

TOTALTHEATRE

MAGAZINE

ISSUE 17 | VOLUME 01 | SPRING 2005

TOTAL THEATRE NETWORK CELEBRATING PHYSICAL + VISUAL PERFORMANCE



TOTAL THEATRE COMES OF AGE AND CIRCUS HEADS OFF IN NEW DIRECTIONS.

COME INSIDE TO HEAR LITTLE WHITE LIES AND UNCOVER EXPERIMENTS IN TRUTH.

EXPLORE THE POSTFEMINIST LANDSCAPE.

LEARN THE RULES+REGS.

BE DRAWN TO PERFORM.

PAY TRIBUTE TO AN ENGINEER OF THE IMAGINATION.

WITNESS THE BEST IN CONTEMPORARY PERFORMANCE PRACTICE IN FEATURES,

NEWS AND REVIEWS... FROM PUPPETRY TO PERFORMANCE ART, MIME TO MIXED

REALITY, AERIAL DANCE TO EXPERIMENTAL THEATRE.



That the spoken or written word has the power to move or challenge is seen as a given, whilst it is still sometimes argued that predominantly physical and visual performance forms cannot have that same power. This notion gets short shrift in our lead feature **WHAT IS THIS THING CALLED, LOVE?** DOROTHY MAX PRIOR ^{P8} which looks at Total Theatre past, present and future. The relationship between truth and fiction seems to be an underlying theme to this issue. **LITTLE WHITE LIES** ESTHER SIMPSON ^{P12} reflects on Esther's work with Metro Boulot Dodo whose FIB project looked at why people lie. Another aspect of the truth-and-fiction debate is the use of true stories in devised theatre. **EXPERIMENTS IN TRUTH** MIRANDA BARBER ^{P14} discusses the work of her own company SixOfOne and others in their use of verbatim, tribunal and other theatrical methods used to seek out truth. **IN RULES + REGS** SETH KRIEBEL ^{P17} we hear of a project that aims for an honesty in live art performance through the imposition of set rules and regulations at each curated event. One thing that performing artists are sometimes not so honest about is their age - and issues around ageing and body image are still vital, particularly to female performers, despite 30 years of feminism. **EXPLORING THE LANDSCAPE** DYPHNA CALLERY ^{P18} reflects on these issues within the context of the Total Theatre Explores discussion at the Interdisciplinary Landscapes: Postfeminist Practices in the Arts conference. Still with the physical... **THIS WAY UP** TOM WILSON ^{P20} focuses on the role of the director in circus - proposing that we view new developments in circus within the context of 'hybrid circus' which has quite different aims and methodologies to either the 'classic' or 'new circus' models. Moving from the physical to the visual - the success of visual theatre in recent decades owes much to the wonderful work done by makers and designers. One such person was Greville White, whose sculptures, structures and automata graced the work of Welfare State International and Whalley Range Allstars, amongst many others. **ENGINEER OF THE IMAGINATION** EDWARD TAYLOR/JOHN FOX ^{P22} pays tribute to Greville, who died in 2004. 'Every image embodies a way of seeing' said John Berger. At the Re:Visions Symposium 2004, visual art springboards for performance were discussed, workshopped and reflected on. **DRAWN TO PERFORM** BECCY SMITH ^{P23} is a taster of the day - and for the latest of the User's Guide publications which will follow later this year.

You'll find **REVIEWS** ^{P24} from the visions festival of visual performance 2004, from BAC Octoberfest and elsewhere; our regular sections have been revised. Upfront, there's **NEWS AND PREVIEWS** ^{P4} and **UPDATES FROM PERFORMERS AND COMPANIES** ^{P6}. Towards the back **MEDIA** ^{P31} has a round-up of publications, CDR, websites and other resources. **TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT** ^{P32} gives you the low-down on courses, workshops and conferences coming up in spring 2005.

EDITORIAL

Welcome to Total Theatre 2005. If this is your first encounter with the magazine, congratulations on finding your way to the only national UK publication that celebrates and promotes innovative contemporary theatre and physical/visual performance. We are published by Total Theatre Network, which exists to support and advocate for the artform 'total theatre'. Our definition of 'total theatre' is fluid, but our remit includes physical and devised theatre, visual performance, live art, street arts, circus, mime, new music theatre and puppetry.

If you are a regular reader, you'll see that it's new boots and panties both for the magazine and for the organisation that publishes it. You'll notice that we have a brand new design for the magazine - and behind the scenes, Total Theatre Network has a new director, Felicity Hall, who'll be steering the mother ship from membership organisation to national development agency over the coming year.

Total Theatre will continue to be the face and voice for the myriad performance forms that we represent. That artists should be allowed the freedom of personal expression is something that should go without saying in 2005. Yet we have started the year with a controversy that has brought issues of censorship and artistic freedom to the fore with the closure of Behzti (Dishonour) by Gurpreet Kaur Bhatti at Birmingham Repertory Theatre.

There has been an oddly reticent quality to many of the public statements of support for the artists and venue - perhaps mindful of the proposed 'incitement to religious hatred' bill. Total Theatre would like to take an unequivocal stand in support of the letter circulated by Birmingham Rep which said: '...We particularly deplore the stance of those community and religious leaders of whatever faith who have condemned the production of this play, misrepresented it in clear ignorance of its intent and content, but have not condemned those who have used their faith as an excuse for hooliganism...The violent abuse of power to silence the individual in a community is one of the main themes of this writer's play. It is a sad irony therefore that the violent actions of some of the protesters have actually only served to confirm the play's relevance to us all'. I have not seen Behzti, but this is not the point. Whether I personally like the play or not, whether I am offended or not has no bearing on Gurpreet Kaur Bhatti's right to self-expression as an artist. The inaction in the face of the Fatwa delivered to Salman Rushdie for his novel *The Satanic Verses* is a disgrace that stills casts a shadow over this country - it is imperative that intimidation cloaked as religious sensitivity is never allowed to happen and that all artists and supporters of the arts unite in their rejection of such intimidation and oppression.

We hope you enjoy our new-look Total Theatre Magazine - as always your comments and feedback welcome to the e-mail address below.

Dorothy Max Prior, Editor
editorial@totaltheatre.org.uk

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ITC AND TOTAL THEATRE NETWORK are collaborating to offer a number of benefits to Total Theatre Subscribers. From now until March 2006, all Total Theatre Subscribers who join ITC will receive 20% discount on ITC Organisation and Independent membership and 5% discount on all ITC training courses and seminars. For further details of ITC's work and membership details, please see www.itc-arts.org

TOTAL THEATRE EXPLORES the Creative Renewal Project funded through the European Union Social Fund, which has been researching issues around women in performance, finishes in March 2005. A full report of the project with associated findings will be on the Total Theatre website shortly (totaltheatre.org.uk). This important work will inform future Total Theatre advocacy and professional development programmes.

LONDON INTERNATIONAL MIME FESTIVAL 2005 In full swing as Total Theatre Magazine goes to print, the Mime Festival brings another eclectic mix of physical and visual performance to London, including clown duo Les Witloof from Belgium, physical comedy ensemble Tricicle from Catalan and mask-theatre maestros Family Floez from Germany. Also appearing are 'cult absurdist' Total Theatre Award winners Akhe from Russia with the UK premiere of *Mister Carmen*. There are many UK companies on the bill - including Gecko whose new show *The Race* continues at BAC until 15th Feb. Also programmed in this year's festival was the first ever Total Theatre Lecture, by David Gothard, entitled *The Roots of Visual Theatre: can we ever look Tadeusz Kantor in the face?* (ICA, The Mall, London 22nd Jan 2005). Apologies to LIMF for Total Theatre Magazine's mis-credit of the *Derevo* show *Reflection* (TT 16-3/4 reviews) which was originally presented in the UK by LIMF. See www.mimefest.co.uk.

GECKO THE RACE



LES WITLOOF AT LIMF. PHOTO GUY THERACHE

THE CENTRE FOR PERFORMANCE RESEARCH (CPR) Aberystwyth-based the Centre for Performance Research (CPR) will be celebrating 30 years of work over 2005. What began with the experimental theatre company Cardiff Laboratory Theatre (founded in 1974) became CPR (the Centre for Performance Research) in 1988. For full details of the year's events, including the *Towards Tomorrow* conference in April, see the company's website. CPR is pleased to announce that it will be publishing Krzysztof Plesniarowicz's *The Dead Memory Machine* - a hugely revised, expanded and updated version of the first book-length study of Kantor's *Theatre of Death*, originally published in Polish in 1990, including many additional images and illustrations. For details of this publication and for CPR's 2005 programme of events T: +44 (0) 1970 622133. e mail: cprwww@aber.ac.uk, see www.theopr.org.uk

THE NATIONAL STREET ARTS MEETING (NSAM) & STREETS OF BRIGHTON 2005 marks the 9th year of the NSAM, the UK's leading street arts conference. The NSAM is a key event in the UK street arts annual calendar, attracting national and European artists, producers, directors, funding bodies and local authorities to meet and debate current issues within the sector. It will be held Thursday 12th to Saturday 14th May 2005 and will run alongside the *Streets of Brighton* programme. As part of the Brighton Festival, *Streets of Brighton* will present an exciting range of street arts events with an 'On/Off' programme based on the French festival model. Contact Isabelle Boudaud on 01273 821588, email: Isabelle@zapuk.com

LEGS ON THE WALL FELLOWSHIP Arts Council England in association with the New South Wales Ministry for the Arts is delighted to announce an International Fellowship opportunity with Legs on the Wall, Australia's leading physical theatre company. Legs on the Wall is looking to host an established UK-based theatre practitioner in July 2005 on a major new production. To register your interest in this opportunity or to receive further details, please email kate.booth@artscouncil.org.uk. See www.artscouncil.org.uk and www.legsonthewall.com.au/new/

ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND - GRANTS FOR THE ARTS The period for submitting Grants for the Arts applications for individuals, organisations and national touring has been extended from 28th February to 31st August 2005. See www.artscouncil.org.uk for full information and for contact details of your regional Arts Council England office.

CB PROJECTS Chenine Bhatena's cb projects are currently developing projects for 2005, working with key clients, including Australia's Legs On The Wall (touring Spring 05), Company FZ (Spring/Summer 05), Contemporary Clowning Projects (Spring 06), Jade Summer (05) and Circlation in April 05. www.cbprojects.co.uk

MOVING PARTS 2005 The Midland Arts centre (MAC) Moving Parts festival runs February to March 2005. Highlights include Kathak dancer Sonia Sabri's *Red*; David Glass Ensemble with *Disembodied*; Company F/Z *Losers*; *Out of the Blue*, a new work from *Rejects Revenge*; Shobana Jeyasingh Dance Company's new work *Flicker* with specially commissioned digital visuals and music by iconic British composer Michael Nyman; *Bandbazi's In Audrey Hepburn's Arms*; Miren Theatre's *Leave to Remain*; *Darkin Ensemble's Hotel*; Theatre Alibi with *Close to Home*. e mail enquiries@macarts.co.uk, minicom 0121 440 4923. See www.macarts.co.uk

THE OXFORD SAMUEL BECKETT THEATRE TRUST AWARD Applications are invited for The Oxford Samuel Beckett Theatre Trust Award 2005. A grant of up to £30,000 and a three week run at Riverside Studios (Studio 3) in November 2005 will be awarded to an individual or company for a production of their choice. Bold, innovative and challenging projects from emerging practitioners will be favoured. Artists from all disciplines are encouraged to apply. Application deadline 18th February 2005. For full details visit www.osbttrust.com



IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SUBMIT NEWS OR LISTINGS OR TO ADVERTISE IN THE NEXT ISSUE, PLEASE NOTE THAT THE COPY DEADLINE IS 7 MARCH 2005.



JOAN SCHIRLE OF DELL'ARTE. PHOTO: ROBIN ROBIN



AURORA NOVA DIRECTOR FOR THE DUBLIN FRINGE FESTIVAL Wolfgang Hoffman, the acclaimed artistic director of Aurora Nova (twice winners of Total Theatre Award for most supportive venue at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe) has been appointed director of the Dublin Fringe Festival See www.fringefest.com; email wolfgang@fringefest.com

DELL'ARTE INTERNATIONAL celebrated 30 years of ensemble performance, actor training and research with last summer's greatest hits *The Thirty Show* and in October premiered a contemporary adaptation of *The Miser*, now on tour. Founding Artistic Director Joan Schirle's solo mask show, *Second Skin*, played the COS Festival of Mime and Gestural Theatre in Reus, Spain, and she was honoured with an award at the 16th Cairo Experimental Theatre Festival. From June 21 - 26 2005, DAI hosts over a dozen U.S. companies for the National Ensemble Theatre Festival, including SITI, the SF Mime Troupe, and Universes. DAI's Mad River Festival is June 28 - July 24. e info@dellarte.com www.dellarte.com

PLATEAUX - NEW POSITIONS IN INTERNATIONAL PERFORMING ARTS is a supportive model for young performing artists and invites international artists, performers and companies in the field of experimental theatre, performance art and live art to send in conceptual proposals. The proposals should display a discrete and textually well founded aesthetic position. plateaux commissions a limited number of productions and invites the artists for production residencies of up to 6 weeks, starting in September 2005. The productions will then be presented during the plateaux festival Frankfurt/Main from November 3 to 13, 2005. plateaux deadline 1st March 2005. Enquiries to plateaux@moussonturm.de. See www.plateaux.info

FUEL is a producing organisation set up in Sept 2004, working in partnership with artists to develop, create and present new work for all ages; particularly in the field of live performance. Louise Blackwell, Kate McGrath and Sarah Quelch are the Fuel directors. Fuel is a BAC and Jerwood Charity supported producer. Fuel (based at BAC, Lavender Hill, London) is currently producing the work of Gecko, Patter, Mark Murphy, Sound & Fury, Will Adamsdale and The Clod Ensemble. Contact: +44 (0) 20 7228 6688 info@fueltheatre.com www.fueltheatre.com

FORMA Launched in 2002, forma has already established an International reputation for its programme. They work with renowned artists such as Cerith Wyn Evans, Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster, Kim Gordon, Ryoji Ikeda, Carsten Nicolai, Philippe Parreno, DJ Rupture, Ryuichi Sakamoto, Saburo Teshigawara and Richard Wilson, but also work regularly with equally interesting artists at earlier stages of their careers. Based in central Newcastle upon Tyne [UK], Forma is funded by Arts Council England. E mail info@forma.org.uk or phone +44 191 230 4646 or see www.forma.org.uk to find out more about this season's past projects, forthcoming events and more.

NEW TERRITORIES This annual Glasgow festival/event runs from Monday 7 February - Saturday 19 March 2005. The thrill of the new, everything from three-hour epics to five-minute snatches of some of the most exciting, innovative and sometimes downright weird bits of dance, art installation, performance art and otherwise unspecified creative happenings currently reverberating around the globe. Features The National Review of Live Art (Wednesday 9 - Sunday 13 February, Winter School (Monday 9 February - Saturday 5 March) and new territories main stage programme (22 February - 19 March). For further information please contact admin@newmoves.co.uk. Programme now live on www.newmoves.co.uk

HOME TO HOME is delighted to announce a major award from The Heritage Lottery Fund, towards a festival based on rural medieval traditions, which will launch its new space, home Suffolk in a listed medieval church in the village of Rishangles, with a wide range of spaces for performance inside the building as well as in the graveyard, gardens and adjacent fields. Their projected programme will include the Church Ale Performance Festival and Live Art Residency Programme. Live Art Retreat, which will start in 2006, will provide contemplative space, mentoring and opportunities for networking and the production of new work, in the inspiring, rural environment of the church, and operate like a contemporary artists' retreat. Contact Laura Godfrey-Isaacs, T: 07957 565336, email Lgihome@aol.com See www.Lgihome.co.uk

EXCHANGE & ART An event for all those working in the performing arts sector on Wednesday 9th March 2005 - 11am - 5.30pm at HG Wells Conference & Events Centre, Woking, Surrey, presented by SETA, the regional venue & promoter development organisation. The event provides networking, promotional, debating and showcase opportunities for artists, programmers, companies, performers, venues, promoters, festivals, educators, agencies, development organisations, authorities, funders and all arts and cultural professionals. Further information and booking details: info@seta.org.uk, T: 01634 818901 www.exchangeandart.co.uk

THEATRE ROYAL BATH - CHILDREN'S THEATRE is opening a dedicated theatre space (120 seat) for children and young people in Autumn 2005 and invites companies to send any relevant publicity material for plays/proposals for devised work suitable for a young or family audience to Kate Cross, Theatre Royal Bath, Sawclose, Bath BA1 1ET. T: 01225 823435. kate.cross@theatreroyal.org.uk. See www.theatreroyal.org.uk and click on the egg.

10 YEARS OF THE CROYDON CLOCKTOWER As part of their 10 year anniversary programme, Croydon Clocktower are presenting the British Indian dance company Angika whose new work features an exciting original score composed by India's well-known exponents of electronica, MIDIVAL PunditZ (as featured in the film *Monsoon Wedding*). Other highlights for the 2005 season include: Linda Marlowe in *Mortal Ladies Possessed*; Clown, Travelling Light Theatre Company's co-production with Bristol Old Vic; The Cornish Theatre Collective /James Seabright presentation of *The Alchemist*; Muttnik - *The First Dog in Space* performed by Niki McCretton and Third Angel's *The Lad Lit Project*. Contact: Jonathan Kennedy on 020 8253 1037 e: jonathan.kennedy@croydon.gov.uk. See www.croydon.gov.uk/clocktower

PERFORMER & COMPANY UPDATES

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MUTTNIK AT TAKE ART



ANGEL EXIT THEATRE COMPANY recently performed in the U.S. for the first time, at the Revolutions Festival in Albuquerque, New Mexico (January 2005). Their new show, Faraway from Blighthope, is in creation and is set in the absurd world of an immigration detention centre. The show will be available for touring from late May 2005. Contact Tamsin Fessey t 07855 599068. e info@angelexit.com www.angelexit.com

COMPANY FZ open the year with shows of Loser at the London International Mime Festival, followed by a short UK tour plus further UK/International dates for Throat. Over Easter, the company will be developing a new co-production with Jade. In June they open their new production OCD at Contact Theatre, Manchester followed by a season of all of their work in Edinburgh for the Fringe Festival. In autumn 2005 they will develop a new touring alternative Christmas production. See their website at www.companyfz.com. Contact CB Projects. e info@cbprojects.co.uk www.cbprojects.co.uk

CONTEMPORARY CLOWNING PROJECTS Angela De Castro is developing her next show Only Fools No Horses with director John Wright and writer Sarah Woods, and undertaking R&D for this production in Spring/Summer 2005, ready to go into production and tour in Spring 2006. De Castro also continues to develop the Why Not Institute professional development programme for clown-actors. Email: info@cbprojects.co.uk www.contemporaryclowningprojects.com

DYNAMIC NEW ANIMATION For spring 2005, DNA's Atishoo! (for children under 6 and their families) will be touring to Bath, London, Bristol, Hemel Hempstead and Coventry. From Easter, DNA will be touring Baba Yaga Boney Legs, a performance for families. Baba Yaga will be touring throughout 2005, and in the summer will be a feature performance in DNA's unique puppet marquee Puppets a Go Go!, a touring outdoor venue incorporating a variety of performances, workshops and activities for children and adults. DNA will also be running professional development workshops in Preston in 2005 for artists, performers and practitioners. Tel: 01772 253100 Email: dna@dynamicnewanimation.co.uk

FOURSIGHT THEATRE presents Welcome To My World by Christine Watkins and Home Sweet Home by Penni Gillis. Two new plays from West Midlands playwrights developed from page to stage. Performances 2nd - 5th March 2005 at 7.30pm, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton. Contact Emma Beale. t 01902 714257 e foursight.theatre@boltblue.com www.foursight.theatre.boltblue.net

GECKO Hot on the heels of the whirlwind international tour of their first show; Taylor's Dummies, Gecko is back with their brand new show The Race. Surfing from image to image on a swell of physical energy and visual explosiveness, Gecko will take you on a ride. Tumbling from scene to scene, The Race follows the journey of a man trying to reconnect his feelings and truly live. The Race is currently (until 15th Feb 2005) at BAC as part of the 2005 London International Mime Festival, Gecko then move on to Komedia, Brighton (15 - 19 Feb) then Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry (23 - 26 Feb) www.fueltheatre.com

GONZO MOOSE Physical comedy company Gonzo Moose are back with a brand new show, I Am A Viking which tells the epic tale of a man who gave it his best shot... Directed by leading contemporary clown practitioner Gerry Flanagan (Complicite, David Glass Ensemble and Shifting Sands), I Am A Viking combines clowning, theatre, slapstick, and bizarre puppetry. This show will appeal to all lovers of the ridiculous, from 13 years up. Contact Mark Conway. T 07866 828456, or e gonzo.moose@virgin.net.

