

elizabethan trust news



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september '74 no 12



*The
Poets of
Pleasure*

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THE AUSTRALIAN ELIZABETHAN THEATRE TRUST

NEW SOUTH WALES
Head Office
The Secretary
P.O. Box 137
Kings Cross, 2011
Telephone: 357 1200

VICTORIAN
REPRESENTATIVE:
Roger Myers
163 Spring Street
Melbourne, Victoria, 3000
Telephone: 662 2911

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN
REPRESENTATIVE:
Miss Margaret Morris
1st Floor
Central Market Building
45-51 Grote Street
Adelaide, S.A. 5000
Telephone: 51 8444

QUEENSLAND
REPRESENTATIVE:
John Devitt, O.B.E.,
S.G.I.O. Theatre
Turbot Street
Brisbane, Qld., 4000
Telephone: 21 9528

A.C.T. REPRESENTATIVE:
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C/- Australian National
University
Canberra, A.C.T., 2600

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN
REPRESENTATIVE:
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F. Alexander, C.B.E.,
77 Victoria Avenue
Claremont, W.A., 6010
Telephone: 86 3443

TASMANIAN
REPRESENTATIVE:
John Unicomb
Theatre Royal
29 Campbell Street
Hobart, Tasmania, 7000
Telephone: 34 6266

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FRIDAY 29 NOVEMBER 1974 AT 8.15 P.M.

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in Adelaide

at the Adelaide Festival Theatre

MONDAY 2 DECEMBER 1974 AT 8.00 P.M.

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at Festival Theatre Booking Office 51 8211
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Sydney

at the NSW State Conservatorium of Music
— Main Hall

FRIDAY 6 DECEMBER 1974 AT 8.00 P.M.

Australian Programme

Programme: Ian Farr — Sonata;
Richard Meale — Orenda Coruscations;
Alison Bauld — Concert for Roger Woodward
(World Premiere);
Anne Boyd — Angklung (1st complete
performance)

MONDAY 9 DECEMBER 1974 AT 6.30 P.M.

Japanese Programme

Programme: Takahashi — Chromomorphe 11 (1964)
Kai — Musik für Klavier
Takemitsu — Undisturbed Rests
Piano Distance
For Away
Film — Kwaidan (Strange Things)
(music by Takemitsu)

WEDNESDAY 11 DECEMBER 1974 8.00 P.M.

Recital

Programme: Bartok — Mikrokosmos Vol. I
Mikrokosmos Vol. II
Barraque — Sonata

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Roger Woodward records exclusively for RCA

Roger Woodward

Photo: Roger Woodward at the Chopin Memorial in Warsaw



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Supplement to Elizabethan Trust News, September 1974.

THE

WOODWARD

Dear Sirs

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 14th inst. in relation to the above matter.

I am sorry to hear that you are unable to attend the meeting on the 18th inst. I am sure that your presence would have been most valuable.

I have discussed the matter with the other members of the committee and we have decided to proceed with the plan as proposed.

I am sure that you will be satisfied with the result.

I am, Sir, very respectfully,
 Yours truly,
 J. H. [Name]

Enclosed to Eliza [Name]



MARCIA
HAYDEE

The Stuttgart Ballet, Germany's pride and the creation of South African born dancer and choreographer, John Cranko, will be in Australia during October and November. The Company will be presented in Canberra, Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney by Michael Edgley International Pty. Ltd., in association with Edgley & Dawe Attractions, J.C. Williamson Theatres Ltd., and the Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust.

The Company have triumphed all over Europe, in America and the U.S.S.R. and they come to Australia from a 'sold out' season at Covent Garden. No small part of this success has been due to the presence of Marcia Haydee, a ballerina with an exquisite classical style and great dramatic power. The London Times said "Miss Haydee has now become, what she was always destined to be, one of the great dancers of her time." She has been quoted as having the qualities of Plisetskaya, Ulanova and Fonteyn.

Also her partner, Richard Cragun, is an equally exciting dancer. There is no combination mutually more catalytic than he and Marcia, like Fonteyn and Nureyev they inspire each other, fire each others' imagination.

In 1961, John Cranko, established as a dancer and choreographer of outstanding talent, was appointed director of the ballet of the Stuttgart Opera House. He swiftly made the company internationally famous by producing an

extraordinary range and quantity of ballets which stretched and developed the capabilities of his dancers to the full.

The Company has established itself as unquestionably one of the world's leading ballet companies and is listed along with the Bolshoi, Kirov, London's Royal and the New York City Ballet. Part of Cranko's success in Stuttgart was in creating a strong company. He insisted on the foundation of a ballet school attached to the theatre; secured able assistants and gave them responsibility. His real secret lay in developing an exceptional team spirit and in his own rare ability to recognise, cherish and nurture the talents of his dancers. He also created a series of ballets which not only showed his dancers to good advantage but also had a direct and immediate appeal to audiences. He had a sense of theatre and a genuine wish to entertain people, coupled with a keen sense of humour.

Above all he was a great story-teller, he is probably unrivalled among choreographers of his day.

It is not as a creator of pure dance that Cranko was outstanding, his distinction lies in using dance to express the richness of the human spirit. He is quoted as saying "I wish to rediscover all the things that have been forgotten and then go on to find things that were never discovered before." His sudden death last year was a tragedy for the Stuttgart Ballet and the ballet world. Glen Tetley said "His gift was not only to create ballets but also to create dancers."

Dame Margot Fonteyn has said "What a magnificent contribution John made to all levels of the art of ballet in his short life. He created marvellous artists, great ballets and a fine school. They were like family and home to him, he lived for them. What a tragic loss for all of us."

The Company will be presenting three programmes while in Australia - Cranko's THE TAMING OF THE SHREW and EUGENE ONEGIN and a triple bill of Cranko's BROUILLARDS, his JEU DE CARTES or Glen Tetley's VOLUNTRIES and Act II of SWAN LAKE. Their first performance will be in Canberra on October 10.



JOHN
CRANKO

interview with STELLA ADLER

In June this year the Peter Summerton Foundation brought Miss Stella Adler and her assistant, Ron Burrows, to Australia to conduct workshops and script interpretation classes at the Bondi Pavilion Theatre. Miss Adler, an eminent teacher from America, conducts the Theatre Studio in New York and is head of the Acting Department of New York University. Her visit gave many actors a much needed shot-in-the-arm — their respect for her, and the inspiration she gave them was clearly evident during the classes and is still being expressed by those who attended. During their visit Miss Adler and Mr. Burrows talked with Margaret Leask for the Trust News.

M.L. HOW DOES THE THEATRE STUDIO IN NEW YORK OPERATE?

R.B. The Studio offers a two year, full-time training programme with two fifteen week terms during the year. Beginning actors have classes on the body and movement, voice and diction, Shakespeare, improvisation, and sight-reading which are back-up classes revolving around the technique Stella teaches. Then the students move into more specific classes such as styles in acting. After two terms of technique they move into scene classes and script interpretation. Then there is a term of play analysis and finally a class on character technique. The studio takes up to 50 students at a time — about half drop out during the course — mainly through their decision that acting is not for them. Their places are taken up by professional people who want to come back for scene classes or script interpretation.

Prospective students are auditioned at universities throughout the country and interviewed in New York before gaining admittance to the Studio. At the end of two years students can get a piece of paper diploma, but the important thing is really whether or not they can do it, and whether they have gained something from the Studio which they can take away and give to others.

M.L. HOW DO YOU SEE YOUR ROLE AS A TEACHER IN RELATION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN ACTOR?

S.A. The developing actor can be helped, can be shown the way, can be developed by paying attention to him, to his potential and to things he doesn't know. So the aim of the teacher in relation to the young actor is not to teach him to act but to help him achieve, through acting, a technique which will give him the craftsmanship to solve any artistic problem that might confront him in his work. The teacher becomes more of a guide to the student's independence, to release him, step by step, from the need to rely on anyone but himself.

M.L. RON, YOU WERE A STUDENT AT MISS ADLER'S STUDIO AND NOW YOU'RE A TEACHER WITH HER?

R.B. Yes, I went through the training process then went away to work, but I found I always came back to the Studio. The work level outside can be very bad and have strong, adverse influences on an actor. I found I couldn't stay with those influences for too long. I equate, at this stage, teaching with acting because you have to do, as an actor, what you say as a teacher. You just don't get up there and sprout words of wisdom — you have to demonstrate what you're saying. Also, in New York jobs are highly competitive — much time and energy is spent looking for work. I feel at present teaching and acting when I can and want to, is best for me. Many other graduates of the Studio go into T.V. or light, musical comedy theatre outside New York. If you choose not to leave New York you often have to wait for work.

M.L. WHAT HAVE YOU FOUND AUSTRALIAN ACTORS NEED MOST? WHAT HAVE YOU CONCENTRATED ON WHILE WORKING WITH THEM?

S.A. They stick too close to the text, they don't use any of themselves to get behind the text, to develop the character, so to speak. They don't know the background of the character and they don't particularly know why the playwright wrote the play — and that's interpretation and that's what we need — more than anything else. To interpret the text. People can act but they don't interpret.

The actor's need to study his art has become more urgent than ever. If an actor has nothing but ignorance to offer, he is a destructive force in the theatre. Today he must be equipped to represent the literature of his country and the literature of other countries. The pressures that have been put upon him by the commercial theatre are not valid to this work. An actor's work needs culture, love and care, or it will perish and destroy the actor with it.

The actor should be able to read a play and digest every aspect of it. The actor's knowledge must be just as complex as that of the director. It must be understood that an actor needs to realise fully the playwright's idea in order to broaden his performance. And the performance only becomes important to the audience when the ideas are made vital. This is, of course, also the job of the director; but interpretation of a part is, always was, and always will be the lifetime aim and responsibility of the actor.

R.B. From the actors I have seen here, I see you have a great willingness to work and not a great fear of saying, 'Well, I don't know but let me try'. At the same time I have a strong impression that the actors are waiting for someone else to do it — the director,

and RON BURROWS

or the technicians, when it doesn't really work that way. They will have to find it within themselves — they will find, as Stella says, independence. It can be hard and lonely but, in the long run, rewarding, because when you're doing it, it's all of you and that's where satisfaction comes in.

M.L. IN YOUR SCRIPT INTERPRETATION CLASSES WHAT ADVICE AND GUIDELINES DO YOU GIVE ACTORS AND DIRECTORS APPROACHING A NEW OR FAMILIAR SCRIPT?

S.A. The words in a play are skeletal; they must be given flesh, but before attempting to act a scene you must know what the words mean. You must also know the past — to find this work from the present tense to the past tense. In approaching a character ask yourself pointed questions like "Where does he live? What class does he belong to? How does he live? What does he do? What is his position in the family? What are his virtues? Does he care, suffer, believe, love? Where does he come from?" Try to understand the play not from the lines, but from what it is about. The interpretation of the play is not in the lines but in what it is about. A play teaches you a lot about yourself and your own attitude to life — make use of it.

Make the doing as simple as possible — get rid of intellectual attitudes and approaches — let the critics do that.

When working with other actors, talk when you hear, not after you've heard. Talk to your partner, don't just swap lines — acting is reacting. A thought needs energy to enter into the minds of others — don't let it drop in front of you

For Australian actors and directors — you are between two traditions — both the English and American are falling upon you. Use them both, but one at a time!

R.B. When approaching a script it's extremely important how you yourself are at the first reading. At the first reading your impressions are most important. These could be the artistic kurnell of the entire part you're creating and of the overall style the director shapes the play with. Ideally you should be completely at ease and calm inside. Your conditioning at the time of reading has a large influence on your response to the play.

After first impressions, you must build toward more specific and detailed responses. An impression is not a fact, just a feeling which then has to be substantiated. If your mood is wrong at the first reading you may tend to impose something onto the play or read something into it which is not intended. You must try to come at a play with a fresh and pure mind.

M.L. CAN YOU TALK BRIEFLY ABOUT THE CURRENT AMERICAN THEATRE SCENE?

S.A. The big stars are on Broadway — otherwise they're off-

Broadway trying out plays and being very successful. I think the tendency is to have a lot of theatre, it doesn't matter where. In any corner of the American scene there seems to be a lot going on.

Experimental groups are doing plays coming from young playwrights — plays mainly that emphasise young people's problems. They're a bit bolder, a little less glossy than the establishment theatre. There's a great variety of style and activity.

M.L. WILL YOU COME BACK TO AUSTRALIA?

S.A. Yes, certainly. I've been asked to come back and it's frightened me to death! They've been so kind and so generous in their personal attitude to me here, and the students have been so disciplined. I don't know whether that will happen again!



Photo by courtesy The Australian

STELLA ADLER

FRINGE ENGLISH IN BRISBANE

Albert Hunt is Director of Complementary Studies at Bradford Regional College of Art, England. He has scripted and directed shows such as JOHN FORD'S CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS (recently published by Methuen) and THE FEARS AND MISERIES OF NIXON'S REICH. He was brought to Brisbane for the inaugural Queensland Festival of the Arts by the University of Queensland, which appointed him Brookes Fellow in English for 1974.

Albert Hunt writes:

When I was invited to work on a Fringe production in Brisbane as part of the First Queensland Festival of the Arts last May, I had no idea what to expect, or what would be expected of me. All I knew was that someone called Richard Fotheringham had gathered together a group of people — professional actors, lecturers, teachers and students — who were willing to work on a short play that could be toured around streets, squares and shopping towns. Since all the plays I'd worked on with my own Bradford Art College Theatre Group for many years had been political, I also assumed that a political subject would be welcome — although I was warned gleefully by an English friend that Brisbane was the "Dallas" of Australia.

In thinking about the project — and in corresponding for many months with Richard Fotheringham — I reached a number of preliminary conclusions. They were mainly negative — about what I decided I couldn't do.

I felt, for example, that I couldn't, as an Englishman, go to Australia and write for Australian audiences a satire about Australia. In Bradford, we'd created a number of plays about American politics. But they were presenting our view of American politics — a "Yorkshire" view — to Yorkshire audiences. For a foreigner to breeze into Australia, have a quick look around, and then start handing out the satirical comment, seemed to me like a form of cultural imperialism. The material would have, primarily, to be provided by the group itself. In the end Richard Fotheringham himself wrote the basic script, after a lot of group discussion and improvisation.

The second feeling I had was that I couldn't go to Australia and start "teaching" people how to do street theatre. I don't know how to do street theatre — certainly not at the level I want to work at. Every show I work on, whether it's for a street, for a pub, for a conventional theatre, or for all of them, is one more experience of learning. Once I stop

learning, I'll stop doing shows. What excited me about going to Brisbane was precisely that I'd be learning how to do a show in a completely unknown situation.

