

total theatre

Mime, Physical Theatre & Visual Performance

Volume 9 Issue 4 Winter 1997/98 £2.50

Baying for Blood

Franko B in Conversation

Performance

Scarabeus

Wim Vandekeybus

Welfare State International

Stephen Powell

Festivals

London International

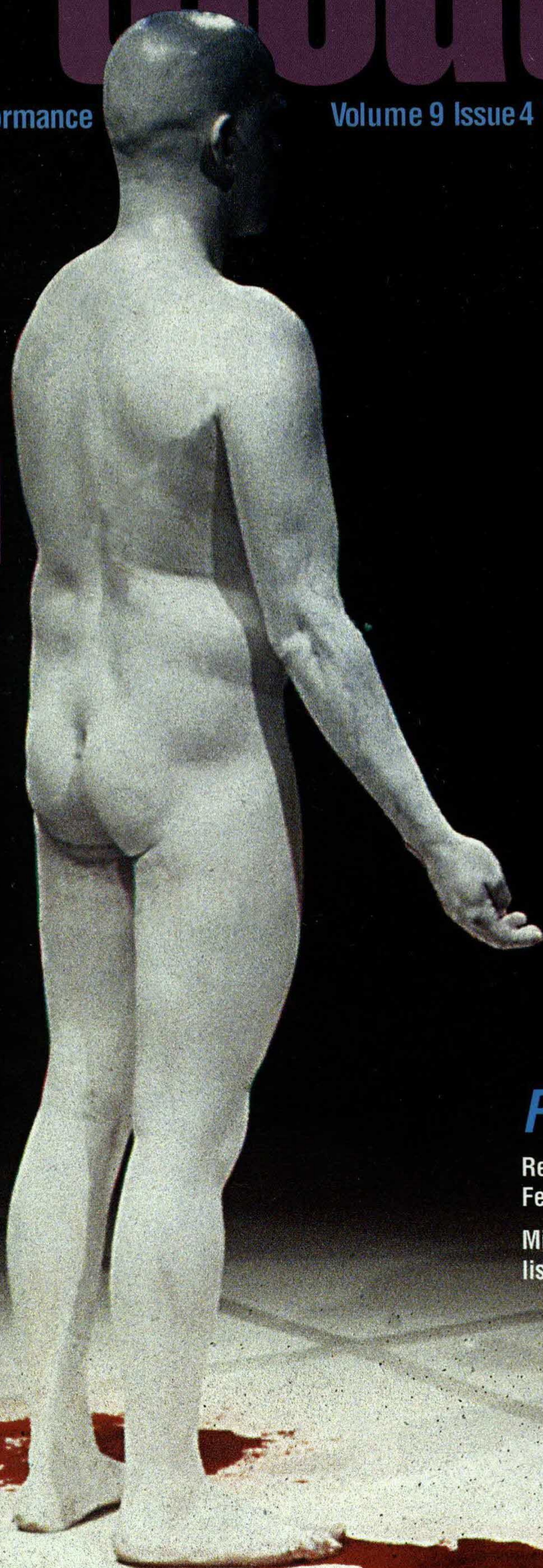
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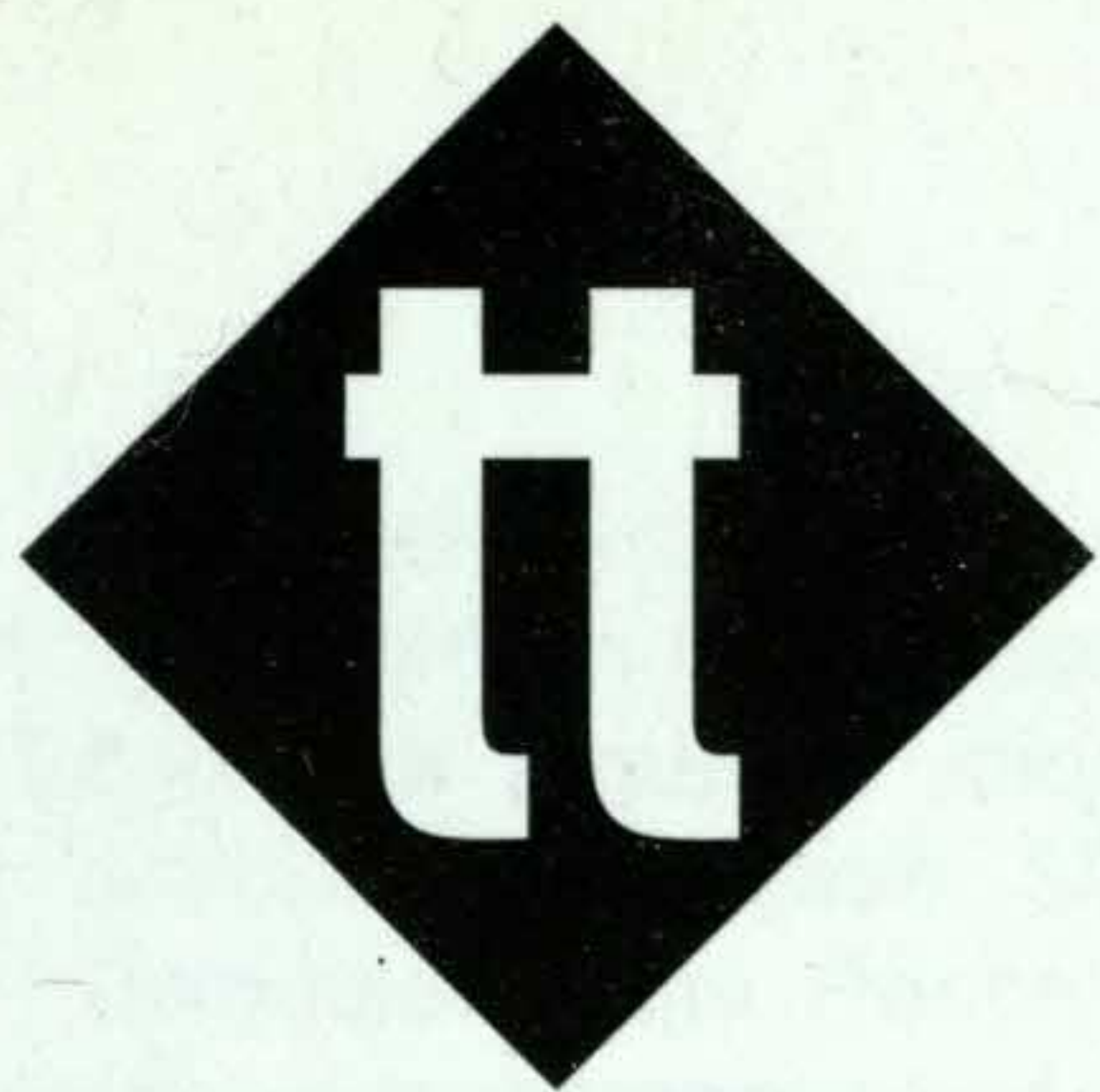
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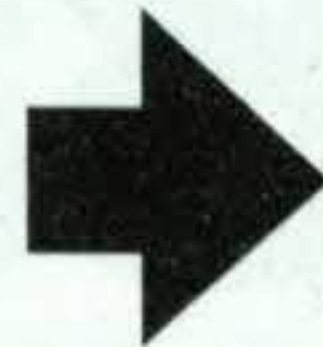
THE new year offers lots of opportunities to see a range of home-grown and visiting international companies performing in mime, physical and visual theatre festivals across the country. The London International Mime Festival kicks off this month and is followed in February by the Beyond Words season at The Hawth, Crawley and the Moving Parts Festival at the MAC in Birmingham. There are full performance listings for all three festivals on page 33. We also include a feature on the London International Mime Festival, which looks back to its inception twenty one years ago in 1977.

In this issue we branch into live art with an interview with the body artist Franko B, whose existential performances raise fascinating questions about the connection between creativity and mortality. Continuing with this theme, there is a feature on the function of 'rites of passage' events; looking specifically at the work of Welfare State International, who have many years experience of 'staging' bespoke funerals. Elsewhere, we delve into the world of dance with an article on contact improvisation and with an analysis of the choreographic theatre of Wim Vandekeybus. There is also an article on stilt theatre company Scarabeus, who are currently working on a large scale environmental performance project.

Following the success of last year's Critical Practice Debate, Total Theatre hosts a debate on Improvisation and Experimentation in Performance at the Royal Festival Hall, London as part of the International Mime Festival on January 25. Speakers will include Tom Morris from BAC and Adrian Jackson, Artistic Director of Cardboard Citizens. All members are welcome, turn to page 20 for full details of the day's events. We look forward to seeing you there.

John Daniel, Editor

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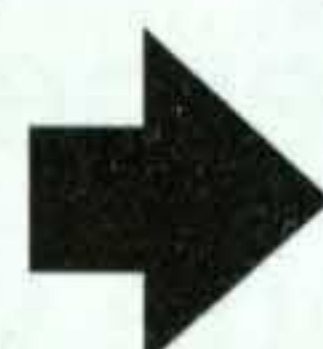
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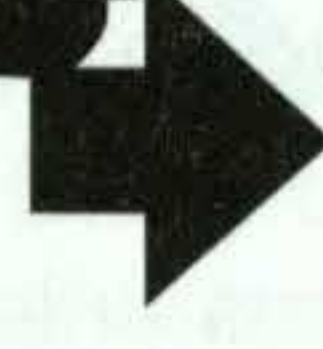
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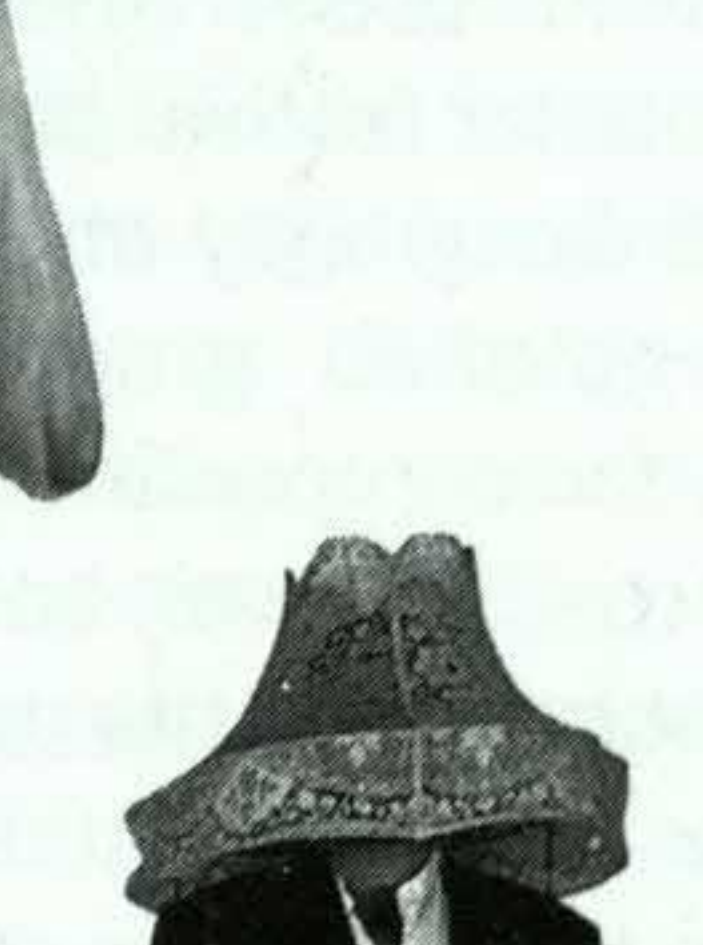


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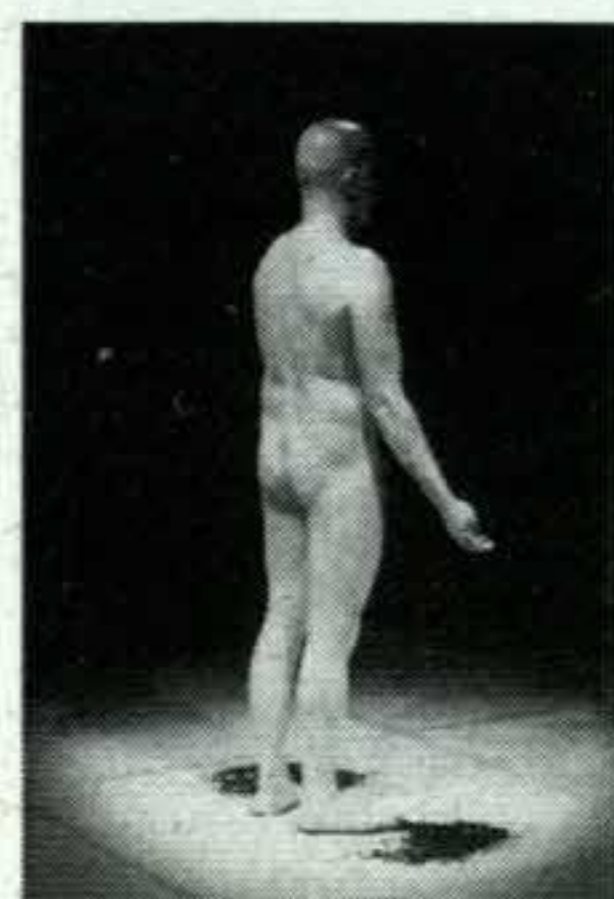
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Franko B

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Mime is Back in Town

The 21st London International Mime Festival is in town this month. **EMI SLATER**, of Perpetual Motion, takes a trip down memory lane with festival directors Joseph Seelig & Helen Lannaghan, and discovers what has been keeping them so busy all these years

CAST your mind back to 1977: Abba were in the charts and flares were in fashion. Nothing much has changed. Twenty one years ago a young Joseph Seelig was artistic director of the first Festival of Mime and Visual Theatre. In 1998 he still directs the London International Mime Festival (LIMF) alongside Helen Lannaghan.

Lannaghan describes how she quaked in her boots when she first met Seelig, whom she describes as a 'morose, lugubrious figure'. Now they evidently form a strong team. Seelig comments that the festival 'really became a profitable outfit' when Lannaghan came on board in 1987. She seemed an unlikely candidate for festival director, having studied Oriental Geography at SOAS. She is also an accomplished graphic designer, designing print for companies like the RSC and DV8. She was, however, bowled over by seeing Marcel Marceau at the age of 14 and later did stage management for her then boyfriend, Ben Keaton, who thought (like David Bowie, Kate Bush and Lindsay Kemp before him), that studying mime would be one route to becoming a famous rock star. She met Seelig when, using her grant cheque as a stake, she and Keaton hired The Place Theatre and presented John Mowat's London premiere. The show was a sell-out. Lannaghan got her grant cheque back, and Seelig instantly recognised her potential. Today they work together in a large office with silver plaques on the door beside the British Museum.

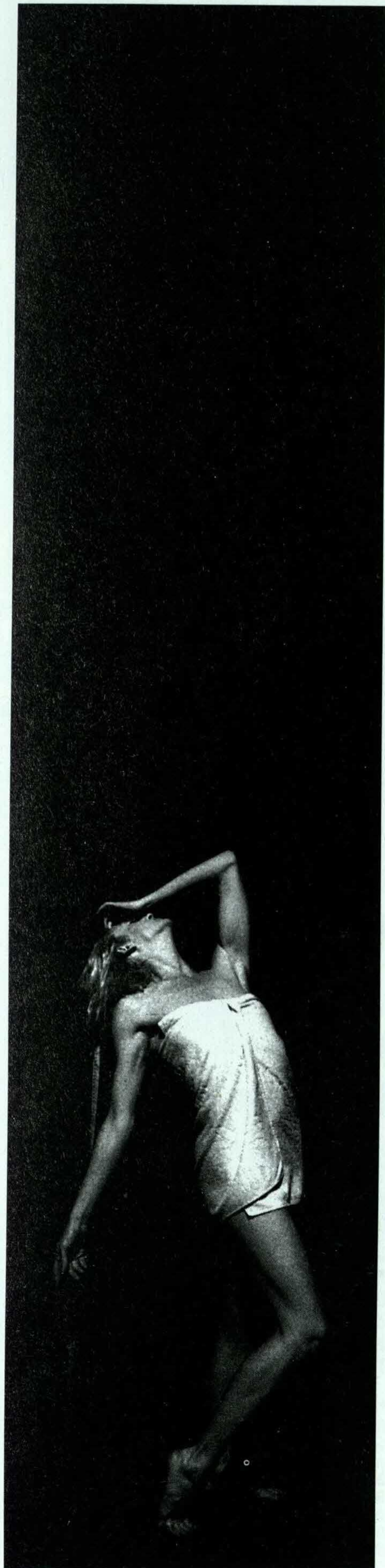
Both Seelig and Lannaghan are passionate about mime, and as directors of the longest established and best-respected mime festival in the UK are clearly in a position of quite considerable power. Seelig states their

objective is to: "Promote the art form to as wide an audience as possible. We want the real public to come - we don't want to ghettoise it - we believe in the work and we think loads of people should come and see it."

Seelig defines mime as: "Work which is not text based, whose motivation comes from visual and physical skills rather than from a text. It's not about actors flapping their arms about... Some shows do have words but they are kind of incidental." Lannaghan says that her ideal festival would be one where: "Not one word was uttered." She complains that actors speaking can ruin a show: "Very often the power of the thing just drops. Unless you are someone like Boleslav Polivka (described as 'playing the theatre like a Stradivarius', and being 'a cross between Danny Kaye and Richard III') who really can do everything brilliantly, then you should really concentrate on one art form. Mime is a very powerful medium - you can take people to all sorts of places in their heads."

However, over the years the festival has moved quite far away from mime. Nola Rae, who teamed up with Joseph Seelig twenty years ago to establish the first Festival of Mime and Visual Theatre, likes the way the Mime Festival now delves into so many corners of performance. "Lots of things they programme are not mime at all", she says.

Back in 1977 actors were only just beginning to consider a mime training, perhaps in Poland or with Lecoq in Paris. Seelig, then programmer at the Cockpit, remembers that mime "was an area of work which was under publicised and totally neglected." To address this problem, he got together with Rae and invited eleven artists to perform at the first festival at The Cockpit



Theatre. Participants in the festival were: Nathaniel (an American mime), Sony Hayes Magic Fantasy (a group of idiosyncratic cabaret performers), Theatre Slapstique (modern Commedia from France), Marita Phillips (with work choreographed by Adam Darius), Justin Case (magician, acrobat and unicyclist), The British Theatre of the Deaf (deaf, sign and mask), Annie Stainer (clown), Chris Harris (actor, mime, clown), Mute Pantomime Theatre (more Commedia), Desmond Jones and of course Nola Rae.

The Cockpit was full every night and, after that first year, the festival took off in a big way with other venues such as the ICA, The Place and BAC programming performances. The following year, in 1978, the festival became international with artists from Argentina, USA, Germany, Switzerland and Holland.

It is fair to say that LIMF was the first international theatre festival in London. Seelig points out that there was the World Theatre Season, but Dance Umbrella began the year after LIMF and LIFT did not begin until 1981. Charles Hart of the Arts Council panel, which has funded LIMF since its inception (they received £1,500 for the first festival), says that LIMF has been responsible for: "Setting the standard for mime and physical theatre in this country." The international perspective has enabled UK practitioners to place their work in a broader context and has promoted the exchange of skills and influences. However, the international focus of the festival, Rae believes, can mean that non-British artists are favoured at the expense of UK based performers who are now not getting the support that the festival once offered.

Lannaghan and Seelig are proud of having had the opportunity to 'raise the temperature' on certain companies and provide their work with a valuable platform over the years: Complicite, The Right Size, Trestle and David Glass among others. Seelig says: "I take my hat off to them. Mime is a rare art and the festival is important because it keeps a focus on the art form." He does worry though that, after twenty years, they have still not been completely successful in getting the message about mime across to a mass audience. As Rae points out: "We seem to be still discussing the definition of mime just as we were then."

Seelig is concerned that some companies have now dropped the 'mime' label, saying that the word has actually hindered their professional development: "Venues might say 'we've had a mime here this year, we can't possibly book another one', or the press might say 'oh we've done mime this year', throwing all the work together in one category. Crazy surely. When will the press find the vocabulary to talk about this kind of work?"

Steven Berkoff is, after all, a great mime although he has never been in LIMF. He's a very busy bloke isn't he? He makes movies in Hollywood after all."

Seelig was astonished recently when a critic from Time Out asked him, in all seriousness, what devised theatre was: "He simply did not possess the vocabulary to talk about this kind of work". At least, although theatre critic Michael Billington "hates mime", he "does write about it appreciatively sometimes."

So how do practitioners get programmed into the festival? Seelig says that even after twenty years "everybody in the world writes to you." If something grabs their attention, Seelig and Lannaghan will ask the company or performer to send a VHS of their show: "If the video is interesting we will go to some lengths to see it live. The show must be a London premiere and it's sadly not a free for all, the risk is very big for us and we need to keep our audience. If a company cannot afford to make a video we will however go and watch a rehearsal." Remember though, if you do send a video send the whole show; Seelig worries about the bits that have been left out if you only send an edited version. Likewise, don't try to make your show look better than it actually is. The competition is enormous.

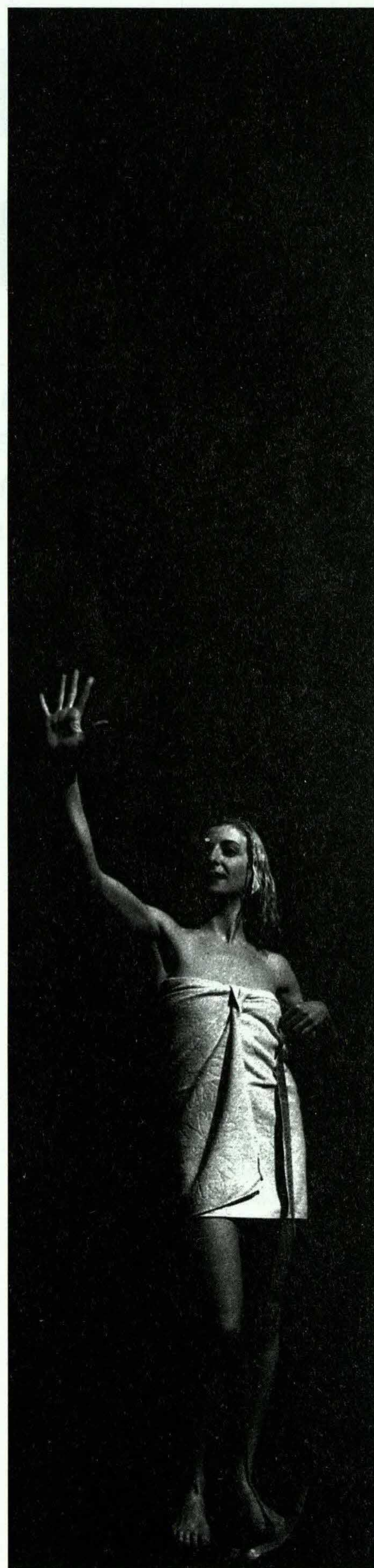
Both Seelig and Lannaghan dream of being able to commission more work. Lannaghan's personal dream is of a flexible venue in the centre of London with "a 500 adaptable seater, state of the art equipment, a wonderful rehearsal space, a video library and resource centre for mime and physical theatre." Here, she would bring together artists such as Patrick Bonté & Nicole Mossoux, Lloyd Newson, Nigel Charnock, Bruno Meyssat, Josez Nadj, and Derevo to create new work together under one roof.

Seelig dreams of being able to afford some of the continental companies for whom the draw of London is fading: "We would like to be able to pay people more... In the end you run out of reasons why an artist should come to London. I want to be able to say 'how much do you cost?' 'Oh really, OK, no problem, we'd like to invite you to LIMF next year'."

1998 is LIMF's twenty first anniversary year and with the enormous explosion of visual, mime and physical based theatre in this country and abroad it is obvious that the foundation laid by Seelig and Lannaghan will last well into the next century. There is nothing to beat the buzz of a live event, and as Lannaghan says, "being part of a living, breathing organism that is called a 'full house' is a totally wonderful experience."♦

Left & Right: La Ribot 13 Piezas Distinguidas Photo: Isabel Meister

The London International Mime Festival runs between January 10-25. See page 33 for listings.



Contact 25: Making Contact

In the autumn Chisenhale Dance Space hosted a festival to celebrate the last twenty-five years of contact improvisation. **LUCINDA JARRETT** gathered some responses to the improvised dance form from artists who attended the Chisenhale season and looks at the evolution of contact improvisation

CONTACT improvisation was founded by Steve Paxton in New York in the 1970s. It grew from his first improvised performance, *Magnesium*, at Oberlin College, Ohio. Part of the score was worked on with men and was concerned with bodies coming together in space; working with unconscious reflexes and movement from within the body. The performance was raw and rough. The new dance form first became known as a 'dance sport'; a way of inviting non-professional dancers into an exploration of the body as a tool for choreography.

American experimentation soon reached British soil under the influence of Mary Fulkerson at Dartington College. The X6 Collective emerged from the college and comprised the pioneers of contact improvisation in Britain: Mary Prestidge, Fergus Early, Madée Duprès, Jacky Lansley and Emily Claid. In 1980, X6 assumed residence in East London, where they renovated the top floor of a warehouse in Bow and established Chisenhale Dance Space.