GRAVITY AND LEVITY This stunning aerial dance company, led by Lindsey Butcher, will be touring from 5 May - 27 June 2005, with a promenade installation performance Taking Flight, with the installation directed by Kevin Finnan (Motionhouse). The show has just received touring funds from Arts Council England. Gravity & Levity recently won the SEDA Dance for the Camera Award to make an aerial dance short for the camera as part of this programme. e info@cbprojects.co.uk www.gravity-levity.net

HORSE + BAMBOO Rossendale-based Horse + Bamboo Theatre, one of Europe's leading visual theatres, has won a coveted Manchester Evening News (M.E.N.) Theatre Award for its current touring production, A Strange (And Unexpected) Event! The show, which is enjoying a 4-week stint in Holland following a sell-out success in the UK, won the Best Special Entertainment Award. A Strange (And Unexpected) Event! has been playing to rave reviews and earned its nomination for a fantastic week long run at Manchester's Royal Exchange Theatre, which was sold out more than a month ahead of appearing there in November. T 01706-220241 www.horseandbamboo.org

JADE After the huge success of Cake, Jade are now looking to take the show overseas as well as a further tour in the UK in summer 05. They are also planning a collaboration with Company FZ for a middle scale production to tour in 2005/06 and a new show with writer Sarah Woods for 2006/07. Email info@cbprojects.co.uk Web: www.jadetc.co.uk

RAJNI SHAH



KAZUKO HOHOKI'S writing was recently to be heard on The Wire (Radio 3), Directed by Polly Thomas with music by Clive Bell and Tim Hope, this was a story about a Tottenham teenager who believes she is Moon Princess in a Japanese folk tale. Kazuko has also spent the Xmas season appearing in Duckie's C'est Barbican. www.kazukohohki.com

LEGS ON THE WALL All details are now confirmed for a spring 05 tour for the spectacular and groundbreaking innovators of physical and acrobatic theatre Legs On The Wall with their hit production All Of Me, directed by Nigel Jamieson. The company will be leading masterclasses in both London on 25-26 February for professional dancers/ performers. For more information on participation please contact: info@cbprojects.co.uk www.legsonthewall.com.au

NOLA RAE, LONDON MIME/THEATRE Mozart Preposteroso continues to be popular and will be performed in Bridport Arts Centre (5th Feb 2005), ATP de Millau (11th March) and Falmouth Arts Centre (31st March) while Nola's latest show Exit Napoleon Pursued by Rabbits, after performances at the London International Mime Festival in January, will be at Norwich Playhouse (12th Feb) TR Bury St Edmunds (13th April) and Christ's Hospital, Horsham (26th April). On 29 or 30 April, Nola Rae will perform Elizabeth's Last Stand in Andorra. Contact: Valerie West. t 020-8444 6248 e vwest@dircon.co.uk www.nolarae.btinternet.co.uk

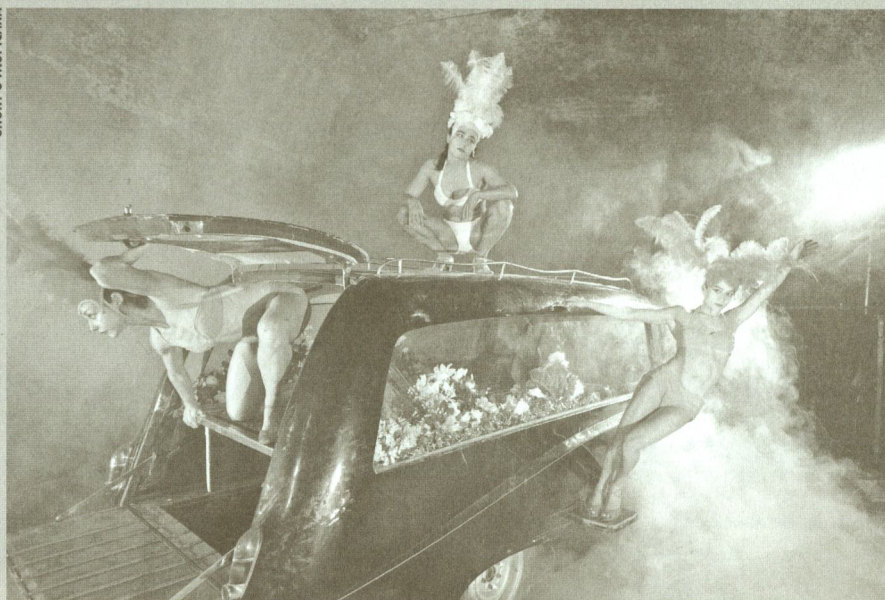
PLATFORM 4 present Claustrophobia - The Bates Hotel meets Penelope Keith with lashings of surreal charm. Platform 4 has developed a reputation for producing unique theatrical gems. Don't miss what promises to be a sinister, sensual and sensational night out from one of the South's most exciting performance companies. Contact: Catherine Church Email: catherine@platform4.org Tel: 01962 622050 www.platform4.org

RAJNI SHAH THEATRE will be presenting a new extract from Mr Quiver as part of ROAR at the Chelsea Theatre on January 24, and will be part of the Sprint Festival 2005 at the Camden Peoples Theatre. The Spring Season at Hoxton Hall has been cancelled due to the sudden closure of Hoxton Hall, but Mr Quiver will be premiering in full in autumn 2005. Email: rajni@rajnishah.com www.rajnishah.com

GONZO MOOSE

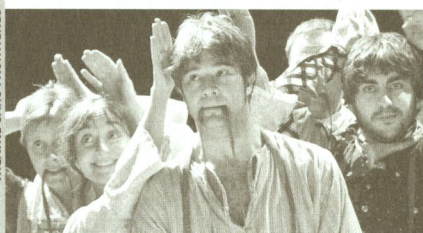


SHUNT'S TROPICANA



THEATRE ALIBI'S new show *Close to Home* uses three personal stories to track the mysterious homing instincts of the heart. Nationally renowned for shows like *One in a Million*, *Shelf Life* and *little White Lies*, Theatre Alibi create a compelling production with heart-stopping music, powerful physical performance and a Muppet... Contact: Annemarie MacDonald. t 01392 217315 e alibi@eclipse.co.uk

THEATRE SANS FRONTIÈRES



REJECTS REVENGE THEATRE COMPANY

The Rejects - in collaboration with Spike Theatre Company and Unity Theatre Liverpool - developed *Hoof!* with Todd Stashwick of the Hothouse Improvisation Studio in Los Angeles. An evening of long-form improv based on *The Beast* performed for the first time in the UK. *Out of the Blue* is a new poetic fiction inspired by the murky and submerged tale of the sinking of HMS *Thetis* in 1939. Directed by John Wright and written by Andrea Earl, *Out of the Blue* opens at The Everyman Theatre, Liverpool from February 15th-19th and tours nationally until March 25th. Tour dates on the company website. t/f 0151 708 8480 www.rejectsrevenge.com

SHUNT'S latest project *Tropicana* has been extended to 24 March 2005 and will now be performed five nights a week instead of three. The event is performed in the company's new space, a labyrinth of railway arches under London Bridge Station. Devised by the company, *Tropicana* is the first event at shunt's new residency where they will perform over the next three years and it is presented in collaboration with the National Theatre. www.shunt.co.uk

TALL STORIES The company produced three shows during the Xmas 2004 season: *The Owl* and *the Pussycat* at Norden Farm (Maidenhead) and at Lakeside Arts Centre (Nottingham, different cast); and *The Gruffalo* at the Pleasance in Islington. During 2005 they will be touring two brand new shows: *The Snow Dragon*, about a small goat who isn't sure whether he believes in the mythical creature or not; and *Them With Tails*, a semi-improvised story-telling show which is a co-production with Network of Stuff. www.tallstories.org.uk

THÉÂTRE SANS FRONTIÈRES are touring the UK with a revival of its successful Spanish production, *El Sombrero de Tres Picos*. This spring, the cast and crew of *Around the World in 80 Minutes*, the follow on production from *Le Tour de France*, are planning to film the final part of the production on location in Quebec. Whilst in Quebec, artistic directors John Cobb and Sarah Kemp will continue work on a forthcoming collaboration with the company's patron, international director and actor Robert Lepage. Théâtre Sans Frontières is now booking theatres for *Around the World in 80 Minutes*, which will be touring nationally in autumn 2005. Contact: Michelle van den Berg t 01434 652484 e admin@tsfront.co.uk www.theatresansfrontieres.co.uk

THIRD ANGEL has three new works opening in spring 2005: *The Lad Lit Project* premieres at Sheffield's Crucible Studio on February 2, followed by another 34 dates around the UK, *Palm* is a new commission from Home for a performance by a single audience member (Friday 4 March), and at the other extreme, *Standing Alone, Standing Together* is a Sheffield Galleries and Museums Trust commission for a performance for 50 performers in a public through route. Contact Hilary Foster t: 0114 281 2044 e mail@thirdangel.co.uk www.thirdangel.co.uk

TIEBREAK THEATRE



TIEBREAK THEATRE Tiebreak's Increased Access programme enables schools in economically deprived areas of Norwich to receive professional theatre on site. Their New Partners Award (supported by Marsh Ltd) will also allow Tiebreak to run workshops for primary school children and teachers as well as produce an educational DVD. The programme will run in conjunction with Tiebreak's spring 05 tour of *Jack and the Beanstalk*. The company (in residency Xmas 2004 at Watermans, Brentford with *Jack and the Beanstalk*) is keen to hear from venues seeking a family show for Christmas 2005. Contact Kaja Holloway. t 01603 665899. e info@tiebreak-theatre.com

TRAVELLING LIGHT THEATRE COMPANY Clown, Travelling Light's first co-production with Bristol Old Vic, finished a successful run at the theatre before beginning its national tour. The play is an adaptation of the Quentin Blake's wordless book. Inspired by this, director Sally Cookson has created a piece of theatre without text, to encourage the audience to take an active part in interpreting what they see and hear. Designer Isla Shaw has brought the story to life within the framework of a Victorian theatre box design. The original score has been created by composer Stu Barker whose recent theatre music includes *The Bacchae* for Kneehigh Theatre. Tour dates are on the company website. www.travlight.co.uk

WELFARE STATE INTERNATIONAL Plans are afoot for WSI's Mad March Weekend (24 - 27 March 2005) during which Lanternhouse becomes host to a celebration of Longline (WSI's current major three year community artwork linking communities, industries round Morecambe Bay. The weekend will feature performances by school groups, junk bands, community choirs, mini movies and more. t 01229 581127 e info@welfare-state.com www.welfare-state.com

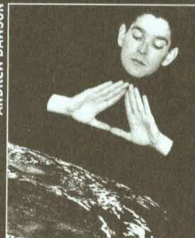
WHAT IS THIS THING CALLED, LOVE?

TOTAL THEATRE COMES OF AGE. AS WE ENTER OUR 21ST YEAR, DOROTHY MAX PRIOR LOOKS AT WHERE WE'VE COME FROM, WHERE WE ARE NOW AND WHERE WE ARE HEADING.

NOLA RAE - EXIT NAPOLEON PURSUED BY RABBITS. PHOTO MATTHEW RIDOUT.



ANDREW DAWSON



Total Theatre is 21 this year - how time flies when you're having fun. Once an Action Group (how 80's!) for a beleaguered artform, Total Theatre is all grown up now, having developed over the past two decades into an organisation that celebrates, promotes and supports a mixed-bag of live performance practices - physical and devised theatre, visual performance, live art, street art, contemporary circus, puppetry - and mime. Ah yes - mime. That's where we came in 21 years ago...

In 1984 the Mime Action Group (MAG) was formed to 'promote the art of mime and related disciplines'. The organisation's newsletter was called MAGazine and the first copy - twelve typewritten A5 pages - appeared in autumn 1984. There's a call-to-arms by Helen Lannaghan, MAG co-ordinator and co-director of the London International Mime Festival; news of tours by founder members *THEATRE DE COMPLICITE*, *TRESTLE THEATRE*, *DAVID GLASS AND NOLA RAE* (all still going strong); a slightly defiant feature on *MARCEL MARCEAU* by mime guru *DESMOND JONES*; and an artist's diary by bright young things *ANDREW DAWSON* and *GAVIN ROBERTSON*, known collectively as the *MIME THEATRE PROJECT*, whose show *Thunderbirds* was wowing audiences who had no idea that they were witnessing 'mime'.

By 1986, MAG was establishing itself as

a force to be reckoned with, taking up the funding battle with an open letter to the Arts Council entitled 'A Fight for Survival' from three MAG company members - *TRESTLE*, *TRICKSTER* and *THEATRE DE COMPLICITE*. 'We, the undersigned...' it starts 'have joined together to stop the inevitable closure of our companies unless measures are taken now'. They go on to say 'Mime, as classified by the Arts Council, is so diverse an artform that they don't know what to do with it'. Well, despite the odds, two out of those three companies are going strong today.

The MAGazine listings in the mid to late 80's show an interesting new batch of emerging artists and projects - including *Ra Ra Zoo*, *Black Mime Theatre*, *Guy Dartnell's Voxhall Bridge*, *Bim Mason's Mummerandada*, *Mick Wall's Circus Burlesque*, a collaboration between *David Glass* and *Peta Lily*, *Kneehigh Theatre* and *Ralf Ralf*.

Summer '88 brought an extraordinary tussle with the Edinburgh Fringe First Awards, following the Scotman's decision to exclude mime companies from eligibility for a Fringe First. A sea of letters from MAG members were sent to Scotsman arts editor *Allen Wright*, questioning this decision. A rather peevish reply from Mr. Wright states that Fringe First Awards exist to support drama: 'the encouragement of new writing remained our principal objective'. He

for comedy reviews and the Radio Forth award for musical performances. Well, glad we've moved on with that one - winning not only Total Theatre Awards (which were set up in 1997 to 'bring attention to the success of physical and visual theatre companies in the Edinburgh Fringe') but also Fringe Firsts in recent years have been a whole host of physical/visual theatre shows - including La Divina Commedia by Derevo and Fabrik's Pandora 88.

Perhaps, though, this Edinburgh battle was the straw that broke the camel's back for 'mime' for in 1989 comes the first Total Theatre magazine. The organisation is still called MAG - it's to be a few years until it too changes its name (1997), but there are the first stirrings towards the shift in the re-naming of the publication. Total Theatre number 1 features a naked man on the cover (yes - a noble tradition we aim to continue - Bob Berky if you want to know) and it comes with a by-line 'the magazine for mime, physical and visual theatre'.

By the mid-90's collaboration with other organisations is a vital part of MAG's work. Moving into Performance, held in Manchester in September 1994 brought together practitioners from Britain, Europe, America and Australia in a week-long exploration of the state of the art. Some of the aims included: considering models for devising; considering the relationship between the three languages of the physical, the visual and the spoken; exploring the way new mime, physical theatre and visual performance were being created across the cultures of Europe. The peer-group exchange practical workshops that characterised the event were a model of practice that MAG/Total Theatre very much made its own, with a similar model used for the subsequent Raising the Voice of Silence and Discovery programmes. In 'The M-Word', the keynote address to the event, co-director of the London International Mime Festival Joseph Seelig gave a few pointers to what mime was and was not: It was a genuine visual theatre, not reliant on the word for making its mark or for what it wanted to say. It was neither a mixture of word and arm-waving - nor a script with movement bolted on.

Moving into Performance coincided with the organisation's 10th anniversary. In a Total Theatre feature called 'Ten Years On ...and still something to say' Simon Murray laments the passing of companies like Trickster and Moving Picture Mime, commends survivors like Forced Entertainment, Complicite and Kaboodle and welcomes into the family relative newcomers like DV8, Rejects Revenge, The Right Size and Theatre Sans Frontieres. At the heart of his feature is a discussion of what we mean by this artform known

COMPLICITE - A MINUTE TOO LATE



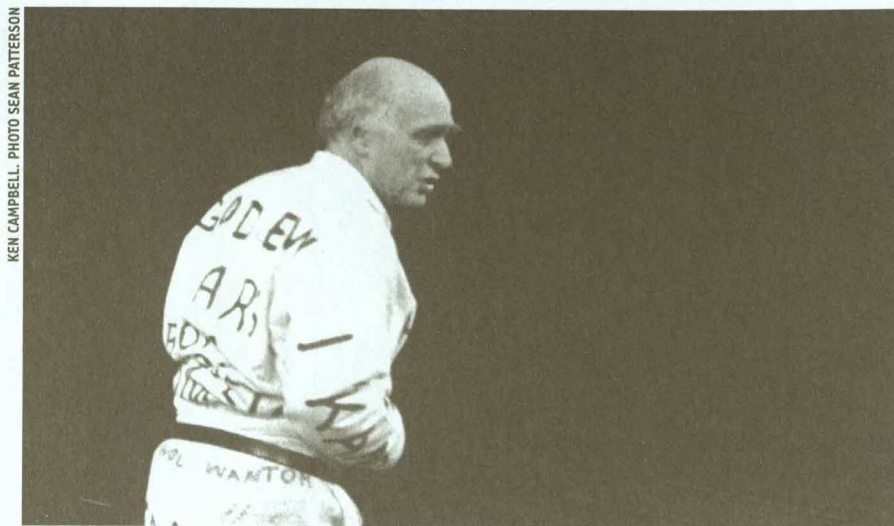
'Visual theatre is not just a powerful technique for gingering up literary theatre'

Joseph Seelig, co-director of London International Mime Festival from 'The M-Word' - Moving into Performance 1994.

variously as mime/physical theatre/total theatre and its relationship to the mainstream. One of his concerns is the question of form or technique versus content. He quotes the many critical commentaries on physical performance (from Michael Billington amongst others) that complain that it is all a show of technique without any moral content. Hopefully, in an era when we acknowledge the power of the visual image, some of the prejudice against the eye-ful rather than the ear-ful has disappeared. Yet I don't think we would need to go far to find theatre critics who would still agree with Les Smith's contention (quoted by Murray, Total Theatre Vol 6/3) that 'almost everything worth saying on stage requires words - reams of them...' Then - as now - the question arises of what we mean by 'having something to say'. The Smith review quoted complains that 'everyone climbs ladders with beautiful synchronicity but when they get to the top of them they have nothing much to say'. Doesn't standing on the top of a ladder say anything to you? It did to me when I saw Shifting Sands' Romeo and Juliet (Hawth, Feb 2004). Juliet up a ladder for the balcony scene spoke volumes. Even before she opened her mouth, her absurd, teetering vulnerability

gave us her out-of-herself on-the-edge emotional state of fear-of-falling (falling in love, falling out of grace, the fall of original sin - sexuality). Of course, of course - I'm preaching to the converted. But the battle's not won yet.

Back in 1994, there was a concern expressed that physical and visual forms of theatre were somehow not appropriate media for political statement - a question that arose recently at the Total Theatre Talks Street Inspirations discussion at xtrax (June 2004). The answer is surely that any artform can address the political. Yet choreographer Bill T. Jones was quizzed on this same tired old question during press interviews for his summer 2004 tour. Can dance-theatre be political? His reply was something along these lines: there is nothing more political than the sight of a black man and a white man walking down the street together in the Southern states of America holding hands. From the early days of the Civil Rights campaigns to the Women's Movement, Gay Liberation Front and beyond - those oppressed because of race, gender or sexuality have always known that a physical gesture can be as political as any written polemic. And, as any painter, sculptor or filmmaker knows, our psyche can be stirred, our empathy



KEN CAMPBELL. PHOTO SEAN PATTERSON

engaged, our sense of injustice aroused, just as strongly by a visual image as by a speech.