The third feeling I had, very strongly, was that I mustn't try to export the texture of my own group in Bradford to a group of people I didn't know. By texture I mean the detailed manner of playing, the way the actors relate to each other, physically, their style of throwing away a joke, or speaking a potentially emotive line dead flat. This was their style, the Bradford style. It had grown out of all of us working together for several years, and was an organic thing. The superficial tricks could be taught: but what to me was good about the Bradford group was the way the actors could always come through themselves as personalities commenting, through their performance, on what they were doing. It was clear to me that this couldn't be taught — that an Australian group would have to create its own idioms drawn from the attitudes of the people involved. This would inevitably be a long process. We shouldn't get there, I felt, in a single project.

But if all these were things I couldn't do in Australia, what, in fact, did I have to offer at all? I wasn't really sure that I had anything: but there were two areas in which I felt the way we'd worked at Bradford might be helpful.

The first involved an approach to theatre through children's games. I'd first begun using children's games with adult students nearly ten years earlier when a group of us had put on a play by John Arden and Margaretta D'Arcy, *ARS LONGA, VITA BREVIS*, in Shrewsbury. Arden and D'Arcy had written the play around children's games; and at first I used the games simply as a way of getting at the script with a group of inexperienced actors. The production worked well in the end — but what was interesting was that on the way we'd found the games could be valuable in themselves. The first performance we ever created at Bradford was built round a blindfold game — and all our projects and shows have had this element of play about them. JOHN FORD'S CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS began with a group of us playing at the missile crisis as if it were a game of cowboys and Indians.

It was through the games that the people in Bradford had created the texture of their performance: the games had enabled them to discover themselves, physically, and then to use what they'd discovered. At Brisbane, I played the same games, both with the Fringe group, and with students from Queensland University. They were so popular and



Albert Hunt

The Fringe Group in action

Photographs by Van

entertaining, that eventually we took them out and played them on the main square in Brisbane, and a number of people joined in.

The other area of ideas which I found exportable was connected with metaphor. This, in its turn, was connected also with play — but the more imaginative play of "Let's pretend". So, in our shows, we'd pretended that the Cuban Missile Crisis was a western directed by John Ford; that Wilson, in his first period of Labour Government, was a star in a British war film, leading the retreat to Dunkirk and claiming every step backwards as an advance; and that Hitler, in his career, was playing out the Oberammergau Passion Play. This game of pretending had a deeply serious purpose. We'd wanted to look at familiar events, at what were normally accepted as documentary facts, through a sharp, questioning focus. When we presented Kennedy as if he were a John Ford hero played by Henry Fonda, it was fun: but it also meant looking at the connections between American history and American myth in a coldly astringent way.

In writing to Richard Fotheringham, I suggested that, though I couldn't supply the political material, I'd offer a metaphor as a starting point. I'd been watching the American TV series, STAR TREK, and I had this idea of Australia, as a great space ship, transporting certain particularly Australian values to the far galaxies of the universe. The group would discover the values — but we'd build the story around the STAR TREK characters (there was even the half-Vulcanite Dr. Spock, whom I wanted to turn into an English cultural imperialist.....).

Before I arrived, the group had already been playing with STAR TREK. But the day we started work happened also to be the day when the election was announced. And that was how a piece of street theatre turned into a part of the whole election charade, and how Joh Joh Bjelke-Petersen came to be playing the morally-righteous Captain Kirk, Captain of the space ship, National Enterprise, who thwarts the insane, power-mad designs of another space captain, Garth (played in our version by Gough Whitlam). We married the STAR TREK story to the political documentary, and produced STAR TRICK.

Before the end of the Festival, the show became very successful. At first, when we were feeling our way, we had a few depressing performances: but for me the whole experience came good at the end when we played all day in the main city square on election day, amongst the polling

booths and the canvassers and near the Black Embassy tent. For once, political theatre seemed to be operating inside a total context.

On the other hand, I felt at the end that we'd only just begun. We'd found an idiom, a popular form which could carry intelligent and ironic ideas to a non-theatre-going audience, and we'd found a style adequate for the material. It seems to me, in fact, that we'd got a starting point for the creation of a particularly Australian style of popular theatre. But the style, the texture, can only grow and develop richness if a group can come together and work together and explore together for a much longer period of time. The most urgent need, it seems to me, in Australian theatre at the moment is for just such work to be done.

I enjoyed working in Brisbane very much. And what was most enjoyable of all was the sense of open-ness, of being willing to try anything, which I found in students, in the Fringe Group itself, and in the audiences we played to. We'd only to put up our little stage, and knock out a few bars on the honky-tonk piano, and people would gather out of curiosity. And would stay to have a good time.

Richard Fotheringham writes:

The Fringe Project for the 1974 Queensland Festival of the Arts was an ambitious exploration of several possible directions in which theatre in Australia could move in the continuing search for a popular style. The production was approached thematically, with the script being written progressively from the collective ideas and talents of the group. It was his experience in this field of the unscripted play that made Albert Hunt's assistance invaluable. Drawing on his background of collaborations with Joan Littlewood, the Ardens, and the Brook/Royal Shakespeare US, Albert acted as a catalyst, setting up a working environment in which the group could decide what they wanted to say, and could explore through games and improvisations a popular theatrical style with which they could most effectively say it. In the past he had bounced his shows off such popular idioms as the films of John Ford and Billy Wilder, and the English music hall also figured largely in his style. A similar style seemed a viable starting point for the Fringe project, and STAR TREK was chosen as the vehicle for a satire on political morality. STAR TRICK (as the show came to be called) used the idea that an episode of STAR TREK was being produced by the Australian impresario, Hector Crawford, continued on page 8

with the Premier of Queensland in the role of Captain Kirk, space-hero, fighting his arch-enemy, the madman Garth, played by the Prime Minister. The plot followed roughly the events which led to the recent double dissolution of parliament and the consequent General Election.

This tradition of using popular idioms to present contemporary ideas and issues was the major contribution which Albert Hunt made to the project. As a style it has precedents in this country in *THE LEGEND OF KING O'MALLEY* and more recently in the work of the National Rock Theatre, and *STAR TRICK* was another modest contribution to this sadly ignored field. It was ironic that Albert, an Englishman, was the first director most of the actors had worked with who believed in the natural voice and appearance of the Australian actor as a valid instrument of artistic communication, and who was able to use these qualities to "present" rather than "live" characters in a Brechtian sense. It was for most of us a first introduction to the styles and possibilities of political theatre.

The other area which the project explored was the use of informal performance venues. *STAR TRICK* was performed in shopping centres, hospitals, public squares, civic centres, and a workers' canteen during the two weeks prior to election day. The flexibility, technique and energy which these conditions demanded from the actors seemed at first unattainable, and were after twenty shows only partly achieved. Shopping towns particularly are amplified children's theatre territory, with gloss, tinsel and schmaltz everywhere. The subject matter of our play, the spare touring set, acting without amplification, and the fact that the show was aimed primarily at adults, all clashed with audience expectations. It was a show for a time and a purpose, and worked best when we bounced off the real politicians. One performance took place at Brisbane's Garden City shopping centre seconds after Mr. Bjelke-Petersen had finished speaking there; we captured his audience (350 adults) and capitalized on the mood which he had created, a mood sympathetic to political comment and satire. On Election Day, Saturday May 18 we performed in the public square opposite the polling booths in the City Hall. Again the atmosphere was right; people knew why we were there.

STAR TRICK was a leap into faith for those of us who had preached popular theatre and community involvement. It was mildly successful, but showed clearly that these admirable goals will not be achieved without continuing experiments and errors; experiences which will lead to a growth of expertise amongst those few actors and directors who are willing to venture away from the formal theatre and the prepared script. There is a welcome possibility that Albert Hunt could return in 1975 to work in Australia with several groups on more substantial shows of this kind. Instant success will not result, for the kinds of adjustments which both actors and audiences will have to make do not come easily. But ultimate success in creating a popular theatre tradition, which is accepted by the market place and which can both entertain and stimulate it, is one vital goal facing Australian theatre. Without such a tradition, our present incipient renaissance could quickly wither into the elitism that has strangled theatre in so many countries.

puppetry news

The Marionette Theatre of Australia has indeed had a very exciting and eventful year. Since the premiere of *TALES FROM NOONAMEENA* in December last year, to combine with the opening celebrations of the Sydney Opera House, it has toured throughout Queensland, New South Wales, South Australia, where it was a highlight of the 1974 Adelaide Festival of Arts, and was the opening attraction of the new Portland Civic Centre in Victoria. This tour concluded at the end of September.

The Company has a short break and then starts its new production.

There are a few new faces in the Marionette Theatre. Mr Terry Divola is the new Administrator, assisted by Evelyn Keating, with Sally Aurisch doing the publicity, and Ted Lakis in the position of Advance Tour Manager.

Graeme Mathieson, the Head Puppeteer, who has been with the Company for ten years, is now back from a six week study tour, sponsored by the Australian Council for the Arts. Graeme attended the American Puppeteers Festival in New Orleans in August, and then went to Hollywood, London, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Russia, taking in the latest building and manipulating techniques.

Returning from his home in Singapore, Peter Scriven arrives in October to direct the new production by the Marionette Theatre of the *TINTOOKIES*.

The Company will rehearse this new production which will have more than 60 puppets and will be the biggest production the Company has undertaken to date, premiering in Sydney in the January school holidays.

Assisting Peter Scriven will be one of the world's foremost marionette experts, Igor Hychka.

In the next issue of the Trust News, we will be telling you more of this new production and giving you a few sneak previews, and photographs of what is in store for you when we open in January.



Brolga from the Marionette Theatre of Australia's production of TALES FROM NOONAMEENA

london scene

by Gordon Beattie

SUMMER MADNESS

I was sitting in an underground tube train the other day, when a man caught his belt in the electronically controlled closing doors. Much to the horror of the passengers close to him, the belt appeared to become alive and with the assistance of a beautiful girl, it strangled the man. The man, belt and girl fell out at the next stop and the passengers sat amazed. It was not reported in the papers the next morning. The same routine probably happened a number of times that night. It is called Tube Theatre and can happen on any train at any time. In fact anyone can do it, although there are a few who specialise in it. The idea is not to get caught.

Talking of transport, there is also the ARTS BUS, a double decker bus which tours around London. Hop onto it and on the top deck you might find yourself confronted by a play with the characters appearing from a hole in the floor.

There is an increase in the number of 'Buskers', street musicians and people with routines which they perform in the streets for a few pence from the passing crowd. They frequent pedestrian walkways and where ever there are queues of people. They vary from the two old gentlemen: who do the tap dancing routine in Leicester Square to the fellow with the trained budgies. Many of these people are featured in Peter Sellers' recently released OPTIMIST OF THE NINE ELMS, a delightful film. The buskers shown really do exist.

THEATRE IN WHAT?

A few months ago I had the pleasure of attending the British Children Theatre Association's Annual Conference. One of the themes it was centred around was Theatre and Drama in Education. The Conference ran a number of workshops on techniques in the use of theatre in education, puppetry and directing children's theatre. What is drama and theatre in education and what is the difference between theatre and drama?

There are two distinct areas. The first is Drama in Education, which is drama as a subject in schools, an area which is now well established in the British School system. This involves not only a study of theatre, but also involves the use of drama in the education and development of the child through creative improvisation, role playing and dramatic presentation. The second area is the use of theatre as a tool in education. A number of educational authorities have set up Theatre-in-Education teams, consisting of teachers and actors, who design shows in such a fashion as to present facts, raise issues and stimulate discussion amongst students. (The same techniques are being used by community theatre groups for documentary presentations and raising of issues in the community.) It is interesting that many of these Theatre-in-Education teams are operating as branches of established companies, for example in Coventry and Bristol, and in some cases out of community arts centres. I talked

to a number of teachers after observing some of these shows and it is apparent that they provide not only entertainment but are also a basis for an educational experience in their own right, as well as with follow up from the teacher.

THE GOOD OLD DAYS! OR THE GOOD OLD DAYS?

An interesting feature of theatre in London at the moment is the large number of plays which are revivals from the good old days. Or plays written about the first half of this century. Perhaps the best of these is the revival of Tennessee Williams' A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE with Claire Bloom as Blanche and a very strong supporting cast with Martin Shaw, Joss Ackland and Morag Hood. On the other hand we have THE GOOD COMPANIONS, the musical of the novel by J.B. Priestley, with John Mills and Judi Dench.

"J.B. Priestley's THE GOOD COMPANIONS is the perfect novel for the deck chair on the beach, the punt in the backwater, the railway train, the wherry on the Broads and the shade of the vicarage mulberry tree. 'Jolly' is the only epithet for a work that goes as gaily as Inigo's song 'Slipping Round the Corner'." (The Times, 30th July 1929)

A 'jolly' or pleasant unmemorable musical.

INSANITY + BRILLIANCE = THE BEWITCHED

THE BEWITCHED is the Royal Shakespeare Company's latest production at the Aldwych Theatre. It is by Peter Barnes, author of THE RULING CLASS. THE BEWITCHED is set in 17th Century Spain during the reign of the inbred, epileptic Carlos II, last of the Spanish Hapsburgs, whose failure to produce an heir led to the War of the Spanish Succession. It deals with the attempts of Carlos and the court, to produce an heir to the throne. A completely insane production directed by Terry Hands with a virtuoso performance by Alan Howard as Carlos.



Claire Bloom in A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE

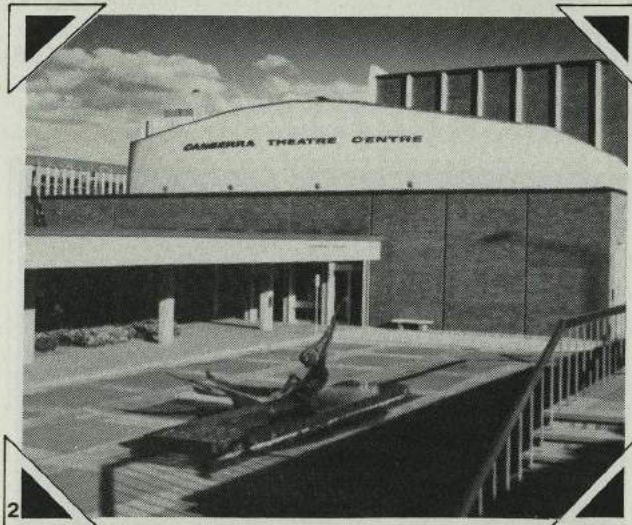
THEATRE IN CANBERRA

THEN & NOW

by Anne Godfrey-Smith



1



2

1 Rosemary Hyde and Stan Davis in Repertory's production of *THE SHIFTING HEART*.

2 Canberra Theatre Centre

Twenty years ago Canberra, with a population of about 28,000 possessed two picture theatres, one small live theatre, and one multi-purpose hall. This last – the Albert Hall – was a lofty, chilly oblong used for public meetings, land auctions, ABC concerts, official balls, Saturday night rock and roll sessions, conferences, and the occasional Arts Council sponsored visiting theatrical company. It was also used by one of the two local theatre groups in Canberra at that time: the Philharmonic Society, who staged musical comedy or light opera shows there twice a year. The other local group – the Canberra Repertory Society – had used the Albert Hall but in 1953 wisely fled to more congenial surroundings at the Riverside Theatre.