No other dance form espouses democratic and community-based principles better than contact improvisation. After the possibilities for participatory and community theatre and dance of the 1970s seemed to diminish in the '80s, Chisenhale Dance Space has consistently remained a site where the beliefs and practices of the decade were maintained. Contact jams, workshops and performances remain a regular feature of Chisenhale Dance Space's programme, long after the work faded from public presentation.

Mary Prestidge, now Lecturer in Dance at the Liverpool Institute for the Performing

Arts, asserts that contact improvisation was never intended as a theatrical event, instead it evolved as a participatory process of sharing and showing work: "Dancers never wore costumes or particular clothes and the audience sat low and close to the performers."

Contact improvisation became part of the vocabulary of British dance in the 1980s. Independent dancer and choreographer Rosemary Lee explains how, following a trip to New York in 1985, it informed her work with Jointwork in Oxford: "On a technical level it taught me how to be more fearless in lifting and helping to lift, which was critical because I was working with a man of 6'7".

Partnering skills are key enablers in group work, and contact improvisation has shaped community dance because, by definition, it is a form which espouses a politics of equal access. Rosemary Lee made *Egg Dances* for Jointwork with over 80 members from an Oxfordshire Community in 1988. "In a more pure way, contact really helped my work with the community", she says. "The ethos of access was critical and I used contact to help people become confident with movement, to help a group gel and to enable people to meet each other through touch." Independent choreographer and dancer Gill Clarke agrees: "As a dancer I have always absorbed an enjoyment of meeting through touch and group dynamics. As a teacher I have been surprised when I couldn't make that assumption and I have needed to go back several stages to simple trust exercises... contact improvisation is a wonderful medium to reach out to a wider community. If dance was only about a series of compli-

cated steps it would exclude a whole breadth of the community."

In 1990 as an English literature graduate, I wanted to pursue an interest in dance but found myself intimidated by technique classes at the school of London Contemporary Dance. I was delighted to find that at Chisenhale Dance Space I could explore performance and dance through improvisation, in an atmosphere which was not intimidating. I learnt how to use my body through the use of gravity and weight, how to work with partners by sharing weight, and how to feel confident lifting, turning upside down, exploring flight and height, and most of all I learnt how to enjoy working through movement. Nic Sandiland, a performer with no formal training, was also introduced to dance through improvisation and then contact improvisation. "It was something which helped me gain a sense of presence in performance," he says.

The spontaneous and informal events which characterise contact improvisation mean that it is ill-suited to large or 'formal' venues where an audience expect to receive experiences but not to participate in them. Contact improvisation is best suited to intimate venues like Chisenhale. But can an artistic process which thrives on shared spontaneity communicate the intensity of a shared group dynamic to a wider audience?

For some artists there remains a 'pure' form of contact which is possible to perform. Jackie Adkins speaks with enthusiasm and delight about a double bill of Chisenhale commissioned work by Andrea Buckley & Paula Hampson and Jo Chandler & Rick Nodine. She comments, "It re-affirmed the



Andrew Fifield & Sue MacLennan Photo: Christiane Robin

excitement and beauty and wonderfulness of contact improvisation. It was particularly exciting to see pieces which would otherwise not have existed and which enabled highly-skilled artists to put their skills on the map." Rosemary Lee agrees: "As an audience member the most exciting work I have seen recently has been at Chisenhale, where performances have shown there is incredible talent and skill in this country that remains un-funded."

The Contact 25 festival performances opened with an evening of improvisation. Only one of the three performances used contact improvisation. This was a duet performed by Rick Nodine and Karl Jay-Lewin. Whilst I appreciated the play with masculinity and the parallels found between combat

and desire, I was not always able to engage directly with the piece. For Nic Sandiland, however, the duet was a clear example of when contact works well: "It was genuine, playful, untheatrical."

But can a dance form which thrives on untheatrical values survive? That contact remains exploratory is, for many dancers, its main attraction. Jackie Adkins comments: "I became involved with contact improvisation because of the process. It's about asking questions, about being in a constant state of research, its always open-ended. Endings are dull."

Mary Prestidge refers to contact as if it were a personality, a place and a journey to make and re-make: "It is a teacher, a tool, and a place to come back to, to find yourself

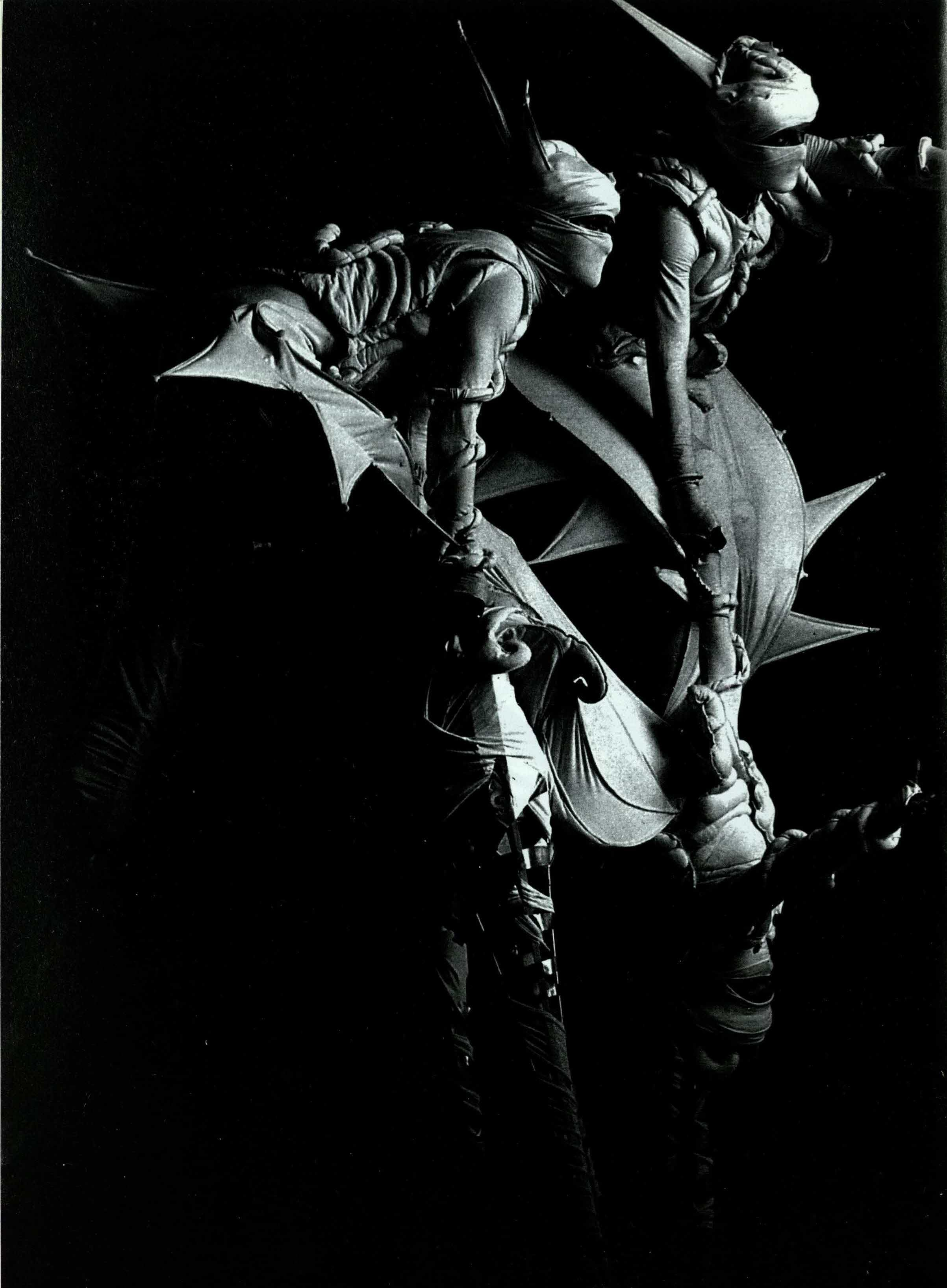
in." Contact improvisation depends on what each performer brings to the performance. Relying on spontaneity and on the skill to respond to another's body, it is a profoundly honest dance form. In Mary's words: "You can't cheat or pretend because contact improvisation does not allow you to prepare; your preparedness is what you bring to a performance and where you arrive."

Mary describes the international improvisation performed on Saturday November 15 by Benno Voorhan, Sue MacLennan, Lucia Walker, Yolande Snaith, Gaby Agis, Andrew Fifield and Stirling Stewart as a clear example of the way in which contact improvisation operates: "The performance was clearly structured. We designed the structure and then Sue devised the series of events. She wrote a dozen or so events down on paper, describing who was performing them... This enabled us to use a chance method of bringing a series of short events together. There were clear rules set. We decided who was present on the stage and who was lounging at the side. No performer was ever 'off-stage'. A performer could be still or at the side of the performance space, but always part of the performance."

Yolande Snaith comments that, through her return to contact improvisation, she realised what she's been missing: "This is a discipline. It provides you with the fitness, the strength, the imagination and the freedom." For Mary Prestidge, contact is a process towards choreography but it is not a theatrical event: "It teaches me clear skills, skills of how to look, perceive and listen. It teaches a state of mind and body which is alert. And it is a great way of warming up physically."

At a conference on November 23, a wide cross section of students, teachers and practitioners confirmed that contact improvisation is a widely used and ever evolving discipline. Increasingly students are asking to be taught the skill of contact as part of their dance training. Gill Clarke says: "If I had another life, I would love to explore contact more. It is all about play. I enjoy the surprise of playfulness. What's wonderful is a partnering not only of weight but of energy and a sharing of the pathways of energy. A partner can always surprise you by taking you somewhere new and unexpected."

Sadly Chisenhale Dance Space is currently threatened with closure. Its demise would be a sad loss to the dance world because of its commitment to experiment and participation. Contact improvisation has been a valid part of this process; the excitement of sharing unexpected movement and spontaneous journeys with partners makes the discipline so rewarding. It is a profoundly democratic art form which is uniquely positioned to welcome a larger audience and practising community. ♦



Living in Trees

Aerial and stilt theatre company Scarabeus are currently working on a large-scale outdoor show inspired by a reforestation project in the Scottish Highlands. JULI MAHR talks to Artistic Director Daniella Essart about the company's first issue-based production

TREES are one of our most essential symbols; their twisted, aged forms are sacred to all human culture. In India, women place offerings at the foot of the banyan tree in hope of fertility; in Kyoto, Japan paper is hung from branches to attract good luck, and in Catholic Europe pilgrimages are regularly made to the sites of great trees. The oldest recorded living tree is 12,000 years old and most trees live into their hundreds. They are one of the cornerstones of our ecosystem, yet we clear land as it suits us.

The debate is as topical as ever - tree dwellers versus road expansionists, Swampy versus the bulldozers - our headlines are filled with battle stories. Surprising then that few theatre companies outside of theatre-in-education choose to address environmental concerns of this kind. Perhaps it's because political theatre no longer sits comfortably in the post-Thatcher world. Or perhaps it's that, in this saturated media age, all we really want from shows is a little diversionary entertainment. Either way political theatre is virtually dead. Still, the issues remain and it would be a shame for theatre to give up its political resonance. One answer may be to try gentler tactics, to communicate with metaphors and stories.

This is the approach being taken by street theatre company Scarabeus (the name comes from the scarab, a large dung beetle, regarded as sacred by the Egyptians), whose abstract shows are a visual mix of aerial and stilt work, framed by lighting and sound.

The company was formed in 1988 by three performers: Daniella Essart from Italy, Soren Nielson from Denmark and Kevin Alderson from Britain (who has since left). To date they have produced three shows which have toured to the car parks and shopping malls of Europe. Their first show, *Ballet-tico Fantastico*, was a parody of ballet's prima donnas, *Syzygy* (1991) was a ritualistic piece

which drew on the myths and legends of different cultures and *Fata Morgana*, their latest piece, was a theatre, circus and dance hybrid which explored the theme of 'mirage'.

Philosophically Scarabeus are committed to raising the quality of outdoor work and to performing to a non-theatre going public: at least 90% of their audience for any particular show will be locals, many of whom will have caught the act while out shopping.

Their new show *Arboreal*, which will premiere this Spring, is the first issue-based production that the company are tackling. It will focus on the nature of our relationship with the environment and in particular the way in which landscapes, and specifically trees, shape who we are. It was inspired initially by a reforestation programme in the Highlands of Scotland.

There was a time when the forests of the Scottish Highlands were as great as those of Central Europe. This changed as early as the Middle Ages when, through economic necessity, trees had to be felled for fuel and building, and land cleared for grazing. The forests became patchy as overgrazing destroyed new saplings and prevented them from regenerating. The situation was exacerbated in the eighteenth century, during the Clearances, when local landlords introduced vast numbers of sheep. Nowadays, forests are threatened by commercial forestry and tourists who, straying from designated paths, erode the top soil.

One scheme dealing with these forestry issues is the Crocach Crannah Project - a small reforestation programme in Skerry, managed by the local arts officer, Gavin Lockhart. The project, on the north coast of Scotland near the Kyle of Tongue, aims to remodel man-made landscapes into their original form. One idea has been to cut a peninsula into an island, another to plant 13,000 trees. When Scarabeus learnt about the project they approached the community for permis-

sion to do a show based on this work. "They liked us," explains Essart, the artistic director of *Arboreal*, "but they asked us not simply to do a piece of publicity because that would be against their philosophy. Instead they asked us to come back with a good metaphor."

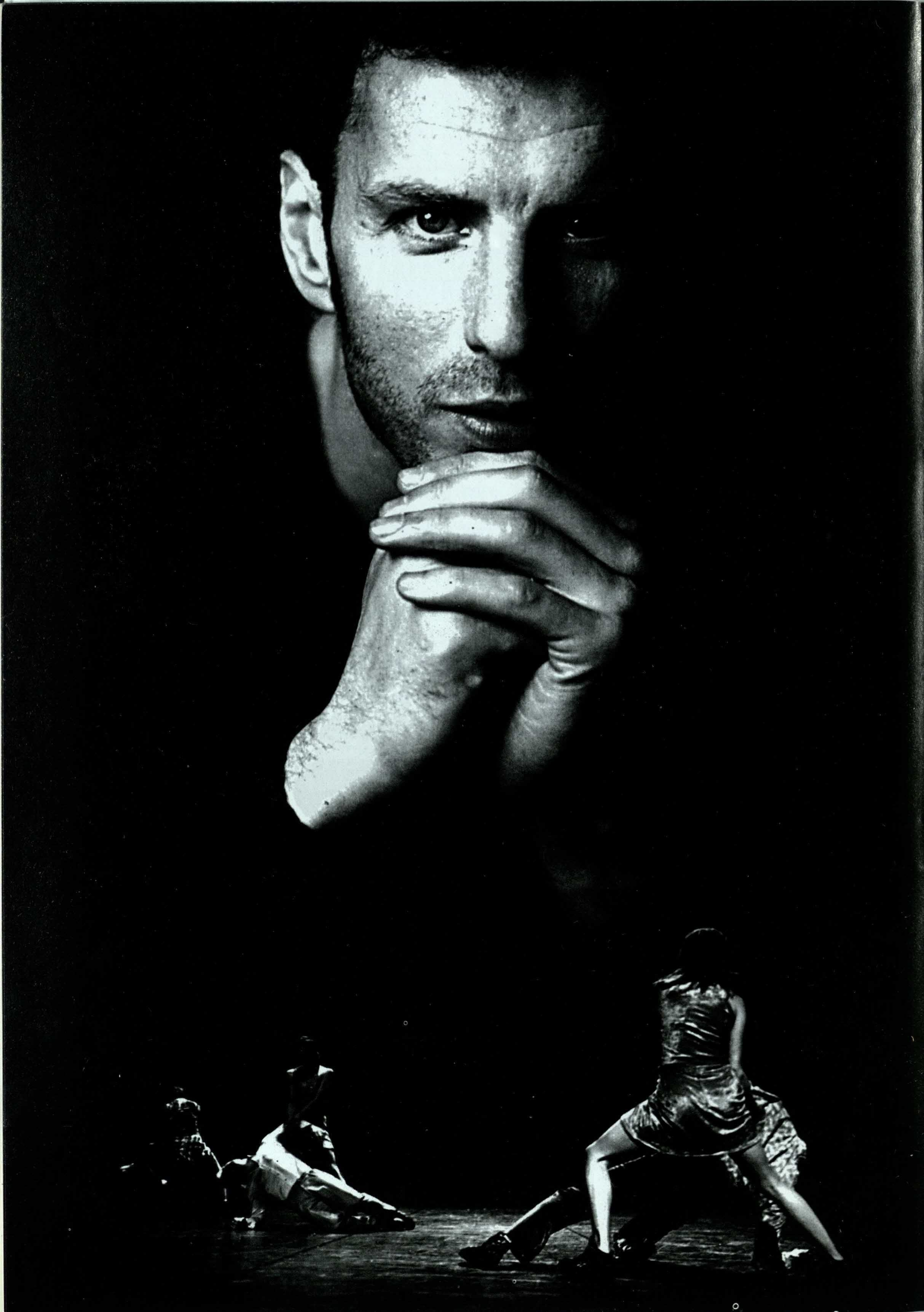
Essart proposed a piece based on the Baron in The Trees, a novel by the illustrious Italian author Italo Calvino. Calvino, born in 1923, was an avowed opponent of Fascism in Italy. During the war he joined the resistance movement and later became a committed member of the Italian communist party. His stories are inspired by folk tales and many have a fantastical quality. 'The Baron in the Trees' is the tale of Cossimo, a twelve year old nobleman living in the eighteenth century who, witnessing the destruction of his local landscape, decides to live the rest of his life in trees. "Central to the story," says Essart, "are characters with big ideals who stick to them. They are happy but they pay for it."

The company have now been working on the piece for over three years: developing the show, securing funding and engaging collaborators. Those who will join them for this project are Gavin Lockhart who will provide video images for the piece, Giuliano Palmieri, an Italian composer, who will use sensory techniques to enable those on stage to provide the motor for the soundtrack; Claude Coldy, a choreographer who has developed the 'Danse Sensible' Technique based on osteopathy; Jerome Aussibal a mountaineer and Muir an artist and designer.

During the upcoming year the show will be staged both indoors and outdoors and will be performed on a set of artificial trees (which in the outdoor version will be set alight at the end of each performance).

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Left: Scarabeus *Fata Morgana*
Photo: Ray Massey



Encountering Secrets

Wim Vandekeybus is lauded as one of Europe's top international choreographers. His intensely physical and visual style is complex and often challenging. **ANA SANCHEZ-COLBERG**, artistic director of Theatre EnCorps and lecturer at the Laban Centre, London, rises to the challenge and unravels some of his secrets

SINCE the inception of his company Ultima Vez in 1987, Wim Vandekeybus has left an indelible mark on the development of physical theatre. The work of Ultima Vez has become synonymous with a very specific vein of physical theatre coming from Europe. One that is committed to full theatricality accompanied by a movement style which is based on physical risk.

Vandekeybus came to dance from an eclectic artistic background. He is not only a choreographer, but an actor, dancer and photographer who trained with Jan Fabre (a collaborator of Robert Wilson) before establishing the company. Over the last eleven years he has produced annual projects in collaboration with Ultima Vez and various films based on the material from previous stage pieces. He also co-ordinated the musical composition *The Weight of the Hand* (1990) and more recently directed the theatre piece *Alle Groesen Decken Sich Zu* (1995). Vandekeybus' work is devised in close association with his collaborators, which include not only the dancers but also musicians like Thierry de Mey, Peter Vermeersch and Charo Calvo, designers and directors like Fabre.

The impact of the company on the international dance scene was immediate. In 1988 Vandekeybus received the coveted New York Bessie Award for his production of *What the Body Does Not Remember*. The production was very different from the expressive style of German 'tanztheater' and the socio-political themes of the UK company DV8; although comparisons between all three are inevitable. Vandekeybus is more interested in the 'experiential body' than in forms associated with a codified dance technique, and with issues of perception through time and space. At a very immediate level the work centres around a physical image which creates a particular sense-perception. For instance the weight and sound of concrete bricks in *What the Body Does Not Remember*, the sound of floor tiles shifting in *Bearers of Bad News*, dirt and nude male

bodies in *Mountains Made of Barking*. The work is characterised by shifts between live performance, film and soundtrack. However, it is the movement aspect which, in conjunction with the sensual images, weave a complex tapestry.

Speaking before the performance of the latest piece *7 For A Secret Never to be Told* at the Oxford Playhouse, Rasmus Olme, a long-time company member, spoke of Vandekeybus' interest in the theatricality of movement and his constant investigation on how movement (and in his particular case, movement from a variety of sources) operates within a theatrical context. Olme identified certain recurrent focuses in Vandekeybus' work; among them the notion of exhaustion, infinite repetition with variations of context and the sense of the dancers being 'on edge.' The impact of the work stems from its 'reality'. The dancers take real risks, only just avoiding possible crashes and falls in potentially neck-breaking movements. The sound of their panting breath on stage gives evidence to the physical demands of the material. Watching the work, the dancers appear to be controlled by intangible hidden rules. There seems to be an underlying structure of play which organises the various exchanges and the connections between scenes. The play sometimes becomes the essence of the work itself and often has no specific end and resolution. It is this feature which is most satisfying about Vandekeybus' work; the performance sustains a sense of play ad infinitum.

For Olme, *7 For A Secret* presented a challenge in many ways. The creative process demands great commitment from the dancers. They are asked not only to improvise in text, song and movement but also for the latest piece for instance, to carefully study the behaviour of magpies, discuss the films of Starewitch, Tarkowski and Altman, and the texts of Theocritus, Camus, Octavio Paz, Brecht and Bachelard. Vandekeybus does not require for his dancers to be simply 'technical machines'. In the performance each dancer 'carries' a scene and, for Olme, this

represented the biggest challenge and also the highest sense of accomplishment. For the audience, *7 For A Secret* evolves in a constant flux between challenge and wonderment. We are challenged to witness the exhaustive repetition of material which Vandekeybus purposely wants us to watch and watch again with only the tiniest variation.

The piece, although based on the well known rhyme, is not just about superstition; it is more of a journey into the darker side of human consciousness. The beauty of the work lies precisely in the fact that you can never pin down exactly what it means. The stage is a dark cavern, peopled by lost souls, with brief explosions of light which allow the audience to watch a dazzling female quartet. The full body movement associated with Vandekeybus' work is re-articulated into the fast motion of individual body parts delineating pathways of energies tensely contained within the female forms - hip to head, chest wide open, ribs reverberating. There are repeated themes from previous pieces, here manipulated anew. Vandekeybus' vocabulary is no longer limited to solo work or the brief one-to-one encounters of *Mountains* and *What the Body Does Not Remember*. In *7 For A Secret*, the vocabulary is orchestrated to generate encounters within trios. At times there are elaborate spatial exchanges between the whole group, these are negotiated within a stage which is an obstacle course of gigantic feathers which hang from the ceiling and pierce the floor to form a visible boundary which encloses the dancers.

Vandekeybus is constantly aware that theatre is a place of encounters - between the dancers, between the dancer and the music and the audience, for instance. These encounters create complex relationships which are not just limited to that which is perceived on stage. The events generate hundreds of parallel narratives in each and everyone who comes face to face with the work. ♦

Left: Wim Vandekeybus & Ultima Vez
Photos: Bruno Vandermeulen



John Fox preparing a coffin painted by Caroline Menis Photo: Westmorland Gazette

Dead Good Funerals

Sue Gill & John Fox of Welfare State International have been designing bespoke funerals for more than 25 years. **BAZ KERSHAW**, of Lancaster University, considers the significance of personalised rites of passage ceremonies in our secular society

I WAS buried alive once. That was in Bangor, North Wales, on a cold Sunday in October, 1996. In the pitch dark I was gently pushed against a wall which tipped backwards so I ended up horizontal. I felt myself wheeled around on a trolley and a cloth was put over my face. Then there was the thud of a lid going on and stony earth was shovelled just inches above my nose. I felt the blood draining from my face and shivered as an icy cold fear gripped my heart. I could swear it stopped beating for a moment.

Forgive the clichés, but they are entirely apt. This actually happened as part of an astonishing event staged by the Colombian performance company Taller Investigacion de la Imagen Dramatica, under the direction of Enrique Vargas. *The Labyrinth-Ariadne's*

Thread was a performative maze which you travelled through alone in search of your very own Minotaur. Some of this journey - besides the burial - was terrifying, but I never felt so scared that I wanted to stop or go back, because the maze was peopled by a community of carers whom you never saw, but who were always there with gentle hands to guide and support you on your way. They were the kind of people I'd like to have at my own real funeral, even though they were strangers.

In some senses funerals make us all strangers to each other, even when we know all the mourners really well. This seems to me particularly the case today in an individualistic society like ours. This is perhaps one of the reasons why, generally, we have

accepted such thinly standardised forms of ceremony to see us through the loss. In performance terms, the normal English funeral is a minimalist ritual, usually staged by professionals, designed to keep death and the overwhelming emotions it generates at a distance, under control. Such dramaturgic coolness both responds to and reinforces the 'strangers to each other' syndrome, forcing us apart when we might rather choose to be together in ways that rarely happen at other times. The reaction to Diana Princess of Wales' burial, the collapse of most of the nation into collective hyper-grief, can be seen in part as a pathological response to the inadequacies of the generality of English funerals. The 'mega-funeral' fills in the psychic empty space that all the other little

funerals have produced, for a moment relieving us, perhaps, of all the loneliness that they generate. Such are the politics of grief in an age of abstracted icons.