So if we accept that physical, visual and verbal expression are all potentially powerful tools of expression - what of the relationship between word, action and visual image on stage?

At the Total Theatre Salon, held at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in August 2004, the inter-relationship between these theatrical elements and the place of spoken text in 'total theatre' was a hot topic. 'Where there is too much emphasis on text in conventional theatre, in total theatre it seems sometimes shunned' was one comment. After all, as Rudolf Von Laban pointed out, the voice is a part of the physical body. It was also pointed out that there are many different ways to use spoken text: 'Text can be a sound texture. This can be made up by pure sound, an unintelligible fantasy language or more conventional texts with a strong focus on rhythm and sound as in Mamet and Berkof'. On the question of how much text is 'too much' - David J.J. Johnson of Lazzi! had the most succinct of answers: too much is 'One word more than you absolutely need'.

One definition of 'physical and visual theatre' has traditionally been that it is theatre that doesn't work on the radio - so this was one of the teaser questions thrown to the Salon. Perhaps surprisingly, radio was embraced as a medium for physical/visual performance by many of the practitioners present: 'I first heard Monty Python on the radio and found it funnier on the radio than on TV.' said Richard Cuming of Winchester University. Marianne Sharp said 'Radio is a very physical medium - and all physical theatre work has a rhythm and a sound running through it. You can see sound and hear action. Some people hear the phone ring in a colour'. So perhaps it is time for a name change - from Total Theatre to Synaesthetic Theatre?

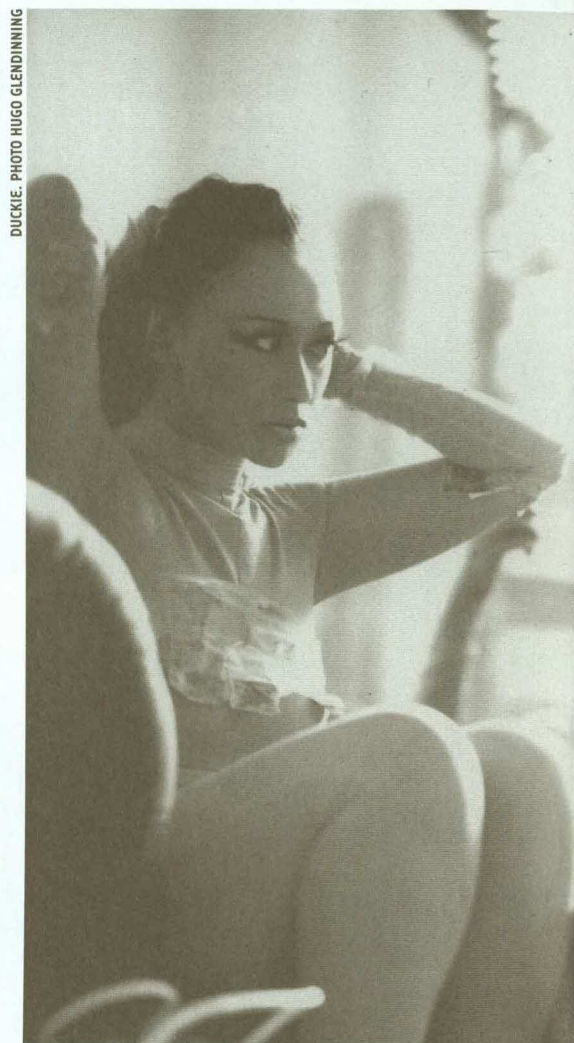
No, no - Total Theatre will do. On the



DAVID GLASS ENSEMBLE. PHOTO KEITH PATTISON

question of definitions - they've preoccupied us all for a long time - too long perhaps. Rather than add more definitions to a term that has been bandied around a fair bit (from Wagner to Artaud to Moholy-Nagy to Grotowski to Schechner even before we got our hands on it) let's focus instead on the work, and let that serve as a 'liquid map of shifting territory' as dramaturg Phil Smith sees it.

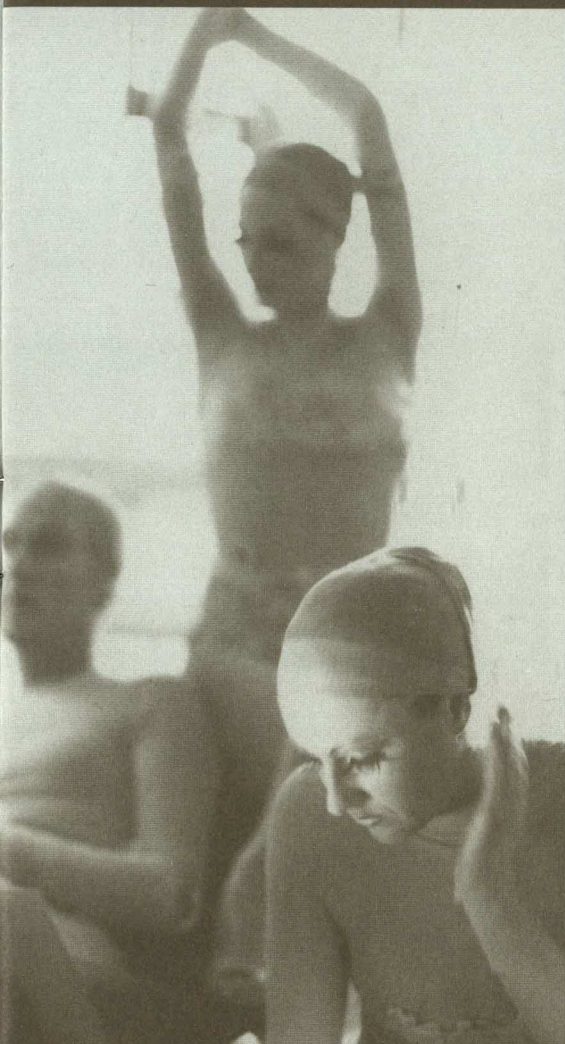
First, there are those who were there when we started 20 years ago. Complicite, who have taken Lecoq-based mime and physical/devised theatre into the mainstream and into new collaborations with other artforms, especially music. They are currently (Jan-Feb 2005) at the National Theatre with *A Minute Too Late*, a revival of their second show, redirected by Simon McBurney who appears with Jos Houben and Marcello Magni. Forced Entertainment, for their investigation into the nature of theatre itself and the role of the active witness, recently celebrating their birthday with the LIFT Indoor Fireworks season. Solo artists such as Nola Rae, David Glass and Ken Campbell, who in



DUCKIE. PHOTO HUGO GLENNING

their different ways have proved the power of performer-centred theatre. Performance artists Rose English and Lois Weaver have bridged the gaps between theatre, live art and vaudeville. Welfare State International made their name as innovators of large-scale outdoor spectacle but subsequently followed an alternative path that has brought ritual and rite of passage ceremony back into the domains of theatre. Dance-theatre artists Lea Anderson and Liz Aggiss have challenged the dull abstraction of much physical performance practice, adding in burlesque and sexual politics. Street-art tricksters Natural Theatre Company prove that some good can come of an art-school training. The Little Angel Theatre, venue and producing company at the forefront of the revived interest in puppetry and animation. Forkbeard Fantasy have brought film and live performance together in ever-more weird and wonderful ways.

Festivals such as London International Festival of Theatre (LIFT), BAC Octoberfest, visions, Aurora Nova, x.trax and of course the London International Mime Festival, have brought us wonders from around the world. UK-based artists are recognised and supported too within these festivals: LIMF, for example, is currently offering us the exuberant music-mime-circus of Gecko's The Race.

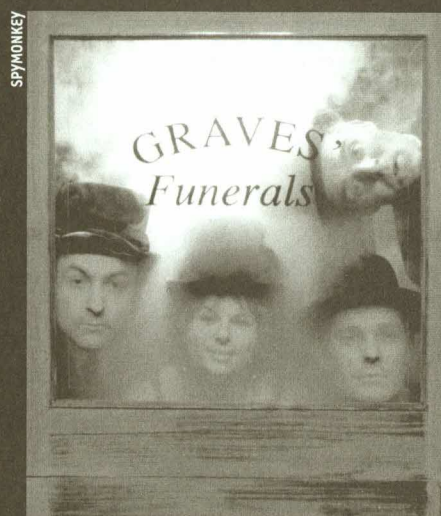


moved on a fair bit, and this whatever-you-call-it (mime, physical, devised, visual, total theatre) has become embedded in the mainstream. Told By An Idiot and Improbable Theatre play at major venues, and their directors, designers and performers are called upon to contribute to work by mainstream companies. BAC director Tom Morris has moved on to the National Theatre, having taken Jerry Springer - The Opera from scratch at BAC to NT to West End. The Right Size, Ridiculusmus and Peepolykus have taken physical comedy and clowning into the heart of theatre. Spymonkey have flown away to work with Cirque du Soleil in Las Vegas. Duckie have taken bawdy new vaudeville from the Vauxhall Tavern to the Edinburgh Fringe to the Barbican International Theatre Event Xmas run for the second year running.

So that's about it for this quick tour of Total Theatre's past 21 years. What now my love? Where next are we heading? Who knows what the future will hold - but here's a few clues:

'A theatre which furnishes the spectator with the truthful precipitates of dreams'

Antonin Artaud, theatre-maker and writer.



RADIO KILLS THE VIDEO STAR

Pictures in the head... Rose English, Tim Etchells, The Wooster Group and Kazuko Hohki have all turned up on our airwaves with experimental theatre pieces/soundscapes.

RETURN OF THE MAN IN WHITE

Les Enfants du Paradis, the cult film starring the divine Jean-Louis Barrault and featuring the godfather of modern mime Etienne Decroux, surfaced for a special showing at the Mime Festival 2005. Set in France in the 1840's, it'll prompt a revival of real 'pantomime' - mark my words.

FAIRGROUND BOOTHS AND ATTRACTIONS

More than a metaphor - the actual physical experience of being taken for a trip into another little world, be it Carnesky's Ghost Train, Stan's Café's Black Maze or Whalley Range Allstars Bedcases, is what it's all about. Expect ever more bizarre rides and sideshows.

HYBRID CIRCUS

Company FZ have taken circus arts into new hybrid forms. Artists like Giselle Edwards, who's mixing aerial dance-circus with opera, and Chloe Black, who's investigating the place where circus meets live art and feminist politics, are already at it - next?

EVER MORE EXTRAORDINARY COLLABORATIONS

Art/Sci and then some - Jyll Bradley's floristry into performance art practice and live art meets cookery interactions at Home. Mermaid-tail swimming, zero gravity in space and art installation meets marine biology. Is there anything out there that can't be incorporated into performance practice? Accountancy? Rugby? Plumbing?

GAME BOY, GAME GIRL

Blast Theory make art events based on gaming - meanwhile, the kids are playing Final Fantasy and Prince of Persia. The games just get better and better - suspension of disbelief, a site you enter and allow yourself to be enveloped in, alternative worlds peopled by wonderful characters, role play, catharsis - sound familiar?

POP INTO THEATRE

Quirky popular music combos and performance art/theatre go back a while - but with the revival of Improbable/Tiger Lillies Shockheaded Peter, Eddie Ladd's Club Luz at BAC Opera 2004, and The Trachtenberg Family Slideshow Players runs at Edinburgh and Soho Theatre, it's very much the mood of the moment.

THIS IS FOR REAL

Street art performers Dot Comedy (Misinformation tents and bric-a-brac stalls) and Bureau of Silly Ideas (realistic road works turn surreal) are blurring the boundaries between art and life. Then there's the Turner Prize win for Jeremy Deller for his 'real events'. Expect it to get harder and harder to tell the difference.

Wherever, whenever, whatever - Total Theatre will be there.

ESTHER SIMPSON FROM METRO BOULOT DODO EXPLAINS WHY IT'S SOMETIMES OK TO LIE

METRO-BOULOT-DODO FIB. PHOTOS ROGER BRADLEY

LITTLE WHITE LIES

You have 28 seconds of music to choose your first box

One box, one person

Entering a box with another person is forbidden

Once you have chosen your box please wait outside the door

Each box is numbered

Please take a moment to tick the box number off your checklist

TOTAL THEATRE MAGAZINE | ISSUE 17 | VOLUME 01 | SPRING 2005



I have to confess that when Metro-Boulot-Dodo won a Total Theatre Award for Best Newcomer at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in 1999, I never imagined I would find myself 5 years later standing on a two foot square plinth encased completely in perspex and whispering a heartfelt confession to a stranger. And yet that is exactly what is required of me as a performer in FIB, Metro-Boulot-Dodo's most ambitious performance project to date.

When we won that award 5 years ago we were still Metro-Boulot-Dodo theatre company, and at the time we wanted nothing more than to make a name for ourselves among the numerous black box theatre spaces which are dotted around the country. I don't recall how we managed to veer so far from this goal, but suffice to say we looked back one day and realised that we weren't actually spending that much time in theatres any more. Through expanding into digital arts production and a programme of site-specific multi-media performance installations, our work had

spread its wings and found its way out into the world. Metro-Boulot-Dodo Theatre Company was now just as happy in a gallery, car park, museum, coalmine or cathedral.

One of the major factors in this change of direction was a chance meeting, and subsequent collaboration, with a group of musicians by the name of Bathysphere. Their lo-tempo electronica became the soundtrack to a couple of our early theatre performances before we joined forces and embarked on a programme of site-specific work, *Watch This Space*. These installations blend historical fact, personal storytelling and digital music and visuals to create performance tours which bring alive spaces that are usually not open to the public. As well as the chance to work with like-minded artists, the whole experience of *Watch This Space* showed us that our brand of contemporary performance was not restricted to black box theatres and, perhaps more importantly, it was not restricted to the audiences who would normally frequent those theatres. Instead we were taking contemporary performance to grandparents, children and everybody in between - and they enjoyed it.

It was this combination of new-found skills and the desire to break out of our conventional theatre spaces that led to the concept for FIB: a multi-media performance installation for a limited audience. However, unlike *Watch This Space*, FIB is not site specific; instead it was built as a stand-alone piece of work which we would be able to tour. Not to black box theatres as we had previously

done, but to take wherever we could find a space big enough to house it.

FIB is just the latest chapter in a body of work that has flirted with the boundaries of performance, installation and digital arts, and with FIB it has developed into what can best be described as a large-scale game. 14 individual white boxes confront an audience of 14 people, all of whom must adhere to the rules of FIB.

FIB began with an experiment that we had devised to help us explore the role of lies in our everyday life. For one month prior to the making of FIB each of the company members randomly chose between being on a truth day, a lie day or a FIB mission. Our aim was to be as honest as possible or as deceptive as we could manage without being found out. The lies didn't need to be big, and not everything we said had to be a lie but we consciously tried to give false answers as often as possible. Likewise, on a truth day we were allowed to be evasive but not to actually tell an untruth. Mission days were a little more playful. We would inhabit different lives as investigative journalists, test drive cars that we could never afford, market research for fictional products. Although the experiment brought much amusement and some interesting (if slightly bizarre) data, it was the secondary impact that was most noticeable. By the time we were half way through that month all of the feelings that came with lying were magnified tenfold because of our increased awareness. There was the elation at so comprehensively fooling other people, coupled with an enormous sense of guilt.

By week three we had no idea if what we were telling each other had any shred of truth left in it, we were hopelessly paranoid. Up until now our close working life also made us close friends and suddenly we knew, in some small way, what it was like when trust is taken away from our personal relationships, and how easy it actually is to abuse somebody's trust.

FIB is a very serious game. It is made deliberately to encourage participants to engage in a playful way with what they find. The audience have to discuss and negotiate with each other to make sure that everybody can experience each of the

murder his own family. There is the woman in a restaurant who wrestles with how much of her life she should share with her partner. And then there is me, encased in a tiny Pperspex box, a living exhibit of everyday deception frantically trying to justify the increasingly tangled web we weave throughout our lives.

People tell all sorts of lies for all sorts of reasons. We don't claim to understand all of these reasons and in 3 minutes it would be foolish to delve too deeply into each example. And that is part of the beauty of FIB. For us it was a joy to make. We didn't need to worry about agreeing on

a company in 1996, we have tried to do with our work. FIB gets people to talk, and FIB gets people to smile.

So far, FIB, has been presented as part of the Now festival in Nottingham, by Phoenix Arts in a car park in Leicester, at MACBA in Barcelona, as part of X.trax in Manchester and in a disused shop as part of Stockton International Riverside Festival. Non-arts and arts audiences alike have responded with great enthusiasm for the piece and its appeal seems to be much wider than anything we have produced before. The great asset that FIB possesses is that it is able to move in so many

You will then be instructed to enter your chosen box

Once inside, your experience will last exactly three minutes

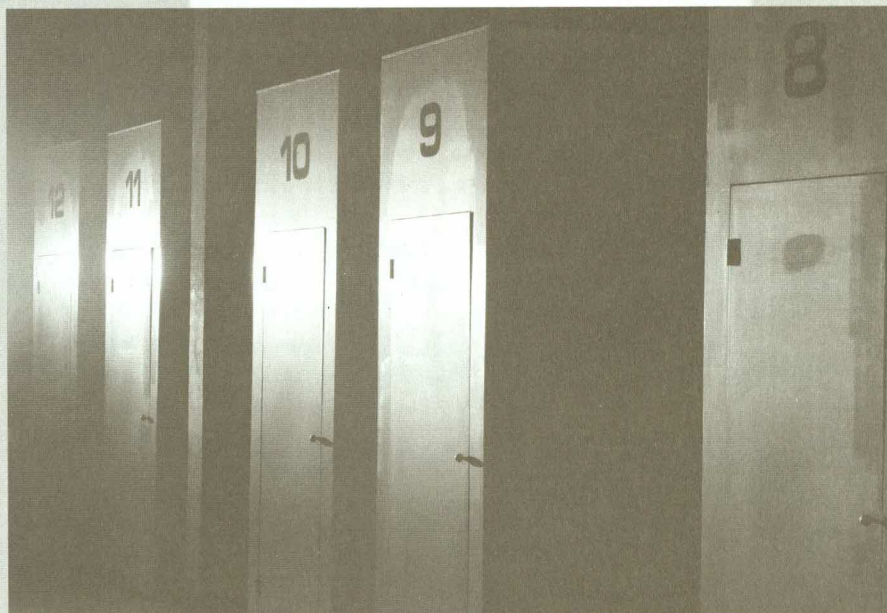
Please comply with any verbal or written instructions you are given once inside the box

After 3 minutes you will be asked to leave

You will then have 28 seconds of music to choose your next box

The procedure will be repeated a further 13 times until every box has been visited

There is no correct order But never enter the same box twice



14 boxes, otherwise people are left out in the cold. Many of the boxes are there to make you laugh, some are confessional and some give the anonymity for people to share some surprising secrets. The toilet (made to mimic a public toilet) has its walls adorned with some very revealing thoughts and fears offered without the fear of being identified. There is a triptych that consists of two films and an audio piece which chart the lies that are passed through a family, the loss of innocence and the long-term damage within a family unit. There is the performer whose projected image ruthlessly interrogates his live self, forcing the admission of inner turmoil and weaknesses that are usually kept well hidden. There is the telephone salesman whose career frustrations have led him to

every aspect as we would with a more traditional piece. Instead the volume of mini experiences gave us all (and our artistic collaborators) absolute freedom for three minutes. It is this breadth of styles, subjects and a varying degree of seriousness that seems to make FIB appealing. Not everybody will like every aspect of FIB, but after three minutes you can swap around and try something new. It is difficult in any piece of work to do much more than scratch the surface of one's subject matter, what is more of an achievement, and what FIB seems to have done, is to get people talking. We see the work more as a catalyst for conversation than a life changing experience, but ultimately FIB seems to do two things which, from the very first show we made as



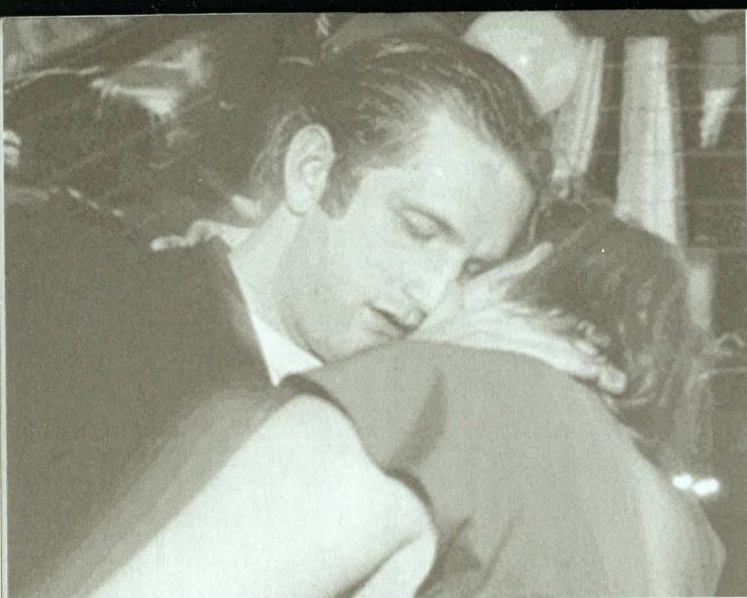
different circles and always raise eyebrows for all the right reasons. From the highbrow art junkies of Nottingham's Now Festival to the unsuspecting shopper from the streets of Stockton, FIB has taken itself out and proved that art doesn't have to be kept in boxes (no pun intended) and in many ways it is a testament to the reasoning behind its conception. Although MBD will never completely leave behind our theatre roots, that is one black box that we don't want our work to be restricted by.