The Riverside Theatre had once been the canteen of the old Riverside Workers' hostel, now ingeniously converted into a small theatre, seating about 140. Like all the workers' hostels built in early Canberra, it was a timber and fibro construction and insulation against heat and cold was not one of its strong points. The stage was only six inches high, necessitating death scenes and important struggles to be staged in chairs or on tables, as no one, other than the front three rows could see anyone on stage below the waist. The switchboard seemed to have evolved from the accumulations of successive productions, and I can personally vouch for the truth of the story of the inspector from the Electricity Authority, who wandered backstage one day and caught sight of the switchboard. With an anguished cry of "Jesus Christ!" he headed for the open, adding as he went: "I didn't see it and I don't want to know anything about it!" Yet the tangle of wiring and Variac dimmers worked remarkably well for the most part, and at this theatre more than one hundred full productions were staged, as well as innumerable Sunday night play readings, workshop productions and several drama festivals. During their twelve years at Riverside between 1953 and 1965, Repertory staged between seven to nine productions each year, and performed throughout the year on Friday and Saturday nights, with one weekend off between productions. Later this was increased to Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights. Such a record of continuous production was only possible because of an annual grant, given to the society by the Cultural Committee of the A.C.T., used to employ a full time manager-producer, responsible for the general organisation of all productions, and for directing about half of them each year.

Among productions at Riverside there were about twelve premieres of locally written plays and musicals, including Alan Seymour's first play *SWAMP CREATURES*; Ric Throssell's *DAY BEFORE TOMORROW*; *ULTERIOR MOTIFS*, a musical satire on the Public Service, with music by Peter Sculthorpe, and *THE GIRL FROM THE SNOWY* by Albert Arlen.

Today, the theatrical scene in Canberra has greatly expanded, both in the number of groups operating, as well as in the buildings available for staging performances. Chief of these is the Theatre Centre, opened in 1966, consisting of two theatres: a large theatre, seating over 1,200, with an extensive stage, large orchestra pit and fly tower. It is more suited for opera, ballet and musicals than for straight drama, because of its extremely wide proscenium opening, and the fact that as it has no dress circle, the back ten rows of seats are a long way from the stage. The Playhouse, the smaller theatre, seating just over 300, though comfortable from an audience's point of view, is not so well designed. Though the acoustics appear satisfactory, there is virtually no resonance in the auditorium, and because of this, actors' performances and audiences' responses seem curiously damped down or muted. The stage opening is rather too wide, the stage itself too high above the auditorium floor, and the audience sit in unaccommodating straight lines; the whole design making for great sightline difficulties. In addition there is no fly tower and little wing space. Most of these disadvantages could be markedly improved if the whole stage area were dropped so that it was at a level below the front row of seats: it would make flying scenery possible, and solve the problem of sightlines. Both theatres have foyers, bars, air conditioning and general comfort. They are well equipped in lighting and sound systems, and very well administered and staffed.

Theatre 3, once the assembly hall of the old Canberra High School, is probably one of the most flexible and functional designs of its kind in this country. The adaptation of the assembly hall was designed by Russ Brown, a set designer for Repertory, and was carried out by himself and his colleagues Bill Ryan and Bob Ryde. They had had extensive experience both in building and in working the sets they designed and built, and understood that adaptable space is the basic requirement for theatre, not imm-

moveable barriers set up to form trendy architectural shapes. The result is a little theatre, seating about 200, that can be transformed from ordinary proscenium staging to thrust stage, to two sided or to four sided arena staging. The seats are all on moveable rostra, stepped so that sightlines are excellent from anywhere in the theatre. A grid overhead supplies bars for lighting any form of staging used. The far end of the oblong hall has been cut off by a wide partition and made into a comfortable foyer.

The old Riverside Theatre no longer exists, having been burnt to the ground in the early hours of an October morning in 1967. Apart from the Theatre Centre and Theatre 3, there are a few halls in which shows can be staged: the Albert Hall still functions, and there is the Wesley Church Hall, where Alpha Theatre stages many of its plays, the Childers St. Hall, once the dining hall of the Turner Workers' Hostel, now the Australian National University's theatre, until its new performing arts centre is built. Staging in Childers St. can be reasonably flexible, because the stage is made up of moveable modules that can be set up in various shapes and in various parts of the hall. Its chief limitation is lack of ceiling height, and from an audience's point of view, conditions are rather spartan compared with the Theatre Centre, or even Theatre 3.

At the moment there are about twelve different theatre groups in Canberra: some well established over the years, others recently formed, and a few that have been very active, but do not seem to be presenting productions regularly now.

Canberra Repertory still presents 7 or 8 productions a year. When the Playhouse was opened in 1966, they moved their major production seasons there from Riverside, and used the Riverside Theatre for workshop and experimental productions. Their opening production in the Playhouse as a rather spectacular ROMANOFF AND JULIET, (directed by Peter Batey). Four years later, in the same theatre, their two hundredth production was staged: Farquhar's THE RECRUITING OFFICER, directed by Alan Harvey. Although the Riverside Theatre was burnt down in 1967, workshop productions continued until about a year ago in Hut 18 at Riverside, and were an excellent training ground for actors and directors.

Repertory today are no longer in the Playhouse: chiefly because of the high cost of rental and staffing in that theatre, the Repertory Council decided that a move to other premises would be in the best interests of the society. They now operate in Theatre 3. Their opening production there was TOM PAINE, directed by Sean Surpliss in early 1973. Productions since then have included THE SHIFTING HEART, FLASH JIM VAUX and MACBETH, directed by Ross MacGregor, present manager producer, and THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST and THE REMOVALISTS. In addition, Ross MacGregor staged a large scale production of STOCKADE in the main theatre of the Theatre Centre. Plays scheduled for the remainder of the year are: SUBJECT TO FITS (described by the author as "a response to Dostoevsky's THE IDIOT"); THE MIRACLE WORKER and THE FANTASTICKS. ACT FOUR, Repertory's annual, non-competitive drama festival was held in Theatre 3 in August.

The other society with a record of productions for over 20 years is the Philharmonic Society, whose seasons used to be presented at the Albert Hall, but since 1966 they have used the large theatre at the Theatre Centre. They present two large scale productions a year of musical comedy and light opera. Their mainstay was Gilbert and Sullivan, until the Australian Opera Company began to bring Gilbert and Sullivan seasons to Canberra. The Philharmonic, however, still present the more esoteric Gilbert and Sullivan operas: PRINCESS IDA; RUDDIGORE and PATIENCE (with visiting artist, Dennis Olsen playing Bunthorne). Robert Gard was another artist invited by the society to play the leading role in THE STUDENT PRINCE. An interesting departure from their usual pattern a few years ago was a production of Offenbach's LA BELLE HELENE, directed by Terry Vaughan. Their most recent production has been CAROUSEL; their next production is SHOW BOAT, directed by Ken Healy.

Among the groups that have been very active, but only do occasional seasons now, might be mentioned the Little Theatre, the Theatre Players, formed by Joyce Goodes in about 1960; and Prompt Theatre formed by Al Butavicius in the mid 1960s. This last group has presented many interesting seasons, all directed by Al Butavicius, including: VIET ROCK; an election year political revue in 1972, with masks created by the cartoonist, Pickering; a season of one act plays by New Guinea writers: SPIDER RABBIT; and a double bill in May this year, FAIR GIRL and SADIE NECO by local playwrights, Roger Pulvers and Max Richards respectively.

Among the more recently formed groups is the Australian Theatre Workshop, a lively group, concerned chiefly with presenting Australian plays though they do not limit themselves to local playwrights. This group developed from a drama workshop, initiated by three ANU graduates: Jon Stephens, Adam Saltzer and Bruce Widdup. The ATW still hold classes in improvisation and group drama and have created short plays from such work. Though most of their productions are centred in Childers St. Hall, they also present open air productions and street theatre from time to time. Open air performances have included THE CASTLE OF PERSEVERANCE, (directed by Penny Chapman); two topical open air shows, MOTHER SEGAL'S TRAVELLING MEDICINE SHOW and GAREMA GIRDIE; and two open air performances in Petrie Place of DIMBOOLA. This last production was first presented for a season in Childers St. Hall. In this hall, ATW have also presented several of Buzo's plays: ROOTED; NORM AND AHMED (a production which won the 1971 Wagga Drama Festival); and THE ROY MURPHY SHOW. Plays the group hope to present later this year are: two one act plays by local playwrights for the ACT FOUR festival; a season of Australian plays not yet produced in Canberra (including Hibberd's STRETCH OF THE IMAGINATION and possibly PRESIDENT WILSON IN PARIS). This will be followed by a production of Brecht's MAN IS MAN and three Howard Brenton plays. They also hope to organise some street theatre for Christmas.

Centred at Childers St. Hall, of course, are the university theatre groups. Their activity tends to fluctuate: an usual phenomenon with university theatre. The undergraduate group, the ANU Theatre Group, was very active throughout the sixties and was also directly involved in the annual revue, strongly politically flavoured as one would expect in Canberra, with scripts and lyrics written by local writers for the most part, and music composed and orchestrated by the revue's musical director, Martin Ward. The annual revue had a continuing existence for about 11 years. It has been in abeyance for the last 4 years up to this year when it was once again revived. The Theatre Group between 1963 and 1966 also produced a pre-Christmas musical entertainment for children each year. These musical fantasies included: ST. GEORGE AND THE BURLY GRIFFIN; PLATYPUS IN BOOTS; THE MERMAID'S TALE; and TREBIZOND, all written by Viv Whittaker, a Sydney writer and composer.

Stage, the graduate theatre group, presents seasons rather more sporadically. Recently they presented a musical about Guy Fawkes, THE CONSPIRATORS, written by local writers Allen Mawer and Jon Stephens and with music composed by Paul Thom. Stage also presented a highly successful open air production of ALICE IN WONDERLAND on Springbank Island in Lake Burly Griffin, to which the audience had to come by launch, and once there, followed Alice (literally) in her adventures as she moved from scene to scene around the island. Stage's most recent success was an election year political revue, MISREPRESENTATIONS, written by Mungo MacCallum, with music by Paul Thom. They have done little since then, but plans are under way for several interesting productions next year: one (the work of a local writer and composer) is to be presented as part of the Australia 75 Festival.

The Opera Group, attached to the ANU, produces for the most part, chamber opera or intimate opera. They came into being a few years ago, following an ambitious and very successful production of Purcell's KING ARTHUR, staged at Childers St. and directed by Paul Thom. They have presented lunch hour opera (with piano accompaniment only) at the Playhouse, including: Menotti's THE TELEPHONE; Holst's THE WANDERING SCHOLAR and two short operas by contemporary American composers. At the Albert Hall they presented a season of Donizetti's GIANNI SCHICCHI, and at the Playhouse a highly stylised production of Handel's ACIS AND GALATEA; Otto Nicolai's THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR; and a Menotti double bill, directed by John Tasker: THE TELEPHONE and THE MEDIUM. This year, as part of the Spring Festival the Opera Group are presenting an opera, THE RED SEA, composed by Malcolm Williamson (ANU Creative Arts Fellow during 1973). This will be staged in the large theatre of the Theatre Centre. They are also producing two 9 minute mini-operas, to be staged on platforms in the theatre foyer after the concerts held at the Spring Festival. In late October they will present Britten's TURN OF THE SCREW at the Playhouse. They will also hold a workshop season later this year, and present extracts from an opera, BOFFLER AND SON, written by Noel Fidge, a Canberra composer.

continued on page 12

Children's theatre is very active in Canberra. Alpha Theatre, formed a year ago by Christine Dunstan, was created to provide live theatre for young children on Saturday and Sunday afternoons. Their productions were chiefly staged at the Wesley Church Hall, and occasionally at the Playhouse. The casts, for the most part, consist of adult players. Alpha Theatre opened with a production of *THE WIZARD OF OZ*, followed by *THE MERMAID'S TALE*, a musical play by Viv Whittaker and a dramatisation of *THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE*. Chris Dunstan directed *YOU'RE A GOOD MAN, CHARLIE BROWN* at the Playhouse, and parts of this musical were taken round the schools. Alpha Theatre has presented an outdoor Nativity play at Christmas; *DICK WHITTINGTON*; and a musical play, *CIRCLES* by Paul Barron, with music composed by Martin Ward. Their current production is *OLD KING COLE*, and productions planned for later this year and early 1975 include *PADDINGTON BEAR*; *MERLIN AND THE GIANT STONES* and *THE THWARTING OF BARON BOLIGREW*. They also hope to go out more into the schools with productions or parts of productions, and with rehearsed readings from authors like Edward Lear, A.A. Milne and Kenneth Graham.

The Youth Activities Centre is situated at Reid House, one of the old timber and fibro hostels of Canberra, but now handed over to the Centre. There, every day, children of all ages can come and take part in activities such as workshop theatre, classes in film, drama, puppetry, painting and music. This Centre has a full time director, Carol Woodrow, and about a dozen tutors. The under-twelves take part in what is called "arts workshop" involving painting, music, group work, games and dancing. The over-twelves do workshop classes and periodically put on productions. The various groups attend once a week for a two hour class in technical workshop, giving them a basic training in aspects of stagecraft such as set design, the making of properties, costumes and so forth. They also take part in movement classes and improvisation groups, listen to records, or take part in playreadings and plays. They are encouraged to work on their own scripts. Recently, a senior group of the Youth Theatre embarked on a detailed study of *MACBETH*, and as a result of their study they presented as a production an interesting collage or series of impressions of the play. It says much for the perseverance of the group and the encouragement of the tutor involved, that they should carry out such a lengthy and complex project for several months to a successful conclusion. The Youth Activities Centre is the kind of civic facility that one wishes were available to children in every suburb of every city.