A couple of months ago, I attended the funeral of my father's half-sister. She was one of the few left from that generation of the family, so all my sisters and my brother were there. In the church she had always used, we sang *All Things Bright and Beautiful* before the substitute vicar (the usual one was on holiday) said a few words about her. He'd never met her, but he'd done some homework and he managed a pretty gracious speech about what he'd heard she was like. On the way out of the church I commented on this to my brother-in-law, who said that he was glad there was a substitute because my aunt had never really liked the regular vicar and probably would have been happier with the one who didn't know her, the one who was a stranger to her. I found this oddly comforting.

From this kind of perspective, the work that Welfare State International have been doing on funerals in recent years, like most of their other projects, is profoundly significant. The company recently brought out a book called *'The Dead Good Funerals Book'*, based on their research into the options we might have in finding more personal and engaging ways to be laid to rest. Written by Sue Gill and John Fox, it has the usual Welfare State mix of visionary ideas, practical know-how, carefully judged humour, and down to earth suggestions (the pun is meant) about how to do a funeral yourself. They published the book themselves and hired a small distributor to manage the sales, so you won't find it in W.H. Smiths, but already they have sold several thousand copies. In some ways the actual number is less important than the network of contacts it indicates and what that implies for funeral practices in Britain. If each copy leads to a better burial than the norm, then most medium sized towns in the country might have witnessed one before the millennium arrives.

This kind of pragmatic creative outcome, growing from sustained research, has helped to make Welfare State quietly famous: the lantern processions, the sculptural fire-shows and the percussion bands have spread through the capillaries of regional and local community contacts like a beneficent infection. Though these forms, and others, stem at source from a deeply radical praxis, they do not dictate how the people should use them, nor what they should say through them, but they do gesture towards a healthier culture: one in which we will be less like strangers to ourselves and each other, in which the body will be reclaimed, the spirit revitalised, community restored. They also speak of a hands-on ecological creativity that

can connect the local to the global, and vice versa, so strangers whom we will never meet become a crucial part of the picture.

The inclusion of funerals - alongside other domestic ceremonies such as namings, marriages and special birthdays - is a further step in Welfare State's lifelong effort to shape a new symbiosis between art and life. And it is an aspect of a wider ambition to create with the people of Ulverston, South Cumbria, where the company has been based since 1979, an annual cycle of ceremonies and festivals which aim to enhance its sense of life - adding to the warm-hearted and witty town-sized lantern procession that has run every September for the past fifteen years. A new centre for vernacular art and secular ritual is being created, to open in 1998, through a major rebuild of the company's base. Among the offerings will be courses on revived funerals and other forms for the reclamation of the body in western society.

Welfare State's whole project raises important and radical questions about the way art and artists should be part of culture in late-capitalist liberal democracies, so their work is not without controversy and, at times, contradiction. But I think this is because an ethic of openness has always informed the company's work, signalled again by its willingness to engage with the absurdities thrown up by concrete creative problems, such as how best to design a low-cost eco-sound burial casket for the ashes of a football supporter. This kind of activity puts Welfare State among the artists whom Suzi Gablik, in *'The Re-enchantment of Art'*, identifies as "...prototypes who embody the next historical and evolutionary stage of consciousness, in which the capacity to be compassionate will be central not only to our idea of success, but also to the recovery of a meaningful society and a meaningful art." I'd count Enrico Vargas as one of them, too.

Being buried alive in Vargas' labyrinth was life enhancing because, paradoxically, the performance was inspired by compassion. Making ceremonial templates that encourage us to take creative charge of the performance of our own and our loved ones' funerals. Welfare State is rooting in the same kind of direction. Having had a good life, my aunt thought death was not much to look forward to, but the improvised words of a stranger gave her passing a sustaining warmth. It's not just that funerals could be more fun, but also that a reinvented art of the mortuary could add to the making of a more caring body politic.

So despite the terror, being buried alive in Bangor was, well, reassuring. It helped me to, as they say, face up to my mortality. ♦

The Dead Good Funerals Book by Sue Gill and John Fox is available from Welfare State International, The Ellers, Ulverston, Cumbria LA12 0AA. Tel: 01229 581127.

Continued from Page 9

It will tour to alternative venues and outdoor spaces, with the company continuing the process they began with *Fata Morgana*, of transforming the spaces in which they perform. As usual the shows will be highly visual and will involve stilts, though to a lesser extent than on previous occasions. Performances will be complimented by outreach work to ensure access to those in the community who will most benefit, with locals sharing the stage by participating as a chorus.

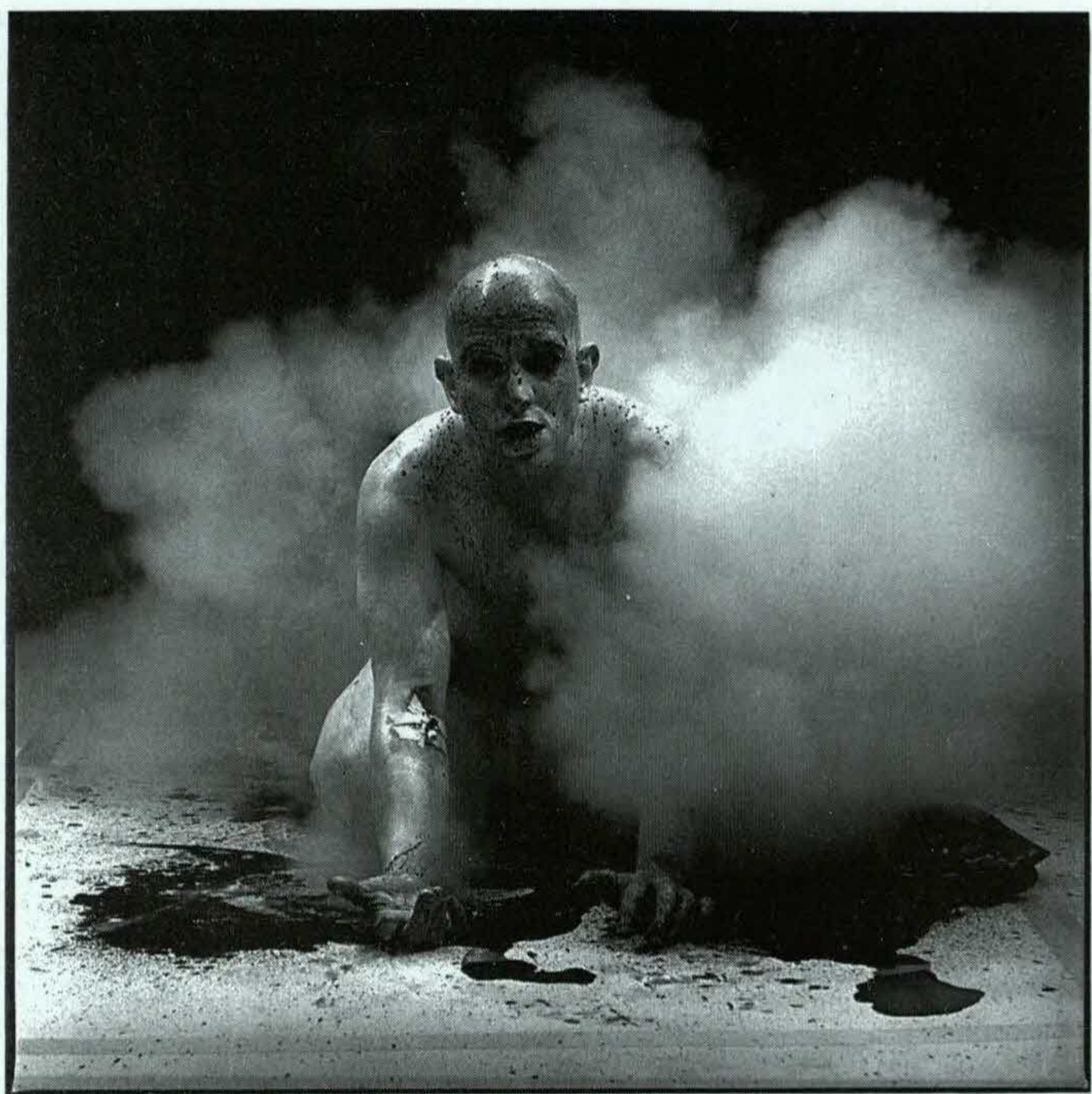
That Scarabeus should choose to step in this political direction is unsurprising. Despite this being their first issue-based performance, the company have always had an intensely political take on theatre. According to Essart this has taken place behind the scenes: "We are always being called the purists in circus, in the sense that we have always been uncompromising artistically. We pay a high price for that. I know that there are companies who work much more than us. But that's OK... because it's about negotiating the quality of space where you perform."

In the past the company have found that they would be expected to arrive at a site in full costume and with full back-up. Where indoor performers would be allocated a changing room and access to toilets, Scarabeus would have to beg shops to let them use their facilities. The situation was similar with overnight accommodation. "As little as four years ago, in Germany we would be given private rooms with en-suite bathrooms but when we performed in Ireland we would be put in a youth hostel, sometimes sharing a room with 30 people; at the same time as an opera singer would be put in a hotel with a single room. OK there is the concept of 'high art' but this is discrimination. So now we never compromise."

The fight has also been on "not to produce as a factory, but when things need to happen," and another stand has been taken over wages. "In indoor work there are levels of payment but outdoors it's cowboy country - really a cattle market. Many times we've talked to other companies and suggested price bands. Those are the things that we have been fighting, that have been the real political statements."

It's logical for a company who are politicized to take this onto the stage: *Arboreal* is not only an ecological play, it's a product of the philosophy that drives Scarabeus. It's also a landmark for the company, taking them into new narrative and spacial realms. As Essart concludes: "*Arboreal* is the culmination of a number of things that come from our guts and from our heart. They make sense." ♦

Scarabeus premiere Arboreal - Living in Trees at The Circus Space, Coronet St, London on May 1 '98. Details: 0171 739 7494.



Baying For Blood

Franko B is a performer who literally bleeds for his art. What motivates artists to push their bodies to physical extremes, and why do audiences turn out in droves to participate in the painful spectacle? **JOHN DANIEL** asks the questions

THE last time I saw performance artist Franko B was at the ICA. He was hanging from a meat hook at the end of a show in which he lay naked in a pool of his own blood. In other shows Franko has cut his skin with a scalpel; bled from open wounds; vomited blood and had his lips stitched shut with gut. Meeting him face to face for the first time was going to be a nerve-racking experience. What would he be like at home?

Franko B's South London flat clearly doubles as his studio. On the VCR a video of one of the ICA performances is playing. In it he is daubed from head to toe in thick white paint and blood is dripping from the veins in his forearms. Franko is making a copy to send to a friend. All in a day's work. The ordinary becomes extraordinary in Franko's flat: along the length of the sitting room wall a metal urinal acts as a handy book shelf; old fashioned wheelchairs provide the seating and medical

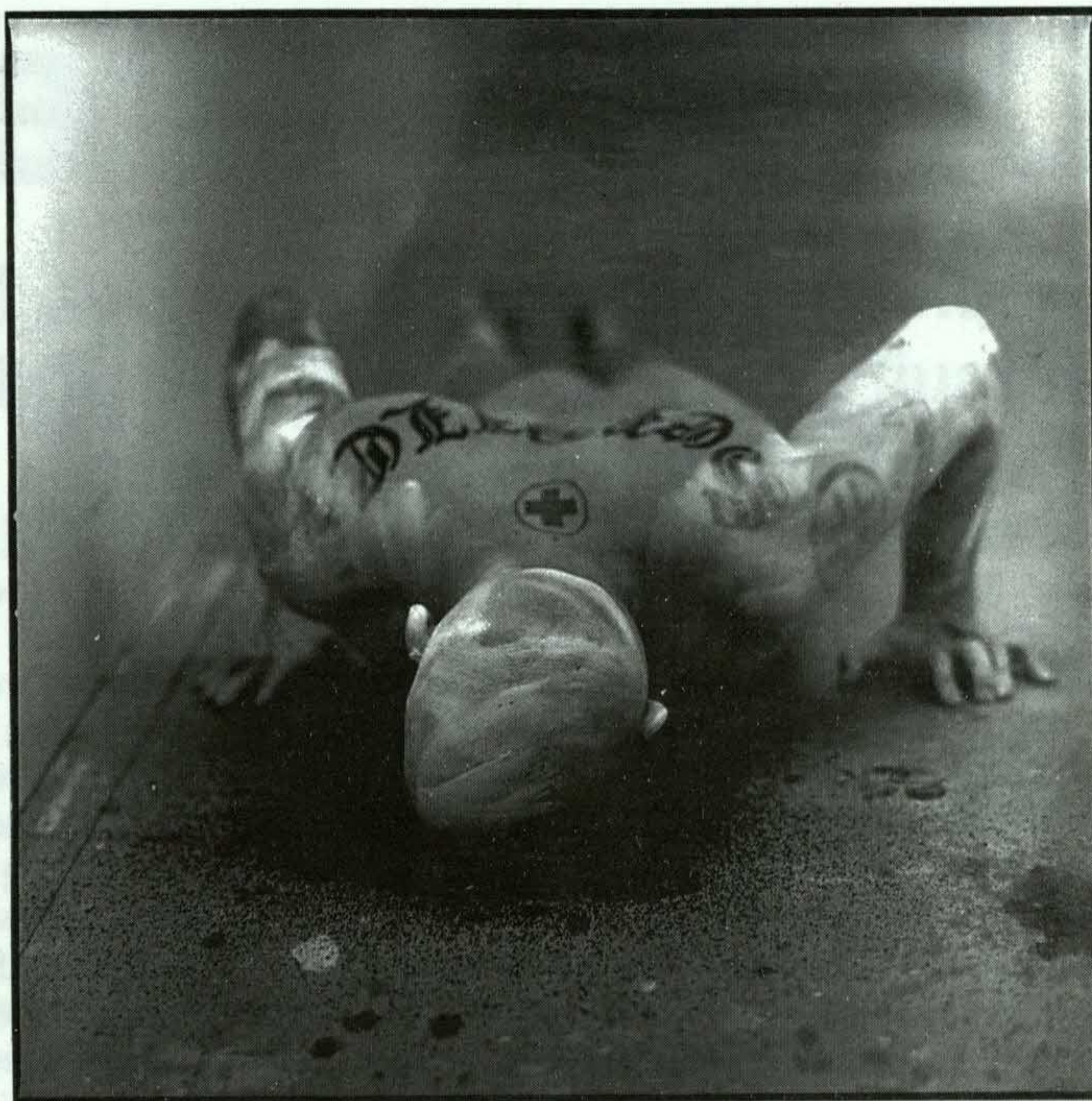
detritus - syringes, swabs, assorted shiny clamps - decorate every available surface.

I would feel disconcerted, except Franko is the perfect host; making espresso and providing the guided tour. He talks rapidly; his guttural accent a combination of native Italian and South London. Franko left Italy in the early '80s. He was living in a squat on Railton Road at the time of the Brixton riots. Later in the decade he studied Fine Art at Camberwell. For the past five years he has been building a reputation as a performer who endures the sort of pain that you or I would run a mile to avoid.

Of course artists have been performing radical acts on their bodies for years. Since Duchamp shaved a star into the hair on his head in 1919 and declared himself an art object, a succession of artists have put themselves into situations of palpable physical risk in the name of art. During the heady days of the 1970s, American performance artist

Chris Burden had himself shot, imprisoned in a tiny locker without food for five days and nailed to the roof of a VW Beetle. The previous decade witnessed a flurry of bloody performances in Vienna. Artists known as the 'Viennese Actionists' staged events in which they disembowelled dead animals, smeared themselves with bodily fluids and toyed with razor blades, nails and scissors in frenetic scenes of simulated self-harm. The public were simultaneously revolted and fascinated. The work was banned.

The viewing public's fascination with extreme risk and the vicarious pleasure to be derived from watching a performer in pain continues into the present decade. French circus troupe Archaos played havoc with chain-saws and pyrotechnics and sold-out their death-defying shows. Camden's Roundhouse recently hosted the Circus of Horrors in which, for the price of a seat, punters could watch 'strong men' stick needles through



their cheeks, lift heavy weights from their testicles and swallow fluorescent tubes. Clearly the public has a taste for blood. But what are the performers trying to prove?

Franko insists on his own sanity. His art school tutors thought he might need psychiatric help, but perhaps they were too eager to dismiss as 'madness' that which they struggled to understand. Franko admits his art is a product of his own psyche: "The work is a product of who I am." But he suggests that his bloody performances are simply manifestations of psychological impulses common to us all: "I'm like everybody else, I don't think that I'm special. My work is made up from my insecurity, my feelings of inadequacy and so on." But insecurity doesn't make us all take a knife to the nearest vein. Or does it?

In some ways Franko's performances express a self-destructive drive which is shared by many and often manifested as alcoholism, substance abuse or bulimia, for instance. Self-harm can seem therapeutic, as Franko admits: "The performance is to do with survival. What I do in performance makes me feel totally free... This obviously goes some way towards making me feel better in myself. I am doing something which allows me to feel that I have some kind of respect, of dignity; feeling that it's worth me living."

As well as providing personal catharsis, Franko's work is an impassioned plea for unrepressed self-expression. It started as a protest over the prosecution of a group of gay men for acts of sadomasochistic sex in the controversial 'spanner' trials. That these acts were performed consensually and in private raised the thorny issue of the right of the state

to intervene in the private activities of the individual. Franko got his boyfriend to carve the words 'protect me' with a scalpel into the skin on his back. His message was clear; he needed to be protected from society and its draconian laws, not from the lovers with whom he might choose to practice SM sex.

Through the act of cutting his own skin and drawing blood, Franko asserts his right to control his own body and is liberated from rules imposed by those in authority. His fear of powerlessness, he explains, stems from an unstable family history: "I was brought up in an orphanage for seven years and then I lived with my mother for two and a half years, and then I was taken away from my mother by the state and I was put in a Red Cross Institute in Italy for battered kids and I was there for five years." He explains that his work helps him cope with the insecurity, because through it he re-creates himself as his own independent being: "I am nobody's baby. I don't want to play your game. I don't want to be assimilated into a club. The idea is simple, I am not what you want me to be. I am trying to do things for myself."

Nonetheless, Franko is cagey about providing too much biographical detail, because he wants to stress the universal themes in his work. He is also quick to remind me that he is making art; a fact that often gets overlooked by commentators who obsess about the psychosis of the artist at the expense of the art itself. He is after all an image-maker, as he explains: "I am concerned with beauty. You can use anything to make beauty." Furthermore, he points out that he needs an audience for his work. He is not interested in committing acts of self-mutilation in private:

"I have come to the conclusion that I will not perform these acts just for myself. I am making art, I am making paintings, these are available for people to consume."

As an artist his tools might be unorthodox - he has abandoned paint and canvas in favour of the body, skin and blood - but his intention is not to shock. "If people want to be shocked, they get shocked. It's what they want," Franko says. Furthermore he doesn't want physical pain to become the point of the work, so he cuts himself off-stage. To explain, he points to a scar in his chest, the product of a deep knife wound inflicted backstage at one of the ICA performances: "I would never do [this] on-stage, because I don't want my work to be about that. It is not about the action it is about the language, it's more about the metaphor."

But surely Franko must be putting his own personal safety at risk in performance? His answer is disingenuous: "No more than if I were to cross a road without looking and ran the risk of being hit by a bus. It's not about risk." However he does explain that his doctor has advised him to do no more than three or four performances in a year. "I lose over a pint of blood in performance," he says by way of explanation. "Once I've bled," he goes on, "there's not much else I can do. To me bleeding is the ultimate. Eventually I will have to stop performing because I cannot do anything else. The only other thing I can do is to open myself up, which I've been wanting to do for a long time but which for practical reasons I can't." ♦

Above: Franko B
Photos: Nicholas Sinclair

Underwater World



Stephen Powell has a new idea for a show in which he will wear a wetsuit and perform Hamlet underwater. JO OLSEN distinguishes the method from the madness

I LAUGHED so much whilst talking to Stephen Powell, that it was sometimes hard to remember that he is an actor, director and writer to be taken seriously. He has worked with such theatrical heavyweights as the RSC and the Lithuanian State Theatre. However, his work defies classification and remains steadfastly zany.

Currently Powell is working on an idea for a new one-man show, *Underwater Hamlet*. In it he plans to don a wetsuit to become the Prince of Denmark. He explains: "There is a vogue of doing one-man Hamlets, which I think is a bit weird because Hamlet is only one character among many." *Underwater Hamlet* will set out to parody the conceit of the one-man Hamlet.

Joking aside, he explains: "The show isn't really about Hamlet. I'm not sure what it is about yet... Probably about families since all great tragedies are about families, and probably about mine since that is the one I really know... When Hamlet starts out it's almost a historical drama about a prince. It very quickly becomes very gritty, almost a soap opera about a family and family tension."

Powell is known for infusing his work with an electric sense of possibility, where anything could happen. He aims to keep his audience on the edge of their seats. "It is a desperation to communicate that is also a game," he explains. "I'm interested in doing stuff that is about communication at that moment, in that time, between that group of people, on that night... I try to build this into my performances and stop myself closing the circle."

He's not looking for the ideal text to create a satisfying piece of theatre; spontaneous audience participation is the key. In his most recent show, *It's A Wise Son*, Powell deliberately created a structure where the audience would join in. "I wanted to do something interactive... I covered everyone with a big white sheet and told them a story underneath, just like what I used to do with my brother, with a torch and box of Dairylea. It gave a nice environment for the story I was telling and got rid of the stage for a while. And then I got back on stage and left the sheet over them. They all found it really funny. It made them important. It took them a few minutes to get the thing off and put it to the back. One night they put it at the front and I said, 'No put it at the

back' which they loved, they really wanted to keep on playing."

This reversal of roles, making the audience the performers, is a great way to keep the performance alive. "They are desperate to communicate. This is what I am really interested in - getting an audience talking all the way through the show and being more concentrated on it than they would sitting silently through *The Cherry Orchard*. Because that is living up to the potential of the performers and the audience. The potential of the audience is the thing that has been tapped the least."

However, spontaneous participation is not brought on through pure improvisation. He deliberately works within a structure. "Then you have a little game you can play with people... a way of reacting to what's going on."

Powell tries to nurture the 'flow-state' in performance, where connections in the mind of the performer can multiply. "You've got thoughts that travel at the speed of light, faster than speech. Hence you can think of things that are more interesting than the script and can choose to incorporate them. That for me is interesting. Brecht talks about alienation; to an extent that is what he means - catching up with yourself."

It's A Wise Son was an attempt to incorporate this thinking into his work and to keep apace with the speed of the imagination. Powell has set himself a momentous task; since words, thoughts and anecdotes pour out of him at ferocious speed. In describing what it is like to perform in this way, he comments: "It feels like tunnel vision. People get really close. Actually your body feels like it has done the right thing. It says, 'Oh I'm among friends, they like me'. You start to really look at their faces, to play with them as individuals. And they start looking at you in a different way too."

This intimacy is based on a complete trust in audience feedback. "The audience in a way is the chorus. They're the ones that tell you how it is going - more than the director ever will. Because he tells you afterwards. They know instinctively, because what we are presenting is a very instinctive medium, the medium of human communication."

Powell expects the actors to trust the audience too. While directing *Don Quixote* for

the Lithuanian State Theatre he had to deliver an ultimatum to the two stars to force them to take the risk of performing in this way. They chose not to take up the challenge and so, two weeks into rehearsal, he presented the cast with the quixotic situation of staging Cervantes' story with neither a Don Quixote nor a Sancho Panza. What emerged was a triumph, with the two youngest actors taking on the roles and creating a show that three years on is still playing in Vilnius to packed houses.

"I want them to be great in front of the audience. I don't care what they look like in rehearsal. That's sometimes a problem because I don't appreciate the performances in rehearsal... I have in mind the audience all the time, so I find it hard to be indulgent with actors."

There was a moment when the young actor playing Don Quixote began anxiously asking Powell what his motivation was. Powell responded, logically, that his motivation was simply that if he didn't speak his lines he wouldn't be able to get on to the next bit. The actor was horrified at first and started quoting Stanislavsky, "I said 'if you're quoting Stanislavsky you really don't know. Leave it and let the audience decide.' In the first performance he looked a real idiot during that scene. As the play settled down he grew and grew. After ten performances he flew with it."

In line with his love of spontaneity and the adrenaline rush of performing, Powell is not a great one for lengthy research when preparing a new show. "I see *Underwater Hamlet* as a still postcard at the moment with a title and a costume. It will become a full technicolor movie in my head as it develops... I usually only write to order. I'm not a natural writer. So I put it off for as long as possible. When I finally sit down it just comes out because I've been thinking about it all the time, imagining scenarios, things that will make the audience laugh... You start to write and one idea leads on to another and it's not necessarily sequential.