For more information on FIB and the work of Metro-Boulot-Dodo see:

www.metro-boulot-dodo.com

www.whydowellie.com

www.watch-this-space.org.uk



EXPERIMENTS IN TRUTH

TOTAL THEATRE MAGAZINE | ISSUE 17 | VOLUME 01 | SPRING 2005

MIRANDA BARBER INVESTIGATES THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THEATRE AND TRUE LIFE STORIES

The use of true stories in creating theatre is nothing new. However, the increasing volume of documentary, tribunal, verbatim theatre and theatre which uses biographical material as a starting point from which to dream has opened the doors to styles and approaches to performance which are hugely divergent. Through employing the language of real people, as they talk about issues of personal, social and political interest, these forms of theatre have the capacity to attract audiences who have ordinarily associated theatre with fanciful fiction and highbrow language. Staging true text raises a multiplicity of questions about responsibilities for writers/devisers and actors who represent often very sensitive personal stories.

Tribunal theatre is quite common in Britain. The Tricycle Theatre in North London has staged a series of tribunal plays, the text of which is primarily taken from published transcriptions of official inquiries, as in *Justifying War: Scenes from the Hutton Inquiry*. However, I am interested in theatre created from stories of ordinary people. The *Permanent Way*, created by David Hare with director Max Stafford-Clark and nine actors, about Britain's railway privatisation, deserves mention. The actors interviewed stockbrokers, railway workers, policemen and crash survivors, offering improvisations based verbatim on their notes, which provided raw material for the piece.

But how far can an actor go in representing real text on stage? Real text is considered somehow sacred, regardless of how openly it has been shared. There appear to be unwritten rules about how it

can be theatricalised and about interpretation. I interviewed Lee Simpson of Improbable Theatre who saw *The Permanent Way* and said: 'Weirdly I thought it was brilliant... because it wasn't him [Hare] writing, because I wasn't sitting there going 'what do you know about these people?' - it was their stories.'

Recorded Delivery's *Come Out Eli* (presented at BAC, March 2004) explored the Hackney siege of Christmas 2002, when police held gunman Eli Hall and his hostage under siege in a Hackney flat for 16 days, causing upheavals in the lives of those operating in the area. Playwright, Alecky Blythe tape-recorded many of the locals' comments and five actors recited their words on stage. This style of verbatim theatre involves performers wearing mini-disc players which carry the edited interviews. The performers recite exactly what comes over their earphones, reproducing speech patterns and intonations, in a technique developed by Mark Wing-Davey. This eliminates the actor's interpretation of character, offering the audience a direct conduit to the witness. Responses to verbatim theatre are varied and usually extreme. Improbable Theatre used verbatim technique in a small sequence of *Hanging Man* where the actors recount their fantasies of death via mini-disc. According

to Lee 'it was the one part of the show that audiences hated. The company loved it. The directors loved it. But in general the audience hated it. But it was the strength of response that made us keep it in because we thought 'there's something interesting here that we're not getting'. Towards the end of the tour, the cast dispensed with mini-discs and learned the text: it worked fantastically. It was not the mini-discs themselves that were the problem, it was the context... It was the fact that it came out of nowhere, it went nowhere. Get rid of the mini-discs and it seemed to be part of the same show.'

When I brought *SixOfOne* together in August 2002, we started working with verbatim techniques. The company collected recorded interviews of people's own true stories, thereby discovering a language and text we would not have dreamed to script ourselves. We used verbatim technique to trigger different ways of theatrically exploring the material. Yet we wanted to create interactive and spontaneous theatre without a sense of documentary, so we chose not to pursue the technique on stage, but continue to work loosely with verbatim in our devising practice. I recently used basic verbatim practices at Central School of Speech and Drama with a group of students, mainly non-actors. The group recorded each other's stories. One interviewee very comfortably shared her experience of miscarriage. It was then reported in this way via the recording by a non-actor, whose very shape seemed to transform as she spoke the words. The group was captivated and I was struck by how ready

Staging true text raises a multiplicity of questions about responsibilities for writers/devisers and actors who represent often very sensitive personal stories

SIXOFONE OLD NEW BORROWED BLUE. PHOTOS THOMAS PETER



they were to accept the staging of a shockingly intimate story. The process revealed it as an accessible, indeed beautiful story that could be represented in performance. Speaking with Lee about the use of verbatim in *Hanging Man* rehearsals, he said: 'What was fantastic about it was that we saw actors improvising without worrying about what they were going to say next... And because they had to work really hard to keep up with the interview they stopped trying to act. It's brilliant. You want acting without ego in it and that's what you get.'

For SixOfOne's first show, we used a lot of exact reportage from our interviews,

mixing it up with naturalised improvisation to create *Old New Borrowed Blue*, directed by John Wright. As a company, we aim to create theatre which is accessible for young audiences, by playing in all sorts of spaces, and looking at life through stories of ordinary people. So the show was a wedding party, to which our audiences were invited as wedding guests. We took true stories into another world entirely and created characters through them, not directly representing our interviewees at all, and only occasionally preserving character traits. In placing these intimate texts in a chaotic environment, we had to respect the stories and their sources. I

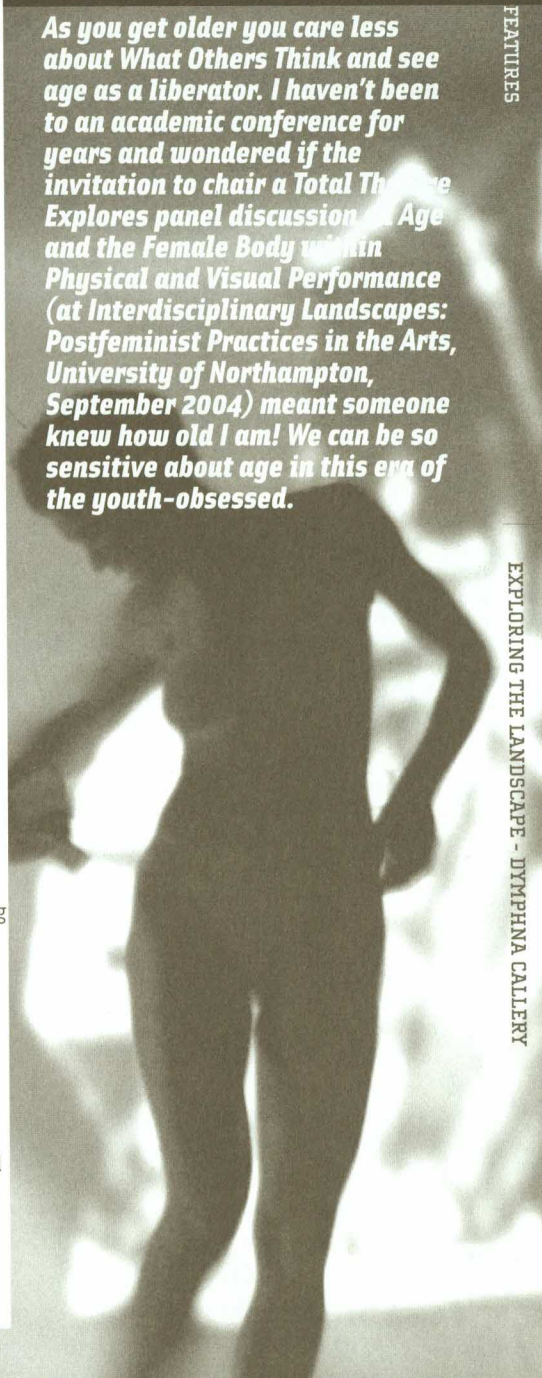
think we achieved this by avoiding parody and playing in the style of everyday speech. Our audiences felt they were complicit in something, having been let into a lot of secret worlds.

Skinless, SixOfOne's next project, also devised from true stories, deals with the issue of asylum, again directed by John Wright. SixOfOne is collaborating with Sri Lankan actor and London-based former refugee, Redley Silva. We have a huge body of interviews, recorded with refugees, support networks and community participants, and the show will highlight and juxtapose Redley's experiences in Sri Lanka, and parallel experiences facing refugees in exile. The company's responsibility in dealing with some extremely sensitive material is obvious. A great number of refugees have opened their lives to us. Subsequently, in exploring humour in the tragedy, farce in the displacement, and compassion in the politics, SixOfOne has a responsibility to deal with the asylum subject conscientiously. Audiences don't have to like or agree with our work but it is important that they perceive a level of integrity in the use of material and treatment of the issues. Arts Council England funded a research and development period for Skinless in February 2004. At its conclusion we held a de-brief at the Riverside Studios, hosted by *Artists in Exile*, for an audience largely comprised of refugees, many of whom had contributed stories. The response confirmed that the resonant subject matter could be played through a combination of surreal comedy and realism, and still powerfully convey the essence of the refugee story. Importantly, it established that the responsibility

finally came clean, realising that her age was a positive asset deserving admiration and respect. I asked Nola Rae what issues concerned her about growing older. There was a pause. 'Arthritis', she said, and grinned her mime-artist grin. Nola spoke engagingly about how research for her characters becomes absorbed in the body, how mental exploration becomes re-processed into gesture, how mime is age-less, an art which enables her to play both young and old. Another panelist, performance artist Lois Weaver, told us she gave up stripping at 50. Having liked taking her clothes off in public since the age of 6, three years ago Lois suddenly found she couldn't do it. She'd lost confidence, aware of the inevitable southward drift of her body parts, and felt self-consciously exposed in performance. Meeting the 80-year-old Queen of Striptease Dixie Evans (who is still at it and whose home is a shrine-museum to this art) revitalised her and she got back in the saddle. We found out her age through a performance. Lois was not the only panelist to perform, but the only one who stripped - a witty and endearing act in which she counted out her years as vocal accompaniment. Naked beneath a voluptuous winter red dressing gown, she joined delegates for coffee after the applause. The fascinating line-up from Total Theatre also included Bisakha Sarker, dancer, and Deborah Pope, circus artist. Bisakha performed an exquisite Indian-style dance to words - a recording of a poem (incidentally, read by a man), a strand of work she's developing which gives a new and innovative channel for her creativity. She spoke of paring away layers of 'what others think' which had

accumulated in her, and shifting the debris of what's 'permanently written on and in the body'. The joints and muscles don't respond in the same way as they used to, she explained, but there are alternative movements and "you can find if you seek". Deborah Pope was the youngest panel member and the oldest trapeze artist performing in Britain, a title she graciously ceded to Linda Marlowe on hearing about her act in No Fear. Deb is currently associate director of the world-renowned Circus Oz - directing being an example of a physical performer finding a new way of expressing her creativity and utilising hard-earned skills. She changed her perceptions about herself through acquiring physical strength in circus training as a younger woman, and is now excited by the prospect of exploring age as a form of physical grotesquerie. All the panelists had come to the same conclusions: as you get older you care less about W.O.T., shorthand for What Others Think, and see age as a liberator. For the older woman, the body is ur-text and they are learning to recognise its power as a source, while respecting, but not giving into, wear and tear. The issues surrounding ageing present us with contradictions that refuse resolution. But with many performers continuing to offer us innovative and work in the latter years of their careers, it's important that younger generations are given access to their histories, their ideas and their anecdotes. The Landscapes conference in general, and the Total Theatre Explores session in particular, embraced this.

As you get older you care less about What Others Think and see age as a liberator. I haven't been to an academic conference for years and wondered if the invitation to chair a Total Theatre Explores panel discussion on Age and the Female Body within Physical and Visual Performance (at Interdisciplinary Landscapes: Postfeminist Practices in the Arts, University of Northampton, September 2004) meant someone knew how old I am! We can be so sensitive about age in this era of the youth-obsessed.



HOLLY LAU. PHOTO FRANC CHAMBERLAIN



INTERDISCIPLINARY LANDSCAPES. PHOTOS FRANC CHAMBERLAIN



Dymphna Callery is writing a follow-up to Through the Body (Nick Hern Books), this time tackling somatic approaches to text. She continues to teach at the University of Wolverhampton and is available for workshops and consultancies. Email: d.callery@wlv.ac.uk

DYMPHNA CALLERY DIPS HER TOES INTO THE ISSUES AROUND PARAFEMINISM AND THE FEMALE PERFORMER OF A CERTAIN AGE

EXPLORING THE LANDSCAPE

The panel discussion took place on the second morning of a three-day event, which included not only presentations of academic papers but also performances, installations and 'happenings'.

Conference papers can be tedious at the best of times, but the surprising variety of subjects over those three days kept us alert. How the body is looked at was central to many. Carrie Lee O'Dell's illustrated paper, 'Who's the Ugly Duckling here: The Sexual Politics of Cosmetic Surgery in Orlan's Surgical Performances and Fox Television's *The Swan*,' offered a comparison between women who elected to change their appearance through surgery for reality TV, and Orlan's deliberate (filmed) operations to distort her natural 'good looks'. The concept of 'parafeminism', introduced by Amelia Jones (Professor and Pilkington Chair, School of Art History and Archaeology, University of Manchester) in her keynote address 'Postfeminism or Parafeminism? Piplotti Rist and the Televisual Architecture of the Dream Body', put a new spin on post-feminist ideology - though there are those who claim you need a postpatriarchy first. Some women who climbed the fences at Greenham Common, or joined the Women Against Pit Closures in the 1980s, have difficulty with the idea that feminism's had its day, that we're all constantly in 'process', that there's nothing left to be angry about any more, and nothing really has any real meaning, and they bemoan the fact that feminism has become a dirty concept, fit only for satirical swipes, or the cynic's 'PC' pyre. But this conference had a wonderful liveliness that reminded me of my early encounters with gender debates. It was comforting to find several (older) women define themselves as unapologetic feminists. As an interdisciplinary affair (feminism crosses all artistic boundaries), Landscapes offered live art, visual art, video art, performance art, music (a gig one evening) and gorgeous (and often underrated) conversation art, as well as



LISA MARIE PATZER - VEILED OPPRESSIONS. PHOTO FRANC CHAMBERLAIN.

the art of talking more formally (discussion panels, papers, posters).

Performance work presented included the autobiographical *Transgressions*, a three-part poetic reflection on relationship and bereavement written, choreographed and danced by Holly Lau and Red Leaf Dance's *Myths and Stories by Her*, a beautiful and melancholic solo performance by Jane Bacon using a fragmented narrative of spoken text, song and video staged in and around a sea of suspended wedding dresses.

Many of the papers presented incorporated art praxis - most memorably Angela Bartram's spitting. I kid you not. This woman makes spitting an art. Or, as her (illustrated) paper pointed out, is she the art? I love all this semantic gymnastics, and it was good to get the old(er) grey matter churning again on academic arguments. Even better to meet up with an astonishing array of women of all ages, representing every strand of artistic and theoretical practice. I'm a writer rather than a theorist, but encountering this smorgasbord of female intellect and artistry made me realise we distinguish too much between the two. The (dare I say patriarchal?) divisions between different modes of philosophising about

life and its troubles and pleasures (which is what art articulates and expresses in its manifest ways), don't necessarily have to be brick walls. Let them be glass, and they are transformed into windows, opening on fresh visions, of others, of ourselves, of the world around us. And it was heartening to hear young women at the conference say how much they valued hearing the stories and anecdotes of their elders. 'Why haven't we heard of these women?' asked one after being mesmerised by Anna Furse. Maybe there's a platform for 'silver feminism'. If someone wants to host a conference, I just might go. It was appropriate, therefore, that the Total Theatre Explores panel looked at the delicate question of the ageing female performer and her art - with particular reference to physical performance forms. I've never lied about my age (52), but I asked the panelists if they had... Linda Marlowe told a revealing anecdote about continuing to pay full National Insurance contributions after she received her bus pass. (She even lied to her agent!) 'Producers - predominantly young males - look at the number written down, not the potential of the performer,' she said. When she trained as a trapeze artist at the age of 62 for *No Fear* (2001), a show she created and produced herself, she

UP WAY THIS

Over the last 20 years circus has experienced a period of reinvention and re-investigation, resulting in a widening range of working practices. We are in a situation where circus can be identified as inhabiting three broad styles: 'classic' circus, 'new' circus, and a 'hybrid' circus. Whereas classic and new circus both rely on the pre-eminence of a skill-centred approach, revelling in the miraculous achievements of the human body in space and time, hybrid circus introduces theatrical and/or dance ideologies so that the skills of circus are used to deliver a narrative, concept or issue. It is primarily in this context that the idea of a 'director for circus' is emerging.

There are a variety of ways that artists have discovered this role of 'director', often emerging out of their interests in the kind of work they wish to pursue and a varied experiential base in a variety of performing arts. This changing approach to making circus-based work has been supported by the Circelation project, a series of workshops and mentoring programmes designed to provide both training for circus directors and the opportunity for circus-performers to work with directors coming from other disciplines. Circelation's two-year pilot phase (2000 - 2001), programmed by Chenine Bhatena and Leila Jancovitch, explored key aspects of circus work through short courses and mentoring programmes. Guest teachers included Katherine Hunter (Theatre de Complicite), Gail Kelly (Legs on the Wall) and Ron Bunzl (Cloud Chamber) who ran workshops and mentored emerging artists over the two years. Hunter went on to direct Mamaloucos' co-production with the National Theatre of Aristophanes' *The Birds*, bringing circus skills back into the foreground of the subsidised arts.

In April 2004, Circelation began a new three-year phase of training for performers and directors. The 2004 Circelation programme was devised by Dick McCaw (director of the International Workshop

CIRCUS HEADS OFF IN NEW DIRECTIONS, AND TOM WILSON IS ON THE TRAIL

Festival 1993-2001). In this he aimed to 'broaden horizons' as to what circus could be. The support for new directors in this programme took the form of mentoring by Rose English and Mladen Materic. Directors were given an opportunity to 'doubt, dare and fail'. Daniela Essart of Scarabeus saw this as a unique opportunity to work with other directors within a 'safe ground'. Working with Materic and feeling confident in her ability to produce strong visual images, Essart aimed to develop her approach to structuring performance. She found that one of the most valuable things she acquired was the need to become stricter about a show's 'logic', by anticipating the questions an audience might ask of the show.