This discussion of the various theatrical groups operating in Canberra is necessarily incomplete. No mention has been made of school groups, for instance. In the last few months a new group calling itself Tempo put on the musical *BYE BYE BIRDIE* at the Playhouse, and there is a possibility that one or more groups centred in the outer suburbs, such as the Woden Valley, may be formed. It can thus be seen that there is no shortage of theatrical activity in this city, and that there are organisations catering for all age groups and tastes. There are also five theatres or halls, all within a mile of each other for groups to operate in. Yet there is always demand for more. Repertory would like to built a scenic workshop and rehearsal room next to Theatre 3, now that the Riverside huts are no longer available, and the need for these two essential facilities will become greater. There is also a demand from other groups for some kind of workshop room (like Repertory's former Hut 18 at Riverside), freely available for experimental productions and seating about 40 people: a place, like La Mama in Melbourne, where costs would be minimal, box office not important, and where directors and authors could try out new scripts.

Meanwhile there is plenty of local activity in the theatre; activity which has benefited greatly since the Theatre Centre opened and made possible regular visits of touring companies, both from interstate and overseas. The theatrical scene has developed richly and diversely over the past 20 years: the presence of independent groups means that each can stimulate and challenge each other. Performers and directors do not limit themselves to working with one group only; and since the feeling among the groups is primarily one of good-will, the experience gained by actors working in different conditions and with different directors is extremely valuable. It is to be hoped that in these days of mergers and monolithic organisations, this situation of independent and diverse theatrical activity will long continue.

dance footnotes

by Leonard Lindon

Will it work? *rites of passage* opens on September 27th at the Sydney Opera House — composer Peter Sculthorpe, director Jaap Flier, designer Kenneth Rowell. We know Rowell and Sculthorpe but who is this Flier character? Dancer, choreographer, one time director of the Netherlands Dance Theatre, and now co-artistic director of Adelaide's Australian Dance Theatre. That's who! *rites of passage* features the Australian Dance Theatre (augmented by Russel Dumas, Jacqui Carroll and Ian Spink): the choreography explores performance improvisation. Will it work?

If you see nothing else this year you must see *rites of passage*. Probably you'll decide to see the Stuttgart Ballet instead. It's certainly whacking good bread-and-circuses entertainment Tour opens in Canberra on October 10th, plays a week both Adelaide and Melbourne, and finishes November 16th after three weeks in Sydney.

A few days later at the selfsame Sydney Opera House the curtain rises on our national ballet's new production. Yes, it's that surefire tale *romeo & juliet*; this version by the late John Cranko (the man who made the Stuttgart Ballet). This version seems to have the A-1 Entertainment Seal of Approval from the Entire Western World. See you there.

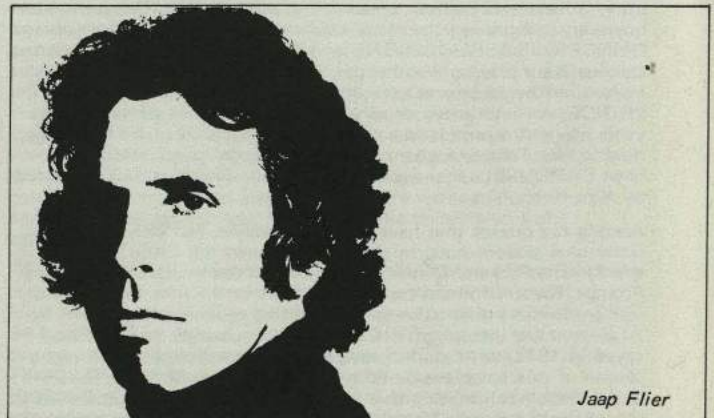
Now it's quite possible that all this lavish balletic noise is not for you. If so, can I interest you in an intimate two-man show at Melbourne's Pram Factory in November. Dancer Bob Thorneycroft and mime Joe Balsa are presenting another zany nonstop commotion disguised as *the bob & joe show*. It's also cheaper than the balletic big guns . . .

So much for the future. Time for a quick look backwards. We can see an upthrust of young Australian choreographers, bursting with things to say and inventing new movements hand over fist under ankle neck up hip down leap in the air blink twist and repeat three times if you want to, as you feel like it, or not, as the case may be. Overlong and laboured, much of it, just like my last sentence.

But some of it is quite outstanding. I name no names here. That would make it too easy for you to talk about them without seeing them. I urge you to find out for yourself which young choreographers are at work in your city. And go see for yourself.

More likely than not you'll be irritated beyond belief. This is quite natural. Perfectly healthy in fact. And, no, you won't wake up next morning blind or with warts on your hands.

Struggle back for a second and third look, and you too will be hooked. Soon you'll get so you can't let a month go by without seeing a new piece of choreography. Then a week. Then a day. You will have become a dance critic! And in this despised and sordid state you will see *rites of passage* and you will know that Jaap Flier is a master of his art. Or something.



Jaap Flier

THREE ROOMS HARBOUR VIEW

THE I.T.I. AT THE A.E.T.T.

THE REMOVALISTS arrived early on the morning of July 3rd to shift the local centre of the International Theatre Institute to new and larger offices at the Elizabethan Theatre Trust. This expansion reflects the growing interest that is taken in theatre in Australia and recognition of the need for an information exchange within the theatre community.

The International Theatre Institute was chartered by UNESCO in 1948 "to promote the exchange of knowledge and practice in the theatre arts". The Charter opens:

Since theatrical art is a universal expression of mankind, and possesses the influence and power to link large groups of the world's peoples in the service of peace, an autonomous professional organisation has been formed, which bears the name of INTERNATIONAL THEATRE INSTITUTE.

Member countries of the ITI now number over 60. National centres around the world serve as an information network for theatre

professionals, offering services of visitor programming, publications, information exchange, exhibits, research facilities, etc., depending upon the needs and resources of the theatre community in each country.

Every two years, members meet to discuss their work at ITI Congresses. The 15th Congress took place in Moscow in May and June of 1973. Over 300 theatre professionals attended, including the Honorary Secretary of the Australian Centre, Ms. Marlis Thiersch, and Mr. Alan Seymour from London, both as Australian delegates. International Committees on Theatre and Youth, Third World Theatre, Musical Theatre, and Seminars and Symposia on all aspects of theatre, create the opportunity for theatre professionals to meet and share their experience, problems and visions.

The Australian Centre of ITI has had its own office in Sydney since 1970, providing several valuable services to theatre people. Many overseas travellers now find access to ITI facilities in other countries through their ITI Card, a kind of passport for theatre professionals.

A quarterly *Newsletter* is edited and distributed by the Australian Centre to over 600 theatrical organisations and individuals in Australia and internationally. The *Newsletter* contains Australian theatre news, a digest of world theatre events, and service information — in the interests of promoting Australian Theatre and providing a window to the wider stage world in Asia, Europe, and America.

Now in bigger and better quarters at the AETT in Potts Point, the Australian ITI Centre hopes to expand its services by providing a comfortable reading room for its growing theatre library; by encouraging round table discussions between local theatre people and visitors from abroad; by enlarging the *Newsletter* into a monthly magazine, *Australian Theatre Review*, of which one sample edition was issued in September 1973; by holding future international conference-festivals, workshops, and congresses in Australia; and by playing a part in the creation of an Australian Theatre Centre, museum and archives for theatre research.

Suggestions for additional services to theatre professionals will be welcome.

australian national playwrights conference

The A.N.P.C. is established as a service to playwrights seeking the experience to be gained from working with actors and directors on a new script away from the pressures of the professional theatre.

The first two Conferences were held in 1973 and 1974. Plans are going ahead for the third Conference which will be held in Canberra, May 3-18, 1975. The Playreading Committee of the Conference has advertised for scripts and these will be received up until October 31 this year. The Committee is looking for scripts which have never been professionally produced and which would benefit from the extensive work-

shop treatment at the Conference. Leading Australian playwrights will be invited to attend the Conference as advisers and to take part in a day-long seminar.

Recently the Australian National Playwrights Conference was taken under the administrative wing of the Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust although policy is still controlled by the Conference's own Management Committee.

Enquiries about the Conference should be addressed to the Administrator of the A.N.P.C. at the Trust's Sydney office.

The Poets of Pleasure

AT NIDA

by Max Iffland



The poets of pleasure were the playwrights of Restoration London. Their genius reflected in accurate and witty detail the life of the scandalous aristocracy of late seventeenth century England. The work of these bawdy and brilliant men formed the basis of a seventeenth century comedy workshop undertaken by third year NIDA students, as their first term acting and design exercise in 1974. This was intentionally one of the most concentrated acting exercises the Institute has ever attempted, as a need was felt to consolidate the previous work of the students, whilst providing opportunities for artistic extension in all the areas covered by NIDA training, such as voice, movement, research, dance, music and style.

The work of these students in their first and second years mainly involved modern plays, and these tended toward serious drama rather than comedy. The first third year exercise was therefore designed as a comedy workshop and exercise in style. The complete term's work contained the full-scale production of a Moliere comedy, followed by an original recital-type programme, which would engage the students in researching the period in great depth.

The Moliere play finally chosen was THE MISER, and this was directed by Alexander Hay. The dissemination and development of Moliere's comic style into England would then be explored in the recital programme, and research and development for this began at the same time as MISER rehearsals.

The first problem for the recital programme was the formulation of a basic framework for the production, first as a guide to the students' research, and secondly so that some of the material could be gathered quickly enough for a start to be made on rehearsals by about the second week. The bulk of the early rehearsal work on the recital programme involved students with smaller parts in THE MISER. The fact that some students would be working on two productions simultaneously meant that these early rehearsals had to involve material closely related to THE MISER, so that the actors' attention could be focused on the same area.

This problem was overcome by the early selection of a short three act play, THE CHEATS OF SCAPIN, by Thomas Otway, to form the basis of the second part of the recital programme. Alexander Hay had decided earlier that he would direct THE MISER in Commedia dell'arte style. With this in mind, the selection of the Otway seemed quite appropriate, as it was adapted from the original by Moliere, and had as its central role one of the most famous of the Commedia characters. The added artistic problem for the students was the way in which Moliere was modified by his translation across the channel.

The next problem was the way in which THE CHEATS OF SCAPIN was to be related to the rest of the recital programme. We were fairly sure that in some way we wanted to evoke the feeling and atmosphere of an actual Restoration theatre, with its close relationship between actor and audience, not unlike that of a small R.S.L. club; as members of the audience tended to know each other, and to be on speaking terms with the actors. It was felt that this was a quality which the modern theatre

lacked, and which was worth trying to achieve again.

We also wanted the programme to be as comprehensive as possible, so as to include an example of the work of every major playwright of the period, as well as poetry, prose, song and dance. Some students wanted an opportunity to do some fencing as well. So how was all this to fit together, and provide an evening of successful theatrical entertainment?

The first plan of attack was to take a Restoration actor's benefit performance as a framework for our material. It was usual in these performances for famous actors of the day to appear in their most popular pieces, and we felt that this would suit our purpose admirably. Each student set about choosing a particular actor from the period to research and to choose material that would be performed using the persona of this actor.

For about a week, this seemed to be quite a profitable approach, but we then decided to reject it for two very good reasons. One was that the production concept of THE MISER was developing along almost exactly the same lines. It was to be performed as a play within a play, the actors being an itinerant Commedia troupe who stop in a small town and perform THE MISER from the back of their wagon. This was such an interesting production concept that we abandoned the actor's benefit idea in favour of it, as we felt that two productions involving actors playing actors was rather labouring the point.

The other reason was that it had begun to emerge that the actor's benefit frame was not dramatically interesting enough, since it was tending to appear as a series of concert items, with no apparent connection between them. Something more structurally sound was needed to carry the dramatic weight of a complete evening. This was an encouraging development so early in the rehearsal period, as it showed that the students were thinking seriously about the elements of dramatic structure, and the ways in which an evening must be shaped to seize and retain the interest of an audience.

However, the final idea for the format of the programme was much slower in coming, but it eventually did come in a very pleasing way — out of a series of discussions between the director and the designer, which were in turn based on discussions with the actors. For the design concept of the programme we were still pursuing the idea of turning the NIDA theatre into a replica of a Restoration theatre. In the course of our discussions about the set, the designer quite rightly reached the conclusion that it would be wrong to try and create a mirror image of a Restoration theatre within an existing building of the wrong size and shape.

So we finally decided on an impressionistic assemblage of some of the most important elements of a Restoration theatre, such as proscenium doors, painted scenery executed with exaggerated false perspective and a large apron acting area in front of the proscenium arch. The proscenium arch and door surrounds were also designed as an architectural collage, composed of typical period features.

Simultaneously with the development of this design concept, our reading of dozens of Restoration plays pointed up the way in which these plays were composed of detailed pictures of the everyday life of the aristocracy of the day. We decided, therefore, that we would present an impressionistic account of a 'typical day' in Restoration London. In the first part of the programme we would trace the progress of the morning, and in the second half, the afternoon, where we would all arrive at a Restoration theatre to see a performance of *THE CHEATS OF SCAPIN*, done in the tradition of the age.

This frame proved to be a very happy solution, as it gave us a way out of a difficult artistic problem. During our rehearsals of *SCAPIN*, we were anxious to approximate as closely as possible the style of acting of the period. Our worry was that a modern, post-Ibsen audience would be likely to consider that this was simply bad acting. With our new arrangement, it became possible to perform the first part of the programme in a fairly natural manner, and in the performance of *SCAPIN* to go all out for Restoration theatricality.

To accentuate this difference the set was finally designed to provide a fairly realistic architectural background for the activities of the morning. In the second half, a curtain was drawn to reveal a set of painted wings and flats, and a steady, central light source was used until the end of the play to approximate the candlelight of a theatre of the day. This second half began with orange wenches plying their trade in the auditorium, brawls between 'Patrons' and door-keepers, and a sword fight between two fops over the favours of a mistress. Every word used in the entire programme was taken from a play, poem or prose work of the period, and the authors represented included Vanbrugh, Congreve, Crowne, Shadwell, Etherege, Wycherly, Rochester, Otway, Flecknoe and Dryden.

We called the programme *THE POETS OF PLEASURE*, using the term 'poet' in the Restoration sense of one who sees mankind more perceptively than his contemporaries, and who is able to communicate this perception artistically. The word 'pleasure' relates to the almost exclusively sexual tone which pervades the writings of Restoration authors. We tried to reflect this aspect very strongly in our programme, as we felt that it was in this area that the period most resembled our own. The only difference is that the 'permissive society' is not now an exclusively aristocratic phenomenon.

The benefits to the students from this workshop were many. They learned that style is very much a matter of knowing what sort of play you are in, and that this involves exhaustive research into the furniture, clothing, social customs, thought and literature of the period. All these are interconnected and can determine such simple things as the way one sits or stands or walks or talks. By organising their own programme, they learned many aspects of basic playwright's craft, and, incidentally, a great deal about what it is that makes people laugh.