"I've got an idea and an image for *Underwater Hamlet* and a few axes to grind and then I'll have a show. I might not do Hamlet, and I might not wear a wet suit, but you have to start somewhere. You have to have something to throw in the bin." ♦

On Dramaturgy and the Dramaturg

What is a dramaturg? JOHN KEEFE goes in search of some definitions and discovers that the answer is all but clear

◆ 'Dramaturg' is equal to dramatist; thus dramaturgy is the dramatic work of the writer.

◆ 'Dramaturgy' is the dramatic text plus the writing process found within it.

◆ 'Dramaturgy' is the study and application of theatre science.

◆ 'Dramaturg' is the equivalent of the literary reader, editor or manager of a theatre

or company who is responsible for the development of the dramatic text before and during production.

◆ 'Dramaturg' has the same definition as above, but also with responsibility for researching the background to the play for production plus the gathering of material for the programme.

◆ 'Dramaturgy' is that which concerns the text of the performance.

◆ 'Visual Dramaturgy' is when all the means of expression have an equal status (Arntzen).

◆ 'Dramaturgy' is the science and knowledge of theatre/drama/performance and the application of that science to both the dramatic text and the performance text before and during production of the performance. So the Dramaturg is one who performs this role as a collaborator with the writer/director/scenographer/performer(s).

AS YOU can see, when I consider the question 'what is the dramaturg?', the answer is anything but clear! It seems to depend on who you ask and which theatre culture one is asking about. I have heard academics refer to a writer's 'dramaturgy' seeming to mean the second definition listed above. I have very often come across writers and directors using the terms 'dramaturg' and 'literary reader/manager/editor' interchangeably which, whilst the most common definition, is a usage which is confusing, too narrow and ignores developments in performance practice and theory. Whilst possessing validity, such narrow definitions, by default, still give priority to the word and to the dramatic text in contemporary theatre. Whilst the status of the word and the dramatic text in mime, physical and visual performance are contentious issues; I see no reason to allow an important concept to be used in ways which perpetuate this dominance and which are inappropriate to many forms and much practice found within contemporary performance.

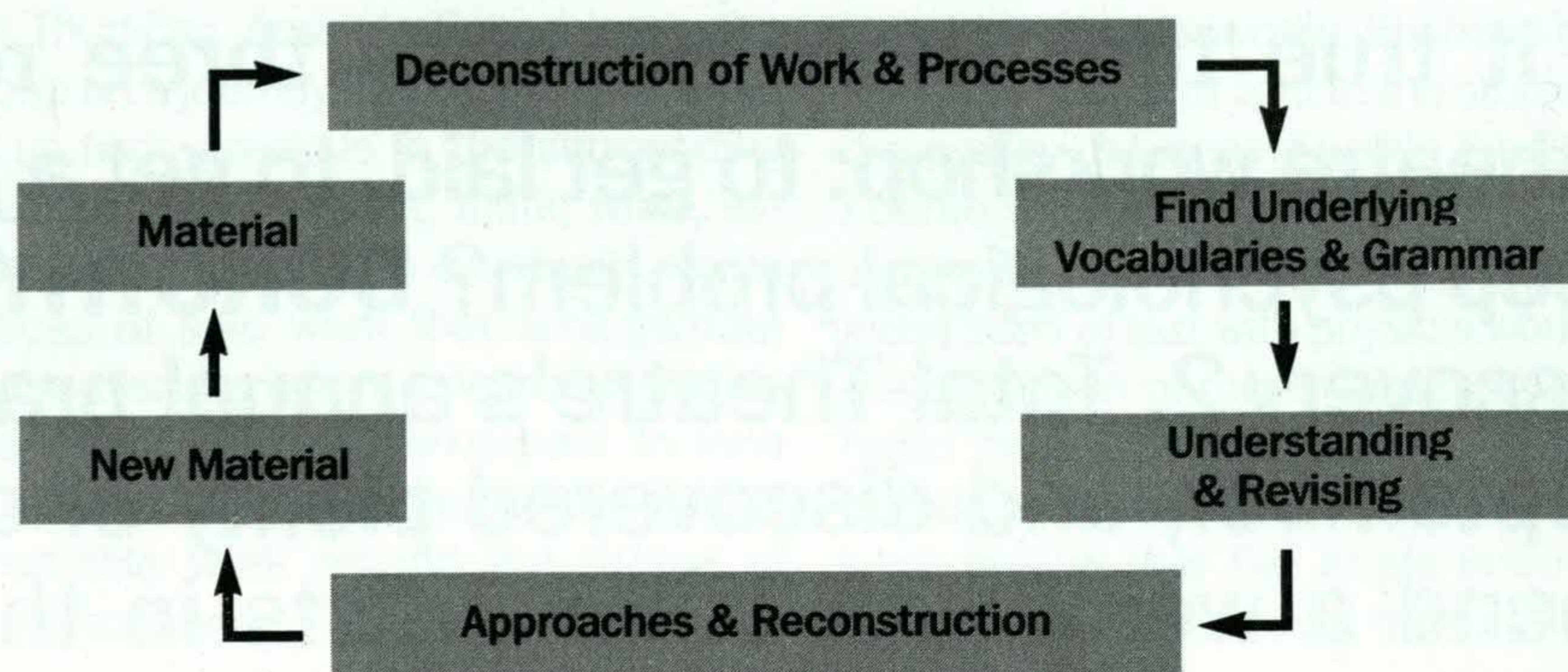
Thus the dramaturg should be concerned with the whole of the process and the performance text that results from it. Clearly I would align myself with the last definition outlined above. I would argue that renewal and deepening of key concepts is thus demanded; that the performance text includes the dramatic text but is not solely this. Rather it is like the parts of a musical score; each element of the performance has its own line which continually interacts with

every other. The performance text may be a piece of 'total theatre' or (more usually) may not when the interaction is biased or only serves one element, but every production is a performance text by intention or default. The dramaturg can take the responsibility of maintaining a concern for these things as an underpinning for the ongoing, practical task of creating and presenting the production. Looking with knowledge means a continual interrogation of the work, a process of deconstructing to open up the work for the collaborators. Thus one dramaturgical methodology may be set out as in the model below.

What I am suggesting is that, rather than be restricted to narrow definitions of the terms; mime, physical and visual performance needs to return to first principles, re-examine the key concepts and apply these to their own work in practice. The notions of interrogation and de-/re-construction apply to all practice. To varying degrees any performer or director can be their own 'native

dramaturg' if so wished; any true ensemble will enable members to perform the role for each other and the production. But I would argue that the dramaturg takes on this role most effectively if they have a distinct responsibility within the collaboration. For me it is a role that is sadly lacking within UK practice with a subsequent effect on the range and quality of work. There have been instances of partially applied or approximations of the role (with subsequent partial success/failure) and the Royal National Theatre is exploring the larger role of the dramaturg but such development is rare. I feel that there is a rich debate to be had here but it is a debate that cannot be restricted to discussion only; it is a debate that must also be held on the rehearsal floor as part of the development of practice and thus becomes part of the working process.

Otherwise theatre science will remain within the academic, research world rather than be part of the world of practice. ◆





C'est La Vie

Is it true that there are only three reasons for attending a theatre workshop: to get laid, to get a job or to sort out some deep psychological problem? **DOROTHY MAX PRIOR** attended Discovery 2, Total Theatre's annual practitioner exchange last September, and discovered plenty of other good reasons to spend a week with other artists in the French countryside

Lundi

In England autumn has arrived, but in South West France it is still summer. Thirteen of us are gathered at a long wooden table under a cherry tree at Centre Sélavy, a 'non-product orientated' performance centre which doubles as an organic farm. The centre is run by husband and wife team Amanda Speed and John Rudlin, who hosted the second Discovery practitioner exchange organised by Total Theatre. Some of us were also present at the first Discovery at The Hawth, Crawley in the Summer of 1996.

We warm-up in the sand garden overlooking the fields. The sand is hot underfoot and we can hardly open our eyes as we face the midday sun. Jeanie McCaghren leads the first session in the main studio, a converted stone barn with sprung wooden floor. We work blindfolded in pairs, creating sound rhythms and movement mantras and learning salutations from the Indian Kerala tradition. The integration of voice and bodywork and the application of personal biography proves indicative of the theme of the week's work.

Mardi

On Tuesday we work with Jon Potter and his travelling companions - a trio of whole head masks including one of Prince Charles. This culminates in four wonderful pieces of site-specific theatre; in a pig-pen, a disused caravan, an orchard, and an outdoor dining area with candelabra. Each of these becomes a setting for a surreal tableau, the heat and intensity of the sun adding to the experience of masked figures wallowing in mud with pigs or serving carrots to Prince Charles. In the afternoon we celebrate the autumn equinox by creating a shrine of found objects and personal mementoes as part of Mel Dolan's session, which also includes both voice and movement work on the four elements.

Mercredi

Wednesday's morning session is led by Katrina Caldwell on the theme 'what makes you cry?' Katrina introduces the 'creative response', a way of working that uses free-form writing as a response to a situation or a piece of work. The process makes creating work based on emotional material much easier. Holding the theme of the session whilst we work, we are directed to find a space for ourselves anywhere we like in or around the farm and spend ten minutes sitting quietly observing, then ten minutes writing a free-flowing stream of words in response to what is before and within us. We develop this writing into a piece of solo theatre using key words as inspiration, then present that work to others who 'respond creatively' with an un-edited stream of thought or key words. Working in this way has a dynamic effect on everyone.

With limitless energy we get through two more sessions this afternoon and evening, a physical workout with Heather Uprichard and Ben Harrison where we throw real sticks and draw with imaginary threads, followed by Steven Powell's wonderful cornucopia of ideas. Eventually we split into two groups to create an Opera that has a death, a love interest, a chorus and a Grand Finale!

Jeudi

On Thursday, Amanda Speed leads the group on a journey to discover what each of us finds precious in the surrounding environment. We walk, think, write, listen, respond and then eventually create pieces of solo work that amalgamate these discoveries into personal performances of word and movement. In Jane Sutcliffe's afternoon session we create ensemble work around the theme of being trapped.

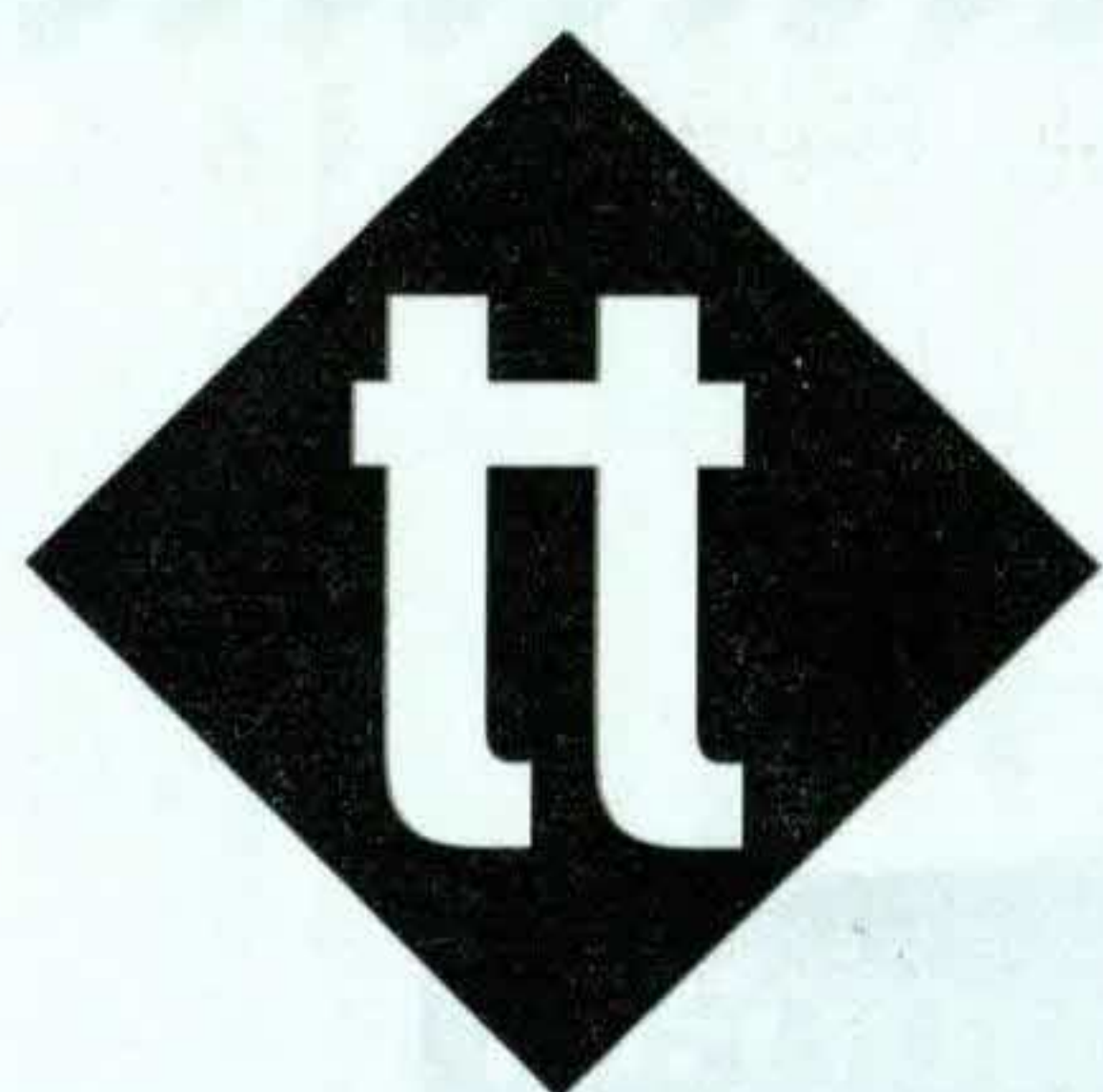
Vendredi

On the last working day I lead a session on 'Transition' - the movement from one state of being to another. Using breath, voice and physical work the group create their own movement life cycle, which is then integrated with written reinterpretations of the poem Prayer before Birth to create solo pieces which are among the most poignant of the week. Sarah Pearce's afternoon session is, by contrast, full of laughter and naughtiness. We tell each other dreadful lies, give impossible gifts and explore the comic possibilities of archetypes.

Le Weekend

By the last day we have each led our own session and experienced something of everyone else's work. We are elated by the quality of the work we have created together, but feel the effect of so much concentrated effort. We spend our last day relaxing, filling in our diaries and writing in each other's notebooks. In the morning we take our first step into the outside world and drive to the local street market, taking Prince Charles with us to experience a little local colour.

It's dawn over France, we've left Centre Sélavy and are heading towards Dieppe. We've said goodbye to John and Amanda, the goats, pigs, ducks and to Scooby Doo the dog. We all have our own personal memories of the week, but some of the shared ones include the sand garden, the outdoor meals, the chestnut wood fireworks, the echo in the field, the quality of light in the studio and the quality of listening within the group. I came to Sélavy hoping to explore the synthesis of voice and bodywork, the integration of text with physical work and the extension of movement work into a more holistic, total expression of the human ability to feel and communicate. I left feeling that I've made enormous leaps towards achieving those goals. ♦



total theatre

mime, physical theatre & visual performance

NEWS

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Kevin Wallace
Dorothy Wilson

Critical Practice 3: Improvisation & Experimentation in Performance

Sunday 25 January 1998, 2.30-5.00pm,
Voice Box, Royal Festival Hall. Chair: Alistair
Spalding, Head of Dance and Performance, RFH

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

Tickets for the debate are free of charge. Book-
ings should be made on 0171 729 7944 or
Email: magtotaltheatre@easynet.co.uk

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

As physical and visual theatre companies
increasingly use improvisation in live perfor-
mance. Critical Practice 3 will look at how
this innovation engages audiences and
extends the performance experience.

Three physical and visual theatre makers
and directors have been invited to present
their views on improvisation and experimen-
tation in front of live audiences.

Adrian Jackson, artistic director of Card-
board Citizens, drawing on his work with
Forum Theatre will talk about how improvisa-
tion offers a unique participatory experience
and the potential to empower individuals and
audiences; Tom Morris, Director of BAC, will
speak on the importance of work in progress
showings and will discuss the value of on-
going experimentation through performance
to enable work to develop; a final speaker
(tbc) will talk about the use of play and
improvisation in the rehearsal process and
methods of gathering the material to create
a finished work for presentation.

Each speaker will address how the
approach taken relates to the participation
and involvement of audiences, and the devel-
opment of physical and visual theatre makers
and artists. There will be opportunities to
question the speakers and for those attend-
ing to openly debate the issues arising.

The Briefs Debate: New Writing: Trend or Tradition?

Total Theatre was present at the Briefs Debate
held at The Hawth on the 6 November '97. This
evening debate, hosted by Shaker Productions,
focused on the contributions of the British the-
atre writer and the physical actor/director/devi-
sor in creating theatrical experiences for an
audience and the importance of the script. Pre-
sentations were given by John Wright, writer
Mark Ravenhill, Katarzyna Deszcz (Mandala
Theatre), Grainne Byrne (Scarlet Theatre) and
writer Rukshana Ahmed. Some of the writers
present felt isolated from 'theatre' and wanted
to feel closer to the making process in
rehearsal, or at least to have more opportunities
for readings of their work. Discussion centred
around how the writer and the deviser chose to
construct meaningful theatre for audiences.

The debate concluded with the view that
true 'theatre' was created where the collabo-
ration in the rehearsal room of actors, direc-
tors, writers, designers, et al. came together.
The devising approach of physical and visual
theatre, taken from the inception of a project
potentially enabled everyone to work towards
the same vision of the work - whether it was
led by a writer, a director or the ensemble.

The Hawth will be publishing a report of the
Seminar which can be obtained by calling
01293 438114.

Skills for Small Businesses 1997/98

In a pilot scheme sponsored by LAB, and run by
Prevista and FOCUS Central London TEC, Total
Theatre is participating in Skills for Small Busi-
nesses. Designed to help small businesses
become more successful by offering training
and development to individuals working on
behalf of an organisation, it will help us to clar-
ify our business objectives and produce a train-
ing plan to help us deliver those objectives.

Our participation will strengthen our organi-
sational training provision and will enable us to
engage in training related initiatives that will
have an impact on the development of mem-
bers, volunteers, staff, project working groups
and the Board.

We are very pleased to have been chosen
for this pilot project and extend our thanks to
London Arts Board for their support.

Membership Rates Increase

From the 1 January 1998, Total Theatre is
increasing its membership rates. The new
rates are published in our new Membership
Leaflet. Our aim is to keep the rates competi-
tive whilst continuing to develop the value of
your membership. The rates were last
increased two years ago in 1995/96 but rising
costs have unfortunately taken their toll. We
look forward to your continued support.

Beyond Words 1998 Festival of Mime, Physical & Visual Theatre

Seminar and Showcase

Thursday 12 February 1998, 2.00pm

The Hawth, Crawley

This skills exchange day for practitioners to find 'practical solutions to their professional problems' is a must for all members and practitioners based in the south-east.

With Total Theatre's support, The Hawth made contact with members in the South-East Region to ask them to contribute to the shaping of the day. We then advised directly on how members views could be incorporated into the programme. Thanks to all those who sent in comments.

The day will cover funding developments in the South East, sharing administrative resources, developing use of the internet, the benefits of artistic collaboration, and a report of The Hawth's Briefs Debate. The day will end with a showcase of work by four physical and visual theatre companies, including Fireraisers (runners up in the 1997 Total Theatre Awards), Cartoon de Salvo, Mass Productions and Out of Synch.

The day promises to be a full and rewarding one and will be of interest to those living in the south east - and beyond. The day is free but tickets need to be booked in advance at The Hawth Box Office on 01293 553636

Total Theatre Education Resource - A4E News

In the early part of this year Total Theatre developed a major education project, 'Physical Action into Practice' from the recommendations in Anna Ledgard's report 'Mime in Schools'. An application for support for the project was submitted to the A4E Lottery Programme first round on the 31 March 1997. In August we heard that our application had been unsuccessful, but that the content of the application had been well received.

We had hoped to be able to undertake four regional programmes of education project and professional development work and develop central resources both to support the regional programmes and provide additional tools for young people, teachers, artists and arts education agencies to develop mime and physical theatre activities.

Though disappointed not to have been awarded funds that would have made a significant impact on the development of mime and physical theatre in education in the UK, we are still completely committed to facilitating and supporting the development of this area of our work.

For the third A4E round on the 29 Nov '97, we presented an application for the central resources element, cutting the project by a fifth, and focusing on the development of a database, a website, an education resource pack for young people and teachers, a quarterly education bulletin, information support and associated training and learning packages. The application for the Education Resource was for £99,500. We should hear from the A4E Unit in late spring or early summer.

Total Theatre AGM & Awards Reception

Thanks to all who attended or sent in proxy voting forms for the AGM on Saturday 1 November '97. Our thanks also go to Geraldine Collinge and Tom Morris for their support in enabling us to have both the AGM and the Reception for the Total Theatre Awards at BAC.

Thanks to Board Member Kath Gorman who introduced the Reception and to Chenine Bhatena, John from Fecund, and Richard from K486 for their fine speeches. More reports and speeches followed at the AGM and thanks go to Robert Breckman for presenting the Accounts, Mark Saunders for his report on Scottish Visions, Chenine Bhatena on the Total Theatre Awards and Jon Potter and Jane Sutcliffe for their illustrated report back from Discovery 2 at Centre Selavy. Final thanks to Steve Hill and Teri Sayers who helped organise the two events and to Jon Potter and Cathy Bailey for chairing the AGM. If you have not already requested a copy of the Directors and Trustees Report 1996/97, and would like one please call the office on 0171 729 7944.

Staff Change

Farewell and thanks to Steve Hill whose commitments at Middlesex University have meant he has resigned as Membership Officer. He has been a great asset and will be keeping in touch and attending Total Theatre events.

We are pleased that Jonathan Cohen, who came to us as a volunteer in July, becomes the new Membership Officer. Jonathan is in the office on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays for all your membership queries.

Past Masters - Decroux

On the 7-9 November 1997, the Centre for Performance Research hosted a major conference on Etienne Decroux. Mhora Samuel attended on behalf of Total Theatre.

A packed programme contained some extremely illuminating presentations and debates.

Conference papers will be circulated to all conference attendees and we hope to have a set in the office in the new year, which will be held in our Library, available for reference by members.

For copies of the Conference proceedings you should contact Centre for Performance Research directly on 01970 622133.

Rosy Gibb

Last year, Rosy Gibb died age 54 from cancer. Her life was celebrated at a special memorial service on 17 October at St Paul's Church in Covent Garden and attended by many who paid tribute to her life and work.

Rosy was born in Dublin and spent her early life in Guernsey. Her teenage years were spent in Rhodesia and later in Ethiopia. She studied philosophy at Trinity College, Dublin where she met her future husband, Andrew. They married in 1967 and later had two children Tammy and Jason. By the early 70s she was living in London where she completed a diploma in social administration at the London School of Economics and an MPhil.

It was 1978 when she first donned a clown's costume and found her vocation. She was known as a magical clown, a civil campaigner and a motivator. She was a proud member of The Magic Circle, taught clowning and magic skills to orphaned children in Romania, and performed for leading children's theatres, arts festivals, in schools and libraries and helped set up the children's theatre at The Old Vic.

In one of the many tributes, Paul Lyons writing for The Guardian said: 'Rosy was a woman with a tremendous energy for life, much of which was expressed through an unquenchable vitality for friendship. She had an interest and enthusiasm for other people, so intense that it illuminated their own lives and with her own child-like innocence and approach to every situation, she made many fall under her spell.'

Her career was reaching a peak when she was tragically taken with cancer - which she bore with fortitude - but which took a truly magical person from all our lives.

Rosemary Elizabeth Jane Gibson, clown, born November 8 1942; died July 13 1997.

Yellow Earth

Behind the Chinese Takeaway

BAC

I had heard a lot about Yellow Earth. The subject matter of *Behind the Chinese Takeaway* is a fascinating one and David Tse's claim that the company create 'a new theatrical style' obviously arouses curiosity. I really wanted this show to be good.

The company present a medley of characters from London's vibrant and diverse Chinese community. There is a young girl whose parents have become slaves to their Chinese takeaway, there is a teenager who hopes of another union between China and the UK and there is an entire dance class. Amongst these are snapshots from life in old China and a collection of jokes which are often made about Chinese people resident in this country. Pots and pans are banged whilst the text is recited, oh and there is also some Tai Chi performed with sparklers.

All these sequences are thick with irony about the Chinese experience and are presented almost as a lecture demonstration with what seemed like hours of video footage of Hong Kong's hand-over ceremony this summer (the actors just sat and watched). In one scene a teenage boy (excellently played by Tom Wu) and girl are chatting after having sex. She makes patronising comments about his 'lovely (oriental) skin', 'lovely (oriental) eyes' and so on, and is surprised that he even speaks English. These encounters raise interesting questions about the future of multi-cultural Britain, but sadly overall the show was under-rehearsed and lacking in theatrical energy.

Emi Slater

Doo Cot

Ultra Violet

BAC

Ultra Violet is a passionate, screaming protest against sexual repression. It is the haunting, beautiful and erudite tale of Violet, an English

woman living in France during World War I, who falls blissfully in love with an American writer Helen. Their story is told, with sufficient sensitivity and power, to convince even the most hardened homophobe of the right of the individual to love free from censure.