Circelation also proved particularly fruitful for Tina Carter of Expressive Feat Productions, who is currently exploring work around political issues emerging out of her Middle-Eastern heritage and working with Rose English on a forthcoming performance entitled *Boxing Palestine*. During Circelation, Carter was able to experiment with the interaction between circus, dance and live art, devising new material that has fed into the process of exploring the emotional and political dimensions of the Palestinian-Israeli divide through the development of emotional and narrative stage action. Carter is a director for whom circus skills become the vocabulary for a narrative dance in vertical and horizontal space. In reflecting on her work, Carter identified the need to make three key considerations in the creation of work: aesthetic, narrative and practical. That is, to consider how work looks, how it communicates the narrative and what needs to be in place to allow a specific

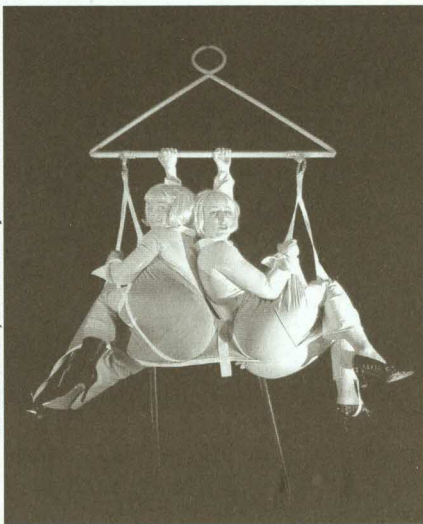
trick to take place. Carter has also discovered an increasing need to write-up the material, both as planning and record. Carter finds the focus and logic that evolves from this invaluable in justifying the work in terms of the narrative and practical logic of a piece of work.

In terms of the exploration of narrative and character, the work of Company FZ serve as an interesting example of the way in which theatrical narrative may utilise circus skills. Flick Ferdinando, one half of the FZ team, approaches the task using a 'conventional' theatrical approach, beginning with the expressive qualities needed for performance and then applying appropriate and relevant circus skills. Ferdinando identifies a variety of issues arising out of this approach, primarily because of the nature and impact of circus training on the performer's approach. Ferdinando identifies a proclivity within circus to focus upon 'the trick', a preoccupation that emerges from the nature of circus training, one that involves a continual investment of time and energy in achieving a more difficult trick than before. This leads the focus of performance away from the expressive qualities of the performer to one that favours the physical skill involved; leading to performances that are visually rewarding, but for Ferdinando too 'clever' and lacking in expressive quality. She sees contemporary circus as needing to 'evolve' in the way that dance, mime and theatre have. Ferdinando's approach signals a clearly thought out rationale for a specific direction in which circus skills are moving, and this is reflected in the training currently on offer at contemporary circus training schools The Circus Space and Circomedia.



COMPANY FZ LOSER. PHOTO ROBERT DAY

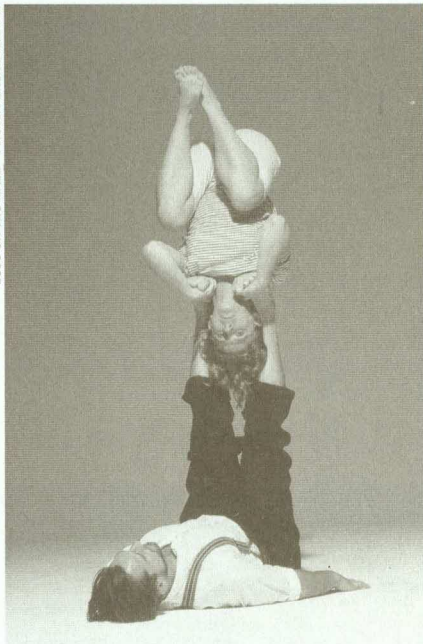
EXPRESSIVE FEAT, SCARABEUS HAJAR - PHOTO GABRIELLA PICCALUGA



LEGS ON THE WALL - PHOTO DEREK BIERMAN



LEGS ON THE WALL - PHOTO DEREK BIERMAN



The key roles of the director in any form are to challenge and drive their artists into new areas of creativity and expressivity

Flick Ferdinando sees contemporary circus as needing to evolve in the way that dance, mime and theatre have.

In her process, the demands Ferdinando makes in the rehearsal room are for performers to consider not what they are doing, but how they are doing it, aiming to '... get people to question what they do with that skill...' In support of Ferdinando's attitude towards training we might draw parallels with Grotowski's *plastics* - where each technical skill must be invested with different expressive qualities each time it is explored. But against this process she sees an endemic attitude within the circus world that believes '... unless you do big stuff you're not a circus performer.' Ferdinando suggests a trade-off is necessary at this stage of hybrid circus's development, where performers should devise with whatever skills they have, and put on hold the desire to learn new tricks for that show.

This is something of a contrast to the work of Philip Gandey, who sees both performer personality and a high degree of skill as vital to the creation of circus-work in order to avoid the 'fantastically wrapped Christmas present that turns out to be broken'. He comes from a highly renowned 'classic' circus family and currently positions himself much closer to the 'new' circus of *Cirque de Soleil* than to the 'hybrid' circus of other artists in this article. Gandey, attracted to the spontaneous but tightly structured work of Lee Simpson of *Improbable Theatre*, is currently investigating the possibility of collaborating with Simpson, looking for the opportunity to 'take circus artists to a places they've not been before.' In this collaboration we can see the way in which circus is able to draw on the skills of theatre-based directors to invest their work with new ideas and approaches. Thus, we don't only have possibilities emerging for a hybrid blending of circus and theatre, but also of an interchange between the two, in which neither loses its autonomy.

What is pleasing to note is the current support for 'directors' of circus in the funding structures. David Micklem, lead

theatre officer for contemporary performance at Arts Council England national office, sees the role of ACE in supporting the development of the art form - and one way in which he sees that this is possible is through the support of hybrid performances, whether through bringing established companies from different fields together or for supporting smaller scale ventures. Micklem sees this development of a hybrid as a way to expand and develop audience bases for circus, theatre and dance, as well as driving the forward the development of the art form itself.

In programming *Circelation* in 2004, Dick McCaw stated that he wanted to draw on the natural tendency of theatre to draw from a wide range of influences in the creation of its work; to 'dehabitualise' circus performers - taking them through a process of 'defamiliarisation' and 'refamiliarisation' with their art form. In this we find one of the key roles of the director in any form: to challenge and drive their artists into new areas of creativity and expressivity, Philip Gandey asserts that people often underestimate the ability of circus artists: '... they have a lot more ability, but it is never explored'. By developing the role of the director we can allow circus artists the opportunity to reach their full potential.

*For full details of the next Circelation professional development laboratory, which takes place in Leeds 2 -15 April 2005, see www.circelation.co.uk or call 020 8314 1295. Circus Arts Forum is the UK body that advocates and supports circus of all kinds. Their annual conference, entitled *How to Create the Greatest Show on Earth*, will be held on 28 April 2005. For full details of this and other CAF initiatives see www.circusarts.org.uk or call 020 7739 1188.*

EDWARD TAYLOR AND JOHN FOX PAY
TRIBUTE TO INVENTOR AND MAKER
GREVILLE WHITE (1945 - 2004)

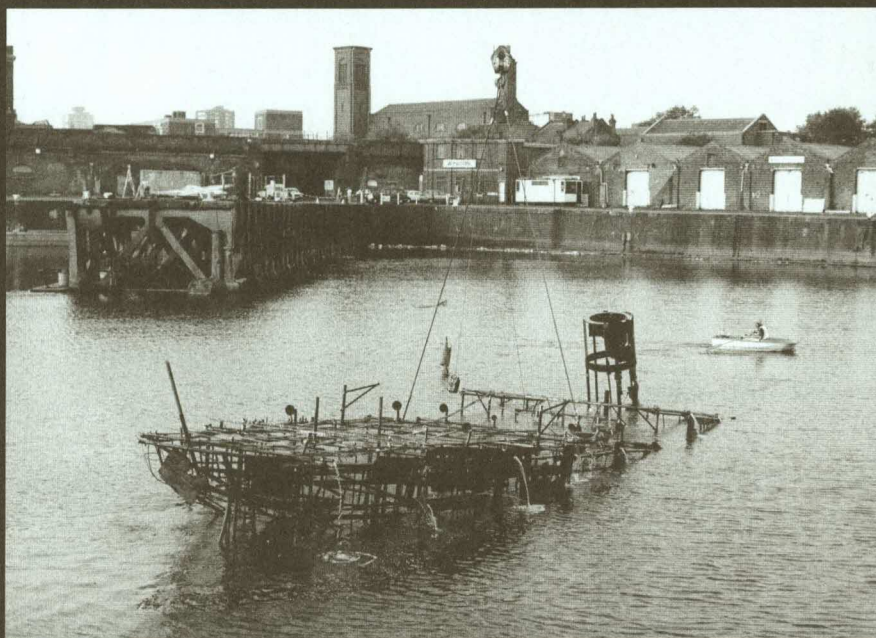
ENGINEER OF THE IMAGINATION

Edward Taylor of Whalley Range Allstars writes: Greville was modest to an almost pathological degree so it was impossible to know the full range of his activities. He was the epitome of a back-room boffin (although shed would be more appropriate) and contributed to shows and installations by Welfare State, Bow Gamelan Ensemble, Whitewood & Fleming, Emergency Exit, IOU, Tim Hunkin, Faceless Theatre, Andy Plant and many others. He was a hugely talented creator of automated objects and seemed at home both with huge structures and tiny mechanisms. His solutions to problems were always ingenious, economical, elegant and unexpected.

He worked with Whalley Range Allstars from 1992 until 1997 and helped create 7 shows with us. It's no exaggeration to say that he totally expanded our approach and attitude to making work. Previously our work was limited to what we made ourselves - we're not bad at making but there are limits! Greville was unfazed by our ideas and revelled in the challenges we set him. So we grew in confidence as to what our shows could be, confident that he would always find some way of making the latest idea we had. It was always impossible to thank him afterwards for what he had done or made for us. This seems true of his work with other companies as well, where he always found a way of downplaying his contribution.

Greville was not a sentimental man and would have loathed this piece of writing. However his work always betrayed a real sensitivity not always apparent on the outside.

John Fox of Welfare State International writes: Greville once told me a ghost story. Isolated in a tenement one Christmas, he ran out of money. He knocked on the door of an upstairs flat and an old lady happily lent him a ten-shilling note. He discovered later that she had died twenty years before. I don't know if it is true, but Greville convinced me it was. He was stropky, imaginative and ingenious; a sculptural engineer and inventor who told his best tales with fragments of wire, assorted springs, selected elastic bands, windscreen wiper motors, cogs, electric



WSI RAISE THE TITANIC. PHOTO ALEX VON KOETTLITZ

welding, hydraulics and a staple gun. Greville loved a challenge and throughout his life created many unforgettable images for many site-specific theatre companies.

He worked with Welfare State International on and off for a couple of decades and created or helped us create some of our best works. So many it's hard to know where to begin. The big one, Raising the Titanic in Limehouse, is a good start. We planned to bring a replica of the Titanic up from the bottom of a dank dock. After six goes, the iron barge armature broke its back and we had at short notice to use skyhooks, a crane and twelve tons of scaffolding instead. Greville and Andy Plant and Tim Hunkin and Baz Kershaw and others, all brilliant at working in teams, rose to the occasion with wondrous hands-on expertise, pulled it off and up.

On *King Real* a community film with 200 kids, also in 1983, he helped construct a jukebox sphinx on the back of a car; also an island iceberg of second-hand fridges. In Expo '86 in Vancouver, he fashioned 300 sheets of litho plate into a giant armoured skull which rose thirty feet into the air and unfolded like a floral hand-grenade. He also welded the Limping Horse of History, a fusion of combine harvester and equine tank.

He was brilliant at tiny things too. For two videos we made for Border TV he



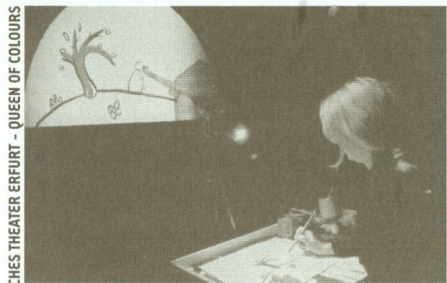
GREVILLE WHITE. PHOTO CHRIS SZDECKI

invented vicious remote controlled piranha fish that devoured two geriatric fascist patients in an old folk's home. These are now collectors' items.

An irrepressibly impish man, he made work that was uncommonly playful and healthily disrespectful. In today's nonsense tick-box world of art as surrogate social work we need more like him. Thank you Greville. That old lady with her 10/- knew what she was doing.

BECCY SMITH REFLECTS ON THE RE:VISIONS SYMPOSIUM AT VISIONS INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF VISUAL PERFORMANCE 2004

DRAWN TO PERFORM



ERFREULICHES THEATER ERFURT - QUEEN OF COLOURS

The move toward a predominantly visual-based culture has variously been described as heralding the final divorce between reality and representation, the opening of more inclusive means of expression and understanding, the death knell to subtleties and standards of self-expression and the triumph of the personal symbolic over the fixed terms of the verbal. What is nowhere disputed is that our cultural perception has changed and continues its evolution to absorb and reflect the increasing prominence of visual media, icons and the other trappings of image-soaked digital age. And that the impact of these transformations onto performance, as a reflex-ion and distillation of cultural consciousness, as well as a mongrel, part-visual art-form, itself has been seismic.

But what does this mean to the people making the culture? How does it affect the resonance and range of our work; how can it inform and inspire process? Has anything really changed? Whilst academics and cultural theorists have long mulled these questions the Visions festival this year offered practising artists a bite at the cherry, building into its programme a focused space to consider from an experiential and experimental perspective some of the issues informing work both presented and planned. The emphasis of the event was squarely process-led, with discursive and practical sessions focusing on the impact of a visual inspiration to questions of methodology, approach and analysis of creative outcomes.

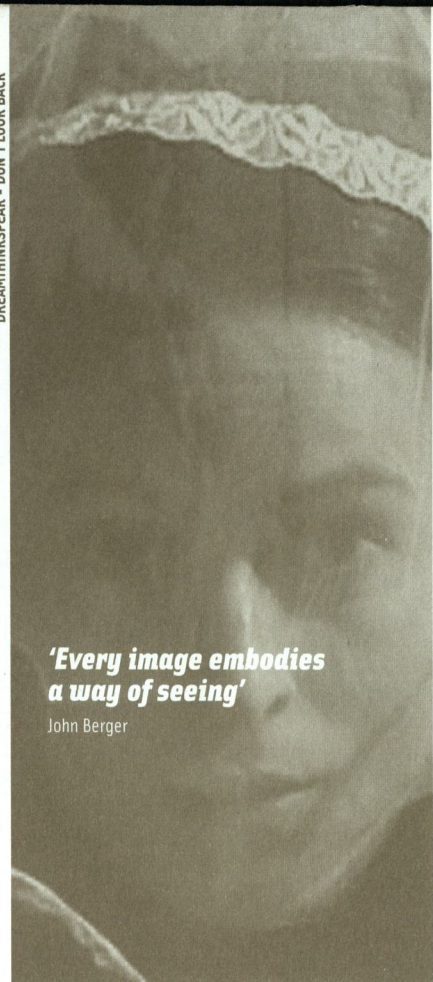
The range of material which radiated from this nucleus certainly reflects the saturation of contemporary performance-makers and audiences in the 'language' of the visual. Liz Agiss's extraordinary performative paper demonstrated,

amongst (many) other things the rich and unruly plethora of visual and cultural signs unleashed by the spot-lit (or filmed) human body as an empowering exploratory field for physical practitioners. John Fox outlined his visual work as one of the most accessible means of discovering and transforming the 'poetry under your feet'; many varieties of visual art, from woodcut to pyrotechnic display to digital film, playing key roles in Welfare State's crusade to creatively empower individuals and communities' engagement with the world beyond self. David Harradine of *Fevered Sleep* explored the role of photography in his work bringing out some of the tensions innate to the image; presence vs. absence; time vs stasis, opening the field for the play of these qualities against performance as a time-based, presence-predicated art form. Theatre-rites' Sue Buckmaster considered the ways in which the visual (and physical, and sometimes aural) qualities of objects held in suspension rich and varied possibilities for creative experimentation whereby the play between individual and images could create a fluid and resonant process and product.

Practical workshop sessions formed a key part of the day's programme, with five different artists allowing participation in creating or analysing a visually-led process, including explorations of storyboarding with Edward Taylor of Whalley Range Allstars; John Wright's comic investigation of ways to harness the power of simple visual shorthand in performance; and the collaborative possibilities offered through working with peripheral vision explored by Olu Tawio.

The sheer wealth of ideas and approaches generated by the topic for theatre-makers, not unlike the range of responses to the question of a visual-based culture as outlined above, urged me to investigate further, because against this backdrop of excitement and excess a theme seemed to be emerging. Recurrently, artists seemed to be in practical dialogue with the openness of the image; its potential profligacy of meaning. Where this dialogue was effective, the visual source or

DREAMTHINKSPEAK - DON'T LOOK BACK



'Every image embodies a way of seeing'

John Berger

outcome was characterised as 'rich', 'ambiguous' and open to play.

Notably, Visions' artists consistently returned to the parameters of methodology in working with visual forms; notions of how the visual intersected with narrative, with physical context and other grounding practicalities of performance. The implied stakes were high: the very fluidity and openness to personal interpretation of the visual allows a potential slippage of meaning. This black hole of meaning where the visual can grow esoteric, or, in the opposite direction have its signification locked into the system of exchange as rigid and over-familiar symbol, formed a suggestive subtext to the day's exploration.

John Fox mused, how can an artist cultivate a process both 'image conscious [and] with a mature image conscience'? Further to this we may ask, what processes can be put into play to negotiate the artistic and politically slippery surplus of visual meaning in our contemporary image-based culture?

This and other questions, queries and conundrums will be addressed in the forthcoming User's Guide publication which will draw on the day and explore further the rich palette of ideas presented and provoked. Contact users.guide@winchester.ac.uk for further details or see www.totaltheatre.org.uk

VISIONS FESTIVAL OF INTERNATIONAL VISUAL PERFORMANCE

Brighton, October 2004

In the beginning was a conviction – if one's eye is seduced it will open one's ears and mind. This quote from Theatre de L'Oeil could serve as the mission statement for visions.

Theatre de L'Oeil's The Star Keeper (Gardner Arts Centre) was the visions launch show, one of a number of UK premieres. Aimed at a young audience, *Star Keeper* is a wordless puppet-theatre piece with all the visual charm and top quality manipulation skills you'd expect of this Montreal company with 30 years experience. Into their large black-box set come puppets of all sorts: marionette, bunraku, hand, shadow; charming little creatures of all shapes and sizes. We move from sky to earth to sea, meeting a wiggly worm, a dancing spider and a slinky mermaid. Enticing images, but I left wanting more. There was, for me anyway, no sense of the eye opening the mind. In contrast, German company **Erfreuliches Theater Erfurts Queen of Colours** (Sallis Benney Theatre) was simply perfect – a live cartoon created by an onstage illustrator with OHP, a pianist, a video screen and an out-of-sight manipulator who transforms the images into simple animations. Another success, **Adios Nonino** from Majorca's **A Cel Obert**, starts conventionally enough, with the classic physical theatre scenario of four performers with suitcases criss-crossing the stage. Railway station, gateway to heaven, immigration control – who knows? As they wait, each in turn nods off and from their suitcases, clothes, bodies, emerge a succession of phantasms. Such is the interconnection between performer and manipulated object that each puppet is a glorious cyborg of sorts: puppet heads with human hands, a potato head with human legs or humanette scooting along on a child's buggy. In turn grotesque, pathetic, clownish or melancholic these night creatures comfort, torment and entertain – acting out the fantasies and fears of their human counterparts. *Adios Nonino* is a perfect hour of physically



THEATRE DU RISORIOUS - VOLPINO

precise performance, superb animation, striking lighting and energised live music. This set a high standard for the remaining week – matched by Portugal's **Marionetas do Porto** who presented **Nada ou O Silencio de Beckett** at Komedica, an almost wordless homage to the best playwright of the 20th century. The piece is both a tribute to and subversion of Beckett's intentions: we encounter the visual motifs from the plays (bins, disembodied heads, buried bodies, the Godot tree) emerging as symbolist icons that take on a life beyond the plays. Sound is a vital element – the ticking of clocks and metronomes; ear splitting whistles; the clattering of heavy-footed puppets on a conveyor-belt walkway. The three performers have the loose-limbed ease of dancers, the comic physicality of clowns and manipulation skills of experienced animators. Precisely timed, absurd and hopelessly funny, this paean to the silence of Beckett is a fitting homage. Australian company **Black Hole's Caravan** has been previously reviewed (Total Theatre 16–3/4) but a word of praise here for visions director Linda Lewis in her programming decision to present this extraordinary adult puppetry piece at the 50-seater Nightingale Theatre, the perfect venue for such an intricate and intimate show.

