

TRAPEZE

With Cath Rushton and Lindzi Miller.

10 JANUARY

INTRODUCTION TO CLOUD SWING

With Cath Rushton and Lindzi Miller.

16 JANUARY

CONTACT JUGGLING

With Graham Currie.

17 JANUARY

AERIAL DAY

With Cath Rushton and Lindzi Miller.

2, 9, 16, 23 FEBRUARY

DANCE

Tuesday evenings with Justine Marsh.

23-24 JANUARY

CLOUDSWING WEEKEND

With Michelle Weaver.

6-7 FEBRUARY

AERIAL WEEKEND

With Deb Pope.

27-28 FEBRUARY

THE DYNAMICS OF PERFORMANCE

With Bob Pearce.

### Theatre de Complicite

London, Details: 0171 700 0233

OPEN WORKSHOP PROGRAMME

For information on Theatre de Complicite's  
regular Open Workshop Programme, write to  
Theatre de Complicite, 20-24 Eden  
Grove, London N7 8ED.

## OVERSEAS

### Patricia Bardi Courses

Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Details: +31 20 6229 742

8-12 JAN, 26 FEB-2 MAR, 21-25 MAY,

18-22 JUNE

VOCAL DANCE AND BODY-MIND

CENTERING

Five day intensive physical training in  
techniques which develop skills connecting  
dance, movement, voice and physical re-  
patterning. Five blocks of five days between  
January and June 1999. There is also the  
opportunity to follow a second and third  
year of further study with Patricia Bardi in  
the Netherlands.

### Centre Selavy

France, Details: +33 545 29 65 56

29 MARCH-10 APRIL

5TH INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP

In Commedia dell'Arte.

### Derevo

Germany, Details: +49 351 801 95 96

SCHOOL ON WHEELS

One and two day workshops taking place in  
different countries throughout the spring.  
Call the above number for details.

### L'Albero Corporal Theatre

Montespertoli, Italy

Details: 0039 571 608891

Workshops and laboratories run by Yves  
Lebreton in techniques including the  
Energetic Body, the Mental Body, the  
Vocal Body, the Musical Body and the  
Comical Body.

### Pantheatre

Paris, Details: +1 44 67 70 53

11 JANUARY-19 FEBRUARY 1999

VOICE, MUSIC AND THEATRE:

FOUNDATIONS AND APPLICATIONS

Six week intensive training directed by  
Linda Wise (voice/theatre direction) with  
Liza Mayer (voice, breath, singing),  
Haim Isaacs (voice, musicality, singing)  
and Enrique Pardo (theatre  
improvisation). Places limited to sixteen  
participants.

1999-2000

MILLENNIUM PROJECT CAMBRIDGE

Two year project in the making, a series  
of workshops on voice, movement and  
choreographic theatre leading to one or  
more performance projects. The overall  
theme will address mythology and the  
millennium, directed by Enrique Pardo  
with Linda Wise, assisted by Faroque  
Khan and Nick Hobbs.

## CONFERENCES

### Consortium for the Co-ordination of European Performance & Theatre Studies (Concepts)

De Montford University, Leicester

Details: 0116 257 7837

APRIL 1999

KANTOR SYMPOSIUM

Celebrating the work of Polish Director  
Tadeusz Kantor. Kantor scholars and  
practitioners, including members of his  
company, will be invited to attend.

### Kaizen/The Manchester Metropolitan University

Alsager

Details: 0161 247 5303

9-12 SEPTEMBER

DANCE THEATRE:

AN INTERNATIONAL INVESTIGATION

International conference bringing together  
scholars, practitioners and producers from  
all over the world. Produced by the  
Department of Contemporary Arts/MMU with  
Kaizen as consultant and co-ordinator, this  
conference promises to bring together a  
wealth of knowledge, insight and material.

### Performance Studies International

Aberystwyth, Wales

Details: 01970 621517

9-12 APRIL

FIFTH PERFORMANCE STUDIES  
CONFERENCE

An investigation of the territory of  
performance studies and its boundaries,  
mapping its different histories, geologies,  
geographies and politics.

## THE LIBERATION OF THE ACTOR

or  
*Getting Beyond Yourself*

FIVE DAY COURSES.

*Kudolf Laban, Rudolf Steiner and  
Gordon Craig through movement,  
speech and settings guide us towards a  
new approach to theatre.*



**Monday to Friday**

plus saturday afternoon performance.

**FEE: £60.00**

COMMENCING FEBRUARY through to JUNE 1999

FOR BOOKLET, DATES AND SCHEDULE INTRODUCING THE COURSES.  
**CHRYSLIS THEATRE 12 BALHAM PARK ROAD.**

**LONDON SW12 8DR. Tel/Fax: 0181 673 4881**

Patron: MARK RYLANCE

Art Director - Globe theatre

# THE DESMOND JONES

## SCHOOL OF MIME AND PHYSICAL THEATRE

The dynamic modern alternative to conventional Drama School, offering a 3-month intensive Foundation Course and a 5-term Course. Spring Foundation Term begins January 12th 1999. Summer Foundation Term begins April 19th 1999 (afternoons only, mon-fri). Fully international. Certificates awarded.

The course includes:

*Decroux Mime Technique, Mime Acting, Story-Telling, Masks, Verbal/Physical/Psychological Improvisation, Style & Stylisation, Body-Balance, Colours, Timing, Caricatures, Commedia dell'Arte, Chimpanzee, Acrobatics, Stage & Body Dynamics, Performance and much more.*

The school gives a thorough and intensive grounding in mime and acting techniques to a very high level of physical expertise, and explores the energy, creativity, excitement and power of modern visual theatre.

We are one of the World's leading schools of Mime and one of the founders of Physical Theatre.

Founded in 1979, it is totally international, the longest-established in Britain and one of the largest of its kind.



### SHORT COURSES

FEBRUARY 13-14

INTRODUCTION TO MASKS (Neutral & Half-Masks)

FEBRUARY 27-28

VERBAL IMPROVISATION - IMPRO! (Keith Johnstone Techniques)

ACT NOW!

Brochures: The Registrar, 20 Thornton Avenue, London W4 1QG. Tel/Fax: 0181 747 3537

## Circomedia Centre for Contemporary Circus & Physical Performance

Full time, intensive training courses in  
Contemporary Circus Theatre:

- \*One year RSA Diploma in Circus Skills & Physical Theatre
- \*Three Month Introductory Course in Circus Skills & Physical Theatre

### PLUS: NEW FLYING TRAPEZE FACILITY

With the opening of a new trapeze hall at its Bristol premises, Circomedia is now able to offer professional classes in Advanced Aerial Skills with internationally acclaimed flying artist Mike Wright.

Skills taught will include:

Petit Volant, Grand Volant, Cloud Swing, Swinging Trapeze (solo & doubles) and Tissu (Silks).

Weekend and week long courses for performers who want to experiment "in the air" from Spring 1999.

Phone for a brochure: + 44 (0) 117 9477288 or write to:  
Circomedia, Britannia Rd, Kingswood, Bristol, BS15 8DB, UK

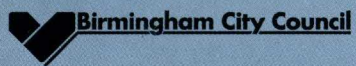


# MOVINGPARTS

17 FEB > 27 MAR

The celebrated annual season of dance and physical theatre at **mac**

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- The David Glass Ensemble > RJC Dance Co.
- Bobby Baker > Aphasia Dance Co.
- Motionhouse > Bouge de la Volcano > Foursight Theatre



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