The performance packs such an abundance of factual and narrative information into a short time, that one is left reeling with wonder at the writer's skill. Nenagh Watson, (she has worked with Polish genius Tadeusz Kantor and you can tell) interacts in an absurd and unnerving way with a life-size puppet - particularly effective in a heartbreaking dance with an ultraviolet skeleton after the death of her lover. Despite horrors (Nazism, eugenics and mutilation), the story is not without humour. Dorothy Lawrence gives an excellent vocal rendition of an array of characters and Chalona Deike interacts with the audience and her cello to create some of the most exciting and original adult storytelling I have ever seen.

The intermingling of visuals (courtesy of Rachel Field), electronic animation, puppetry, live performance and live music was quite simply brilliant - a rare thing in these days of frequent video projection misuse.

Emi Slater

Primitive Science

You Have Been Watching

Purcell Room

Following *Imperfect Librarian*, this was a very disappointing piece of work. In their previous show *Primitive Science* had achieved a sense of wholeness, especially in the visual aspect. Their new show seemed ill thought-out, unethical and theatrically lazy.

Based on Jeremy Bentham's 18th century proposal for a penal system of isolation and observation (the Panopticon), the staging created no connection with the chilling sterility of Bentham's idea. Thus the philosopher's words became book-ends at either end of a core of patterns of movement which were enacted first one way then repeated in reverse. Bentham's words were presented as a lecture delivered live and via tape simultaneously. But the two modes were regrettably out of synch. If this was not deliberate, then it was certainly the product of technical sloppiness. If it was deliberate, then it became not a distancing or estranging device but a joke that quickly paled. Like so much in this piece there seemed no

discernible intention behind the staging or dramatic elements. The patterns of movement had no physical vocabulary and the space was not transformed by them. These were empty images which carried no visual resonance.

Given the powerful implications of Bentham's text there were surprisingly no connections made with the politics of imprisonment, the realities of isolation and observation that are part of imprisonment. There was no sense of a reflection from our current cultural and spiritual condition on his proposals. Thus an ethical essay was neutralised into empty aesthetics.

John Keefe

Theatre Edible

The Bound Man

BAC

This was a show of many parts which did not really come together as a whole. Whilst aiming to convey the mixture of absurdism and grotesque of the original story, the work did not focus the energy and elements into a totality. Thus characters would emerge from the set in visually striking ways, but then not realise the further theatrical potential of the set. Two disembodied heads were the storytellers but became simply an audience for the images, not a chorus or commentary. Many of the images became theatrical clichés as we followed the life and exploitation of the bound man; his role as metaphor for the human condition became rather obvious as a sort of diluted Artaudian confrontation - clowns and children as symbols of human cruelty, grotesqueness and nightmare. The movement was unfocused lacking any physical or gestural vocabulary, again undermining the existential confrontation of the story.

The exception was the playing of the bound man; voiceless but expressing in movement and gesture the bewilderment and poignancy of the innocent in an alienating world. The best moments came as the frantic and unfocused energy suddenly halted as the bound man and his physical echo held the stage space with stillness and silence, the setting framing an image of totality and completeness as stillness and silence were allowed to speak. Two powerful and wonderful moments that reinforced for me the unrealised potential of the rest of the show.

John Keefe



Doo Cot: *Ultra Violet* Photo: Ann McGuinness



Rejects Revenge: *Dusty Fruit* Photo: Robert Cook, Graphic Communications

Hoodwink

Hoodwink

BAC

George, a smooth-talking magician and his wide-eyed psychic side-kick, Lily, perform a dusty, Victorian act in which secondrate tricks and spurious ramblings from 'the other side' combine with a lecture on physiognomy which leaves little to the imagination and much to be desired. Behind the scenes, Harry, the downtrodden assistant, discovers that he too has 'the sight'. The tables are briefly turned as he realises that until now the act has been nothing but shameful trickery.

The action is staged around a huge box of tricks which is spun around and opened to reveal a dressing room, front garden or stage, as required. Its versatility is exploited to the full. However some finer elements of the performance appear to have been neglected in the process; particularly the actors' physicality. Changes in pace and tension are reliant solely on the musical score; the more dramatic mime sequences suffer as a result.

More crucially, if we are intended to believe that George and Lily's act is their livelihood, we are not convinced. And if, as it would seem, Harry is the only person gullible enough to be taken in, then what do we care? Symbolic gesture has

displaced truth and gimmicks replace skill in an attempt to lay trickery bare. We are taken on a theatrical journey that careers from cheap tricks to mime; from larger-than-life monologues to a world of miniature washing lines and plastic garden flowers. In the meantime, the diminishing point of the journey is lost in a puff of smoke.

Libby Snape

Theatre Y Byd

Marriage of Convenience

BAC

Ian Rowlands' one-man play, *Marriage of Convenience*, is an exploration of cultural identity set in Wales. Coming hot on the heels of the recent devolution referendum, Rowlands' play beautifully illustrates the difficulty of finding a national identity in a nation where, 'identity changes from street to street, like species in a rain forest'.

Rowlands is a superb wordsmith. His language is lyrical with a contemporary hard edge. Location and characters are summed up with humour and precision. From the butcher whose 'fingernails always looked as if he had flesh under them', to his vision of the mountain as 'a carnivore who files his teeth upon the wind', Rowlands etches the valleys into our imagination.

The script is, by far, the strongest element. A major problem for a pro-

duction which is part of a festival of 'visual' theatre. Unfortunately, Rowlands is not a director, and both script and performer are seriously let down because of this. His staging is simplistic and repetitive. For most of the play, lines are delivered with the actor either seated or standing on the spot. Gareth Potter seems to be a capable performer, but the director's physical imagination and fine tuning of vocal colour, which are essential to a one-man show, are missing. A wonderful opportunity, sadly missed.

Paul Williams

Vanessa Earl

My Sky Is Big

BAC

The dream of flying is a longing for escape, a desire to free the imagination. This concept is radiantly brought to life in *My Sky Is Big*, a work in progress written by Robert Young and performed by Vanessa Earl.

This exquisite and dramatic monologue to the frustrations and bizarre fantasies of childhood, centres around a young girl who is convinced that she can fly and can therefore escape the dullness of adolescence. Even her desire for security is expressed in an avian manner. Snatching at coloured sweet wrappers, she creates a safe and shiny nest where she can hide from her otherwise drab and loveless life.

In a swift forty-five minutes, Vanessa Earl switches with ease from frenetic physicality to moments of focused intensity. Coaxing every nuance from Young's tight and varied script, she fills the stage. Huge shadows loom behind her; symbols of the fearful adult world she is soon to join. From the first strangulated squawk which perfectly evokes the image of a child desperately straining into adulthood, Earl uses her expert physical and vocal skills to seduce the audience into the girl's world.

The main character defiantly shouts, 'I've seen the future, and it's me!' For Earl and Young this could be true.

Paul Williams

Rejects Revenge

Dusty Fruit

BAC

Rejects Revenge comprise the collective talents of Tim Hibberd, Ann Farrar and David Alison and were formed seven years ago. They have a consummate command of physical and storytelling techniques and set pieces are executed with a great deal of energy and control.

The company dip into a deep sack of theatre styles, from the sublime to the ridiculous. The mime which accompanies much of Ann Farrar's narration has echoes of Indian storytelling. Some moments, such as a routine involving crates which walk about before being catapulted around the stage, is pure music hall; evoking the silliness and perfect timing of Morecombe and Wise's classic stripper/kitchen sketch.

Dusty Fruit also contains snapshots of dramatic magic, such as Hibberd's slow motion fall down a flight of stairs. Special mention must be given to Mike Wight's superbly atmospheric lighting and Alice Power's adaptable set. With a small budget these two designers use a great deal of imagination to create an environment which is used by the performers as a tool instead of merely a backdrop.

The main problem with the show, however, seems to lie with the question of target audience. It is superb as a piece aimed at young people; witty enough not to be patronising, and physically inventive enough to entrance the most hyperactive soul. But unfortunately, it does not offer enough in the way of intellectual nourishment to satisfy an adult audience.

Paul Williams

Trestle Theatre Company

Fool House

Purcell Rooms, London, Sept '97

Set in Amsterdam, *Fool House* opens with a storm in which a barge crashes into a dyke. The action takes place years later in a house, 67 Doverstraat, which is full of life. The inhabitants clomp up and down the many staircases, annoying the busybody concierge on the ground floor; an English student arrives in the top flat, on the first floor a couple are having marital difficulties and the basement is occupied by a man who has hung himself. Underneath the house, the crashed barge has been preserved in peat and ghoulish sailors stir to create mayhem in the house.

In this Anglo-Dutch collaboration, the performances by Egbert Jan Arnold, Chaya Aschkenasy, Karina Garnett and Alan Riley were all superb. The set was great and the illusion of a multistoried house was convincingly created, if occasionally confusing. There were nice moments of parody, such as when an Englishman abroad unpacked his marmite, tea and cornflakes. Many hilarious scenes included one in which the same man, who is studying to be a conductor, is practising but has forgotten to plug in his earphones so that his music disturbs the whole house. The various inhabitants come up to complain. The music is modern and quirky; when the doorbell rings, it sounds to the Englishman like part of the concerto. *Fool House* is yet another winner from Trestle.

Danny Schlesinger

Bouge-de-là

Time Flying

Komedia, Brighton, Oct '97

Between life, death and rebirth is a space (real or imagined), where life's fears, fantasies and failures are revisited. *Time Flying* starts and ends with the last moments in the life of a lonely crooner; a gentle giant whose cumbersome body contains a fluttering soul which flies through time and space.

Bouge-de-là are known for their innovatory approach to design, which is integral to the content of the performance. This is demonstrated wonderfully in the central image of the giant cabaret singer who hides a secret within. The heart

which beats behind his metal ribs contains a trio of beings that make up the whole. These three replay scenarios from his life in which they wait, flirt, dance and desire. They are caught in limbo, in a place where they are locked together in interchanging roles and relationships, one suspects for eternity. Life and death become one long happy hour in which cocktails are sipped to a soundtrack of 'Girl Talk' and 'Cha Cha Cha D'Amour'.

Designers and performers Lucy O'Rourke and Aurelian Koch are joined in this production by dancer Paula Jane Harradine, whose movement adds another dimension to the piece. *Time Flying* is a stylish synthesis of dramatic exposition, design and movement. Catch Bouge-de-là as they tour this Spring.

Dorothy Max Prior

A Quiet Word

Stella You Are Funny

The Theatre Studio, University College Scarborough, Nov '97

Handbags, chiffon scarves, gloves, lipstick and all the accoutrements of the celluloid female, are deployed with style and irony in this highly original and intriguing work.

The audience sits on three sides of an intimate cabaret-club setting with its tables, chairs and matching blue lampshades. Two women in silky blue two-piece suits perform a bizarre journey into film noir. Performers Alison Andrews and Clare Thacker, draw the audience into worlds within worlds as they parody the language and iconography of women in film. They wield a handheld video camera to mesmerising effect, projecting a succession of images onto a suspended cinema



A Quiet Word: Stella You Are Funny

screen. Interspersed with these images are black and white clips from a range of Hollywood classics. The screen, complete with motorised curtain in blue velvet, evolves into a compelling third performer and provides the means for an exquisite ending. On the way to this end we are tantalised by a narrative that keeps on breaking the rules.

Aside from the integration of music and technology and the visual quality of the work, the spoken text was impressive. Andrews and Thacker set the conceptual agenda but Mike Kenny, collaborator and writer, has provided words that fit as well as one of their stilettos. Stella has been fashioned with intelligence and wit. There is a deftness and a clarity of purpose in the approach of *A Quiet Word* which is refreshingly different and well worth the experience.

Eric Prince

Trading Faces

The Man Who Woke Up In The Dark

Spring Gardens Arts Centre, High Wycombe, Oct '97

The Man Who Woke Up In The Dark is the life story of Leonardo Da Vinci told through half masks, mime, dance and conventional theatre on a small stage that appeared much larger through judicious use of space.

The play opened with characters emerging from under the set, which immediately fired the imagination and set the tone for a rumbustious ride through the creation of the Mona Lisa, the invention of the helicopter and the intervention of wicked landlords and a tragic/comic prostitute. Phoebe Soteriades, as Maturina the whore, was magnificent as she fell in love with the young Leonardo, only to discover he loved his inventions more than her ample physical attributes. Landlord Jonathan Ferguson, all thrusting hips and cockerel walk, created chaos whenever he appeared; stealing money and causing grievous bodily harm to everybody in his way.

In complete contrast was Tony Davis' gentle Leonardo, lost in a world of his own inventions and totally oblivious to the real world, as he drew up magnificent plans, painted the Mona Lisa and in the final scene created a flying machine from the framework of his bed.

The half masks give the play an enigmatic air, exaggerating the characters beneath them and bringing

an exciting dynamism to the whole project. This was quite brilliantly done and it is easy to see why *Trading Faces* are such a success.

Archie Wilson

Abraxus Theatre

One

The Finborough Arms, London, Sept '97

Sandwiched between two short plays in a triple bill, *One* stood out as a visually striking and intellectually challenging piece of physical theatre. With minimal multi lingual dialogue, little lighting and no set, the piece follows an epic and confrontational journey of survival through a city. A stranger arrives in search of a drink, but is met with hostility, indifference, greed, trickery and alienation. He can only offer his naive openness to the city dwellers, who mock and reject his attempts to integrate. They are trapped in their own claustrophobic, polluted and spiritually barren world. His thirst for life unveils their death in life, which ultimately leads to their suicide and the continuation of his aloneness.

The universal language of this piece is powerful, potent and physical. Alan Marni, the stranger, leads us through a labyrinth of mobile phones, crowded tubes, dirty streets, parks and dark nights. His physical control and sweating torso is caught between the tightly choreographed movements of Toby Hughes and Leticia Rua, the city dwellers, appropriately dressed in grey. They ran, rolled, choked, flirted and chased one another with flawless synchronicity.

The tightly orchestrated rhythms of movements and sounds, both vocal and recorded, provide a captivating piece of ensemble theatre, whose resonance goes beyond the realms of being alone in a city. The final suicide is brought to a close with the accompanying Oasis soundtrack and we are left to question our own future. Over the next few months *One* is to be developed as a Perpetual Motion show and deserves to have a long and successful future.

Henrietta Seeborn

Threshold Theatre

Candles in the Wind

BA students from Warwick, Arts Alive, June '97

Candles in the Wind offers far more than a retelling of Marilyn Monroe's

eventful life. It addresses wider issues and provides an exhilarating mental workout. Directed by Carran Waterfield and devised and performed by Threshold Theatre, the company's debut production is a polished and challenging piece of experimental physical theatre.

The play combines powerful and dramatic visual imagery along with an effective soundtrack to illustrate Monroe's struggles; focusing on the pressures exerted upon her by her upbringing, marriages and career. The performance communicates more by visual and physical means than by dialogue and thus allows very personal and varied interpretations for the audience. Marilyn, the blonde icon, remains serene and inimitable throughout, whilst the alter-ego Norma Jeane is a vehicle which symbolises the problems of 20th Century women.

Five performers each take various roles and aspects of Marilyn's character, including the child, the icon and the wannabe. In the compelling final death scene the icon is again the centre of attraction, as Norma Jeane is laid to rest, finally achieving peace after her turbulent life. The use of Marilyn's previous Hollywood pedestal as her coffin is a powerful symbol of the link between Tinseltown pressure and her untimely death. The performers coordinate well, bombarding the audience from all sides with sight and sound, appealing to those particularly interested in the legend, as well as the merely curious.

Russell S. Davis



Forced Entertainment *Pleasure* Photo: Hugo Glendinning

Shared Experience

Jane Eyre

The Young Vic, London, Nov '97

Oscar Wilde said 'one's own life is often the life that one does not lead'; to cut off your real spirit and to repress the 'wild' soul within is equal to death.

Jane Eyre will never lose its appeal as a story of universal resonance. Polly Teale's adaptation and direction of the classic text moved me almost as much as when I first read the book as a child. Pooky Quesnel as Bertha disturbingly clanks her chains. Monica Dolan is both funny and moving as Jane. Her 'fiery spirit' must be locked away if she is to survive in Rochester's house.

The action begins with a lone cellist sitting to the side of staircase which winds up to the room which

houses the 'mad woman in the attic'. Behind is a glorious swirling grey Yorkshire sky which captures perfectly the passion and energy of Charlotte Brönte's story. The actors perform their various roles with equal conviction, whether playing dogs, horses or priests (an excellent Antony Byrne) and the raw emotion and sexual fire between Jane Eyre and Rochester (played by James Clyde with great sensitivity and feeling) is engulfing.

A specific physicality has become one of Shared Experience's trademarks, and here we see it integrated into the action with ease and beauty. This is surely their best show since *Anna Karenina*; delicate and exuberant and full of the joy of life. As Charlotte Brönte said: "Even now the fire, though smothered, slacked, repelled, is burning at my life's source."

Emi Slater

Forced Entertainment *Pleasure*

Arncliffe, Bristol, Nov '97

Pleasure is Forced Entertainment's sixteenth production to date and one which sees director Tim Etchells continue to explore familiar themes of fragmentation, mystery and unanswered questions. The show incorporates three women, a pantomime horse and a male MC and combines sex, memory and rage with numbing alcoholism. These characters, though disconnected by appearance, are united in their search for an answer to the question, 'why is modern life rubbish?'

The drunken MC maintains control of the action. He plays records at 16rpm and talks disparately

through a microphone about issues concerning human life. There is a sense of discontinuity between the MC character and the other protagonists. I found this relationship undeveloped. The role of the women throughout the piece is also open to question. There were, however, some wonderfully comic moments involving the horse and a blackboard upon which words or phrases which commented on the action were chalked. Chalk and alcohol are mechanisms which recur from previous shows.

Forced Entertainment are not frightened of ideas which violate and interrogate conventional theatre practice. At this early viewing the piece seemed undeveloped and disconnected in places. However, they should be praised for both their diversity and the originality of their approach.

Richard Crosby

Ta Ta Di Di Teatro The Last Lock Cabaret

Regents Canal, London, Aug '97

Cabaret's take place in informal and intimate environments, liberated from the restrictions of grand theatres. And what more intimate a setting can there be than a houseboat?

Unfortunately, the boat on which Ta Ta Di Di Teatro performed was separated from its audience by an expanse of water which proved alienating. Not an ideal setting for a piece with the intimate theme of love; the instinctive desire to find it, the rituals we use in our search, and the fear that we may never know it.

Was this intentional? In the Jungian imagination, water symbolises the subconscious, the place where our deepest anxieties and desires dwell. A place which both separates us from, and connects us to, others. To extend this analogy, a boat can be seen as a structure we construct to protect ourselves from the chaos of the subconscious.

The cabaret consisted of a montage of images. One involved a mermaid, 'all at sea' with the pedestrian rituals of land-locked love. There was a party, that great place of seduction, but sadly, as it took place inside the boat, the audience were not invited. A post-coital couple leaned from a window and declared, with a sad admission of their subconscious drives: "I could never leave the cabaret". Finally, a man jumped from the boat and offered himself to the icy unknown.

Although the company's physical vocabulary was limited, and set-pieces were somewhat carelessly executed, the piece still managed to excite the imagination.

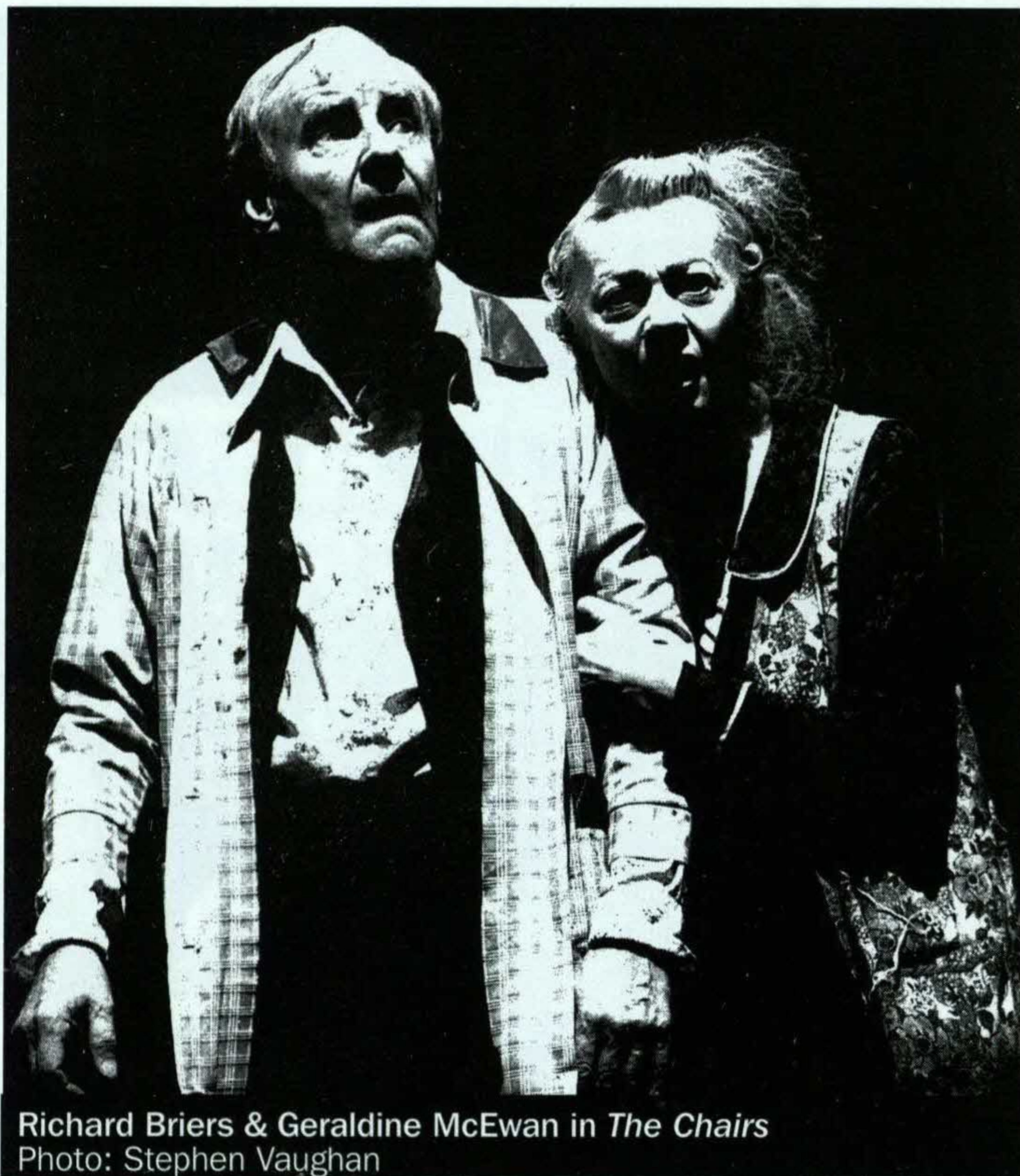
Paul Williams

Theatre de Complicite The Chairs

Royal Court Theatre Downstairs, London, Nov '97

In this revival of Ionesco's 'tragic farce', Simon McBurney directs Geraldine McEwan and Richard Briers as an aged couple who occupy their time with imaginative mind games and reminisce about life's lost opportunities.

The Chairs occupies a theatrical landscape somewhere between tragic realism and surreal fantasy, tipping a nod in the direction of



Richard Briers & Geraldine McEwan in *The Chairs*
Photo: Stephen Vaughan

Beckett's *Godot en route*. A couple live in a decrepit house, where the old man has long worked as janitor. They waste away their dotage imagining all the things he might have been, had he not been 'master of the mop and bucket'. The action dramatises the couple's final fantasy; an elaborate scenario in which an enormous crowd of local dignitaries and figures from the past, descend on their home to hear the old man's farewell message to the world.

McEwan and Briers are magnificent as the geriatric pair, eliciting the perfect blend of pathos and humour from roles which are both physically and linguistically demanding. They conjure the 'invisible' guests who 'crowd the stage with expert skill.

Designers, the Quay brothers, provide some delightful visual tricks. In one beautifully choreographed sequence, McEwan rushes in and out of a multitude of doors, hauling chairs onto the stage for the invisible guests; doors open of their own accord and chairs fly unassisted onto the stage, to a chorus of door bell chimes.

Martin Crimp's translation handles the poetic word play of Ionesco's text with aplomb. This is a rare opportunity to see two luminaries of the British stage in such an imaginatively staged and little performed modern European classic.

John Daniel

Thin Line Theatre Company The Shower Scene

Shropshire New Arts Network, Shrewsbury, Nov '97

Thin Line take Hitchcock's most memorable sequence from the movie *Psycho*, to ask why a space so apparently functional, banal and clean as a shower can serve to excavate secrets, violence and terror.

Kevin McGreevy has the figure and presence for the role of the great director himself. His words are largely taken from the film's teasing trailer. Jane Glennie as Marion (a conflation of the movie roles of Norman's mother and the motel victim), has a powerful physical presence. Jonathan Tritton as Norman, almost plays the 'straight' man, in a characterisation far from the twitching oddity of Anthony Perkins. His understated performance reinforces identification with his status as the childhood victim of family tragedy.