The UK was well represented in the festival by young company **Ding Foundation** and by old-timers **Horse+Bamboo**. **Ding** brought the visually charming and quirky *Being a Bird* to visions 2002, but **Unexploded Bomb** is a different, deeper and broodier kettle of fish. The set is a solid construction of weathered woods – floorboards, doors and walls. This beautiful, concrete set frames a melancholy story (circling around the defusing of a basement bomb) that examines presence and



MARIONETAS DO PORTO - NADA OU O SILENCIO DE BECKETT

absence, love and loss through the skilful animation of objects imbued with the spirits of their human users: a clothes line full of dancing baby clothes; big and little chairs grouped and re-grouped in a poignant choreography; a woman's dress wafting across the stage. The show wasn't seen to its best advantage at the Sallis Benney Theatre, which lacks the total blackout crucial to many of the scenes, thus spoiling the magical effect of the objects moving seemingly by themselves. Nevertheless, the charm and integrity of the show saw it through. **Horse + Bamboo** have been plying their trade for 30 years. **A Strange (& Unexpected) Event** explores the life and art of 19th century Mexican printmaker JG Posada. It features a host of colourful characters in whole-head mask, representations of Posada's exquisite Calveras woodcuts, and sumptuous sets and costumes in the rich yellows, reds turquoises of Mexican folk-art and Day of the Dead iconography. Set on the eve of this feast of All Souls, Posada enters the action as a spirit emerging from the altars to the dead. The story of his struggle as a political activist and earthy man-of-the-people is told through evocations of his own imagery, which references the popular culture of his land – giant snails, red devils, dancing skeletons in carnival clothes and galloping ghost horses. Its a feel-good show: a feast for the eyes and food for the soul. My only gripe was with the choice to have performers moving in and out of character in order to become strolling musicians playing rather pale imitations of Mexican folk tunes. The emergence of the whole

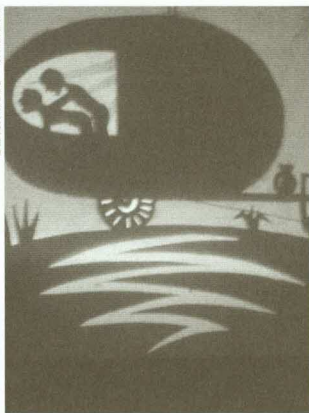


THEATRE DE L'OEIL - THE STAR KEEPER

cast out-of-mask for a musical finale was an anti climax to an otherwise excellent show.

The **visions Launchpad** was developed this year into a fully-fledged fringe for emerging UK companies, giving another valuable strand to the festival. **Nitty Gritty's Inside Out** was puppet theatre with live jazz, exploring a popular visions theme of migrancy and asylum. The beautifully-crafted, large and luscious figures had an earthy organic feel reminiscent of the sculpture of Ana Maria Pacheco. At the other end of the spectrum, **Woodenhead Works' Invertigo** used projected images on movable screens, spoken text and object animation to explore the visual nature of memory. With startling images – multi-coloured cityscapes, falling bodies, a puppet of disembodied body-parts moving through space – *Invertigo* was successful in its visual evocation of blurred memories and confused identity, but marred by some pretty awful acting and a leaden narrative.

Stepping out of the theatres, visions offered a number of alternative settings. **Theatre du Risorius** presented **Volpino**, an engaging and energetic there's-more-than-one-way-to-skin-a-rabbit parable on inter-species tolerance, delivered by Thierry Dupre who animated a selection of wacky animals with the ease of a seasoned performer, accompanying himself in not-French not-English grommelage. It was staged in their own lovely red caravan, which seemed to be furnished with jumble-sale finds – occasional tables, framed portraits and puppets that looked like discarded soft toys. **Aie Aie's My Eye** shared the bric-a-



brac aesthetic, this time set in a woolly tent full of tactile textiles. A tailor sits at his sewing machine, surrounded by a clattering jumble of tools. An Anglepoise lamp swivels to observe the audience. The tailor goes about his business with laconic ease and socks and bags turn into cloth creatures with ogling eyes. A meticulous surgical operation on a lump of cloth reveals a Russian-doll effect of Cyclopic woolly eyes within bodies. Drawers open to reveal jumping scissors. The cool and restrained stage persona of French maker-performer Julien Mellano adds frisson to the surreal logic of the environment. The manipulation of familiar objects always lends itself to exciting possibilities. In this case, it makes for a delightful 15-minute show that is highly original, beautifully staged and performed with skilled precision. Another winner was foyer-show **Professor Olaf Stevenson's Chest of Drawers**, presented by **Chemins de Terre** from Belgium. There are 40 drawers in the chest, and the content of each show is determined by which drawers the Professor chooses to open in his cod lecture on the origins of the universe, evolution and the nature of love (amongst other scientific and philosophical conundrums). Forks, tin cans, balloons, marzipan, bananas, drawing pins... all are transformed in the hands of this skilled puppeteer-clown. All of the little sketches are extremely funny - many with a pleasantly nasty edge. I was particularly taken with a detailed surgical operation on cans of baked beans and creamed rice which became - and once the professor had planted the idea this is what they were - guts and brains. I also enjoyed (drawing pin) Naughty George Bush destroying the (blown up yellow rubber glove) sun and thus ending life on earth.

Visions is one of a kind: there is nowhere else in the UK where this range of puppetry, animation and visual performance from all corners of the world can be seen within one festival. Long may it continue to thrive.

Dorothy Max Prior

VISIONS EXTRA

CONTROLUCE - CANTO A ORFEO



Controluce
CANTO A ORFEO
Sallis Benney Theatre

Based on the Greek myth of Orpheus and Eurydice, the story was told without text through image, movement, light and music. (Melo)dramatic images were portrayed, danced, shadowed within the surrounding kaleidoscopic light forms, that were stunning, rich in colour and shape, and constantly moving. Unfortunately, many of the ideas were overplayed. The dancer made repetitive movements with no choreographic/dramaturgical sense, apparently to fill out the music. Some of the lighting effects were similarly repetitive, which reduced their impact considerably. The story was not always comprehensible, which was perhaps only a problem if you knew the story! One audience member told me afterwards how deeply she had been moved, but it left me feeling empty.

Philip Beaven

NORWICH PUPPET THEATRE - PINOCCHIO



Norwich Puppet Theatre
PINOCCHIO
Komedia

This was a very accomplished piece of work, Mark Whitaker's consummate skills leading us through the story with puppetry, acting and mask play. The story was ingeniously told with table and shadow puppetry and rear projections, all put together around a set that served all the needs of the story and the performers telling of it. With only two performers holding all the threads together, it sometimes got a bit hectic. Though the beginning had a wonderful stillness and beauty, the desire to push the story along left me wishing for more moments of wonder and peacefulness.

Philip Beaven

SLEEPING DOGS - MIGRANT OVERTURES



Idolrich Theatre
THE MODEL
The Nightingale Theatre/
Visions Launchpad

Like a six-foot tall version of a classic wooden artist's model, a beautifully jointed puppet is brought to life as a fashion model. The joints offer complete articulation, and the eyes, which you might expect to be blank, have an eerie shine. With messages about food, glamour and self-image, this is a busy and at times overly full show. The Model includes video projections that highlight aspects and themes of the live action, yet many screened images (such as a man juggling) left me puzzled as to the context.

In my favourite section, simple yet wonderfully synchronised, the model moves and poses in the light of the flashgun as she is shot by the camera, freezing for poised moments, luxuriating in the attention. The end has a glorious serenity, where the puppet/model gently pushes her two puppeteers to the floor in a final act of liberation and solitude.

Miriam King

Sleeping Dogs
MIGRANT OVERTURES
The Nightingale Theatre/
Visions Launchpad

I am led through the dressing room, past a woman transfixed by her mirror image, brushing her long hair. I want to brush her hair too. In the next room, a child sleeps in a bed, I don't want to disturb his slumber. Through the next door, I'm into the theatre space where a man helps me to my seat. I don't know what is going to happen next - every moment is a surprise. Real and immediate, the performers do not seem to act, every moment seems a surprise to them too in this non-narrative exploration of the theme of 'home'. The very air in the space becomes animated as solitary journeys are made, places of rest sought - with serendipitous moments of sublime unity. A woman spills her bag of pebbles, a child takes a lantern to the window wistfully peering out, out into the night air a man calls 'show me the way to go home...' With questions of what 'home' means to me, I returned home with this piece of theatre very much alive inside of me.

Miriam King

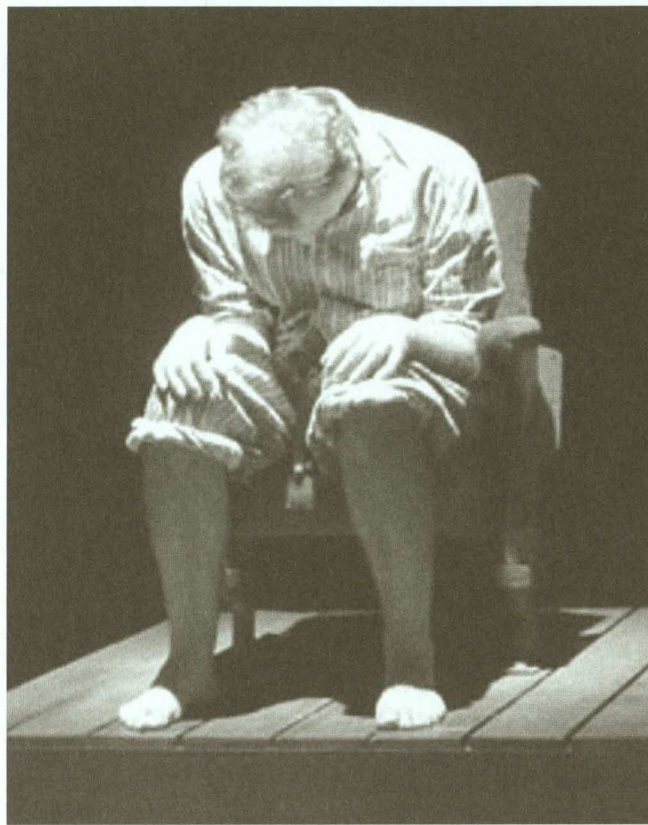


SCHLOCK! - UNINVITED GUESTS

Schlock!
UNINVITED GUESTS

Schlock!'s programme and publicity promised an investigation of the erotics of violence explored through the aesthetics of mediated horror: a challengingly cerebral starting point. Forming the work's organising principle, this perspective of cultural critique demanded an intimidatingly unwieldy theatrical dramaturgy. However, viewed on a straightforwardly performative level, the expertly handled friction between 'real' and fictionalised violence formed the basis for a rich and provocative piece of work. Schlock's material was drawn from a wide palette of b-rate horror films and first-hand accounts of experiences of violence ranging from friends of the cast to Ted Bundy. This was realised and related through a number of meta-theatrical devices: a surgical clear plastic screen dividing audience from much of the staged activity; the performed direction of characters into faked horrific poses; the separation of live and recorded voice; and the recurrent technique of breaking dramatically violent sequences at their peak. Transparent theatrical fakery was juxtaposed with movingly performed 'reality' and further with an emphasis on live physical presence through direct address and bodily foregrounding of the performers including nudity, retching and the use of physical soundscape mixed live from a mobile medical cart. There were certainly ideas which didn't work: confronting the audience with predictions of death; images of vampirism which seemed too overtly fictional and the requirement for their argument to collapse accounts from victims and infamous perpetrators which seemed at times insensitive to their material. Yet overall this was a thrilling and disconcerting performance to watch: both visceral and cerebral, allowing the audience to experience the fault-lines between experienced and performed violence.

Beccy Smith



DAVID GLASS ENSEMBLE - DISEMBODIED

David Glass Ensemble
DISEMBODIED

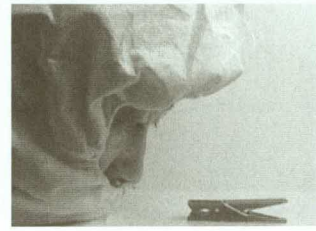
A man appears and sits on a white tiled platform on the side of the stage. From the back, through a red curtain and in a red light, a hunched figure walks down a series of steps made from upturned shoes. He laboriously climbs a platform on which is a single red velour folding theatre seat, and after much effort sits on it. A routine for the non-surgical removal of the brain is played and spoken directly to the audience - vaudeville style. The condensed brain is ultimately blown out of his nose into his hand! A tongue that won't stay in the mouth - despite every effort to push and hold it in, it always slips out. It is cut off in desperation and takes on a life of its own climbing down the wall. An intimate dance of the hands, very eurythmic, with movements more or less synchronised to the music, played live on the clarinet. These are just some of the scenes around which David Glass's Disembodied unfolds. It is touching, hilarious, painful, moving, confusing. It could be described as episodic, yet that is perhaps just its disembodied nature. Glass is a masterful performer, highly skilled with the expression of his body. It was first scratched last year at BAC, and this is the first performance. It feels like a piece that is unfolding, in the process of becoming, still young, but highly recommendable.

Philip Beaven

Peepolykus
ITS ALL IN THE TIMING

The absurdity of language is an apt theme for Peepolykus' new collaboration with David Ives. What kind of writing is ridiculous enough for Peepolykus' stupid behaviour? This is it: writing that stimulates their idiocy, the cast mostly unburdened by the script. This mixture of text with physical humour is truly skilful, with the words' meaning flung into absurdity by the physicality of the characters and situations - apes, construction workers, slapstick deaths... here is a real symbiosis of text and action. The writing is more than just gags. There are some genuine moments of beauty and light. The audience welcomes the drama and holds their breath, such as when a language schoolteacher confesses to being a fraud, or when two old ladies touch the next life at the end - you wouldn't expect to have your emotions tweaked by men in dresses, but it happens! Peepolykus suspect that their humour has hitherto been considered superficial - a not unfounded suspicion we might think for the princes of meaningless life-enhancing idiocy. It's All in the Timing is not as side-splittingly funny as some of their other shows, but it is still very funny and the compromise pays off. It's brave; it challenges the audience to find links between the scenes through themes of coincidence, randomness, probability. The audience likes it, and so do I.

Laura Eades



Kazuko Hohki
EVIDENCE FOR THE
EXISTENCE OF BORROWERS

Happiness for Everyone! is the catchphrase of the Borrowers International Network, which (we are led to believe by Hohki and her collaborators, Andy Cox and Mervyn Millar) was set up to promote cultural exchange between Borrowers and Human Beans. We start with an introductory lecture on the organisation's valuable work, then are taken on a tour around all sorts of hidden corners of BAC, including the roof-space where we sit precariously balanced between beams listening to a concert played on Binstruments - mini instruments made from spoons, pins and teeny wooden boxes. This promenade piece is a delight - particularly for anyone familiar with Mary Norton's stories of tiny people who live beneath the floorboards. We experience Borrowers' homes through peepholes, play miniature hockey, enter a museum of Borrowers' art and artefacts, read e-mails from a Borrower who has made contact (although sadly couldn't be with us that evening) and see a singing mini-person in the bottom drawer of a filing cabinet. An especially lovely touch is the little clues all around the building, not drawn attention to - a clothes peg here, a matchbox there. There are moments when the conceit of the piece flags - I grow a wee bit tired of the Network - but this is a minor gripe. Its strength lies in the ingenious artistic concept, the meticulous making skills, the music (with contributions by Hohki, Cox and Clive Bell) and engaging performance that brings the audience into its alternative reality with a complete suspension of disbelief. Now, everyone who believes in Borrowers, clap your hands...

Dorothy Max Prior

KAZUKO HOHKI - EVIDENCE FOR THE EXISTENCE OF BORROWERS



Petras Pulse

DRINKING THE DAWN

Camden Peoples Theatre/CPT: X Festival
October 2004

Think Ionesco's *Old Man and Old Woman of The Chairs*, only 70 years younger. Selina Papoutseli and Jamie Wood, performers and devisers of *Drinking the Dawn*, create equally idiosyncratic and eccentric worlds with sensual precision and beauty. The Woman surrenders sleep for cooking, concocting a variety of dishes before our eyes and noses. The Man is a dreamer. On the tones of a softly played accordion melody, the dreamer glides into the world of the Woman. They meet and play, for real. As the two worlds converge, the Man and the Woman appear to be helping each other play out their respective fantasies: Him as her lost lover who she feeds and nurtures, and Her as part of his romantic fantasy in free-fall dreaming. It is a joy to watch. Watchfulness itself becomes ludic. In one moment, the Man walks up to the audience and looks at the faces of the spectators with a surprised smile. Another meeting of worlds occurs. Its playfulness guards against pretension. The landscape of dawn is a place where shapes do not have to be solid. Musings and movements are still allowed their dream-like forms. It is a soft, sensual yet striking place, animated by evocative sound design. The performers ensure that free dreaming is channelled into a tighter, glistening ball that bounces and dances with grace and allure. It comes to a gentle stop when the first words of the play are spoken and the piece comes to an end. Morning has broken?

Marigold Hughes

Leikin Loppu

PERSUASION

Camden Peoples Theatre/
CPT: X Festival
October 2004

It could be harder than one thinks to persuade a play-going public to give themselves to play. In risking failure, abandoning self-consciousness and elevating fun to a level of utmost importance, *Persuasion Phase One* definitely persuades. As scantily clothed attendants - flourished with a touch of fairground fantasy - usher in the audience, the hands of the public are resolutely brandished with a 'Yes' stamp. We are in. We are going wherever they are. This is a good decision. The theatre becomes a space of play, of fun and of fantasy. Whisking us around a variety of activities, our hosts hop between roles of facilitator and performer. The fire doors sweep open and one of the performers is sitting on the street, listening to an Elvis love ballad. Passers-by look on with bemused stares. Moments later, we are in the street - dressed in white space suits and bearing sparklers to create a statue: *St. Peter's Lament*. Revelling in such irreverence is great fun. Those with whom we would normally spend a couple of hours sitting shoulder to shoulder in the dark are exposed to us in bright relief. When the games end and the theatre begins seems to be an inappropriate deliberation. Theatre is returned to play. Interactive experience should not have to compromise artistry, however, and the performance sections do slightly lack substance. *Persuasion Phase One* may have had other goals than to ensure a highly amusing night out using new means of actor-audience relation, but this is definitely where its strengths lie. Far from demeaning the piece, it has created an extremely strong foundation. Bring on Phase Two.

Marigold Hughes

1157 Performance Group

SEEN AND NOT SEEN

Norden Farm Centre for
the Arts, Maidenhead
September 2004

This small venue nestles in the suburbs of Maidenhead; surprising therefore that Norden Farm should house 1157, an 'experimental performance group'? In this piece they attempt to explore their self-professed identity crisis. 1157 show distinct influences of Artaud and post-modernity: aural assault of the audience, the use of personal experience as content and the preponderance of multi-media. With this in mind, 1157 should be an exciting and dynamic prospect, but at the moment they fall short of expectations. The stage is quartered by white-curtains; resonances of psychiatric treatment abound, further enhanced by the introspective, at times self-obsessed, ramblings of the 'characters'. Referencing personal experience is not an instant recipe for success and this piece lacks the irony or crafting of other 'confessionals'. The variety of multi-media techniques, from doubling live action to quoting an array of film extracts, within the visual montage that they seem to favour, allows for one or two interesting compositions of the mise-en-scene - Kate Hargreaves dancing to camera in just high heels and underwear while inscribing her body with lipstick, and montages of TV-relayed confessionals. However, for the most part it just proves repetitive and disheartening; often because the construction of the concepts are uneven in their realisation. This is clearest in the lacklustre and derivative physical theatre sequences. 1157 show promise in the tenacity with which they have constructed their interface with the technology, it is just they need to spend more time developing the content with which they are working. Somewhere within this show is 45 minutes of interesting material, unfortunately a sledgehammer is needed to pry it out.