Max Iffland teaches History of Theatre at the National Institute of Dramatic Art.





Lucette Aldous, prima ballerina of The Australian Ballet, was Australia's official guest artist at the opening of the Spokane Opera House, at Expo '74, on May 1st. She danced the pas de deux from the Second Act of SWAN LAKE and LE CORSAIRE with Edward Villela, premier danseur of the New York City Ballet. Here she talks with Nancy Austin, of The Australian Ballet.

HOW DID THE SPOKANE GUEST APPEARANCE COME ABOUT?

"In 1973, the CAROL BURNETT Show was performed and televised at the Sydney Opera House. Carol Burnett loves ballet and Edward Villela, of the New York City Ballet, was asked to be a guest on the programme. Eddie requested to appear with the prima ballerina of the Australian National company, and consequently we danced together on the show. I was in Poland, during The Australian Ballet's tour of Russia, Eastern Europe and London, when the details of the guest appearance were finalized; it was marvellous news and cheered me up considerably. The programme was filmed in November and shortly thereafter aired coast-to-coast on the CBS Network in America. The programme was telecast again just before I arrived in New York in April — so American audiences were familiar with Eddie and I.

There were several Australian artists scheduled to appear at Expo '74 including Helen Reddy, Rolf Harris and Donald Smith. During discussions about Australia's guest representation at Expo '74, Jack Neary from the Broadcasting Control Board suggested to Prime Minister Whitlam that since Eddie had been invited to perform, why didn't Australia send me over to dance with him?

WHAT WAS YOUR SCHEDULE FOR THE TRIP?

I flew to New York City for a week of rehearsal with Eddie at the New York City Ballet Centre. I like America and have a lot of friends in the ballet world there. Rudi was appearing with the Canadian National Ballet — I attended performances at Lincoln Centre — rehearsed with Eddie — attended



Lucette Aldous, Alan Alder and Arushka

class with Alvin Ailey — had tea with choreographer John Butler — and met Martha Graham. Miss Graham is most anxious to tour Australia, and asked me to bring her film, NIGHT JOURNEY, to Australia and to promote it. There was so much to do, and with people urging me to stay and see the Pennsylvania Company, due to open soon, it was a shame I only had a week on the East Coast. It was fabulous and refreshing. I also went to a big party on Long Island, "Gatsby Territory". I'd just finished reading the book, and it was easy to imagine what the era was like: those stately homes, the big parties and the elegant clothes. It was quite an experience.

WHAT IS EDWARD VILLELA LIKE?

I had never danced with Eddie before the Carol Burnett Show. I'd seen him perform on television, and thought that he must be a bit conceited — he is very handsome. However, I found him to be soft, gentle and an absolute "sweetie" to work with. Eddie is used to partnering tall Balanchine ballerinas, and I think he enjoys dancing with someone petite . . . he wouldn't feel so overwhelmed by 'tallness'. The dancers in New York City are very kind to each other. The competitive "rat-race" is evident among the dance students, but the real professionals stick together and are warm and kind to one another. It is a marvellous atmosphere to work in. And the Lincoln Centre complex is so compact. The Julliard School of music is there, the superb theatres, with the Metropolitan Opera House in the middle. The New York State Theatre and the New York City Ballet Centre are within walking distance as well. During my last visit to New York, it was cold and raining and there was a taxi strike in progress. I had to use the subway to get from hotel to rehearsals, etc. It was difficult and exasperating. This year, I was in New York in the spring, and the weather was beautiful, and I could walk around, which was so much easier.

DID YOU GET TO SEE MUCH OF EXPO '74?

I only had one day to look around, but Bill Worth, the Commissioner-General, gave me a tour of the finished buildings and we had a look at the Australian Pavilion. It was so well designed: the architect showed tremendous taste. The foyer reflected the different life-styles in Australia; the difficulty of the outback compared with the lazy life of coastal swimming and waterskiing. There was a fabulous multi-screen slide presentation showing the different fauna and birdlife of Australia and the colour scheme (browns, blues and greens) reflected again the outdoors of Australia. There was also an amphitheatre, in which they served a cold meat buffet, with Australian beer. I asked why the pavilion was serving beer instead of our fabulous Australian wines — apparently the Americans are real beer drinkers and were extremely enthusiastic about our beer.

The people connected with the Australian Pavilion at Expo were a bit disappointed due to the lack of interest shown by the Australian press. There was only one reporter to cover the opening of the Pavilion, and with all the hard work



involved – and with such a marvellous pavilion – they had hoped for more enthusiasm and coverage. The Australians were very popular in Spokane. Their naturalness came over well. They all seemed to have the old Colonial charm – not brash or excessively forward – and they were winning all of Spokane over.

WHAT DID YOU THINK OF THE SPOKANE OPERA HOUSE?

I enjoyed dancing there. Apparently Spokane's cultural performances were taking place in an "old tin shed" before the Opera House was built. A local conductor, who spent over ten years developing an orchestra, was instrumental in the planning and construction of the Opera House. The stage itself is huge, and of course, we had no scenery during our performance. However, because it is built in a horse-shoe shape, there is no cold, yawning atmosphere. They commissioned a special architect to design the stage and he used real oregon pine for the floor; it is a dancer's dream. The soft wood in itself is marvellous to perform on – no sore muscles the next day – and the Spokane stage is doubly soft because the oregon pine was placed over a rubber base.

The countryside around Spokane is exquisite; and with a relatively small population of about 150,000, the city itself is not even as sophisticated or as glamorous as some Australian country towns. They picked an excellent site for the Fair; there is an unbelievably beautiful river flowing through Spokane, which they've tamed for various Hydro-Electric projects. Buildings are located right on the river, and in fact the ballet rehearsal studio is on the side of a waterfall. Spokane was ideal for Expo in that they didn't have to knock down any buildings to build the pavilions – as they did for earlier Expos in Japan and Canada. The different international representatives arrived in Spokane, picked their spots, and began organising the construction of their pavilions.

The Northwest of America is really impressive. Flying over the state of Washington, I saw pine forests, snow-capped mountains, waterfalls and beautiful rivers. It is a lovely area.

WHAT WAS THE AUDIENCE REACTION TO YOUR PERFORMANCE?

American audiences are incredibly enthusiastic. They are real ballet lovers. All my performances in the States have been with either Eddie or Rudolph Nureyev, so I'm at an advantage there. I've found the audiences keyed up and enthusiastic before we even began dancing; Eddie and Rudi have big followings in America and their every appearance guarantees massive, enthusiastic audiences. I found them very warm.

There was also a good deal of interest in the film *DON QUIXOTE*. It was such a success in New York that they were considering re-releasing it in April. Before one of Rudi's appearances at Lincoln Centre, I was besieged by members of his American fan club and they all spoke so enthusiastically of the film, and asked me if I knew of any plans to re-release it.

WAS THERE A RECEPTION AFTER THE PERFORMANCE?

There was a reception for Eddie, Roberta Peters from the Met. and myself after the performance. We were given a special dinner in the "official green room", which is superbly decorated in creams and chrome. I wore a beautiful beige Norma Tullo dress, and when Eddie came to the dressing room to take me to dinner – after seeing me only in "grubby" rehearsal clothes and tutu's he exclaimed, "my God, what a beautiful dress". It was perfect for the occasion.

DOES "JET LAG" BOTHER YOU?

No, I do so much travelling – in 1970 I made the trip from England to Australia several times in three months. I've done a lot of touring – with the Australian Ballet, the Royal Ballet and Ballet Rambert; some of it had been quite frantic; Portugal, Paris, South Africa, East Berlin, Persia, Brussels. I've learned a good trick, quite by accident, that seems to work very well overcoming fatigue and stiffness: you must exercise immediately before the flight (and I've gotten up at 6.00 a.m. to do this!) and then right after the flight you must again do exercises. You get your feet on the ground with that first plie – it doesn't matter where you are.

YOU ARE A GREAT BURMESE CAT FAN. HOW MANY DO YOU AND YOUR HUSBAND, ALAN ALDER, OWN?

We have three Burmese cats; a mother and two "children" – one male and one female. The male's name is Sebastian, named after one of my husband's roles which I like the best. The baby female is named CHAUVIRE, after the French ballerina who is my idol beyond words. The mother's name is Arushka, which is the name of a town in South Africa. Arushka had four kittens – two of which we kept, and the remaining two sent to friends and relatives. Arushka's mother was the slinky Burmese used in the Hilton pantyhose commercials. I've always been a "dog person" but Alan is a real cat-lover. We discussed getting pets, and since the Burmese are famous for their marvellous temperaments – and they are so warm and easy-going – we decided to buy one. During the 1973 Russian tour, Arushka was entered in a cat show, and won 1st prize in three different sections – what a delightful "welcome home" surprise.

DO THE CATS TRAVEL WITH YOU?

We take the cats with us whenever we can; of course it all depends on our accommodation. They are good about travelling – the younger cats were literally born in a suitcase. In 1973, before the Sydney season, they were born in a motel room in Albury, and three-hours old, were on the road with us. They've adjusted quite well and turned into real "jet-set" cats.

The only worry connected with them travelling is the possibility of them getting lost or stolen. We keep a pretty close eye on them – they'd be so frightened in unfamiliar territory, with strangers.

melbourne scene

by Barry Balmer

THE FLOATING WORLD by John Romeril was premiered by the APG at the Pram Factory on August 7th. This deftly written play takes a compassionate look at the mind and life of a non-hero private in the AIF. He is captured when Singapore falls and spends the rest of the war as a Japanese prisoner. These years leave an indelible impression on his future life which affects his existence to such an extent his sanity is left in shreds. Directed by Lindsay Smith it is a significant contribution to the pacifist credo.

BALLET VICTORIA recently presented a diversified season at the Princess Theatre. Highlights were Garth Welch's ballet **IMAGES** and Walter Gore's lyrical choreography for **SIMPLE SYMPHONY**, last seen at the Princess Theatre when the Ballet Rambert visited Australia in the late forties.

DIMBOOLA by Jack Hibberd has celebrated its 100th performance at the Chevron Hotel. Plans are afoot for productions throughout the United States on the popular theatre restaurant circuit.

EQUUS by Peter Shaffer is one of the 6 plays in the Melbourne Theatre Company's repertoire for Part 2 of its 21st Season. This absorbing play is currently in the repertoire of the National Theatre of Great Britain. A boy obsessed by horses becomes the centre of a perverted crime. The playwright's brilliant sense of theatre makes a bizarre theme an entertaining and

theatrically rewarding occasion.

A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC failed in Melbourne when presented by J.C. Williamson at Her Majesty's Theatre. Excellent staging, fine performances, and a delicate but enchanting plot did not attract audiences and the production was forced to close. Perhaps it was the wrong theatre, or have the Gary Glitter pressures blanked the minds of local musical comedy theatre-goers?

JULIUS CAESAR, Handel's opera, was skilfully produced by Brian Bell, with Richard Divall as Musical Director and Richard Prins as Designer, at the Palais Theatre, St. Kilda, mid-August for the Victorian Opera Company. Lauris Elms and Marilyn Richardson were Julius Caesar and Cleopatra.

GUYS AND DOLLS, the Broadway musical fable opened the new Total Theatre on July 27, but because of a late application for a bar licence patrons were compelled to order soft drinks. Based on the Damon Runyon story, **THE IDYLL OF SARAH BROWN**, the score is full of memorable tunes. Ken Lord as Nathan Detroit scored a notable success. Jon Ewing directed whilst Greg Radford's athletic choreography stopped the show. Frank Esler Smith was Musical Director and Narelle Johnson, the original Miss Lido, of the famed Melbourne theatre restaurant, now the site of the Total, added the international glamour.

CLIVE BARNES visited the Melbourne Theatre Company headquarters at South Melbourne to discuss the critic's role and responsibilities. The dance and drama critic of the New York Times had as his audience Melbourne newspaper critics, journalists, playwrights, actors and other theatre people. Clive Barnes quipped "All you've ever wanted to know about criticism and were afraid to ask". The 2 hour session covered every aspect of the critic's craft, down to an analysis on how criticisms should be written from a time point of view. On the question of whether the New York system of attending a preview and holding an embargo on the review till after the first night is right, or whether the Australian system where reviews are tapped out between curtain fall at 11.00 p.m. and midnight is correct, Barnes said he didn't think it should happen to a dog.

LOU REED has **WALKED ON THE WILD SIDE** at Festival Hall and on the first morning the box office opened, his concerts were three quarters sold out.

BARRY HUMPHRIES interrupted his Sydney season to come to Melbourne for a quick shooting schedule of the new film **A SALUTE TO THE GREAT MCCARTHY**. Barry plays the part of Col. Ball Miller, the

wealthy wheeler dealer football club president who makes McCarthy a star. This Australian film is scripted by Barry Oakley.

ADOLFAS MAKAS, one of the acknowledged fathers of the US underground film movement, arrived in Melbourne recently en route to the Perth Festival of Arts and to commence groundwork on a film about aborigines.

CARMEL DUNN, wife of playwright John Powers, is co-ordinator of the Melbourne Theatre Company Playreading Service. Carmel harnesses the readers for new scripts submitted by local playwrights for appraisal. She has been nicknamed "Miss Behind the Scenes" and her enthusiasm and dedication has been instrumental in arranging a number of workshop productions by new writers with MTC artists and directors.

ROBIN RAMSAY was highly praised for his performance in the title role in Shakespeare's **PERICLES** at Russell Street Theatre by visiting American critic Clive Barnes. Robin is wedded to the theatre but is also horticulturally inclined. He runs a property at Bega which he has turned into a wild life sanctuary.

SWEET FANNY ADAMS is the name of a new Australian musical by Peter Pinne and Don Battye currently being staged by Jon Finlayson for Kortum Hotels at Le Chat Noir Theatre Restaurant, Armadale. Based on legendary Sydney underworld characters and their exploits, it has a number of potential hit tunes including "Give It A Go", which rated a standing ovation from the packed first night audience.

THE MELBOURNE FESTIVAL of Youth Orchestras was staged in August bringing together over 800 young musicians from Australia and overseas. Those taking part included the Melbourne Youth Orchestra and Choir, Auckland University Singers, the Cirencester Percussion Ensemble from England, the Sydney Youth Orchestra, Collegium Musicum from West Germany, the Queensland Youth Orchestra, the Blake Baroque Soloists, the Percy Grainger Youth Orchestra, the Dorian Le Gallienne Orchestra and the Victorian Junior Symphony Orchestra.