The most exciting aspect of this production (directed by Richard Talbot in association with Carran Waterfield of Triangle), is the deployment of bodies and props. The imaginative use of a baby's red suit in a birth scene is more harrowing and violent than the murder reconstructions, however good they are. The lighting by Grant Wilton and

sound by Paul Bull pay creative homage to the film.

Even the weakest moments are interesting. The direct address to the audience, when the company reproach them for their prurient interest in violence, was a cliché. It was also inappropriate to the Shrewsbury audience, who were probably not part of a broader trend which glorifies in representations of violence. However, Thin Line perform an important function by bringing 'avant-garde' theatre to rural audiences, and by suggesting to young people that theatre can hold its own against the challenges of film and television.

Siobhán Kilfeather

Polar Theatre I.D.

Riverside Studios, Nov '97

A lesbian, a gay man, a bisexual man, a bisexual woman and a straight woman (or at least performers representing these), take their place behind a conference table and promise a once-and-for-all definition of gay identity. A preposterous plan, obviously. What actually happens is a ninety minute summary of current thinking on sexual identity.

I.D. concerns itself with the nature/nurture debate, language and gay identity, the need or otherwise for a separate 'bi' space etc. From this starting point, Polar Theatre build a show of broad satire, campy in-jokes, costume changes and self-consciously performative movement. After all this was not a real conference, this was theatre. So far, so ho-hum.

The conference conceit enabled the performers to directly address the audience and to quote shamelessly from relevant texts concerned with gender identity and sexual politics. The potential academic dryness of this approach was coolly avoided because of the wit and bravado of the performers; their energy was focused splendidly on a genuine desire to be understood.

Kinetic thrills were few, however. For the most part, what movement there was added to the sense of explanation, but frequently it seemed to be born more out of a fear of stillness than as a realisation of an impulse rooted in the piece itself.

A minor quibble, however, since, for the most part, *I.D.* was both an entertaining and cerebrally satisfying piece of work.

Ray Newe

MANAGEMENT NEWS

Barclays New Stages and The Royal Court Theatre

Have embarked on a new sponsorship scheme to replace Barclays New Stages. The first production to be supported by Barclays is Theatre de Complicite's *The Chairs*. They support a further three productions in 1998 including Phyllis Nagy's *Never Land* and Ed Thomas's *Gas Station Angels*. Details: Lucinda Roberts on 0171 221 7883.

ICA Live Arts

Because of financial constraints and as a result of a process of restructuring in keeping with the ideals of the new director Phillip Dodd, Lois Keidan and Catherine Ugwu have left the ICA to pursue their commitment to performance independently. Contact: Keidan/Ugwu, Truman Brewery Building, 91 Brick Lane, London E1 6QN. Tel: 0171 247 3339.

South West Arts

Welcomes Ouvrielle Holmes back to the Performing Arts Department after her maternity leave, she joins Sarah Holmes as part-time administrator. Keith Nimmo, performing arts manager departs to become the first director of the new West Wiltshire Music Centre.

MANAGEMENT SERVICES

National Rural Touring Forum
Contacts for Touring
Schemes

◆**Stephen Carr**, Arts Action!, Kent Tel: 01622 754042 ◆**Sian Allen**, Arts Alive!, Herefordshire Tel: 01588 680388 ◆**Beverley Whitrick**, Arts Development Office, Kent Tel: 01892 540492 ◆**Nicky Stainton**, Arts in Rural Norfolk, Norfolk Tel: 01603 507197 ◆**Sue Roberts**, Artservice - Rural & Comm. Touring, Lincs. Tel: 01544 327877 ◆**Gary Sage**, Community Arts Development Agency, Herts. Tel: 01727 852298 ◆**Ian Scott**, Artsreach, Dorset Tel: 01305 269512 ◆**Duncan MacInnes**, DEALAN, Isle of Skye Tel: 01471 844207 ◆**Jennie Wilson**, Dumfries & Galloway Arts Assoc., Scotland Tel: 01387 260445 ◆**Alison Betteridge**, East Staffs. Community Touring, Staffs. Tel: 01283 508656 ◆**Barbara Slack**, North Pennine Rural Touring, Cumbria. Tel: 01768 892947 ◆**Pauline Bray**, Entertainment for Village Halls, Hants. Tel: 01962 846018 ◆**Delma Tomlin**, Yorkshire Touring Agency, East Riding Tel: 01904 645738 ◆**Lorna Brown**, Isle of Wight Council, Isle of Wight Tel: 01983 823833 ◆**Sue Caudle**, Lancashire Touring Network, Lancs. Tel: 01772 717461 ◆**John Prior**, Night Out, Gwent Tel: 01633 875075 ◆**Hilary Western**, Performance, Bedford Tel: 01767 313137 ◆**Carwyn Rogers**, Roundabout, Wales Tel: 01267 234248 ◆**Ellen Thorpe**, Rural Arts North Yorkshire, N. Yorks. Tel: 01943 608627 ◆**Diana Hatton**, 'Razze', Avon Tel: 01454 865834 ◆**Ian Kerry**, Shropshire Live, Shropshire Tel: 01588 680398 ◆**Imogen Haig**, Entertainment for Village Halls, Surrey Tel: 0181 541 9572 ◆**Sarah Peterkin & Ralph Lister**, Take Art!, Somerset Tel: 01458 840992 ◆**Andy Morley**, The Big Night In!,

Devon Tel: 01392 219741 ◆**Emma McCartney**, The Shetland Arts Trust, Shetland. Tel: 01595 694001 ◆**Helen Hale**, Village Hall Touring, Salisbury Tel: 01722 434307 ◆**Tim Harris**, Village Ventures, Nottinghamshire Tel: 0115 977 4289 ◆**Bob Butler**, Village Voice, Beaford Arts Centre, Devon Tel: 01805 603201 ◆**Roger Werner**, Villages in Action, Devon Tel: 01363 773660 ◆**John Laidlaw**, Live & Local, Warwickshire & Staffs. Tel: 01203 713550 ◆**Katie Milledge**, Vale of White Horse District Council, Oxon. Tel: 01235 531039 ◆**Jenefer Lowe**, Cornwall County Council Rural, Cornwall. Tel: 01872 322000 ◆**Nicky Duirs**, Cheshire Arts Service, Chester Tel: 01244 602836

AWARDS RECEIVED

National Lottery

Blast Theory £83,912, for the purchase of a van and computer and video equipment; Dance Umbrella £58,457, for purchase of office equipment; International Workshop Festival £32,094, to produce videos and CD-ROMs; The Junction, Cambridge £474,000 towards redevelopment; The Kosh £99,859, for the purchase of a van and technical equipment; Scarlet Theatre £73,379, to purchase a van, computers, lighting and stage equipment.

AWARDS AND COMMISSIONS OFFERED

ACE Dance & Drama
Development Funds

Offer a Drama Projects & Small Scale Touring Subsidy to fund provision of high quality contemporary work and revivals to small venues. Deadline for application is March 1 '98. Details: ACE, 14 Great Peter Street, London SW1P 3NQ. Tel: 0171 333 0100.

Baring Foundation Small
Project Fund

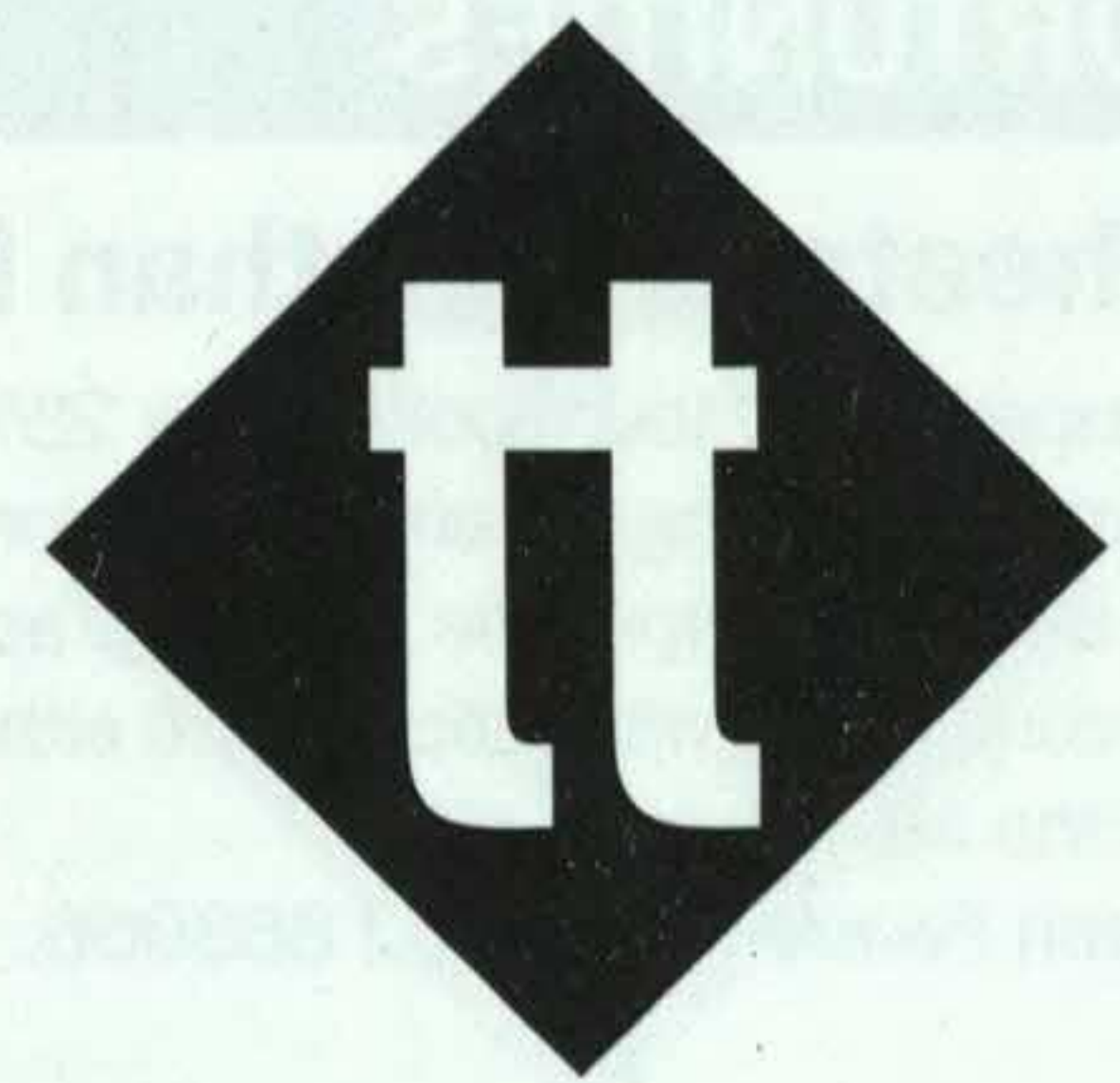
Offer grants between £500-£5,000 towards the costs of small-scale arts events and projects in education or the community across all art forms. Details: The Baring Foundation, 60 London Wall, London EC2M 5TQ.

Interactive Drama Awards

Are available from the Microsoft Network to small teams, writers, artists, multimedia and web developers to explore the potential of on-line fiction and drama. Entry forms and details available from: <http://www.uk.msn.com/drama>

North West Arts Board
Networking Bursaries

Provides funding for networking and creative development for individual artists of African, Afro-Caribbean, Chinese and South Asian descent and representative arts organisations to contribute towards the cost of attending an event or training course. Details: Paulette Brien or Paulette Clunie on 0161 834 6644.



total theatre

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

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

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

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

OPPORTUNITIES

Attic Theatre's Jonathan Kay

Seeks an experienced tour-booker on a 25% commission basis for booking UK and international performances and workshops. The successful applicant will work in conjunction with Attic Theatre either from home or in the Attic Theatre office.

Details: Sarah Peverell on 01962 863966.

Circomedia's

One Year Foundation Course in Circus, Performance & Devising Skills now leads to an RSA Diploma in Circus Skills & Physical Theatre. This may now allow students to access funding for their course fees. Details: 0117 947 7288.

The Park Dance Studio for Rent

7x10m studio with polished pine floor, good amenities and facilities from £5 per hour in London. Details: 0171 249 7141.

Doris Dancers

Are looking for four performers (including 1 percussionist) with skills in physical theatre, movement, music, visual arts and group facilitation. Experience of co-devising and grassroots activism helpful. Rehearsals begin in February and the show tours April-July 1998. Auditions will be held late January. Details: Mel on 01523 420191.

The European Meeting Open Session

Is held on Saturday January 24 at 5.00pm at BAC, London. Organised by The Meeting Point and the L'Academie Europeenne Des Arts du Geste, The European Meeting brings together eighteen of Europe's most interesting artists to meet and work together for a week in January. They will explore the relation of the body, movement and gesture to public space. The open session provides an opportunity for the public to view the results of the week's work, as well as to participate in an open discussion with the artists and organisers.

Details: 0171 978 4200.

Hat Fair Fringe

Invites innovative theatre performers and companies to appear at the 1998 festival between 1-10 July in Winchester.

Details: Sarah Peverell on 01962 863966 or Email: sarah@attico.source.co.uk

Hydra

Are presenting live art events in London during February and April and are seeking proposals from artists working in performance, installation, sound, video, film, images and objects.

Details: Send s.a.e. to hydra, 58a Netherwood Road, London W14 0BG.

International Theatre Institute, Belgium

Would like to hear from companies, institutions or individuals planning to celebrate the centennial of Etienne Decroux. An exchange of contemporary interpretation of Decroux' work is sought.

Details: Jenny Roels, ITI Flemish Centre, Berouw 55, 9000 Gent, Belgium. Tel: +32 9 225 4418. Fax: +32 9 337 5345.

Kaizen

Is a new Manchester-based forum to exchange and develop performance praxis under the direction of Rivca Rubin, formerly of Physical State International. Over the next two years, Kaizen will produce a series of pilot projects beginning with The Changing Room, a four day training forum which will take place in the North West of England from 23-26 April '98. Details: PO Box 19, Winsford CW7 2AQ. Tel: 01606 863845.

The London Butoh Network

Is a new membership organisation established in August 1997 to promote and coordinate Butoh-related activities in London.

Details: Marie Gabrielle Rotie, 7 Trinity Rise, London SW2 2QP. Tel: 0181 674 1518 or Susan Kozel on 0171 607 6490.

North West Arts

Offer media training days and PR surgeries for organisations who require support in running their press strategies. Details: Rachel Wallace or Sue Bradburn on 0161 834 6644.

Rehearsal Space

Available from Artsadmin at Toynbee Studios, Aldgate East, London. Prices from £25 per day. Also office space to let.

Details: Gill Lloyd or Helen Ugwu on 0171 247 5102. Email: all@artsadmin.co.uk

Revolution '98

Is a major series of exhibitions, entertainments and events produced in association with the 9th International Symposium for Electronic Arts to be held in Manchester in September/October 1998. Proposals for new or existing work in performance are invited, for further information contact: Revolution 98, FACT, Bluecoat Chambers, School Lane, Liverpool L1 3BX. Tel: 0151 709 2663. Email: isea@fact.co.uk

Scarabeus

Are still looking for three experienced performers (M/F) with movement, dance, climbing/abseiling, aerial work and stilt skills for Arboreal-Living in Trees their forthcoming large-scale outdoor performance. They also seek a production manager to start in mid February. Auditions in February, rehearsals March/April, touring May-October.

Send CV and photo to Scarabeus, The Power Station, Coronet Street, London N1 3AF. Tel: 0171 739 7494.

South West Arts

Are currently updating their directory of dance, mime and new circus resources. If you know of any resources in the South West which are currently unlisted please telephone Clare Frank, Information Adviser on 01392 218188 or Email: clare.frank.swa@artsfb.org.uk for an inclusion form.

The Yard

Is a new performance and rehearsal space based in the Work for Change Centre in Hulme, Manchester. Rates are £6 per hour for rehearsal space. Details: Liz, Work for Change, 41 Old Birley Street, Manchester, Hulme M15 5RF. Tel: 0161 232 9801.

Zap Productions

Launch the National Street Arts Festival with a £400,000 National Lottery grant. The Festival will run between May and September 1998 and combine the following six highly successful festivals: Streets of London, Streetfeast in West Midlands, Streets of the South, Streets of Brighton and Streets of the East Midlands. Over the next three years the National Street Arts Festival will commission a substantial amount of new work and develop more festivals and street art events throughout the UK. Details: Dave Reeves, Festival Director or Tim Bostock, Development Director, Zap Productions, 7a Middle Street, Brighton BN1 1AL. Tel: 01273 821558. Fax: 01273 206960. Email: office@zapuk.com

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

HAT FAIR STREET PERFORMERS FESTIVAL

Administrator: Sarah Peverell, Attic Theatre Company, 86 High Street, Winchester SO23 9AP. Tel: 01962 863966. Fax: 01962 855334. Email: sarah@attico.source.co.uk

THIN LINE THEATRE COMPANY

Company Administration: c/o Shyan, 5 Belmont, Shrewsbury SY1. Tel: 01743 243755. Mobile: 0976 166448. Tour Booking: c/o Richard Talbot, 5 Parrotts Grove, Coventry CV2 1NQ. Tel: 01203 362210.

WEBSITES

CHISENHALE DANCE SPACE

<http://www.chisenhale.demon.co.uk>

WORLD OF MIME THEATRE

<http://www.geocities.com/Broadway/5222/>
Email: toureiffel@geocities.com

YORKSHIRE DANCE CENTRE

admin@yorkshiredance.org.uk

VIRUS WARNING

If you receive either of the two following Emails which begin JOIN THE CREW and PENPAL GREETINGS! erase them immediately as they could do considerable damage to your hard drive.

PUBLICATIONS

The Arts Matter

Is published by the Royal Society for the Encouragement of the Arts, Manufacturers and Commerce, and is based on lectures from the RSA's influential lecture series. It is available for £12.95 from bookshops or to order from Gower on 01252 331551.

Choreographers & Composers Exchange - A Users Guide

Is produced by the Royal Festival Hall and The Place Theatre as a model for research and training opportunities for composers and choreographers. Copies are available free from Dance Services at The Place on 0171 383 3524. There is an accompanying video at £8 +VAT available from The Video Place on 0171 383 0516.

Contact Connection

Is the UK newsletter for contact improvisation available by subscription only at £6 for four issues. Issue 10 contains articles on the CI25 celebrations in Ohio and the 12th European Contact Improvisation Teachers Exchange in Italy.

Details: Jackie Adkins, Cecilia Road, London E8 2ER. Tel: 0171 241 3664.

Cultural Trends

Is the UK's leading source of statistical information on the arts and provides information and analysis to policy-makers and practitioners. It is researched, written and produced by the Policy Studies Institute and is relaunched in 1998 with broader coverage. Details: Carfax Publishing Ltd on 01235 401550.

Directory of Performing Arts Venues, Promoters & Festivals in Yorkshire & Humberside 1997/98

Gives details of over 300 performance venues including programming details, auditorium and stage dimensions, audience facilities and access for the disabled. It is available for £5 from YHA's Information Unit on 01924 455555.

Drama Trauma

Links the impact of trauma on recent political projects in performance and video and is by Timothy Murray of Cornell University. Available for £15.99 from bookshops or to order direct from Routledge on 0171 583 9855.

Getting On-Line: An Internet Guide for Arts Organisations

Is published by the ten RABs and explains the basics of how to get on-line, the tools of the Internet, case studies of how some arts organisations are making use of the Internet and a list of Internet service providers. It is available free from your local RAB information department.

The Grotowski Sourcebook

Is the first volume to provide a comprehensive overview of the phases of Grotowski's multi-faceted career and assembles material that has appeared in diverse publications and languages over a period of more than thirty years. It is edited by Richard Schechner and Lisa Wolford and costs £12.99 from bookshops or to order direct from Routledge on 0171 583 9855.

Introduction to the Application Process for the Arts in England

Is a leaflet produced by ACE which outlines all the current Arts Lottery schemes available from YHA Information Unit on 01924 455555.

The Mentoring Scheme for Women Writers

Is a report on a pilot training project for playwrights and performance writers by John Deeney of the University of Ulster, published by the New Playwrights Trust. Details: 0171 284 2818.

Re-Dressing the Canon

Combines performance criticism and theory to consider what theatre can teach us about the performance-like qualities of gender. It is written by Alisa Solomon and costs £12.99 from bookshops or to order from Routledge on 0171 583 9855.

Routledge Performance Studies Catalogue

For a free copy of the current catalogue contact Sam Guyatt, Routledge, Freepost, Andover, Hants. SP10 5BR.

Signed Performances in Theatre

Is the national body for promoting sign language performances and has produced five new publications outlining national research into the provision, practice, and audience of sign language interpreted performances for the deaf.

Details: Sarah Sills, PO Box 6028, London SE22 8ZN. Tel: 0181 202 1731.

The Silver Guide

Is a new Arts Council publication and is a basic step by step guide to marketing for touring companies with a few resources. It contains easy to follow worksheets and is aimed at small organisations without a marketing officer. Available free of charge from Sophie Heppel at ACE on 0171 333 0100.

World of Theatre

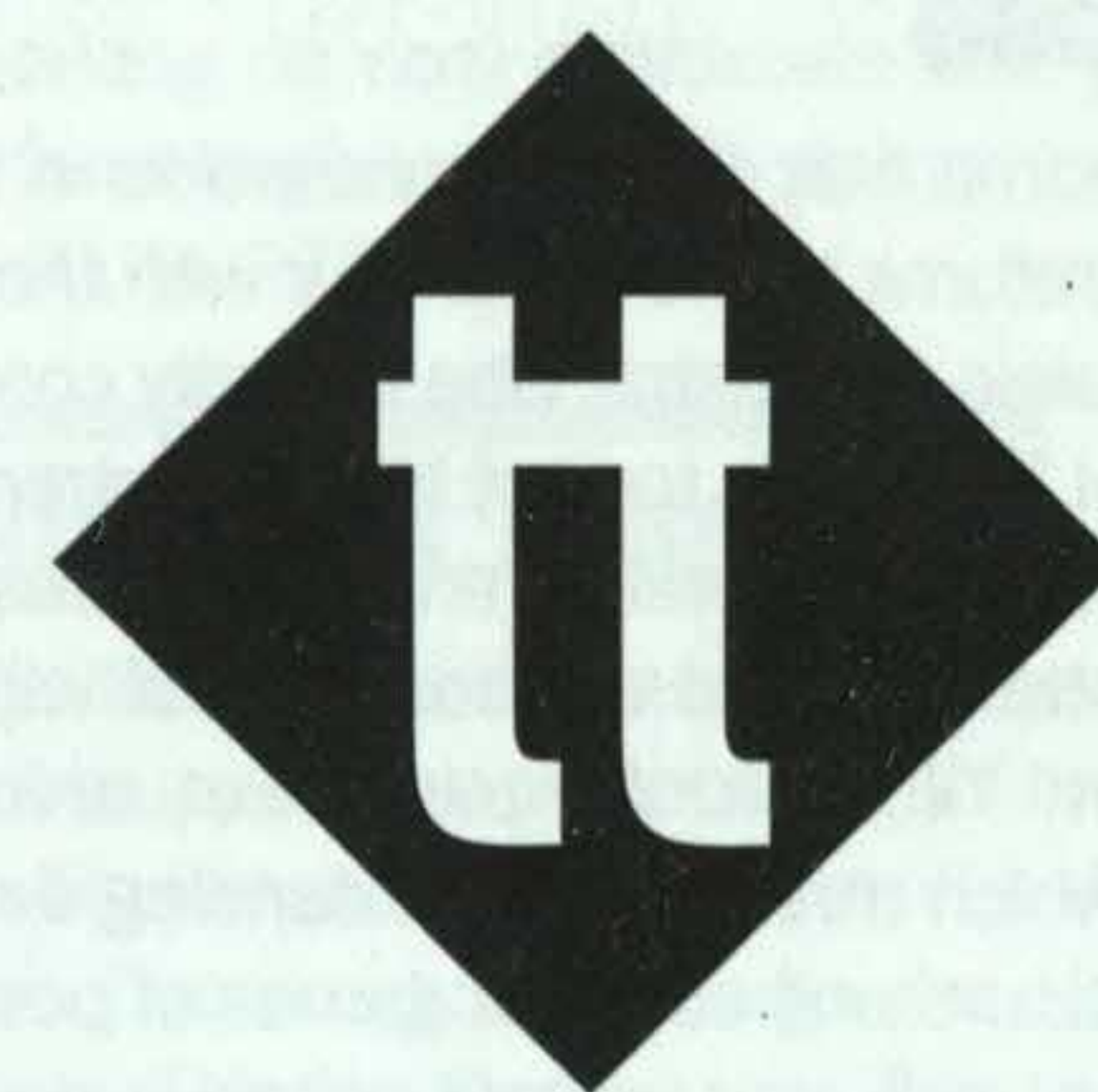
Is published by the International Theatre Institute and contains articles from over fifty countries including descriptions of theatre seasons and ITI activities. It is available at 150FF per copy from ITI General Secretariat, UNESCO, 1 rue Miollis, 75732 Paris Cedex, France. Tel: +33 45 68 26 50.