Tom Wilson

Opera Circus

ARCANE

Lilian Bayliss Theatre, London
October 2004

The title of this performance is apt, as the plot and reasoning certainly seems to be known or understood by only a few. There is a story line about a sacred book representing an ancestral bloodline, confusing without a detailed synopsis. The operetta follows the progress of a dying angel and her interaction with mortals. More interesting are the themes of woman living in a world of man and symbols of anarchic society embodied by characters as omniscient as the angels. Social and global hierarchies are explored. People are driven barefoot from their homes and are forced into sudden life-changing decisions, sometimes in the pursuit of goodness, sometimes love, sometimes lust. All the seven deadly sins are dabbled in. From lusty mothers and greedy sons to a bedraggled barefoot peasant obsessed with a captured angel with wings chopped to bleeding stumps, the performance is a musical gallivant on a stage strewn with white feathers. The company combines comedy with tragedy well; particularly good is the repressed transsexual butler who is sick of living with a killer, Frank Slick, the wing-hacking culprit obsessed with Cockerel (a puppet who launches into jaunty songs). Instead of pecking at corn, this cock dines on caviar. Perhaps the 'opera' refers to the acrobatics of the voices, although the musical highlight was the outstanding trio of musicians (with clipped wings) who play the cello, clarinet and piano.

Katie Phillips



Leslie Hill/ Helen Paris

SMOKING GUN & FAMILY HOLD BACK

Drill Hall, London

October - November 2004

Leslie Hill, dressed as a member of the Ku Klux Klan, opens this double bill presented by Curious to mark the US/UK special relationship. The international relationship between the US and the UK is analysed and contextualised through Hill's entertaining and memorable stand-up lecture. From her Perspex podium with a red, white and blue target behind her Hill asks the question 'Where have we come from?' and 'Where are we going?' Global and philosophical, with great content, style and links, Hill surpasses herself when she enacts the turf wars. Lugging a large suitcase across the stage she unpacks a roll of new green turf and proceeds to cut it up, making her own patch of lawn - the green grassland being a key feature of her view of the development of civilisation through the maternal line and the grass lands of the savannah. Her visual and physical image of turf wars encapsulates the absurdity of the current political climate where territory and boundaries are the name of this deathly game. Of course Hill let rip about the outcome of the US elections, the double bill planned to be a before and after event and hoping for a Democratic victory. The audience shared her horror at the outcome as they sipped Cuban rum and enjoyed the smoky aroma of Cuban cigars. After an interval, Helen Paris took over with her personal political celebration of family and global repression using a dining table, one chair and a beautiful canteen full of bone handled cutlery. In Katherine Hepburn-mode, Paris, a gamine acrobat, folded and unfolded table napkins demonstrating the precision of domesticity in the English suburb of Maidstone. In her finale the dinner table transforms into a fine art spectacle, a tabletop holding water for Paris to do a back bend into and then crawl around in, as she recites the last supper menu

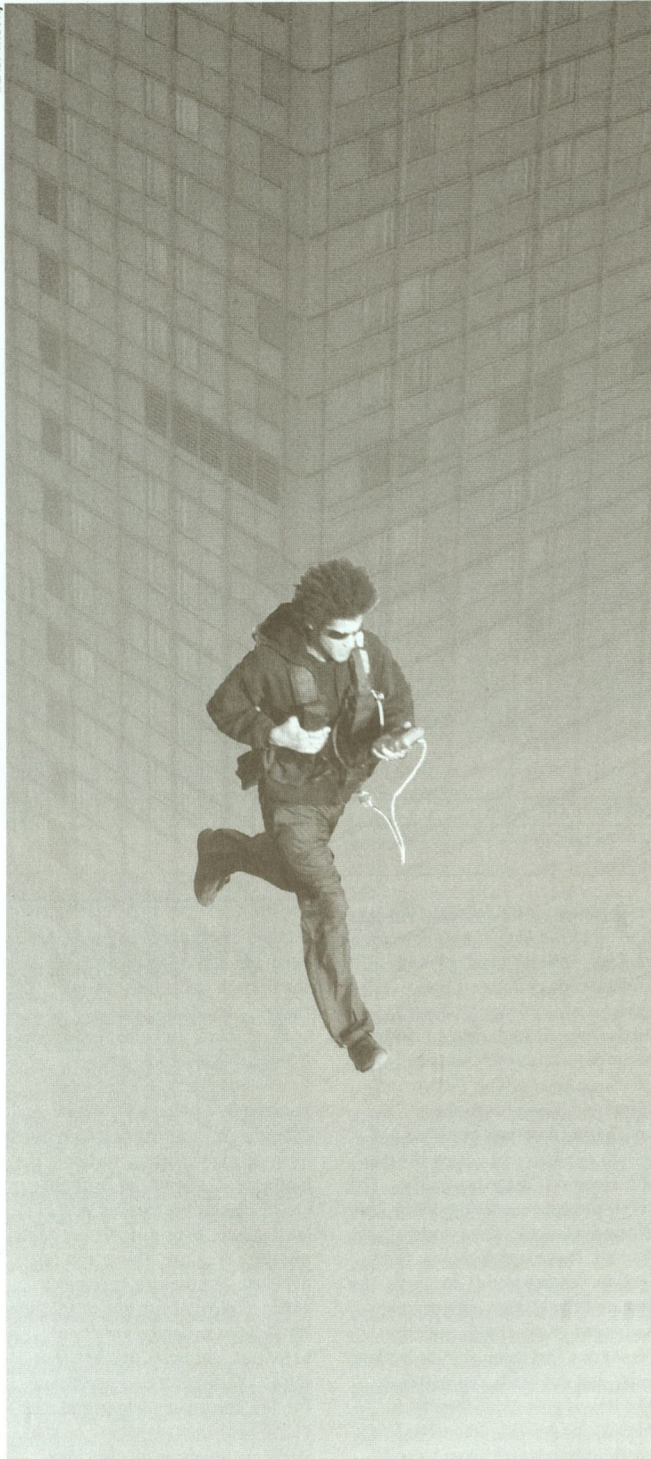
choices eaten by men awaiting execution on death row in America in 2000. Reflections enhance the ominous cutlery canteen now under the table in a visual metaphor exposing levels, tiers, hierarchies and centres of control. In Paris's world, under the table is the place where deals get done and power wielded, and rather than not be noticed when she returns to the top side of the table we believe that Paris is spot-on when she finishes by insisting: 'Believe me you will hear me coming' certainly not 'holding back' as instructed by her mother. Double entendre intended, in a double bill that meshes power politics with personal politics and the joy of transgressing rather than rigidly holding onto boundaries.

*Anna Birch**Lightwork***HERE'S WHAT I DID WITH MY BODY ONE DAY**

Pleasance Theatre, London

September 2004

A man is sitting at a table. A moving train is projected across a screen. The stage is energised by image. Colour and light spark the space into dynamism. Stationary performers are thrown into life, vitalised by video. The man at the table travels. The journey begins. David Reé is a genome scientist - from a family of killers. A cryptic narrative is told with innovative finesse. The killers are three generations of Reé forefathers acting under a family curse: the murder of French intellectuals in traffic accidents. As the relationships between fathers, sons and ancestors are explored, so are the interwoven genes of humanity. Technological media never detracts or competes with theatricality. Instead, it uses the best of itself by remaining unique to its filmic properties - conjuring visual rhythms of pace, colour, location and situation that seem to be caught best through a camera's eye. It is the relationship between live performance and video that renders the piece so compelling. In the midst of a highly technological visual feast, the lives and hearts of characters still strongly resound. The entire cast gives intelligent and versatile performances. Colin Hurley as David Reé is particularly triumphant. That the characters are vivid, the visuals sleek and the narrative gripping serves as concrete proof that these components do not have to exist in mutual exclusivity. Action and storytelling is at the basis of all representative forms, including theatre and media. By employing what is unique to both forms and bringing them into vital relation with each other, Lightwork creates a contemporary coup de théâtre.

Marigold Hughes*Blast Theory/ Mixed Reality Lab***CAN YOU SEE ME NOW?**

Gardner Arts Centre, Brighton

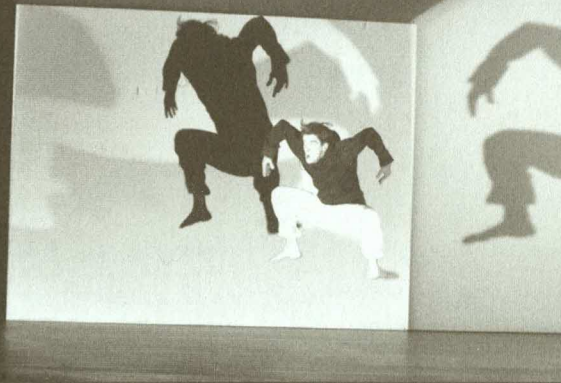
September 2004

So who wants to see white blobs representing you in a virtual world in a computer chased in real time by global positioning, headphone, digital camera equipped runners running around the real world, armed with tracking devices that tell them when they are in the same spot as you? There is freshness when you can hear the performers (actors? agents?) breathing heavily through your headphones. It is oddly disorientating, moving slowly on a computer screen through a rudimentary mock up of the University of Sussex campus. You can see the representations of your real life pursuers closing in, like dots on a sonar screen. You might move round the back of the Gardner

Arts Centre, and hear the muffled yelp as in the real world your tracker slips on the steep wet grass bank. Compared to the video games market it is very slow and 'unrealistic', no smooth graphically modelled explosions and sounds. It is cumbersome, and I got that sense of frustration that you get when your car won't go, or you're in a dream when your legs won't move. But you are safe inside a warm building in front of an antiseptic computer - it is an odd experience. A computer game that isn't a computer game, hooked up with the digital equivalent of string. So who does want to take part in this? 'Who the hell wants to hear actors talk?' said Harry Warner, and got it spectacularly wrong.

Bill Parslow

Bill Parslow



Teshigawara/Karas

BONES IN PAGES

QEH, South Bank Centre

Teshigawara choreographs, performs and designs the set, lighting and costumes. One thousand books, one thousand shoes, light reflected through shards of glass, and one crow. Behind closed curtains, we could hear the chilling call of the crow, leading to a mesmerising opening. I wasn't immediately aware that the glowing vase or egg behind a table-top of jagged broken glass was the head of Saburo Teshigawara, until he slowly raised his forehead revealing his features. I became unhappy about the glorious black crow, tethered as though superglued throughout to the top of a clear perspex wall down stage centre. Dramatic, yes, and echoing the name of Teshigawara's company Karas, yet I perpetually looked to see if this glossy raven was free to move (one foot was tied). Teshigawara was eventually joined momentarily by two other humans, a masked figure ploughing through a field of brown shoes... a woman, like ether, arrives and departs. Teshigawara moves wonderfully, giving us his curious repertoire, yet, to my surprise, I came away unmoved.

Miriam King

Batik

SHOKU/SIDE B

The Place

Ikuyo Kuroda's Batik presented two pieces, both stunning. The first her solo, Shoku. A solitary woman comes forward with a tray of torches, standing on end like bottles. Pathways of light - wild, frenetic, sublime. Startling vigorous scenes. A shoe is dropped repeatedly, rhythmically, the shoe is slammed into the ground, impacted so forcefully that the body flies up into the air, flies up from the backs of the feet. A play of body revealed, concealed. Manually operated torches, a red dress, white frilly pants, dignity, abandonment, the dress pulled up over her face. Potent pauses. At the end, she walks forward, one shoe clenched between her thighs.

Side B begins with a red curtain across the stage. One woman in front, a slow turn. She disappears behind the curtain and it is raised just enough to see and hear feet, huge shadows, rhythmic stomping. The curtain falls, caught between six pairs of nameless teeth. Six women, almost-replicas in height and form, like cut out paper dolls in shadow form, hair over faces, heaving, breathing bellies. Memories of images from Japanese films such as Black Water trace through me. Catherine Wheel arms, astounding lighting, black dresses with red linings. We only see the women's faces at the very end. Parting their hair, their individuality, their vulnerability, smiles breaking into grins, face on.

Miriam King

Philippe Decoufle

SOLO

The Place

Renowned for his magnificent ensemble dance pieces, spectacles and award winning dance films, Decoufle brings us Solo, a technical yet intimate show that incorporates live dance with film and video. Decoufle is a delight, a raconteur, leading us into a playful presentation of his dance career and of family moments. From OHP photos of his friends and family to Busby Berkeley moments, whole routines on staircases with infinite versions of himself decreasing in size and dancing in canon. A dance with four Decoufles using real shadow and video projected shadows, tricks of scale and perception. A highlight, simply performed sitting at a table, is a live version of the gestural hand dance that was the successful dance film *Le Petite Bal*. Funny, charming and moving, Solo is without ego - direct, clever, playful, delightful like the man himself.

Miriam King

Alain Platel/ Les Ballet C de la B

WOLF

Sadlers Wells, London

September 2004

Is it time yet for nostalgia for the naughty nineties? Platel's Wolf fuses opera, dance, circus and theatre and features over 50 living creatures on stage - musicians, dancers and dogs. Set in a shopping mall, the aesthetic is 90's Eurotrash meets Pizzaman's Sex on the Streets. We are enveloped in an ocean of sound, the strongest element of the piece: screeched text, the clanking of metal steps and shutters, gun shots, humming glasses, singers with the voices of angels - and aching beautiful music (mostly Mozart - the Wolf is as much a tribute to Wolfgang as a reference to the dogs) played by the Klangforum Wien orchestra, who are placed within the impressive set of lock-up wire units and walkways. The choreography is a mix of highly staged set pieces (the dancers) and random improvisation (the dogs, who wander around freely for much of the piece). There's Bausch-like gestural dance, a bubble-wrap animation, some rather tame aerial tissu, sur pointe piss-takes, flag-waving, break dancing - and a grotesque 'pregnancy' that results in the emergence of a miniature dog from a dancer's costume. Much is over familiar material to anyone versed in contemporary dance-theatre. Wolf is an extraordinary achievement in its staging and its artistic collaborations, but suffers from the postmodern disease: it's an image overload of juxtaposed signifiers with no sense of statement, essence or commitment from the artist behind the work. We sit absorbing the spectacle open-mouthed, but as we leave, the ironic smile dissolves and we re-enter the world feeling nothing much has changed.

Dorothy Max Prior

Amok Productions

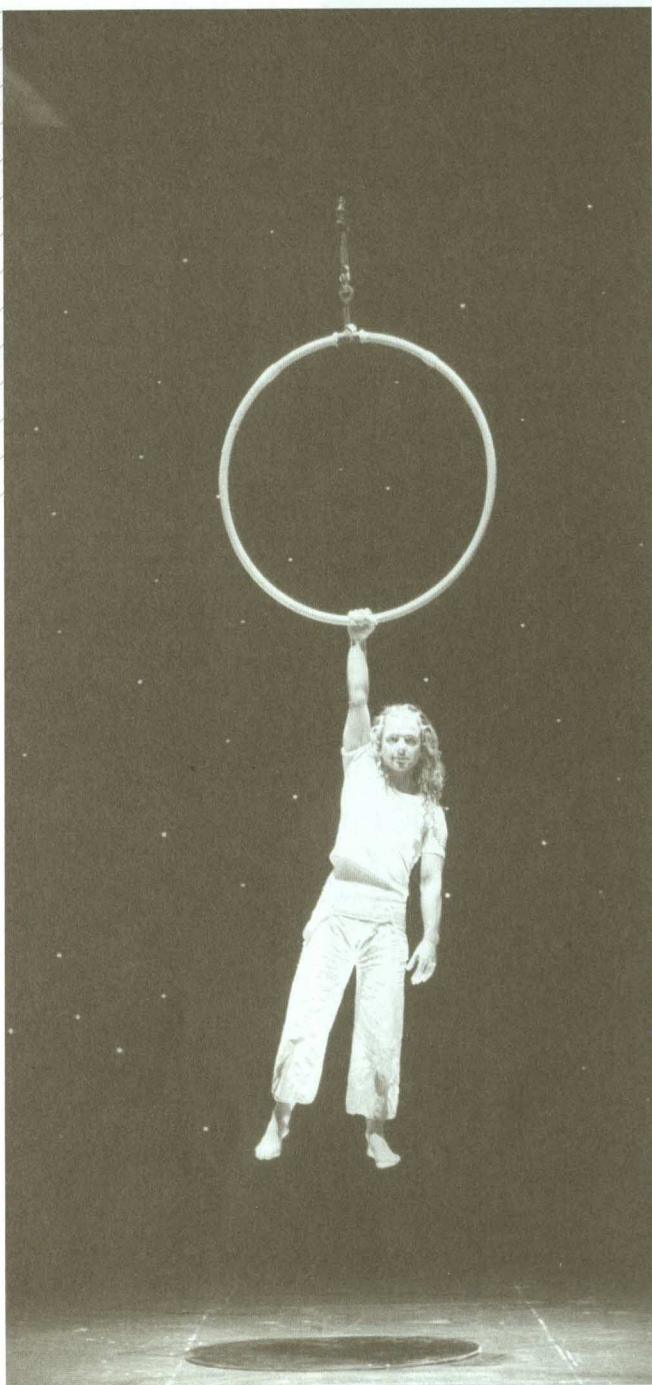
EARTH ANGEL

Southwark Playhouse, London

November 2004

Pre-Raphaelite hair, orchids and a glowing globe... on screen, a barefoot woman in white walks in the night, gliding ghost-like through the streets, trampling through flowerbeds, digging into the earth and scooping up the soil. On stage, the woman lies in bed, tossing and turning. Filmed sequences representing dream life perhaps - but as the piece develops, this simplistic division breaks down as the two worlds merge. Viewed psychologically, a meeting of conscious and unconscious states but also, artistically, a surrealist investigation of juxtaposed images. In Earth Angel we have the story of a woman's (or perhaps Everywoman's) obsession with soil. There is a knowing Freudian literalism in the play with imagery (such as bulbs of both sorts growing in beds of both sorts). As soil - the earth itself - is composed of the rotting bodies of plants and animals, we unsurprisingly find that birth, death and regeneration are lines of enquiry. Blood to soil to milk (white blood) is one. Earth Angel is devised and performed by Catherine Hoffmann, with music composed and played by Alfredo Genovesi. It has been a long time in development, an earlier version presented at ROAR 2002. Hoffmann is a compelling physical performer, and all the elements of the piece work in harmony - with the exception of the spoken text, much of which is self-consciously 'poetic'. There are moments of grotesque humour (cotton-wadding babies emerging from ripped pillows; an ever-growing collection of stinky milk bottles discovered around the bed) but I would have liked more of these to give a better balance to the self-conscious 'artiness' of the piece.

Dorothy Max Prior



Circus Oz
Royal Festival Hall, London
September 2004

You'll notice that there is no show title: this is circus - not circus-theatre or any other circus hybrid. What we see is staged with a contemporary aesthetic, but in essence is a series of well-executed tricks and turns delivered with razzmatazz. There's trapeze of all sorts, Chinese pole, German wheel, acrobatics and BMX trick biking. Perhaps I shouldn't single anyone out of a company so keen on its presentation as a collective - but I can't resist singing the praises of Ethiopian-born Sosi, contortionist extraordinaire and eight-ball juggler who, wearing a wondrous white wig and a wicked grin, bounces the balls off the ground in a percussive patter, catching all eight on the way up. Circus Oz come with a

trail-blazing reputation - their political commitment to work with all-human performers, with gender equity and with collective ownership and creation of the work as valid now as when they formed in 1977. And they continue to take this political commitment into performance. There's the personal politics in the way female bodies are presented (sassy, sexy and all shapes and sizes) and the way women are as likely to be the base as the flyer. And though some might think that circus is not a medium to tackle global politics, Oz give the lie to that in their image of grasping power-hungry men-in-suits climbing all over each other to reach the top of the human pyramid, accompanied by soundbites of the voice of America. Brash, funny and uplifting - the veterans of new circus are still flying high.