THE LAST OF THE KNUCKLEMAN, by John Powers, returned to Russell Street Theatre after its Opera House and Canberra dates and played a six week season. It may play Broadway before long as the American rights have recently been negotiated.

CLAUDIA WRIGHT, Macquarie Network broadcaster and 24 Hours TV personality, clashed with English TV actor, Robin Nedwell, (in town to appear at the Princess Theatre in the farce **DOCTOR IN THE HOUSE**) at the opening of a new city restaurant. Front page coverage and much champagne throwing was the result.



Clive Barnes.

Photo courtesy The Australian

THE ELIZABETHAN TRUST CONFERENCE

A conference called in Sydney by the Trust on June 27 & 28 may well prove to be the initial step towards better communication between performing arts organisations throughout Australia.

With the continually changing role of the Australian Council for the Arts, established in 1968 as the federal funding body, and the final acceptance of autonomy by the Australian Ballet and Opera Companies, and the regional drama companies; all of whom were created and operated by the Trust until 1970; the reassessment of the Trust's role in the light of these and many other changes in the performing arts scene has become increasingly necessary and pressing, both to performing arts organisations and to the Trust itself.

The Conference was attended by representatives from the Australian Council for the Arts, State Cultural Ministries, the Australian Broadcasting Commission, the Arts Council of Australia, national, state and regional ballet, dance, opera, music and theatre companies, Festival of Arts organisations, the Sydney Opera House, the commercial managements, theatrical unions and the A.E.T.T.

The Conference was chaired by the Chairman of the A.E.T.T., Sir Ian Potter, who stated that such a representative and authoritative attendance was indicative of the importance of the Conference, the results of which could benefit the performing arts for many years to come and would assist and guide the Board of the Trust in their deliberations on the future development of the Trust.

The opening address was given by Dr. Coombs, retiring Chairman of the Australian Council for the Arts. Dr. Coombs was instrumental in the establishment of the A.E.T.T. and, as its first Chairman, guided the Trust's destiny from its formation in 1954 until 1968. Dr. Coombs stated there was a need to assess the implications of great changes taking place in the arts today and to try to fortell and meet future changes. For this reason he felt the Conference was most opportune.

Discussions began with a brief exposition of the Trust's role by the General Manager of the A.E.T.T., Mr. J. Joynton-Smith. He introduced the areas of discussion planned for the Conference. These included the Trust's history, structure, finance, operations and services.

The Trust's operations include the management of two full orchestras — the Elizabethan Trust Sydney Orchestra and the Elizabethan Trust Melbourne Orchestra who accompany the Australian Ballet and Opera Companies; entrepreneurial activities which include the touring of overseas and local companies throughout Australia; the Marionette Theatre of Australia; and the management of the Elizabethan Theatre, Sydney and the Princess Theatre, Melbourne.

The Trust's services include the Subscription Department which handles bookings for the Ballet and Opera Companies; Industrial and Personnel services to the profession; Superannuation and an Artists Provident Fund; Tax deductibility; a Residual Responsibility Fund which provides some guarantee against financial loss for certain companies; the Production Division and Scenery, Props and Hires Department which services many professional and amateur companies; and a School Activities Section.

Three new services recently to come under the Trust's administrative wing were also discussed. These are the Australian Centre of the International Theatre Institute, the Australian National Playwrights' Conference and the National Youth and Childrens' Performing Arts Association.

The Conference provided an excellent formal and informal forum for Board members, administrators, managers, and artistic directors of many companies, to meet and talk — an otherwise rare experience for the Australian theatrical profession.

Discussions and suggestions were generally positive and constructive — pointing to the need for the Trust to consider its future plans and develop a strong identity and relationship with the profession it aims to serve.

Sweet Nell of Old Sydney



The career of Nellie Stewart (1858-1931)
famous beauty, renowned actress and
humanitarian, who made a notable contribution
to Australia's culture.

Marjorie Skill

books

Urania Publishing Company, 1974. Retail Price \$3.75

SWEET NELL OF OLD SYDNEY is the first biography of the actress Nellie Stewart (1858-1931), famous and beloved of audiences in Australia and overseas. Marjorie Skill has researched and recorded in great depth the main events during and after the actress's life. She was assisted by Nellie's daughter, the late Nancye Stewart, and by contributions and reminiscences from Nellie's fans all over Australia.

The book is divided into two sections — the first deals with Nellie's life, the second with impressions of her as she is remembered. She was a beautiful and generous person, remembered as much for her humanitarian contributions as her stage appearances. The development of her most famous role in 'Sweet Nell of Old Drury' is described in detail, as are her travels around Australia and to England.

SWEET NELL OF OLD SYDNEY contains photographs and reproductions of playbills and letters relating to Nellie's life and the theatre of her time.

While the book tends to place emphasis on the factual, the new facts Miss Skill has uncovered make interesting reading.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Plays

THE LEGEND OF KING O'MALLEY by Bob Ellis & Michael Boddy, Angus and Robertson, Paperback edition \$1.90

AN ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE by Henrik Ibsen, translated by Michael Meyer, Eyre Methuen, London, Paperback edition \$1.95

Personalities

BRAVO MAURICE! A Compilation from the Autobiographical Writings of Maurice Chevalier - Translated from the French by Mary Fitton. Allen and Unwin \$10.65

CHAPLIN'S FILMS - A Filmography by Uno Asplund translated from Swedish by Paul B. Austin. Wren \$10.50

MIND'S EYE - An Autobiography 1927-1972 by BASIL DEAN. Hutchinson \$13.75

THE FACTS ABOUT THE ELIZABETHAN TRUST ORCHESTRAS

INTRODUCTION

Not a large sector of the opera, ballet and music-loving community is well informed on one of our major national arts assets — The Elizabethan Trust Orchestras — which in 1974 will cost in excess of \$1,250,000 to maintain. These orchestras are maintained by the Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust as full-time permanent professional orchestras. The Trust established them essentially for the use of the two major national theatre companies — The Australian Opera and The Australian Ballet — and are provided as a cost-free service for these two companies.

This article is the first of two brief articles on the Orchestras. This first one provides readers with an outline on the development of the Orchestras. The second article will deal with the developments within the Orchestras during 1974.

PART 1

Twelve years went by between the Elizabethan Theatre Trust's first season of opera in July, 1956 and the establishment of a permanent orchestra to accompany the national opera and ballet companies. During these twelve years the national companies were serviced partly by orchestras of the Australian Broadcasting Commission and partly by orchestras which were engaged for specific seasons and then disbanded. The scheduling for use of the A.B.C. orchestras created problems which hindered efficient planning for the national companies' seasons and the non-permanent arrangements for the employment of the musicians in the ad hoc orchestras engaged for the opera and ballet seasons restricted the development of orchestral standards.

The Elizabethan Theatre Trust surmounted these difficulties with the establishment of a permanent full-time professional orchestra — The Elizabethan Trust Orchestra. It first performed with The Australian Opera (at that time — The Elizabethan Trust Opera) in Canberra in May, 1967. The conductors engaged for the season were Thomas Mayer, Robert Feist and Gerald Krug. Seven operas were included in the 1967 season — among them were *The Flying Dutchman*, *Turandot* and *Il Trovatore*. The orchestra for this formidable season had a complement of 46 musicians, a fine leader — Maurice Stead, a manager — Tony Gould and an administrator — Fred Gibson. The net operating cost of this new orchestra for its first twelve months was \$231,000 and for the most part the funds were provided from the State and Federal Governments of the day.

As could be expected, the heavy touring commitments during this period made it difficult for the Trust to attract the first

quality musicians needed to provide the best possible performance standards. Also expanding seasons needed to meet the increasing demands of the Australian audiences made it impossible for the one orchestra to accompany the complete season of both The Australian Opera and The Australian Ballet. The Elizabethan Trust Orchestra's work with The Australian Ballet during this period included accompanying major productions of *Giselle*, *Raymonda*, *Coppelia* and numerous one-act ballets, four of which were created to scores by the Australian composers James Penberthy, Peter Sculthorpe, Peter Tabourdin and Malcolm Williamson. In 1969 the Trust established a second orchestra with a strength of 32 players. The following January this second orchestra was based in Melbourne and its permanent leader was Anthony Conolan. A high point in the young life of this orchestra has been the commercial release of the recording made for the film of The Australian Ballet's production of *Don Quixote*.

With the decision to base an orchestra in Sydney — the Elizabethan Trust Sydney Orchestra — and the other in Melbourne — the Elizabethan Trust Melbourne Orchestra — the Trust has provided both Sydney and Melbourne with their second full-time professional orchestra and provided the professional musicians living in these centres with an alternative professional orchestral career. The additional benefits for musicians in the Orchestras included substantially reduced touring commitments.

Obviously, the essential reason for establishing the Orchestras has been the Trust's wish to provide the national companies with the best possible orchestral services. To develop standards and morale within the Trust Orchestras, there is an increasing need to provide regular opportunities for the Orchestras to appear on the concert platform. These Orchestral Concerts were first presented in Sydney and Melbourne during 1971 and plans are now afoot to extend these opportunities by presenting concerts as joint ventures with The Australian Opera and The Australian Ballet during the lengthy company seasons in Sydney and Melbourne.

Both Orchestras have earned fine reputations for fine performances during their young lives. As so much of their work involves accompanying performances of opera and ballet under the musical direction of the conductors engaged by The Australian Opera and The Australian Ballet, a very special aspect of the Trust's work in keeping the Orchestras in the best of musical health involves a firm policy working in the best interests of the continued musical well being of each musician in each Orchestra.

The second part of this article will include facts on the work the Elizabethan Trust is doing in this direction.

Ken Mackenzie-Forbes,
Administrator,
Elizabethan Trust Orchestras.



music

THE WAR REQUIEM TWELVE YEARS LATER

Britten's WAR REQUIEM will be performed in the Concert Hall of the Sydney Opera House on Saturday 23rd November. The soloists will be Nance Grant (soprano) David Parker (tenor) and James Christiansen (baritone) with the Sydney Grammar School choir and the Philharmonia Choir.

David Garret comments on the historical and musical background of this piece.

Few, if any, musical works of recent years have met with so immediate and deep a response as Benjamin Britten's WAR REQUIEM. Within eighteen months of its first performance in Coventry Cathedral on May 30th 1962 it had achieved world-wide performance, and the Decca recording had sold 200,000 copies in only five months. THE WAR REQUIEM, wrote Eric Roseberry in TEMPO magazine, "has already taken its place as one of the great pinnacles of twentieth century music". It is now twelve years since that judgement was penned, and we can, if we wish, hear the work with a detachment apparently almost impossible for its first audiences. How does Britten's daring and deeply felt conception stand up as an enduring work of art?

Attempting at the time to explain the huge impact of the work, Desmond Shawe-Taylor wrote:

"A widespread hunger has been disclosed, and satisfied. Composers have for so long avoided any large-scale, emotional treatment of big subject matter that the public was starved . . . Not only has Britten chosen a great subject but he has treated it in such a way as to meet, head on, the main preoccupation of our lives. He has done what hardly seemed possible: given a beautiful shape to the dull, gnawing fears that surround the whole subject of modern war."

The occasion was one loaded with national and historical meaning for Britain — the work was commissioned for the consecration of the rebuilt St. Michael's Cathedral, Coventry, bombed out during World War II. The Requiem itself was daring and ambitious both in content and in means. Britten has chosen to set side by side the liturgy of the Mass for the Dead and the poems of Wilfrid Owen, probably the best of the "poets of protest" of World War I, who

was killed in his twenty-fifth year, one week before the Armistice. Owen was bitterly anti-clerical, and this is reflected in his poems, but not anti-Christian. He believed that "pure Christianity will not fit with pure patriotism". Britten was drawn to these poems by his own pacifism and compassion for the victims of war.

The sincerity and power of much of Britten's musical settings are not in question, but undoubtedly the major impact of the WAR REQUIEM is in Owen's poems. Their self-sufficiency as poetry, their specific battle imagery, their often abrasive language suggest that they might have been even more devastating left without music. Britten is always sensitive in his response to words, but does he achieve here the kind of inevitability with which music can actually enhance poetry? Some of his effects, like the use of drums to underline "the drums of Time" in AFTER THE BLAST OF LIGHTNING have a certain obviousness. Moreover, juxtaposing the Owen poems with the text of the Requiem might be thought to have a distancing, objectifying effect on the latter — the Mass in this way comes to represent the reflection of the Church through the ages on the theme of death, but does it have the same immediacy for Britten as does the war poetry? His setting contains reminiscences of earlier great settings of the Requiem liturgy, Verdi's for example, but perhaps without their blazing musical conviction. What these questions add up to is a worry as to the adequacy of the musical means used here by this always interesting and resourceful composer. Many of the musical ideas are striking and beautiful in themselves, others are ingenious, but as a whole they seem to lack the sense of rightness and unity which would justify the very high claims that have been made for the WAR REQUIEM as a work of specifically musical genius.

It is, of course more than that: a stimulating, moving, and disturbing experience of reflection on war and death. Even thoughts in the listeners' minds about the compatibility of Owen's poems and the Requiem are part of Britten's intention. How disturbing reservations about the music will prove is a question which can more readily be asked and answered now that the work's initial impact as a *piece d'occasion* and an arresting concept has passed, and it takes its place in the choral repertoire.

Committee's diary

YOUNG ELIZABETHAN MEMBERS—N.S.W.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 11 — the ROCKY HORROR SHOW, New Arts Theatre, Glebe. 7.15pm \$4.00 each. BOOK IMMEDIATELY!

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 20 — ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of Y.E.M.S. 6.30 pm. 153 Dowling Street, POTTS POINT. Drinks served prior to meeting.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8 — GALA CHRISTMAS PARTY with special guests from the AUSTRALIAN BALLET Company Private home, 1p.m. Late smorgasbord luncheon with all the festive trimmings. \$3.00 each. CLOSING DATE DECEMBER 2. Enquiries and bookings — Janice Iverach, 2/56 Orpington St., ASHFIELD. 2131. Tel: 799 1248.

LADIES COMMITTEE — N.S.W.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 9 — Theatre Party at N.I.D.A. — FINGS AIN'T WHAT THEY USED TO BE — 8 pm \$2.50. Bookings — Mrs Sparrow 665 2028

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 29 — Theatre party - DOCTOR IN THE HOUSE, Elizabethan Theatre, 8.15 pm. \$4.80. Enquiries Mrs. Sparrow 665 2028.

LADIES COMMITTEE — SOUTH AUSTRALIA

For information contact Mrs D. Bright or Mrs E. Spooner, A.E.T.T. 1st Floor, 45-51 Grote Street, ADELAIDE. Phone 51 8444.