World Theatre Directory

Is now available in its fourth edition and contains information on International theatre Institute Centres, main theatres, festivals, national theatre organisations, teaching and research institutions throughout the world. It is available at 200FF per copy from ITI General Secretariat, UNESCO, 1 rue Miollis, 75732 Paris Cedex, France. Tel: +33 45 68 26 50.

Writing Live

Is an investigation of the relationship between writing and live art and is produced by New Playwright's Trust, edited by John Deeney, and with a chapter from Ruth Ben Tovin. It is available for £10 from New Playwright's Trust on 0171 284 2818.



total theatre

FREE LISTINGS SERVICE**Total Theatre members only**

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

Listings can be placed in:

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

DISPLAY ADVERTISING**Advert Cost**

Size	Members	Non-Members
Full page	£150	£270
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Size	Rotation	Width x Depth
Full page	-	188 x 269
Half page	landscape	188 x 129
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Quarter page	landscape	188 x 64
Quarter page	portrait	89 x 129
Eighth page	landscape	89 x 64

TOTALLY BAGGED MAILING SERVICE

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Number	Members	Non-Members
650 leaflets	£65	£95
900 leaflets	£90	£125

ADVERT COPY DEADLINES

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

Amy Rose

Is ready to admit that she lives and works in the UK, though she returns to the US to tour with the Ladies Auxiliary Ukulele Orchestra. She recently completed a successful European tour of her solo street show *Rogue Angel*, and is currently engaged in *Suspicious Moves*, a lottery-funded devised project with Mark Vis and Kim Tilbrook. A new street animation, *Spores*, in which three reluctant dancing dervishes engage in absurd and complex games of post-modern street draughts and upward spirals is now available for touring. Details: Amy Rose on 0117 942 3212. Email: gg.amyrose@netgates.co.uk or Carla Kogelman on +31 33 465 2660.

Big Bubble Theatre Company

Are currently working on their new production *Big Bubble's Dracula* for touring this Spring. They are also working on a new production for Autumn/Winter 1998 which is being commissioned by The Old Town Hall Arts Centre, Hemel Hempstead. Details: 01462 681916. Email: bigbubble@mail.enterprise.net

Blast Theory

Is a group of artists who make live events which fuse theatre, dance and new technology. They recently received a national lottery grant which will provide them with a mobile multimedia resource suitable for workshops, residencies, rehearsals and performance. They are available for education and outreach work where computers and video are integrated with theatre and dance. Details: Cinzia Hardy on 0171 375 0885. Email: blasttheory@easynet.co.uk

Boundary Runners

Is a multi-disciplinary forum of young and diverse talent, spearheaded by Jami Quarrell and Aidan Treays, which incorporates dancers, choreographers, aerialists and contemporary circus performers with visual artists, film makers and musicians. Last November they launched the project with *Concentric*, an evening of performances at The University of London Union. They are planning a series of work which will lead towards a grand Millennium spectacular. Details: 0171 252 8525.

Dell'Arte Players Company

Will be bringing their new production, *Mad Love*, back to Europe this year, following a successful European tour in 1997. The company are based in Blue Lake, California and the show is performed by co-artistic directors Joan Schirle and Donald Fields and is directed by managing artistic director, Michael Fields. Details: +707 668 5663.

Doris Dancers

Are a new group that combine world folk theatre arts in an interactive outdoor setting. They are touring their debut show *Mrs Mop's Medicine* in late Spring and Summer 1998. This will be a series of promenade performances made in collaboration with local people. It draws inspiration from local community and land issues, blending physical,

musical and visual elements in a dynamic fusion. Each show will end with a tree-planting celebration. Details: Mel on 01523 420191.

Dragonfly Mime

Comprises Katie Haines de Viere and Mark Turner who met at Centre Selavy in France last year. They have recently completed their training with the Ecole de Mime Corporel Dramatique, London and have since toured English summer camps with their shows which incorporate mime, mask, puppetry, dance and physical theatre. They are currently creating work in New Zealand and Indonesia. Details: 0171 561 1021 or +00 64 476 9162.

Du Birque Theatre (formerly Cirque de Birque)

Was founded in 1996 by Flick Fernando who is currently working on a show for winter 1998. Flick will be touring as usual around festivals in the UK and Europe during the Summer with her street show *If the Bag Fits* and she also collaborates with Strangelings on *Beatrice & Mr Bilge*. Details: 0171 278 4604 or 0956 659373 (mobile).

Dynamic New Animation

Have just completed a series of workshops in puppetry and animation for practitioners and are planning a similar workshop series this Spring. Course tutors included Gavin Glover and Liz Walker of Faulty Optic, Phelim McDermott of Improbable Theatre, Penny Bernard and Sue Buckmaster of Theatre Rites, Luis Boy from Norwich Puppet Theatre and Christopher Leith of The Little Angel Theatre. Watch out for the DNA Cabaret at The Spring Gardens Arts Centre, High Wycombe on March 20. Details: Adam Bennett or Rachel Riggs on 0171 794 8616. Email: DNAnimation@compuserve.com

Earth Circus Network

Is composed of groups and individuals who raise awareness of environmental and social issues through workshops, performances, information and creative action. They organise 'Moots' (week long gatherings in the country) where members come together to share skills and support. Members receive a quarterly newsletter and the opportunity to use the network's database and voicemail service. As well as nurturing links within the membership, they are keen to forge new links with other groups to facilitate positive change and D.I.Y. action. Details: Email: ecn@kay-os.demon.co.uk

Engineers of the Imagination (WSI)

Founded in 1968 as Welfare State International, Engineers of the Imagination (WSI) are a team of artists, musicians, performers, writers and inventors based in the Lake District. Their new small-scale performance, *Wireman*, mixes acoustic music, live digital sampling and comic visual performance and will be developed over the next three years as a rolling diary responding to events as it tours. Devised and performed by brother and sister team, Daniel and Hannah Fox, the show tours the Cumbria district

in May. Following a successful bid to the National Lottery Board, refurbishment work is currently underway to create a new home for the company at Lantern House: A Centre for the Celebratory Arts. Details: Sue Gill or Dot Queen on 01229 581127.

English Eurythmy Theatre

Combine Eurythmy with physical theatre, mime, dance and music and are currently touring their new show *Kaspar Hauser-A Mystery* this Spring. Directed by Philip Beaven, the show juxtaposes scenes from the life of Kaspar Hauser with images from the 20th century and explores the opposition between child-like innocence and an evil obsession with power. They are currently rehearsing two children's shows *Mish-o Sha The Magician* and *Perseus The Gorgon Slayer* available for performance in January. Details: 01342 825051.

Foursight Theatre

Are now in their tenth year and are committed to producing a 'total' theatre through a merging of text, movement and live music. Their new show, *Naked Wedding*, is currently touring the UK. Details: 01902 714257.

Garlic Theatre

Is based in Norwich and has toured puppet and visual theatre productions in schools, arts centres and festivals both nationally and internationally. Following a successful international tour of *Rapunzel* (including six months in India), the company are currently touring their new show *George and the Dragon* to schools throughout the UK. Details: 01603 219682.

Green Ginger Animations for Street & Stage

Are just back from major successes at the World Puppet Festival in Charleville, France and a mini-tour of Norway with their latest show *Slaphead-Demon Barber*. A comic re-write of the Sweeney Todd Story, the show received rave reviews and the company have been invited to festivals in Brazil, Sweden, the Middle East, USA and Canada. Discussions are underway with the Jim Henson Foundation to produce a three week run at ps122 in New York next Autumn. Details: Chris on 0117 942 3212.

Improbable Theatre

Are currently touring *70 Hill Lane* and perform at ps122 in New York and Nostos Theatre in Athens during January. They are also developing and rehearsing their new production *Lifegame* which will open at the Brewery, Kendal on March 20 before touring nationally. Their impro show *Animo* can also be seen at certain venues around London in February/March. Details: 0171 978 4200.

Jonathan Kay

Will be touring Australia and North America in 1998 with his one-man show *Fool!* He appears at the Adelaide Fringe Festival in February and March, The Orlando Fringe in April and the Fringe Theatre

Edmonton in August followed by Victoria Fringe and Vancouver Theatre Festival in September. Jonathan has recently completed a successful run of shows at The Spitz in London and is continuing to run his unique 'Fooling' workshops not only to practitioners and students but to corporate and creative trainers as well. He is currently offering '21st Century Shakespeare Fool' about the fool who could well have an influence on stand-up comics of the future.

Details: Sarah Peverell on 01962 863966.

Email: sarah@attico.source.co.uk

Pat Keysall

Has been awarded a research and development grant by S.E. Arts to explore new ways of incorporating mime into her combined arts approach to story-telling. She is also funded by The Chase Charity to take her shows and workshops into rural communities and is currently setting up a tour of Sussex for the Spring. In January 1997, Pat founded the East Sussex Story-Telling Society, based in Eastbourne, and having received a small lottery grant is planning a festival in Eastbourne in March 1998 in which local people as well as visiting story-tellers will take part. Details: 01323 736383.

Laffa Jaffa

Perform Suck It and See, a night of comedy, at the Canal Cafe Theatre, London from January 12 to February 16 1997. The company recently completed a London run of their show, Miss Broadmoor-Landlady to Thespians, written by Clive Hocker and performed by Penelope Solomon. Details: 0976 230346.

Leikin Loppu

Toured their double bill *After Eight & Before Nine* throughout autumn and, in December, devised a new short work with a deckchair and a suitcase to be included in a proposed seaside variety bill being promoted by Tony Liddington and the Pierotters. They continue to tour into the new year with performances at the Leicester Comedy Festival, The Square Chapel in Halifax and a short run at Jackson's Lane, London. In March the company undertake a week's residency at the Tate Gallery, St Ives. Details: 0113 293 4485.

Mr Gilmore

Begin the year with their devised production *The Rhyme of the Modern Mariner*, a peculiar fairy tale about a clown who travels to Mars. The show features live acoustic music and a soundtrack of faked documentary information about a manned mission to Mars. Details: Chris Michael on 01865 249450.

Momentary Fusion

Is currently preparing for an extensive international tour in 1998 and will be premiering a new body of work, *Bliss*, in February 1999. They welcome Salette Gressett as their new administrator. Details: 0171 437 8584. Email: saletteuk@hotmail.com

Muzikansky

Specialise in new translations of texts by European playwrights, poets and novelists, using experimental

theatre techniques. They are resident at The Forum, a music venue in Tunbridge Wells and are currently researching and creating an adaptation of Selma Lagerlof's Nobel prize winning novel *The Saga of Gosta Berling* due to tour in January 1999. The company are currently rehearsing Alma Mahler, the British premiere of Francoise Lalande's text, performed by Alaknanda Samarth alongside art punk band, Unhome. Details: 01892 545792

Opera Circus

Have been nominated for a Manchester Evening News Award for Best Visiting Production for King Stag. They are touring *Cat Man's Tale* this spring and previewed *Impropria*, an improvised musical at BAC in December. In the autumn, Opera Circus visited the Georgian International Festival of Theatre with *Shameless!* Details: 0171 288 1222.

Peepolykus

Girds its loins for the spring leg of finger snapping comedy *I Am A Coffee*, touring the UK through to March and followed by trips to Singapore and Madrid. They have a new show fermenting for the 1998 Edinburgh Festival Fringe and an Autumn tour. Details: 01684 540366.

Perpetual Motion

Are currently developing a new piece *One-(the Other)* directed by Emi Slater, with specially commissioned new writing, choreographed movement, video projection and an international cast including Leticia Rua, Alan Marni and Toby Hughes. An ode to life's mavericks, *One-(the Other)* is a look at one man's search for communication in a city of ice. Some material was seen as work in progress at The Finborough with Abraxus Theatre last Summer. The show will tour in 1998 and the company are also launching a major new youth initiative all over the UK and Europe. Details: Emi Slater on 0171 483 3798.

The Right Size

Move into the West End this month with a run at the Vaudeville Theatre of *Do You Come Here Often?* Details: Natalie Steed on 0171 713 6500.

Scarlet Theatre

Perform *Double Glazing*, a free site-specific performance inspired by the work of artist Thomas Schütte at The Whitechapel Art Gallery as part of the London International Mime Festival in January. They are also planning a return of *Princess Sharon* in 1998. The company's new show, *Stranded*, is based on Ugo Betti's 'Crime on Goat's Island' and will tour the UK later this year. Gráinne Byrne will direct Linda Kerr Scott and Jane Gurnier in a tale about a well which runs dry.

Details: Marie Remy on 0181 441 9779.

Strangelings

Is a new company of statue and walkabout artistes, established 18 months ago in Holland. They have toured throughout Europe, creating strange and surreal animated statues. The company seek to combine creative mask and costume techniques with

quality of presence and movement. They are currently working on new characters and are seeking funding for a large installation statue.

Details: 0171 278 4604.

Théâtre de L'Ange Fou

Celebrate the 100th anniversary of the birth of Etienne Decroux with the presentation of their new production *Resonance/Collage sur 'La Meditation' d'Etienne Decroux* and *Passage des Hommes Sur La Terre* by Etienne Decroux for The London International Mime Festival at The Pleasance on January 23-24. Details: Steve Wasson and Corinne Soum on 0171 607 0561/0171 272 8627.

Thin Line Theatre Company

Recently premiered *The Shower Scene* inspired by Hitchcock's *Psycho*. The production is fully plumbed; featuring a working shower, lots of water and plenty of stomach-churning surprises. Thin Line are busy spending their hard-earned lottery cash on a video camera and projector which they put to inventive use in the workshop which accompanies the current show. *The Shower Scene* tours throughout 1998. Details: Richard Talbot on 01203 362210.

Told By An Idiot

Perform *Don't Laugh, It's My Life* at BAC as part of The London International Mime Festival between January 14 and February 1. The company's latest production was commissioned by smalltalk (The Dorset Theatre Promoter's Consortium) and has been touring since October. Details: 0171 978 4200.

Triangle

Are currently devising *The Tally Man*, a performance documentary in collaboration with Richard Talbot. The company are looking for a musician, ideally a retired organ player, to take part. Carran Waterfield will be writing in rehearsal with Bare Essentials Youth Theatre throughout the Spring in preparation for *Echoes & Omens* a project about prejudice. She also begins pre-production work with Debbie Issitt for the feature film of *The Woman Who Cooked Her Husband*, in which she plays Laura. Analysis of Carran's work has just been published in *New Theatre Quarterly* and will also feature in the *Women's Theatre Journal* in March. Details: 01203 362210.

Twisted Stocking

Toured the UK last Autumn with *Exposure*, a thriller in which two detectives hunt a missing person in dangerous mountain terrain. Angela Bullock, Jillian Wallis and Christy Evans perform under the direction of Katie Normington. Details: 0181 318 2218.

The Weird Sisters

Are currently touring their Edinburgh Fringe show *It's Uncanny!*, a mesmerising comic journey of witches and women from birth to immortality, featuring ingenious physical transformations, sharply observed dialogue, masks, music, mime and a source of unforgettable characters. The company are also running performance workshops in schools and colleges. Details: 0171 328 7039.

PERFORMANCES

Big Bubble Theatre Company BIG BUBBLE'S DRACULA

Details: 01462 681916

MARCH

- 13 Kenneth More Theatre, Ilford
- 17-18 The Old Town Hall Arts Centre, Hemel Hempstead
- 19 Ellesmere College Theatre, Shropshire
- 20-21 Key Theatre, Sudbury
- 27 Windsor Arts Centre

Bouge-de-la TIME FLYING

Details: 0181 348 0203

JANUARY

- 28 Portsmouth Arts Centre
- 29 Weymouth College (tbc)
- 31 Barbican Theatre, Plymouth

FEBRUARY

- 6-7 Rondo, Bath
- 11 Northbrook Theatre, Exeter College
- 12 Marlborough College
- 13 Bridport Arts Centre
- 14 Hoxton Hall, London
- 16-19 Workshops, Oxford
- 20-21 Pegasus Theatre, Oxford
- 26 The Roadmender, Northampton
- 27 Forest Arts Centre, New Milton

MARCH

- 2-5 Esher College Residency
- 6 Riverhouse Barn, Walton on Thames
- 7 Fairfield Arts Centre, Basingstoke
- 12 Ashcroft Arts Centre, Fareham
- 18 The Hawth, Crawley
- 19 Yvonne Arnaud, Guildford
- 20 Bonnington Theatre, Nottingham

Derevo RED ZONE

Details: 0181 348 0203

JANUARY

- 10-14 The Purcell Room, London
- 16-17 The Arts Centre, University of Warwick, Coventry
- 21 Old Town Hall Arts Centre, Hemel Hempstead
- 23 The Gantry, Southampton
- 29 Merlin Theatre & Arts Centre, Frome
- 30-31 Gardner Centre, Brighton

FEBRUARY

- 3 Phoenix Arts, Leicester
- 4 The Roadmender, Northampton

English Eurythmy Theatre KASPAR HAUSER - A MYSTERY

Details: 01342 825051

JANUARY

- 16 Glencraig Community Theatre, Belfast
- 18 Mourne Grange Village, Kilkeel, Co. Down
- 21 Ochil Tower School, Auchterarder, Perth.
- 23 Edinburgh Steiner School
- 25 Botton Village Community, Danby, N.Yorks.
- 27 St Christopher's School, Clifton, Bristol
- 29 Folly Arts Centre, Hereford
- 30 Grange Village Community, Newnham, Glos.

FEBRUARY

- 2 Coleg Elidyr, Rhandirmwyn, Llandoverly

- 5 The Mount Community Theatre, Wadhurst, Kent
- 13 Michael Hall Theatre, Forest Row, E.Sussex
- 20-28 Germany

MARCH

- 1-30 Switzerland, Austria, Italy

Forced Entertainment PLEASURE

Details: 0114 275 7727

JANUARY

- 15-17 The Workstation, Sheffield
- 20-31 ICA, London

FEBRUARY

- 3 Alsager Arts Centre, Stoke on Trent
- 5 mac, Birmingham
- 6-7 Pegasus Theatre, Oxford
- 10-11 Gulbenkian Theatre Studio, Newcastle upon Tyne
- 19-21 Chapter, Cardiff
- 24-25 Arena Theatre, University of Wolverhampton

Graeae TWO

Details: 0181 348 0203

MARCH

- 5-7 South Hill Park, Bracknell
- 10-14 Jacksons Lane, London
- 20-21 Cambridge Drama Centre
- 25 Artezium, Luton
- 26 Harlow Playhouse
- 27 The Stables, Hastings
- 28 The Hawth, Crawley
- 31-1 Live Theatre, Newcastle

APRIL

- 4 The Arts Centre, Havant
- 6-19 Oval House, London

Green Ginger SLAPHEAD - DEMON BARBER

Details: 0117 942 3212 or +00 31 33 465 2660

JANUARY

- 13-23 Netherlands & Belgium

MARCH

- 5-13 Netherlands & Belgium

APRIL

- 2-3 St Donats Arts Centre, S.Glam.

Hoipolloi DEAD ON THE GROUND

Details: 0181 348 0203

FEBRUARY

- 24-25 Arts Centre, Norwich
- 26 Northbrook Theatre, Worthing
- 27 Bryanston Arts Centre, Blandford

MARCH

- 4 Artezium, Luton
- 6-7 The Wolsey Studio, Ipswich (tbc)
- 10-11 The Rondo, Bath
- 12 The Arts Workshop, Newbury
- 13 Yvonne Arnaud, Guildford
- 18-21 South Street, Reading
- 20-22 UEA, Norwich (tbc)
- 23-30 Pleasance, London

Hoodwink HOODWINK

Details: 01703 787130

JANUARY

- 17 Spring Garden Arts Centre, High Wycombe
- 24 The Square Chapel Arts Centre, Halifax
- 31 Forest Arts Centre, New Milton

FEBRUARY

- 12-14 Harrogate Theatre (tbc)

Jonathan Kay IT'S AN O-KAY WORLD

Details: 01962 863966

FEBRUARY

- 6 New Studio Theatre, Quay Arts Centre, Isle of Wight

Leikin Loppu AFTER EIGHT & BEFORE NINE

Details: 0113 293 4485

JANUARY

- 7-9 Camden People's Theatre, London
- 17 The Gate at Goole
- 23-24 Theatre in the Mill

FEBRUARY

- 7 Newcastle Playhouse Studio (British Dance Platform)
- 10 The Place, London (Resolution!)
- 17 Accrington & Rossendale College, Rawtenstall
- 20 Jackson's Lane, London

MARCH

- 2-7 Rural North Yorkshire Tour
- 25 Falmouth Arts Centre, Cornwall
- 26 St Austell Arts Centre, Cornwall
- 27 Bodmin Community School, Cornwall

Mr Gilmore THE RHYME OF THE MODERN MARINER

Details: 01865 249450

JANUARY

- 20-24 The Old Fire Station, Oxford
- 31 Windsor Arts Centre

Muzikansky ALMA MAHLER

Details: 01892 545792

MARCH

- 1-12 The Forum, Tunbridge Wells

Nola Rae MOZART PREPOSTEROSO!

Details: 0181 444 6248

FEBRUARY

- 13 King's Lynn Arts Centre
- 19 Trinity Arts Centre, Tunbridge Wells
- 23 Eastbourne Arts Centre
- 24 Old Town Hall, Hemel Hempstead
- 26 The Theatre, Chipping Norton
- 27 Hope Centre, Bristol

MARCH

- 4 South Street Arts Centre, Reading
- 6 The Gantry, Southampton
- 9 Strobe Theatre, Street
- 10 Exeter Arts Centre at St Lukes
- 12-14 The Drum, Plymouth

Out of Synch (aka Théâtre Decalé) DÉCALAGES: A CABARET

Details: 01273 677921

FEBRUARY

- 1 Sussex Arts Club, Brighton
- 3 The Marlborough, Brighton
- 5-6 Miskin Theatre, Dartford
- 1 The Marlborough, Brighton
- 12 The Hawth, Crawley (Beyond Words)
- 17 The Marlborough, Brighton
- 23 The Marlborough, Brighton
- 27 Dorchester Arts Centre

MARCH

- 3 The Marlborough, Brighton

- 4 Christ's Hospital Theatre, Horsham
- 5 Trinity Arts Centre, Tunbridge Wells

Peepolykus I AM A COFFEE

Details: 01684 540366

JANUARY

- 15-18 The Purcell Room, London
- 29 Harlington Upper School, Luton
- 3 Sundial Theatre, Cirencester

FEBRUARY

- 3-7 New Vic Studio, Bristol
- 11 Phoenix, Leicester
- 12 The Mill, Banbury
- 13 Fairfield Arts Centre, Basingstoke
- 14 The Merlin Theatre, Frome
- 17 The College, Eastbourne
- 19 The Guildhall Arts Centre, Grantham
- 2 The Gantry, Southampton
- 21 Arts Centre, Harrow
- 24 South Hill Park, Bracknell
- 25 Nuffield Studio, Lancaster
- 26 The Met, Bury
- 27-28 Warwick Arts Centre

MARCH

- 3 Arts Centre, Eastbourne
- 4 The Drama Centre, Crediton
- 5 Parish Hall, Harberton
- 6 Village Hall, Blackawton
- 7 Village Hall, South Brent
- 1 Brandon Forest School, Swindon
- 11 Rhyn Park School, Oswestry

Sue Lee & Kosta Andrea Theatre Company SHARKS

Details: 0181 341 1863

JANUARY

- 22 The Bull, Barnet
- 28 Jellicoe Theatre, Poole
- 29-3 The Rondo, Bath

FEBRUARY

- 4 Croydon Clocktower
- 11 Jackson's Lane, London
- 13 Skelmersdale Arts Centre

Rejects Revenge DUSTY FRUIT

Details: 0151 708 8480

FEBRUARY

- 13-14 Cambridge Drama Centre
- 2-21 Blackpool Grand Studio
- 23-27 Residency Pegasus Theatre, Oxford
- 27-28 Pegasus Theatre, Oxford

MARCH

- 11 Accrington & Rossendale College, Rawtenstall
- 12 Atherstone Memorial Hall
- 13 Greig Hall, Alcester
- 14 Romiley Forum, Stockport
- 17 Bideford College Theatre (tbc)
- 18 Bridgewater Arts Centre
- 19 Bedford Corn Exchange
- 2 Forest Arts Centre, New Milton
- 21 Fairfield Arts Centre, Basingstoke
- 23-24 Everyman Theatre, Liverpool
- 25-28 Cheshire rural tour

APRIL

- 1 Radlett Arts Centre
- 2 Hawth Studio, Crawley
- 3-4 Mercury Studio, Colchester

Thin Line THE SHOWER SCENE

Details: 01203 362210

JANUARY

- 14 Wakefield Arts Centre

The Weird Sisters IT'S UNCANNY

Details: 0171 328 7039

JANUARY

22-24 Camden People's Theatre, London
29 Ashcroft Arts Centre, Fareham
30 Chichester Institute

FEBRUARY

12-13 Quay Arts Centre, Isle of Wight
22 Wimbledon Studio
26 Ways with Words Festival, Devon

MARCH

2-15 Adelaide Fringe Festival, Australia

Ylana GLUB GLUB!