Dorothy Max Prior

Fidget Feet/ Wired Aerial Theatre

ACROMATIC

Samuel Beckett Theatre, ESB Dublin Fringe Festival
September 2004

Acromatic is a triptych of solo aerial shows, all beautifully produced, with excellent costumes (particularly the two Fidget Feet shows) and lighting design. Fidget Feet set Jym Darling's Solaris' glittering gold costume against rich blues and reds. Chantal Daly's I Can't Handle Me has an effectively restricted palette: red and white were used to chart the journey from sugary innocence to bloodied adolescence. Prop-wise, the latter's angst portrayal was enlightened by flying in a huge Tampon. Wired Aerial Theatre's Stuffed featured a wheelie-bin/toilet, complete with pink fluffy furnishings, a telling comic metaphor - particularly as the bungee allowed performer Hesketh to be vomited out of it, appropriate to her bulimic subject. All three used medium as metaphor, adding layers of meaning to the beauty and skill of their work. In the case of Solaris this was perhaps the least effective (though female prejudice may be at work here, as his piece was as male-centred as the other two were female). His antics were accompanied by rhyming rap, and while this was often witty, it equally often led to over-statement and was at times shackled to the rhyme rather than served by it. His habit of saying in words what he was also saying in gestures begs editing to highlight the strengths of the piece. But overall, it was a wonderful evening of theatre; heartfelt and humorous, with many surprises and visual treats, they risked their necks while making it look effortless, and above and despite all, flew for us.

Niamh Lawlor

Expressive Feat Productions

DOES MY BUM LOOK BIG IN THIS & LOOKS DECEIVING

Jacksons Lane, London
September 2004

This is Exfeat's first visit to London and provides a promising introduction to the fantastical aerial dance of Tina Carter. The strikingly industrial-looking backdrop for both pieces is a metallic structure spiralling upwards from the floor, providing both fixing point for silks and trapeze and a contrast against Carter's more organic choreography, and Abby Grewcock's evocatively coloured and styled costume designs. Looks Deceiving is a dark and fantastical journey into first meetings of initially 'opposite' individuals. Both floor and aerial movement possess an arachnid-like quality; the performers limbs tentatively investigating the environment and each other; suggesting an insectile nest amidst a futuristic micro-landscape writ large. They fluidly scale and entwine the metallic set and silks, setting the spidery movements against arcs

of flight redolent of butterflies and allowing their differences to be reconciled in mutual play and exploration of the three dimensions.

Does My Bum... is, in tone, worlds away. Against the same backdrop emerge three blonde prototype Charlie's Angels. Dressed in pink Lycra and modesty-saving feathers, this trio of girls lure us into the surreally kitsch world of a competitive search for beauty. They squabble for the best clothes, the best shoes and the best of the audience's attention amongst and upon a creative aerial platform of a giant clothes closet, including giant bra and knickers. Amongst this hard-nosed competition come some more delicate touches - sock puppets, fencing with boots, and a desperate character searching the audience for help. Does My Bum... is a crowd pleasing toybox world where escapist fantasy clashes with the competitive reality of modern living.

Tom Wilson

RSC

VENUS AND ADONIS

Little Angel Theatre, London
November 2004

Shakespeare's poem was presented by the Royal Shakespeare Company, directed by RSC's Gregory Doran, in cahoots with Little Angel's artistic director Steve Tiplady. Both should be as proud as Punch - seldom has a puppet performance received so much critical acclaim in the mainstream press. The majority of the RSC audience, which packed the theatre, had never seen a puppet piece for adults and were generally full of wonder and praise. The Venus and Adonis story, read live by the distinguished actor Michael Pennington, tells of the unrequited love of the goddess for the mortal Adonis, and her revenge. It was acted by a number of puppet figures, large and luscious, operated from behind, except for an introductory pair of small marionettes. The aesthetic was that of a Rubens painting: pastel colours, voluptuous forms, erotic allusions and actions. Robert Jones of the RSC was responsible, with Lyndie Wright as the puppet designer, joined in the making by Peter O'Rourke, John Roberts, Jan Zalud, Stefan Fichert, Simon Auton and assistant Jungmin Song. The talent embedded in the making of the figures and in their manipulation was of the highest order: all concerned were the cream of the cream! The manipulators (Sarah Wright, Rachel Leonard, Michael Bayliss, Lynn Robertson Bruce and Nele de Craeker), as sensitive as they were skilled, were directed by Steve Tiplady. Steve Russell's guitar accompaniment was both subtle and appropriate. As I write the production is enjoying a six-week run in Stratford-on-Avon, and rumour suggests it will have a touring life long after that.

Penny Francis

PRINT PUBLICATIONS

LIVE - ART AND PERFORMANCE

Adrian Heathfield (Ed) & Hugo Glendinning (Photos)
 Tate Publishing

Ah yes - all the favourites: La Ribot, Marina Abramovic, Forced Entertainment, Goat Island, Stellarc, Franko B. The emphasis is on contemporary British practice and/or artists that have appeared at Live Art Development Agency/ Tate Live events. It's a gift of a book - gorgeous pictures, engaging words. Gems within include: the texts from Bobby Baker's Box Story - Cornflakes, mustard, washing powder, biscuits; all the questions from Quizoola!; sumptuous images of Oleg Kulik's Armadillo Your Show; an engaging apologia for performance art by Gomez-Pena; RoseLee Goldberg on the past 100 years. Anyone interested in contemporary performance needs this on their shelf - or coffee table.

NOT EVEN A GAME ANYMORE - THE THEATRE OF FORCED ENTERTAINMENT

Judith Helmer/ Florian Malzacher (Eds)
 Alexander Verlag Berlin

A collection of essays (in English and German) to celebrate the 20th anniversary of Forced Entertainment. Contributions (which include essays and interviews from Judith Helmer, Adrian Heathfield, Matthew Gholish and Andrew Quick) are intelligent and provocative but refreshingly free from critical theory clichés; the focus is always the work itself. Co-editor Maltzacher gives us 'There is a Word For People Like You: Audience' which explores what writer/director Tim Etchells called 'the responsibility of seeing - and having an attitude to what is seen' and Etchells himself provides a coda to the collection with his own version of the company's history 'A Text on 20 Years with 66 Footnotes'. Essential reading.

DODIN AND THE Maly DRAMA THEATRE - PROCESS TO PERFORMANCE

Maria Shevtsova
 Routledge

Maly Drama Theatre of St Petersburg devise theatre from a variety of starting points and they place the highest value on collaborative work made with a permanent ensemble. Their repertoire includes Gaudeamus' a highly visual and burlesque piece dubbed 'Chaplin in the Gulag'; the tightly-choreographed corporeal piece Claustrophobia, and the densely verbal 9-hour marathon of Dostoyevsky's The Possessed (aka The Devils). What all these productions have in common is the skill of the ensemble work: 'No company in the world today has ensemble dynamics comparable to those of the Maly Drama Theatre' states Shetsova in her book which is a refreshingly straightforward look at the history, working practices and major productions of this extraordinary company and its founder/director Lev Dodin.

CD-ROM & STUDY RESOURCES

CDR

TIM ETCHELLS AND FORCED ENTERTAINMENT
 Imaginary Evidence

The hand-drawn site map offers choices such as Dressing Up, Alcohol, Magic and Audience. Click on your choice and you get a Polaroid frame and icons linked to a selection of short video clips to put in it - some have a direct relationship to Forced Entertainment productions, others a more obscure association. With additional archives from the past 20 years, this CDR is a valuable asset to those interested in the company's work in and around contemporary performance and media. Created in collaboration with Mary Agnes Krell, David Jennings and Hugo Glendinning.
 www.forced.co.uk to order.

LADA STUDY ROOM

The Live Art Development Agency's Study Room is a free, open access research facility for artists, promoters, students, academics, journalists and researchers. The Study Room houses the UK's largest publicly accessible library of Live Art related videos as well as an extensive collection of publications; magazines and journals; CDs, CD-ROMs and DVDs; artists' information and materials; and information about key UK organisations.
 www.thisisLiveArt.co.uk.

THE PERFORMANCE PACK

Building on the legacy of Live Culture at Tate Modern, conceived and created by Joshua Sofaer, The Performance Pack is a signed and numbered limited edition artwork, a performance enabler, and an educational resource. The Performance Pack is a ready-made kit containing all the audio-visual material, historical information and props needed to develop a lecture-based performance exploring the relationship between fine art and performance.
 For further details/ to order contact: ppp@thisisLiveArt.co.uk or phone 020 7033 0275

WEBSITES/ E-NEWSLETTERS

The Dramaturgs' Network is an organisation of professional dramaturgs. Their newsletter is available at www.dramaturgy.co.uk

Animations Online Includes features, reviews and news on puppetry/object theatre and related artforms. It is published by Puppet Centre Trust and can be viewed on their website at www.puppetcentre.com.

Dance on Film News takes the reader inside the art and culture of Dance on Camera Films. To subscribe email to danceonfilmnews@yahoo.co.uk

Moon Radio WebTV/ MyTV is a unique broadcasting tool and space for artists to showcase their own live performance, video, and broadcasts on the Internet. Archived performances are available for viewing at www.moonradio.co.uk

Horse + Bamboo have launched HoBo - a workshop/video package for 14-18 year-olds. HoBo engages with memory, family and identity, and issues of discrimination and tolerance in relation to the experience of the Holocaust and to life in modern Britain. Email: frances.rogan@zen.co.uk, T: 01706 220241 or see www.horseandbamboo.org

WEBSITE LISTINGS

www.totaltheatre.org.uk

Total Theatre Subscribers can now add their own directory information and listings e.g. for training, funding, performance dates and notice board via the website. This information is available to view by all visitors to the website. Existing TTN members/subscribers who have an email address but have not yet received an activation code, please visit www.totaltheatre.org.uk and click on the activation link on the home page to access your subscription and benefits online. Contact admin@totaltheatre.org.uk for website or subscription queries.

MAGAZINE SUBMISSIONS

The following items can be submitted to Total Theatre Magazine: **PERFORMER AND COMPANY UPDATES; NEWS FROM VENUES/FESTIVALS/OTHER ARTS ORGANISATIONS; INFORMATION ON TRAINING/PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, CONFERENCES, SYMPOSIA; INFORMATION ON FUNDING, BURSARIES AND GRANTS; INFORMATION ON PUBLICATIONS, EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES, WEBSITES AND OTHER MEDIA.**

Copy deadline for the next issue is **7th March 2005**, publication date is 1st May 2005. The next issue will cover the period May- July 2005.

Send items to: listings@totaltheatre.org.uk

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 Email: admin@totaltheatre.org.uk

See www.totaltheatre.org.uk for listings updates

UK

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zippos.circus@virgin.net
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aop@aber.ac.uk
CPR's Cross-Currents: Spring 2005
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Create short solo performances using meditation, shamanic practices, expressionistic movement, and work with sound and music. Luke Dixon - Theatre Nomad (UK) 5-6 March 2005
Loss & Bereavement - two-day theatre workshop that looks at performative expressions of grief and loss.

CIRCELATION 05

Leeds
www.circelation.co.uk
info@circelation.co.uk
A performance laboratory for circus arts in relation to other disciplines. Produced by Chenine Bhatena, Circelation 05 will take place 2-15 April in Leeds. Full details and application forms on the website.

CIRCUMEDIA

Bristol
+44 (0)117 9477288
www.circumedia.com
Centre for contemporary circus and physical performance. Courses include: Two-year professional training programme. One-year foundation (OCR Diploma). Three-month introductory Two-year BTEC (National Diploma in Performing Arts). Create and Promote - making and marketing circus art

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(degree admissions)
www.thecircusspace.co.uk
degree.admissions@thecircusspace.co.uk
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info@welfare-state.com
Mad March Weekend of Events & Workshops 24 - 27 March 2005
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01.42.87.39.27/06.63.86.58.07
www.academie-spectacles.com
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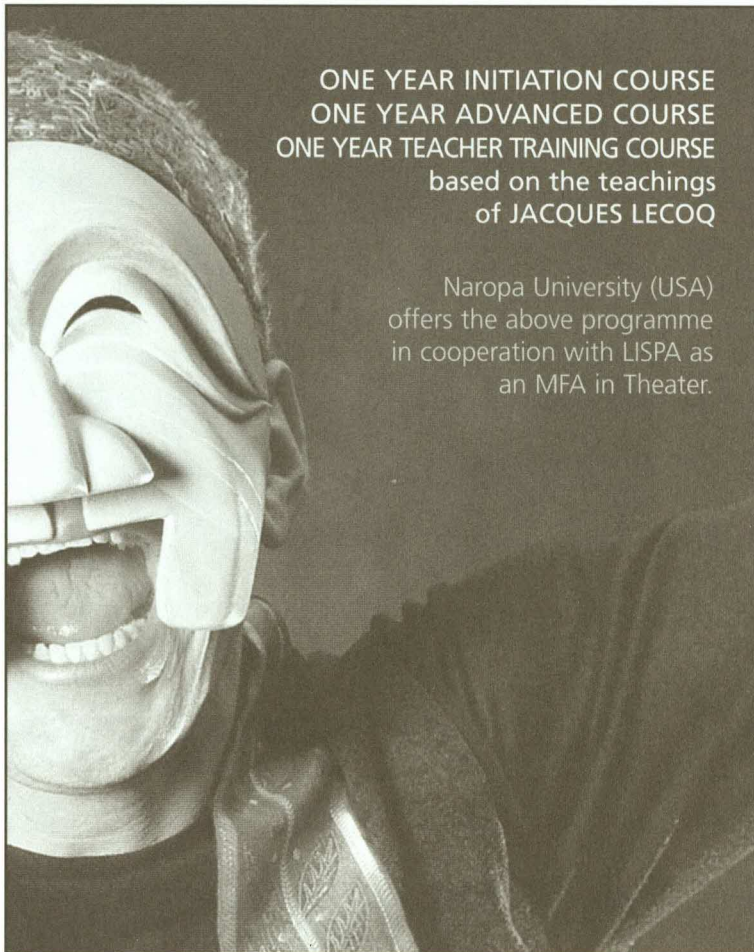
London
www.circusarts.org.uk
How to Create the Greatest Show on Earth. CAF annual conference 28 April 2005. See website for full details.

NATIONAL STREET ARTS MEETING

Brighton
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www.zapuk.com
isabelle@zapuk.com
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TOWARDS TOMORROW?

AN INTERNATIONAL GATHERING
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Aberystwyth, Wales, +44 (0)1970 622133. www.thecpr.org.uk
aop@aber.ac.uk. 7-10 April 2005
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London International School of Performing Arts



Puppet Centre Bursary Scheme 2004/5

The Puppet Centre Trust is pleased to open applications to its 2004/5 Artist Bursary Scheme. The bursaries are designed to support professional artists to develop their skills in puppetry. The programme will specifically assist artists seeking a period to specialise in a new field or to explore a change of direction in their practice.

Applicants must be able to demonstrate a minimum of 2 years professional experience in their artform. We welcome applications from all practitioners who can demonstrate a commitment to puppetry in their work.

Application is by submitting a portfolio of work alongside the Application Form, which can be obtained with Guidelines by emailing Bercy Smith at the Puppet Centre on pct@puppetcentre.demon.co.uk. Deadline for application: 10am February 1st 2005.

Throughout 2004/5 the PCT, as a national development agency for the artform of puppetry, is running a programme of professional development activities, Animating the Animators, including workshops, masterclasses and discussions. Details will be released on www.puppetcentre.com or you can join PCT's e-mailing list to receive regular updates by emailing SUBSCRIBE@pct@puppetcentre.demon.co.uk



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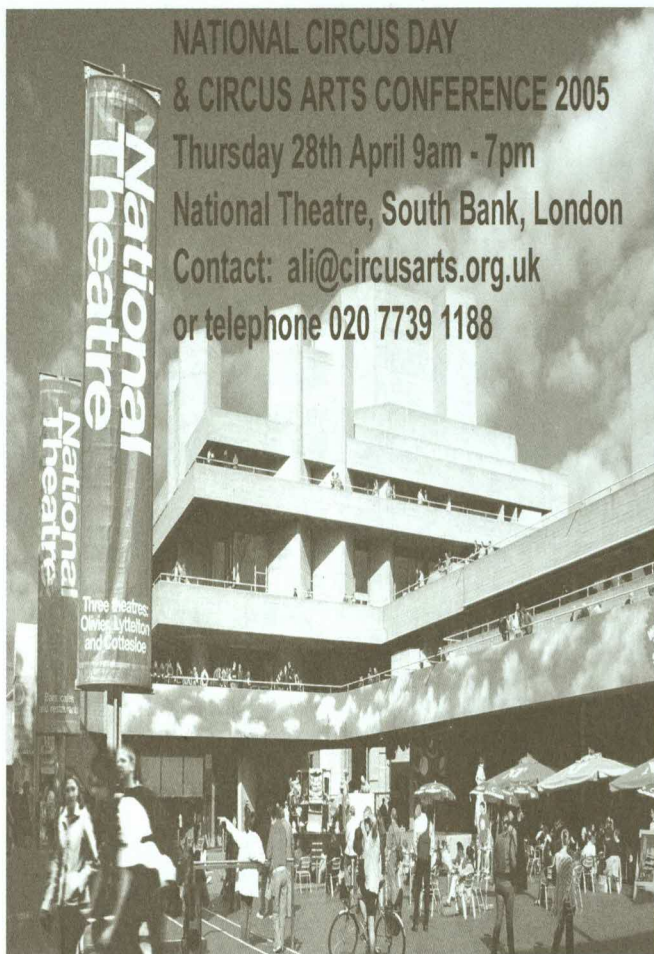
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 examining the complex relation between performance and theatre: the past, present and future of 'performance' and 'theatre' and their aesthetic practices. Theatre X Performance

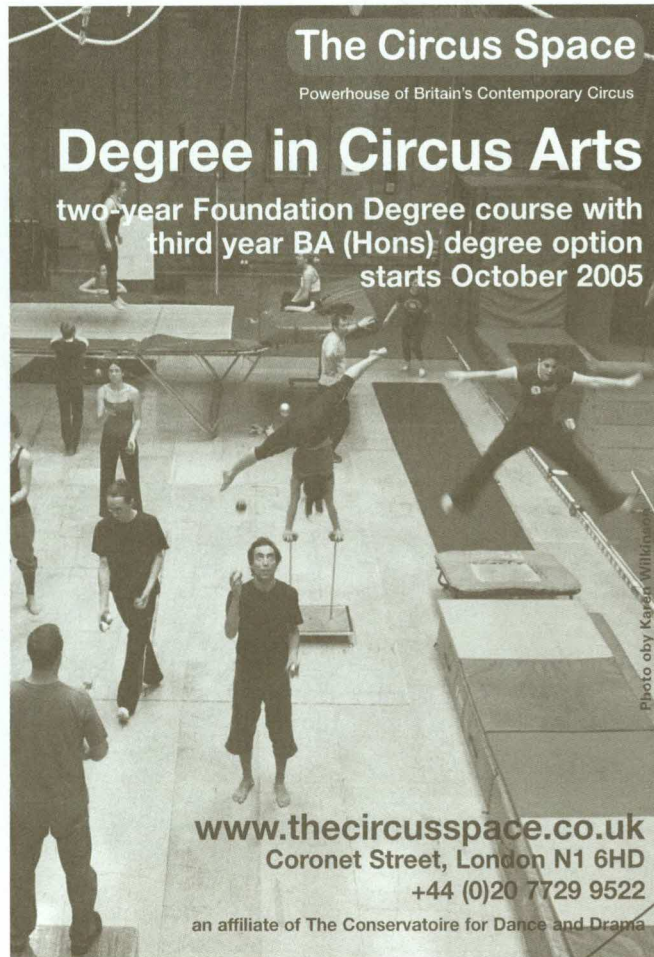
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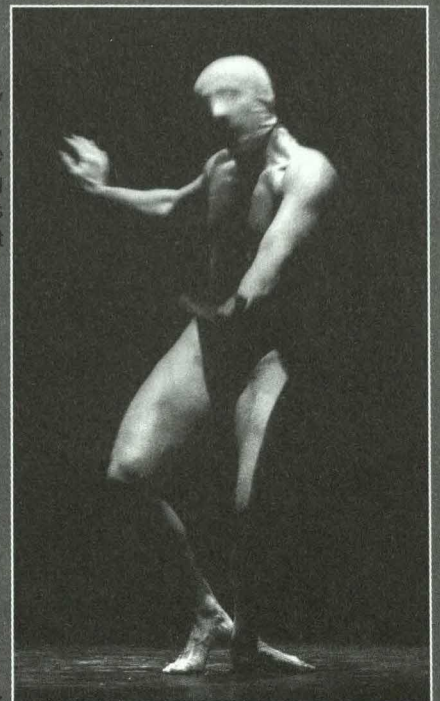


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