ELIZABETH



ELIZABETH SWEETING, M.B.E., is Administrator of the Oxford Playhouse, Oxford University Theatre, England. Her distinguished career in management ranges over amateur, professional and University theatre. Among her publications is the book, **THEATRE ADMINISTRATION** — a widely-read, practical handbook on theatre management. Miss Sweeting is in Australia until October at the invitation of Adelaide University, and is a visiting professor in English, taking part in the University's centenary celebrations. Although based in Adelaide, she is visiting many centres throughout Australia, meeting and talking with people working and studying in theatre.

Miss Sweeting talked to Trust News about her activities in Oxford and her role in the wider British theatre scene.

Q. WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE OPERATIONS OF THE OXFORD PLAYHOUSE ON THE UNIVERSITY CAMPUS AND YOUR ROLE AS ADMINISTRATOR.

My main job at the Playhouse is to co-ordinate everything that goes on. I look after the resident professional company and give a lot of my attention to the student productions. The theatre operates such that each term the professional company use it for four weeks and the students use it for four weeks. As soon as the plays are chosen by the students, we start talking with them and discussing their production plans — not actually instructing them in how to do a show, because they have a very good idea about that, but finding out if there are ways in which they can do things better.

The theatre is a fully running public theatre and we have a professional staff operating full time. We mainly have policy discussions with the professional company. The purpose of these is to keep the image of the theatre together — so that people don't get the wrong impression about its functioning for both students and professionals. We have to present it to the public as a place where something exciting is happening all the time. I also have to keep an eye out to make sure our public relations are good within the University, and importantly, within the wide community that we operate.

We have a very wide 'catchment area' for audiences. There is really no regular,

faithful, uncritical audience nowadays for plays. I think every play makes its own audience. There are some plays (particularly undergraduate plays) that attract certain, limited audiences, but when we have plays by the professional company or visits from the National Theatre, the R.S.C. and other major companies, then we have a very wide audience indeed. They come from all the neighbouring counties and from London. Whenever we have a premiere by the resident company all the national critics come — its very much a focus of interest. Over the last few years we've had several plays put on by the resident company, which have transferred to London with considerable success. For example, **KEAN** with Alan Badel, and **THE WOLF** with Leo McKern and Judi Dench.

We have no subscription ticket system — it would be almost impossible to operate because of the alternation that we have of professional and amateur companies. Tickets would have to be valid for the undergraduate productions which one may not wish to see!

We make most artistic and managerial decisions at Oxford together — I'm a great believer in having an administrator or general manager who is capable of discussing the artistic policy as well. I don't believe the artistic director should have the entire say so — I think its very bad for him — everybody needs argument and criticism. You need to bounce your ideas up against somebody else's. If you both come to the same conclusion then you can be fairly sure its the right one!

The resident company at the Playhouse is subsidised by the Arts Council of Great Britain. They are autonomous and use their subsidy as they see fit. The University gives the theatre a small grant — about £5,000 a year, and we aim to cover our running costs from our box office receipts and this subsidy. The University is very generously responsible for replacing all costly technical equipment. We recently had a £10,000 lighting board installed which would otherwise have been an enormous expenditure for us, and soon carpets, curtains and stage equipment will have to be renewed. Without this assistance and the annual £5,000 we would not be able to balance our income and expenditure.

I'm a direct employee of the University, and besides managing the theatre I teach literature within the English Department. I am under no compulsion to teach, but I enjoy it and it helps the Department.

The Playhouse has been instrumental in the encouragement of a number of new playwrights. Looking back I should say we've done a great deal for Robert Bolt (author of **A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS**). While he was a teacher he sat in on rehearsals of a new play we were working on called **THE CRITIC AND THE HEART**. He went away saying what a great deal he'd learnt about

actors' reactions to scripts and the practical side of writing and producing plays. After that he never looked back. While Christopher Hampton was an undergraduate, his first play, **WHERE DID YOU LAST SEE MY MOTHER?**, was performed in the Playhouse on a Sunday evening. As a consequence, I felt he showed considerable promise and put him onto a London agent. Later he became resident playwright at the Royal Court Theatre and has since written such plays as **THE PHILANTHROPIST**.

Q. WHAT IS INVOLVED IN THE ARTS ADMINISTRATION COURSE, FOR WHICH YOU ARE AN EXAMINER, AT THE CITY UNIVERSITY IN LONDON?

We take about eighteen people only for the one year course. This includes people whose interests are theatre, music and the visual arts (running museums and galleries etc). We're keen to restrict the numbers, because obviously you can't turn out more people than the business can absorb. The course is one of full management technique and includes accountancy, law, industrial relations, human relations, box office practice and all the things needed to administer a theatre, which is nowadays tied up closely with the government and community. We have to seek subsidy — it is not given us a right and estimates submitted have to be correct and comprehensive. Administrators also have to know about contractual obligations to artists, negotiations with unions and safety responsibilities towards fire and police officers. The course aims to keep administrators of the future in touch not only with what is happening now, but to keep them up to date with new techniques. In the theatre we tend, in an extraordinary way, to look backwards. Our box offices have been run the same way since Irving's time, I should think! There must be better ways — indeed I think with the new National Theatre new methods will be put into practice.

One very important part of the course is visiting speakers — leading practitioners in the arts. The students find they learn a great deal from people actually working in the field. The other important aspect of the course is that for a lot of the time students are seconded to a theatre where they work on specific tasks, at the conclusion of which they present a written, researched project. It has taken time to evolve the course into the way we would like it to function. We've spent time studying the results, the jobs students are suited to, the usefulness of their knowledge, and making adjustments in the light of our investigations. The course has recently moved from the Polytech to the University — the advantage is that it won't be run in isolation — it can develop and make use of facilities like English literature, social history and architecture courses as the need arises.

SWEETING

TALKS ABOUT THEATRE ADMINISTRATION

Q. AT PRESENT THERE IS AN ENQUIRY INTO THE TRAINING OF ACTORS BEING CARRIED OUT IN ENGLAND — WOULD YOU TELL US ABOUT IT.

The Enquiry grew out of a number of concerns felt in the profession — firstly, the number of provisions that have been made for training actors, the expense (over one million pounds annually) and overlapping and waste of resources; secondly, the fact that the unemployment rate is tragically high, in spite of television; and thirdly, the variable and uncertain standards of training and the resulting product. What we need, before making any recommendations about the future, is to seek out the facts — how many actors are trained, who is training them, how they are trained etc. We then want to see how standards may be raised and how overlapping can be reduced. We have to realise that we don't all have to have all available resources, but that there must be a certain give and take and exchange. Perhaps Institutes of Theatre could be set up to train people in various aspects of theatre.

You may not have reached the stage in Australia yet, but British actors are frequently finding that while they can make good money in television, they become bored by it and are anxious to get back into the theatre. They are generally welcomed because they have become well known personalities to potential audiences. However, I'm not sure audiences go for stars alone any more. There have been several instances at the Arts Theatre, Oxford, lately where very bad plays with a galaxy of stars have rightly been badly received by audiences. I think this is partly because people now have a much greater choice in what they can do with their money and leisure hours. There is not the glamour now of going to the theatre to see a star when you can see them all on television. The star system is part of a legend and an example of the theatres thinking back into the past. Another interesting thing now is that often the playwrights are the stars. If there's a new play by Harold Pinter or Peter Nichols, for instance, people go for that. I don't want to carry that too far, however, but I do say that the name of an actor alone will not draw people to the theatre — they want to know more about what is happening.

Q. WHAT IS THE FUNCTION OF THE ASSOCIATION OF THEATRE TECHNICIANS IN GREAT BRITAIN? I ASK BECAUSE PLANS ARE UNDERWAY TO ESTABLISH ONE IN AUSTRALIA.

The Association is enormously valuable. It puts technicians in touch with each other — this is very important because so often in theatre inter-communication can be held up as everyone is busy in their own orbit and they don't get time to see what

others are doing. Within the Association we have various sub-committees with specific jobs. There is a lighting committee, a materials committee, a safety committee etc., who spend their time finding out about the latest developments in their field. Reports are made and distributed. Also reports are made on new, exciting effects which others should know about. Newsletters and information sheets are prepared which help build up a library of technical information and meetings and seminars are held regularly. I know that it is difficult in Australia because of distances, but I think the important thing at the beginning is to build up confidence that information will be exchanged. I imagine the Australian association will keep in touch with the British one to enable a wider exchange of information.

Q. HAVE YOU SOME SUGGESTIONS AS TO HOW THEATRE BUILDINGS CAN BE FULLY UTILISED?

We are all looking towards ways of using our buildings all day as we find different parts of the community at leisure at different times of the day. Theatres are no longer regarded as places just for the presentation of plays. Lunch time concerts, late night shows, workshops and exhibitions are proving very popular — mainly because of the casual informal atmosphere they have. The problem, however, for most theatres is that you really need more than one space to have these activities. If the theatre has a resident repertory company, it is continually rehearsing, and long breaks during the day to enable lunch hour events to take place are often regarded as disturbances. Ideally you should be able to schedule the use of the building so as not to interfere with an existing function. One has also to remember the demands on theatre staff — technicians, stage management and front of house people.

Another consideration for the use of the building is the provision of food and drink. I think its very important to provide these — we all need somewhere to eat quickly, cheaply and pleasantly before a show, and if the theatre can provide this service, it should.

Q. FROM YOUR EXPERIENCE, WHAT SPECIAL QUALITIES ARE INVOLVED IN THE DIRECTORSHIP OF A FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS?

Well, I think the important thing is to keep the pattern of the Festival very much in your head — both in a practical and artistic sense. Make quite sure the events scheduled for a particular day are well contrasted so that there is something for everybody and so that the artists involved are not being overworked. The festival Director has to keep his eye on all the practicalities of the Festival. It is an

incredibly complicated network to oversee — you have to be quite sure that people are being met and made feel welcome, that rehearsals are being catered for, and that the venues are prepared and equipped. A Director also needs to be able to spread an atmosphere of confidence and to create a festive atmosphere — that's very important. If you just lay on a string of events and sell people tickets and leave it at that, you're wasting everyone's time. Something very personal has to be contributed which makes the Festival a unified event.

Q. HOW IMPORTANT DO YOU THINK DRAMATURGS ARE TO A THEATRE COMPANY?

Very important. I'm always impressed, when I travel abroad, with the speed with which plays from other countries are translated and performed, and this must really be because there are people all the time keeping their eyes open — reading and able to read plays in other languages, able to sift through all the plays that come unsolicited, able to plan the company's programme and continually pour in suggestions to the artistic director. I think any artistic director in a busy theatre has enough to do to keep his immediate programme going and he can easily run out of steam about plays. You need a dramaturg who is integrated with the company — so he knows the actors' range and capabilities and who can also help in the shaping, cutting and development of a new play with a dramatist. All of these activities are important, but few companies can afford a dramaturg unfortunately.

Q. THE ARTS COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN FUNCTIONS IN A SIMILAR WAY TO THE AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL FOR THE ARTS BUT ARE THERE NOTICEABLE DIFFERENCES?

I don't know wholly how the A.C.A. functions — when I was here in 1972 for the Arts Administration seminar it was discussed, but I know government institutions and policies change frequently. The Arts Council of Great Britain has made one significant change which has made a difference to our pattern of subsidy. We now have regional arts associations which are groupings of the counties in Britain. Each regional association has a director and panels of experts drawn for the region. I'm on the theatre panel for the Southern Arts Association because Oxford is in the south. The Association doles out the money to the people in its area. The main funds come from the Arts Council but they are supposed to be augmented by contributions from local industry and councils. The main regional companies all over Britain are still receiving their subsidy direct from the main Council in London. This is considered fair because of the importance of maintaining a national picture of the drama.



Costume designs for *RENARD*
by Ramona Kedem

new opera south australia

New Opera South Australia is now in its second year as a fully-fledged professional company.

As a result of support from the Australian Council for the Arts and the State Government, New Opera has formed two companies. At present sixteen singers are under contract to form the nucleus around which this year's opera seasons have been built. A second company of four singers tours schools throughout the state in association with the Arts Council of South Australia, performing music theatre composed by Australians for children.

Last year New Opera presented Purcell's *DIDO AND AENEAS*, Rossini's *THE COUNT ORY*, Britten's *ALBERT HERRING* and two music theatre pieces, both presented for the first time in Australia, and both directed by visiting English mime, Mark Furneaux: *MAYAKOVSKY AND THE SUN* by Melanie Daiken and *DOWN BY THE GREENWOOD SIDE* by Harrison Birtwistle.

Until recently South Australia had been the only state without its own professional opera company. Out of initial discussions about the formation of New Opera between representatives of the state's amateur company, The Intimate Opera Group, and representatives of the State Government, there emerged one clear need. This need was for a music theatre ensemble presenting a largely contemporary repertoire with a sprinkling of the 'classics'.

New Opera's recent Adelaide Festival production was possibly paradoxically its grandest yet — but not in the 19th Century tradition. *THE EXCURSIONS OF MR. BROUCEK* was the first fully professional staged performance of a Janacek opera in Australia, and was also the first large scale opera specially designed and produced for Festival Theatre presentation, using to full effect the theatre's large stage area and brilliant technical facilities.

Donizetti's *DON PASQUALE* was the first opera in this year's subscription season. The Company's next season of two one-act operas in late September will comprise Larry Sitsky's *THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER*, immediately prior to which Mr. Sitsky will come to Adelaide to deliver a public lecture about his work. The other short opera, to be produced for the first time in Australia, is Igor Stravinsky's *RENARD*.

Stravinsky's short satirical burlesque, adapted to the universal Aesop fable of the rooster and the fox, was com-

posed in Switzerland with a colloquial French translation by the Swiss writer, Ramuz, in 1917. *RENARD* was first performed by Diaghilev's company at the Paris Opera in 1922 and has proved to be one of Stravinsky's most delightful stage works. He has tackled the perennial problem of drama with music in a new way: the four main singers join a chamber ensemble in the pit while masked dancers enact the scenes on stage, uniting both circus and traditional burlesque elements with operatic techniques.

The Russian folklore which enticed Stravinsky at this time of war and revolution, and which is reflected in his opera *MAVRA*, is sensed in the vigorous rhythms and corrosive polyphonic parts of *RENARD*'s score. Stravinsky was fascinated by the Hungarian cimbalom which he first heard played in a Genevan cafe. After learning to play this instrument himself, he incorporated it in *RENARD* where its metallic sonority contrasts well with the raucous pitch of the clarinet.