Details: 0181 348 0203

FEBRUARY

12 The Rose Theatre, Ormskirk
13 The Princes Hall, Aldershot
14 Phoenix Arts, Leicester Comedy Festival (2 shows)

APRIL

20-26 Nottinghamshire Consortium
30-2 The Mercury Theatre, Colchester

FESTIVALS

Beyond Words

The Hawth, Crawley, 12 Feb - 18 Mar '98 Details: 01293 553636

FEBRUARY

12 Showcase: Cartoon Da Salvo, Fireraisers Theatre Co., Out of Synch Theatre Co. and Mass Productions
13 Yolande Snaith *Blind Faith*
20 Nigel Charnock *Human Being*

MARCH

11 The Featherstonhaughs *New Show*
19 Bouge-de-là *Time Flying*

London International Mime Festival

Various venues, London 10-25 Jan '98
Details: 0171 6375661

JANUARY

10-11 Kirsty Little *Average White Girl* (Circus Space)
10-14 Derevo *The Red Zone* (Purcell Room)
13-14 La Ribot *13 Distinguished Pieces* (ICA)
14-25 Told By An Idiot *Don't Laugh, It's My Life* (BAC)
15-17 Andrew Dawson & Jozef Houben *Quatre Mains* (ICA)
15-18 Peepolykus *I Am A Coffee* (Purcell Room)
16-18 Circus Ronaldo (Queen Elizabeth Hall)
17-18 The Punch & Judy College of Professors *Lunch with Mr Punch* (RFH foyer)
17-18 Gateway to Freedom/Strike the Man Band *Also Available in White* (The Spitz)
19-21 Les Arostiches (Purcell Room)
22-24 Pep Bou *Bufaplanetes* (Purcell Room)
22-24 Paka *Black Hole* (The Albany)
23-25 Conspiracy (The Circus Space)
22-25 Scarlet Theatre *Double Glazing* (Whitechapel Art Gallery)
23-24 Théâtre de l'Ange Fou *Resonance & Passage of Man* (The Pleasance)
24-25 Dust A *Clown Adventure* (The Spitz)

Moving Parts '98

mac, Birmingham, 12 Feb - 4 April '98
Details: 0121 440 4221

FEBRUARY

12-13 Lee & Dawes *Loop*
14 Talking Birds

19 Negative Equity *Killing Larry*
20 Bi Ma Dance Company *Chinese Takeaway*
21 Foursight Theatre X *The Rise & Fall of an Asylum Star*
26-28 The DanceXchange Ensemble *Beyond the Tutu*

MARCH

6-7 Nahid Siddiqui *Taxila*
12 Motionhouse *Faking It*
14 Volcano Theatre *After the Orgy*
20-21 Chitrleka & Company *Power & Grace*
25 Improbable Theatre *Lifegame*
27-28 Forkbeard Fantasy *The Barbers of Surreal*

APRIL

2 Wayne McGregor *Duets & Solos*
3-4 The DanceXchange Ensemble *Burning Issues*

Resolution!

The Place, London, 6 Jan-21 Feb '98
Details: 0171 387 0161

JANUARY

6 Red Rain Dance Company
9 Karin Ponties (Belgium)
10 Be Van Vark & Kollektivtanz (Germany)
15 Carol Brown
16 Le Kwatt (Germany)
17 Projecte Gallina (Spain)
20 m.e.parker
23 Diane Elshout & Frank (Netherlands)
24 Compagnie Rebecca
24 Colin Poole & Händeler
30 El Certaman Coreografico de Madrid
31 Putto & Panja (Hungary)

FEBRUARY

6 Sacré Sacrum (France)
7 Theatre Provincial Dances
21 Roses's Thoughts

Tanzplattform Deutschland 1998

Munich, 26-28 Feb '98
Details: +49 89 724 2515

VENUES

Camden People's Theatre

London
Details: 0171 916 5878

JANUARY

7-9 Leikin Loppu *After Eight/Before Nine*
10-11 Polar Theatre *Static #1*
13-14 Fevered Sleep *Orlando*
15-16 The Tell Tale Heart *The Adventure of Your Life*
17-18 Unlimited Theatre Company *No Brave World*
20-21 Gaybod Theatre *Glad to be Gay/Ludik Daisy Chain* Double Bill
22-24 The Weird Sisters *It's Uncanny*
27-31 The CPT Company *Life With A Lid On*

The Spitz

London
Details: 0181 981 6617

FEBRUARY

24-25 Wendy Houstoun & Carol Brown
Double Bill

MARCH

3-4 Ana Ponds & Steven Whinnery
Double Bill
10-11 Maxine Doyle & Jane Bennett
Double Bill
14-21 Jonzi D

WORKSHOPS

Birkbeck College

London
Details: 0171 631 6653/6687

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Blast Theory

London
Details: 0171 275 0885
19-23 January

NEW TECHNOLOGY AND PERFORMANCE

Intensive workshop in which participants will make a short piece of work using software such as Director, Soundedit 16 and Premiere. Suitable for practitioners and recent performance or art graduates.

Central Council of Physical Recreation

London
Details: 0171 828 3163

TEACHING LEADERSHIP THROUGH MOVEMENT & DANCE

Workshop in tutoring Sports Leader Awards with Hilary Wrack

JANUARY '98

28-29 Bisham Abbey, Buckinghamshire

MARCH '98

10-11 Lilleshall National Sports Centre, Shropshire

APRIL '98

1-2 University College of Ripon & York St John, Yorks.

Centre Sélavy

La Forêt de Tessé, France
6-18 April '98
Details: +33 5 45 29 65 56

COMMEDIA DELL'ARTE & THE MODERN ACTOR

Fourth international workshop: traditional masks and staging techniques for present-day performance

Dance Base

Edinburgh
Details: 0131 225 5525

ALEXANDER TECHNIQUE

With Jonathan Snell
Jan 13-March 24

TAI CHI

With Audicia Lynne Morley
Jan 13-March 24

YOLANDE SNAITH

27 March

RELEASE THROUGH THE MASK

With Ian Cameron
29 March

Dance Northwest

23-26 April '98
Details: 01606 863845

THE CHANGING ROOM

Four day training forum with Rivca Rubin of Kaizen

Expressive Arts

London
Details: 0181 374 4531
Weekend workshop: 20-21 February
Spring course: 12 March-28 May

THE ARTIST BEHIND THE MASK

Integrated arts of dance, voice, visual arts, archetypal masks, forum theatre and playback theatre with teachers Merle Van den Bosch, John Wright, Veronica Needa, Rick Zoltowski and Mojisola Abedayo.

The Hawth

Crawley, 12 February '98
Details: 01293 553636

BEYOND WORDS: SEMINAR & SHOWCASE

Free skills exchange with funding advice from Linda Lewis, administrative advice from Mary Connolly, Internet help from Stuart Buchanan and presentations from Toby Wilshire and Penny Mayes from Trestle and Grainne Byrne of Scarlet. Evening showcase from Cartoon De Salvo, Fireraisers Theatre Co., Out of Synch Theatre Co. and Mass Productions.

International Workshop Festival

London. Details: 0171 637 0712

THE WAY OF THE WARRIOR

A week of workshops and demonstrations exploring links between the martial and the performing arts, including Beijing Opera, Aikido, Kabuki, Krabi Krabong and Shaolin Kung Fu.
30 Mar-5 April

Jonathan Kay

Laurieston, Scotland. 2-9 May '98
Details: 01962 863966

THE FOOL WORKS

Intensive residential workshop

Laban Centre

London. Commences January '98
Details: 0181 694 8749

MA COMMUNITY DANCE STUDIES

London Butoh Network

London. Details: 01865 245178
or 0181 674 1518

WEEKEND BUTOH WORKSHOP

Led by Jeannie Donald.
24-25 Jan

London International Mime Festival

London. Details: 0171 6375661

ARTFUL ANARCHY

With Told By An Idiot
10-11 January '98

MIME & MASK WORKSHOPS

With John Mowat
12-16 January '98

PHYSICAL THEATRE WORKSHOPS

With John Mowat
12-16 January '98

IN SEARCH OF THE EXTRAORDINARY

With Julian Crouch (Improbable Theatre)
17-18 January '98

SCHOOL ON WHEELS

With Derevo
24 January '98

OVERSEAS

L-Albero:

International Centre for Theatrical Formation, Research & Creation

Montespertoli, Italy
Details: +39 571 60 88 91

ENERGETIC BODY

With Yves Lebreton
6-10 April '98

VOCAL BODY

With Yves Lebreton
13-17 April '98

ENERGETIC BODY, MENTAL BODY, VOCAL BODY LABORATORY

With Yves Lebreton, based on teachings of Etienne Decroux
2-27 February '98 & 2-27 March '98

Sélavy

A European Centre for learning and development, re-appraisal and rehearsal, research and exchange

Training in traditional source forms
Physical theatre, vocalisation, mask work
Exploration of contemporary resources



16-18 April 1998
Commedia dell'arte
AND THE MODERN ACTOR

4th international workshop: traditional masks & staging techniques for present-day performance

July/August 1998
African Dance
Balinese Mask

Sélavy is an organic farm in rural France
For further information contact John Rudlin
Sélavy, Grosbout, 16240 La Forêt de Tessé, France
Tel: (33) 5 45 29 65 56 Fax (33) 5 45 29 65 91
selavyjr@aol.com

Mime in Education

Guide to

«This guide focuses on the distinctive roles of mime. It sets mime firmly in the context of an enlarged view of human expressiveness and communication... and is one of the few contemporary sources of ideas and information on the uses and development of mime, not only within the arts but across the curriculum as a whole... It should prove an invaluable resource for schools and artists alike.»

Ken Robinson
Professor of Arts Education,
Inst. of Education, University of Warwick

Contents include

Mime in the National Curriculum • How to use mime • Planning your mime activity • Case studies giving examples of projects with primary, secondary and tertiary students

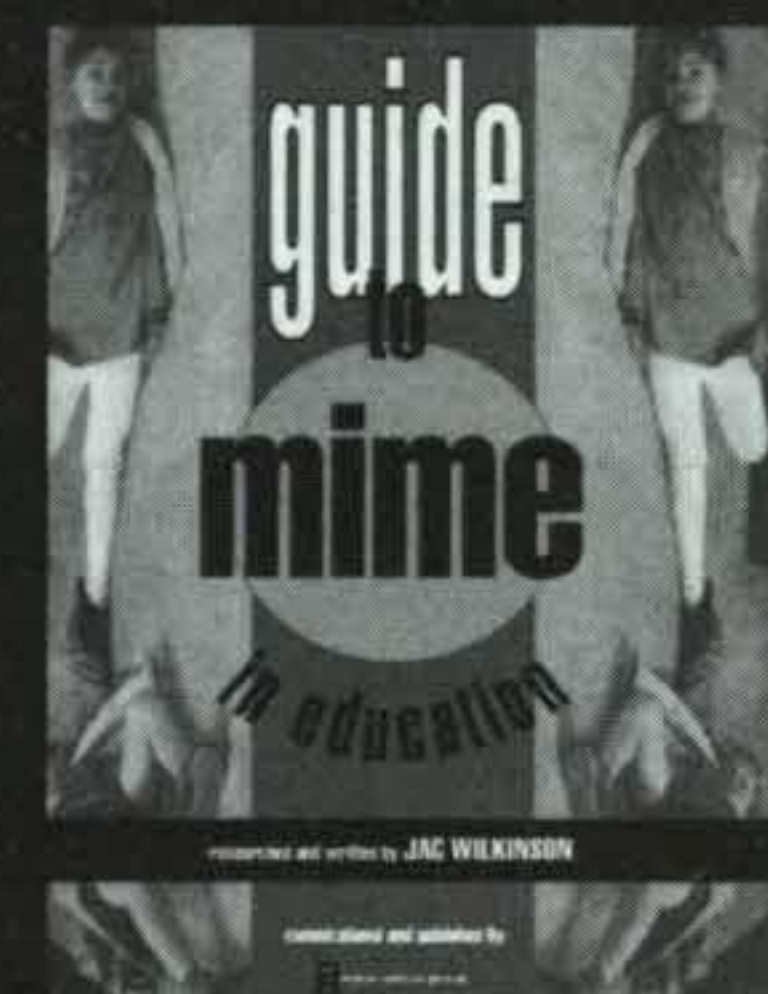
Companies include

Floating Point Science Theatre • Pat Keysell • Jane Sutcliffe • Trestle Theatre Company • Rowan Tolley • Volcano Theatre Company • Trading Faces • Triangle • Pegasus Youth Theatre

The Guide to Mime in Education costs £3.50 (plus £1.00 postage & packing). Details:

TOTAL THEATRE, AT THE CIRCUS SPACE, CORONET STREET, LONDON N1 6NU. TEL/FAX: 0171 729 7944.
E-MAIL magtotaltheatre@easynet.co.uk

Total Theatre is the UK Umbrella Organisation for Mime and Physical Theatre, advocating for greater recognition and status for the Artform - raising the public profile, providing information, identifying training, community and educational needs, and supporting regional and national development.
mime action group Reg. Co. No. 3133599. Reg. Charity No. 1052358



A guide to help teachers explore the use of mime in schools and with young people.

researched and written by

JAC WILKINSON

commissioned and published by

total theatre



THE DESMOND JONES

SCHOOL OF MIME AND PHYSICAL THEATRE

The dynamic modern alternative to conventional Drama School, offering a 3-month intensive Foundation Course and a five-term Course. Spring Foundation Term begins January 12 1998 (afternoons only). Summer Foundation Term begins April 20 (afternoons only).

The course includes:

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

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

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MARCH 7-8

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

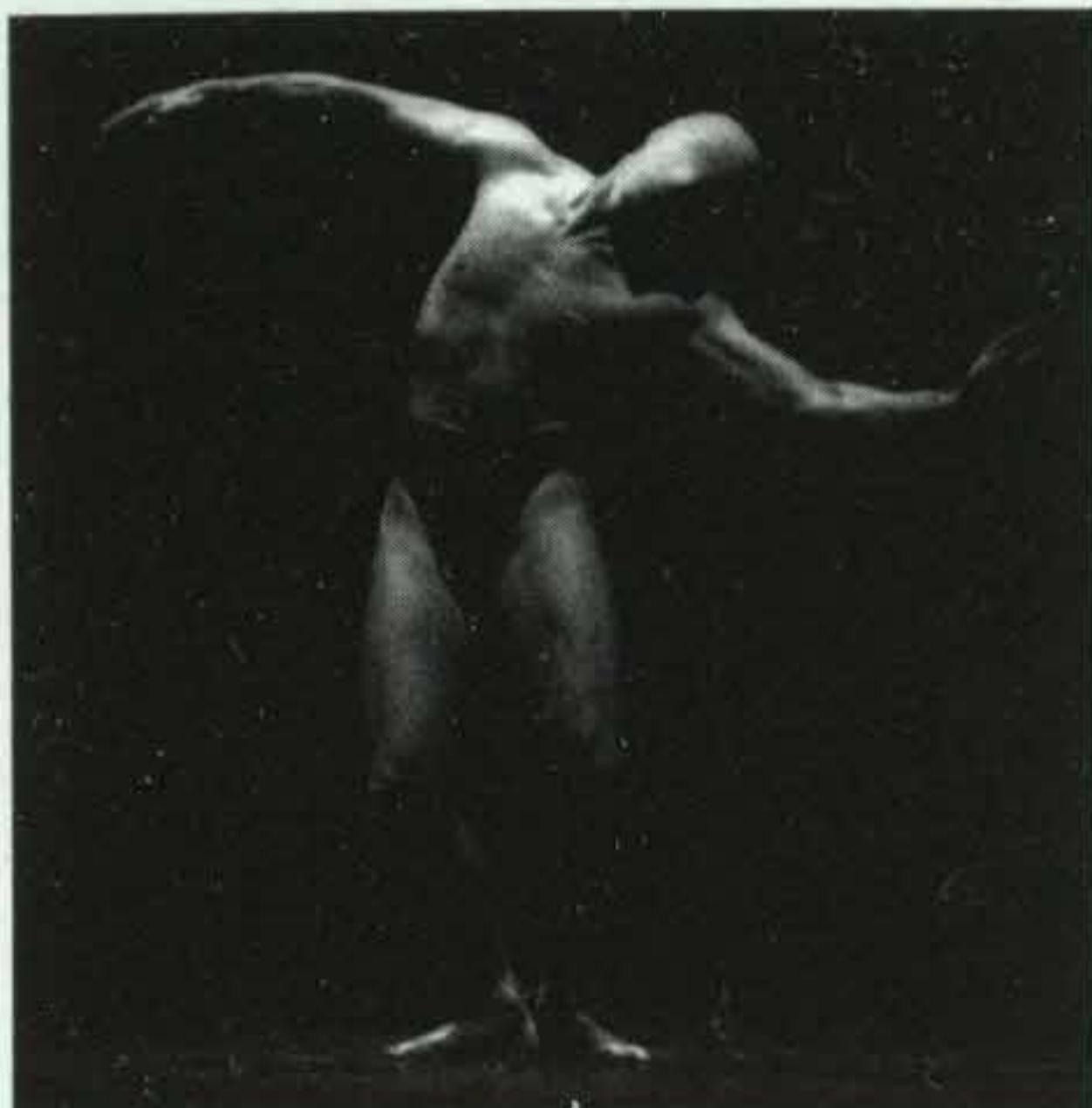
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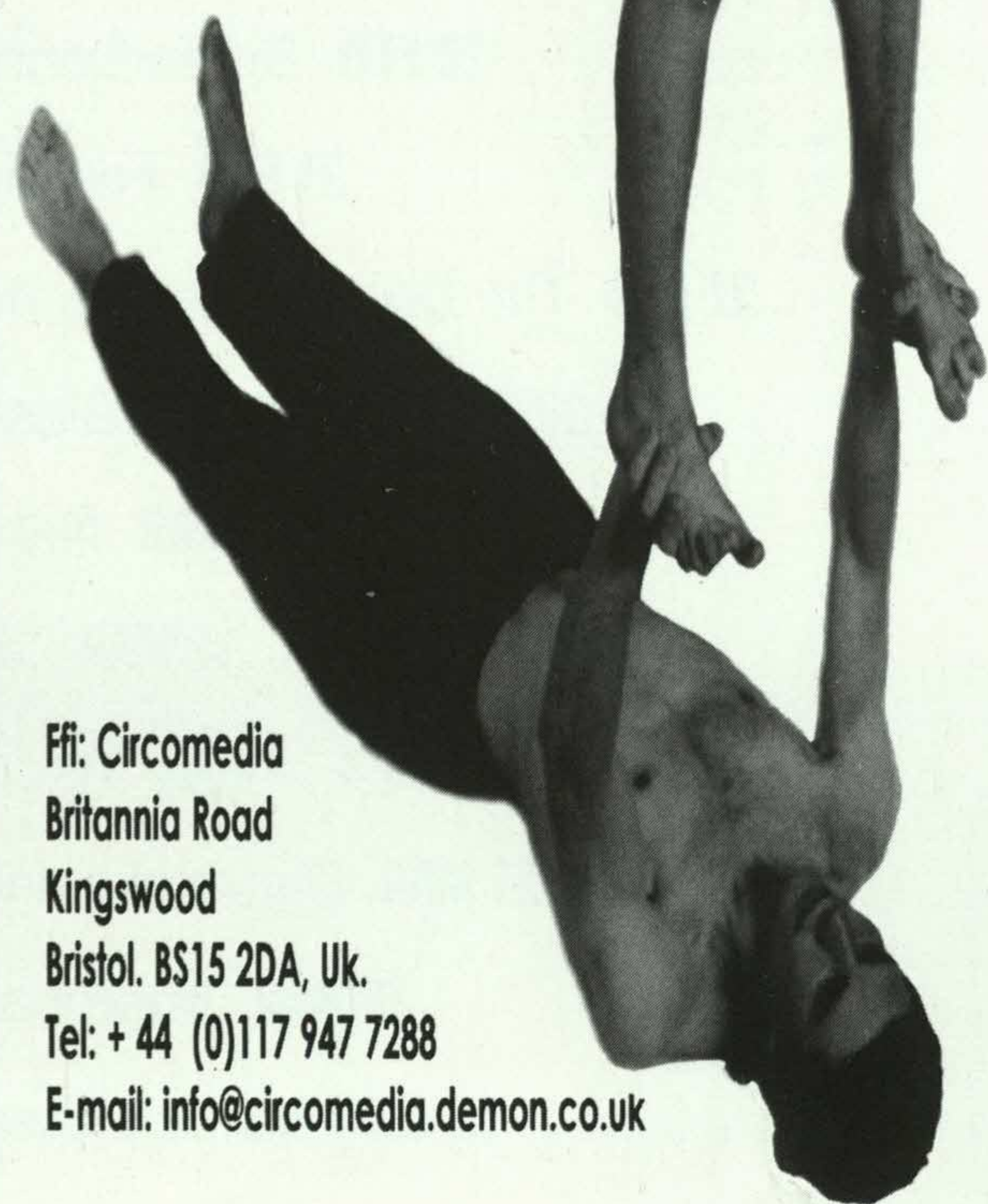
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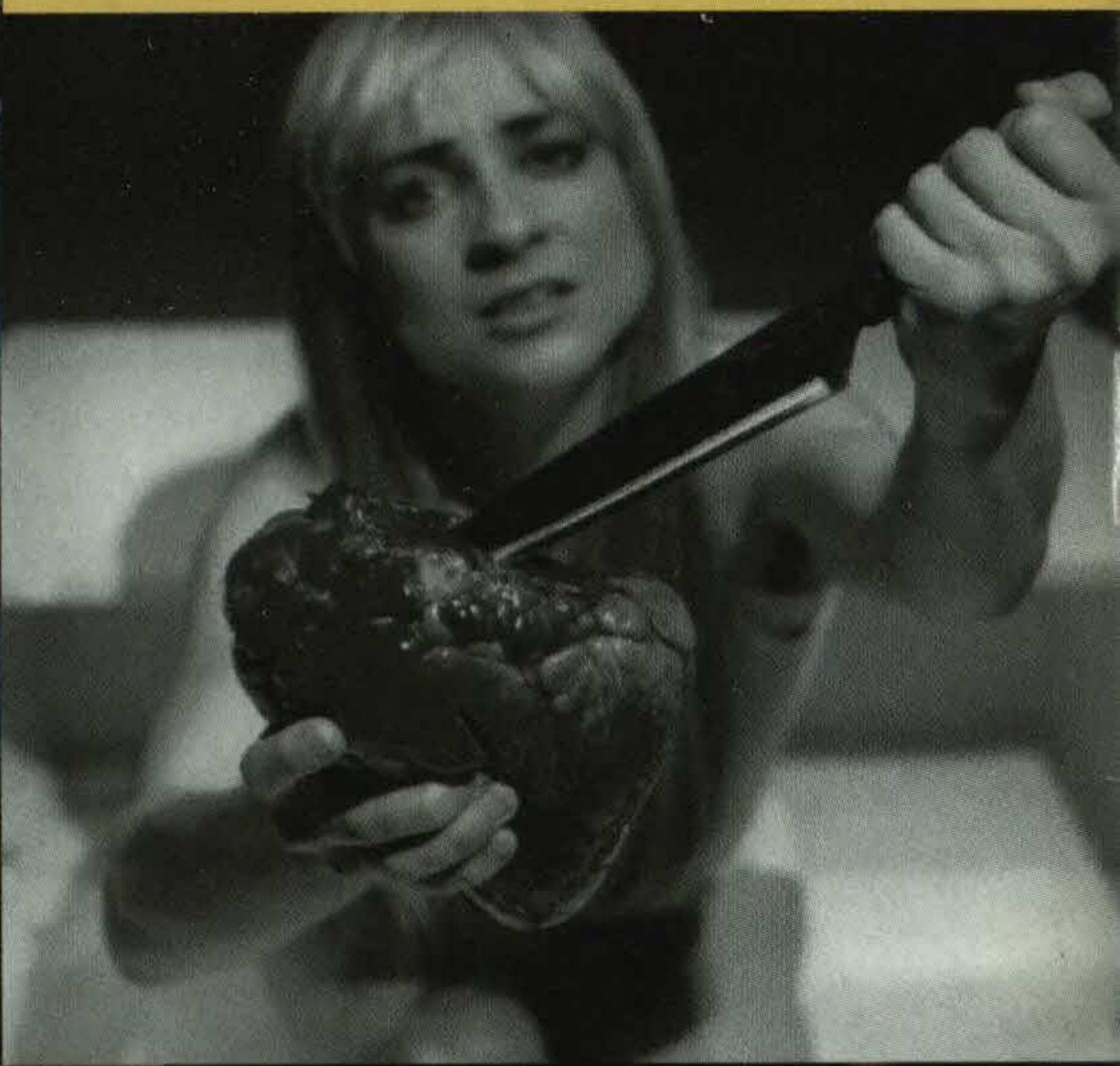
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21 FEB The DanceXchange: Beyond the Tutu

26 - 28 FEB The David Glass Ensemble

6 & 7 MAR Nahid Siddiqui

12 MAR Motionhouse

13 & 14 MAR Volcano Theatre

20 & 21 MAR Chitraleka and Company

25 MAR Improbable Theatre

27 & 28 MAR Forkbeard Fantasy

2 APR Wayne McGregor

4 APR The DanceXchange: Burning Issues

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