The spirit of mountebank buffoonery of the players is reminiscent of medieval satires. The cunning fox, the overconfident cock, the goat and cat who eventually turn the tables on the fox, are burlesque characters dearly loved in popular comedies from the Italian *commedia del'Arte* to 19th Century Australian pantomimes. The fable has undergone many transformations, but here in Stravinsky's short "Histoire burlesque Chantee et jouee" it expresses one of the most attractive aspects of Stravinsky's music for the stage.

The Australian premiere by New Opera South Australia will be directed by noted Israeli choreographer, Moshe Kedem, with Barry Golding as Musical Director. Silver Harris's set will incorporate film, and the costumes have been designed by Ramona Kedem.

Two Brecht Weill works will also be professionally staged in 1974 for the first time in Australia. *THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS* to be directed by Wal Cherry, will tour the Northern Territory before returning to the city in October and *THE LITTLE MAHAGONNY*, which will be directed by Guest Director, John Tasker, will be presented in December.

New Opera's future, then, though not financially rosy, definitely looks promising and busy.

STUART THOMPSON.

stage world

THEATRE 62

THEATRE 62, Adelaide's regional theatre company, continues its interstate regional theatre exchange plan with the visit in September-October of the Perth National Theatre Company's production of Alan Ayckbourn's **ABSURD PERSON SINGULAR**. This wry comedy, by the author of **HOW THE OTHER HALF LOVES**, is directed by Terence Clarke. **DANDY DICK**, by Sir Arthur Wing Pinero, directed by Chris Winzar, will be Theatre 62's last production for 1974. Theatre 62 have recently begun publication of **ON CUE**, a news magazine of the company's activities.

COMMUNITY ARTS COMPOST

A **COMMUNITY ARTS COMPOST**, conducted by the Community Arts Board of the Australian Council for the Arts, was held in August in Sydney. The seminar included discussions on 'How to find funds for community arts projects', 'how to cut your way through all sorts of dreaded red tape', 'What new, innovative things are happening in the Australian community arts field' and 'what lines of communication are open to the community arts practitioner!'

COWARDY CUSTARD AT THE BALL

MARIAN STREET THEATRE, Sydney, will contribute to the entertainment at the Metropolitan Opera Auditions Ball being arranged by Lady Fairfax in November. The entire cast (minus Angus McLean) of the theatre's successful production of **COWARDY CUSTARD** will appear in a short piece from the show.

ALPHA BETA AT BONDI

PETER WILLIAMS PRODUCTIONS will present E.A. Whitehead's two-hander, **ALPHA BETA**, at the Bondi Pavilion Theatre for a six week season commencing early in October. Cast will be Diana Davidson and Alan Lander, directed by Peter Williams.

AUSTRALIAN THEATRE SEMINAR

THE **DRAMA STUDIES UNIT** of the English Department, Sydney University, conducted an Australian Theatre Seminar on August 29-30. The two day session included papers, a symposium and playreadings on Australian theatre and its traditions, and a theatre workshop with playwright Dorothy Hewett and director Alexander Hay. A reading of Miss Hewett's latest play, **THE TATTY HOLLOW STORY** was presented for discussion by professional actors.

PERFORMANCE

THE **WESTERN AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY** have recently published the first edition of **PERFORMANCE**, a quarterly magazine devoted to the performing arts in Western Australia. The editor, David Addenbrooke, has recently published a history of the Royal Shakespeare Company of Great Britain.

ROBIN LOVEJOY

ROBIN LOVEJOY, who resigned recently from the directorship of the Old Tote Theatre Company in Sydney, is at present in London with his production of David Williamson's successful play **WHAT IF YOU DIED TOMORROW?** Before he left Sydney, Mr. Lovejoy was given a reception by the Lord Mayor of Sydney at the Town Hall. Many theatre personalities who had worked with him throughout his ten years at the Tote paid tribute to his significant contribution to the development of the company from its 'tin-shed' days to the Opera House and London.

TECHNICIANS UNITE

In **SOUTH AUSTRALIA** moves are afoot to establish an Association of Stage and Theatre Technicians. Following a number of meetings, a constitution for the proposed association has been set down. The aims listed include:— 'To foster and promote the art of the theatre', 'To advocate theatre design that will offer the widest possible scope for theatrical expression', 'To encourage high standards of work in all technical matters relating to the theatre' and 'To facilitate the exchange of ideas and information between theatre technicians'.

STOP PRESS! — BARRIE INGHAM

BARRIE INGHAM, due in Australia to present his latest one-man show at the Opera House on September 14, was forced to postpone it due to commitments with the Royal Shakespeare Company at Stratford-Upon-Avon. He will now present **THE ACTOR** in the Recording Hall, Sydney Opera House on October 28.

MARCEL MARCEAU —
the genius of mime
who toured Australia recently.



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showguide

A guide to theatres and productions offering concessions to Trust Members.

NEW SOUTH WALES

ELIZABETHAN THEATRE, Newtown
"Doctor in the House" (Willis) October 1-30

INDEPENDENT THEATRE
"And Miss Reardon Drinks a Little" (Zindel) September
"Half in Earnest" (Ellis) November 6 - December

PARADE THEATRE, Old Tote Theatre Company
"Little Eyolf" (Ibsen) to October 19
"Equus" (Shaffer) October 25 - December 21
"Hotel Paradiso" (Feydeau/Destallieres) Opening December 27

AUSTRALIAN THEATRE, Newtown
"Dinkum Bambino" (Quinn) Opening October 9

MARIAN STREET THEATRE, Killara
"Home and Beauty" (Maugham) to October 12
"The Chinese Prime Minister" (Bagnold) October 17-November 16
"Harvey" (Chase) November 21 - December 21

MUSIC HALL RESTAURANT, Neutral Bay
"The Spectre of Wycombe Manor" (Walsh) Concessions Mon., Tues. evenings

CHALWIN CASTLE, Elizabethan Trust Sydney Orchestra
Chamber Music Concert - October 6

SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE OPERA THEATRE
The Stuttgart Ballet "The Taming of the Shrew" October 28 - November 2
"Triple Bill" November 11-16
"Eugene Onegin" November 11-16
The Australian Ballet "Romeo and Juliet" November 29 - December 21

DRAMA THEATRE, Old Tote Theatre Company
"Three Men on a Horse" (Abbot/Cecil) to October 12
"The Chapel Perilous" (Hewett) October 18 - November 30
"Love's Labour's Lost" (Shakespeare) Opening December 6

RECORDING HALL
"The Actor" - Barrie Ingham October 28

VICTORIA

PRINCESS THEATRE
The Australian Ballet - New Work by Barry Moreland to October 9
"La Fille Mal Garde" October 11 - 26

PALAIS THEATRE
The Stuttgart Ballet "The Taming of the Shrew", October 21 - 24
"Triple Bill" October 25 - 26

RUSSELL STREET THEATRE, Melbourne Theatre Company
"Equus" (Shaffer) October 10 - November 16
"Coralie Lansdowne says No" (Buzo) December 5 - January 25

ST MARTINS THEATRE, Melbourne

Theatre Company
"The Doctor's Dilemma" (Shaw) to October 5
"The Misanthrope" (Moliere) October 24 - November 30
"London Assurance" (Boucicault) December 19 - February 8

PRAM FACTORY, Australian Performing Group
"The River Jordan" (Byrnes) September - October
"The Bob and Joe Show No. 2" Opening November 5

TRAK CINEMA
For further details contact Roger Myers 662 2911

QUEENSLAND HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE
"Doctor in the House" November 12-30

S.G.I.O. THEATRE
Queensland Theatre Company "Present Laughter" (Coward) to October 12
Play to be decided November 21 - December 14
Christmas Pantomime December 27
January 18

TWELFTH NIGHT THEATRE
"6 RMS RIV VU" (Randall)
"Absurd Person Singular" (Ayckbourn)

ARTS THEATRE, Petrie Terrace
"Melba" (Sherman) to October 8

For Further details contact John Devitt 21 9528

SOUTH AUSTRALIA THEATRE 62
Perth National Theatre Company - "Absurd Person Singular" (Ayckbourn) - to October 12
Theatre 62 Regional Company - "Dandy Dick" (Pintero) October 23 - November 30

FESTIVAL THEATRE
The Stuttgart Ballet "The Taming of the Shrew" October 14 - 19
The Australian Opera
"Tales of Hoffman", "Tosca", "The Magic Flute", "Rites of Passage" November 2 - 30.

NEW OPERA, SOUTH AUSTRALIA Adelaide Festival Centre
"The Seven Deadly Sins" (Brecht/Weill) Late October
"Tancred and Clorinda" (Monteverdi) Late October
"The Bear" (Walton) Early December
"The Little Mahagonny" (Brecht/Weill) Early December

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN THEATRE COMPANY
AUSTRALIAN DANCE THEATRE
For further details contact Miss Margaret Morris 51 8444

A.C.T. CANBERRA THEATRE
The Stuttgart Ballet "Triple Bill" October 10-12

WESTERN AUSTRALIA HAYMAN THEATRE, W.A. Theatre Company
"A Midsummer Night's Dream" (Shakespeare) to October 12

TASMANIA THEATRE ROYAL, Tasmanian Theatre Company.

introduce a friend to TRUST membership

and receive a copy of the Barrie Ingham record - LOVE, LOVE, LOVE.

Please send this coupon with your cheque made payable to A.E.T.T. to our office in your State.

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(Full name-BLOCK letters please)

of.....

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Phone No.(Home)

.....(Work)

wish to become a

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(Annual Subscription \$10.00)

(Annual Subscription \$2.00 applies to those under 26) Please give date of birth

I enclose my remittance payable to The Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust in payment of my membership subscription for the period to June 30, 197
I hereby agree, if admitted by the Board of Directors, to be bound by the Memorandum and Articles of Association for the time being of the A.E.T.T.

Usual Signature

Note: Subscriptions fall due on 1 July of each year

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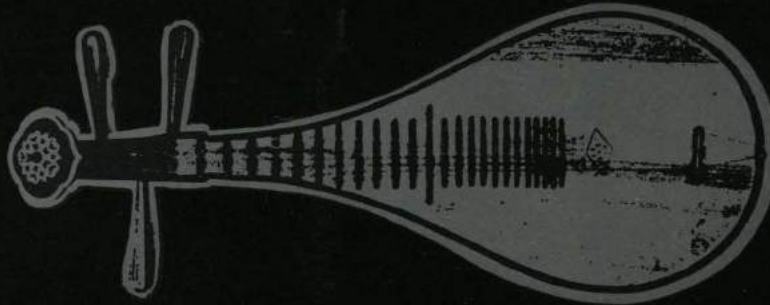
Membership No.....

If you live within the city area, please collect your record from the local Trust representative.

I can/cannot collect my record personally.

HONGKONG ARTS FESTIVAL 1975

3rd FEBRUARY—1st MARCH



Presented by

The Hong Kong Arts Festival Society Limited under the Patronage of H E The Governor, Sir Murray MacLehose, K.C.M.G., M.B.E.

The 1974 Arts Festival was a tremendous musical and theatrical experience and I am sure that many festival devotees watched with keen interest to gauge its success and standard. There is no doubt the result was a festival which could stand among the great artistic events of the world.

The 1975 gathering of the musical and theatrical world greats gives every indication that the high standard created in 1974 will be surpassed.

One of Australia's most respected names in the Travel Industry, Travel-Time International, in conjunction with the Hong Kong Tourist Association, Cathay Pacific Airways and Singapore Airlines are in the process of arranging two highly specialised tours to Hong Kong, and Singapore, to coincide with the Festival. These tours will be offered exclusively to members of the Elizabethan Theatre Trust.

The tours will provide an excellent opportunity for Trust Members to attend the Festival, travelling in small parties, with friends sharing common interests.

Should you wish further information on the Festival, the artists appearing and the programme of events, together with details of the tours being organised please fill in the coupon below and return same to the address shown thereon.

**HONGKONG
ARTS FESTIVAL
1975**



To:

Elizabeth Dowling
The Australian Elizabethan
Theatre Trust P.O. Box 137,
Kings Cross N.S.W. 2011.

Please forward to me full particulars on the Hong Kong Arts Festival together with details of tours being arranged exclusively for members of the Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust.

NAME

ADDRESS

..... Postcode

Dear Trust Member,

There are many interesting events taking place over the next few months - so read on!

STUTTGART BALLET

Unfortunately, due to circumstances beyond our control, we were unable to advise members of concessions available. However, there is still time to book and members do get concessions.

There are three programmes presented by this excellent company:-

THE TAMING OF THE SHREW	October 28 - November 2
TRIPLE BILL	November 4 - 9
EUGENE ONEGIN	November 11 - 16

In the A Reserve seats in the Opera Theatre, for the three programmes, Trust Member price is \$41.40 (a saving of \$4.50). In the A Reserve seats for a single performance, Trust Member price is \$14.30 (a saving of \$1.00). Bookings should be made immediately to the Opera House Box Office. Please quote your Trust Member number.

ALPHA BETA at the BONDI PAVILION THEATRE

E.A. Whitehead's dramatic and moving study of a collapsing marriage - directed by Peter Williams with Diana Davidson and Alan Lander. This play, which was awarded the Best Play, 1972 by London Critics, commences a six week season at the Bondi Pavilion Theatre on OCTOBER 14 at 8.15pm. Special TRUST MEMBER CONCESSIONS - Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday evenings. Trust Member price \$3.00 (General Public \$3.50). Book at theatre.

ATM's-SEE OVER PAGE FOR SPECIAL THEATRE PARTY TO ALPHA BETA ON OCT.20

BARRIE INGHAM - THE ACTOR, OCTOBER 28

Remember his brilliant LOVE, LOVE, LOVE? One performance only of Barrie Ingham's new show, THE ACTOR, at the RECORDING HALL, SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE on OCTOBER 28 at 8pm. TRUST MEMBER price \$4.00 (General Public \$4.50). Bookings at Opera House and the Australian Theatre, Newtown.

AZ MUSIC - RUG CONCERT

OCTOBER 19, RECORDING HALL, Sydney Opera House, 8.15 pm. The AZ Ensemble joins with choreographer Jackie Carroll in dance interpretations of Steve Reich's CLAPPING HANDS and John Cage's CONCERT FOR PIANO AND ORCHESTRA. Pre-concert at 7.30pm features Winsom Evans, Barbara Stackpole and Professor Frederick May. Prices \$2.80, Students \$1.80, Bookings Opera House or Deidre Evans 8273906.

DOCTOR IN THE HOUSE, Elizabethan Theatre, Newtown

Trust Member booking forms were sent with the July Trust News - hurry, book now for a fun show. Playing until October 30.

CHAMBER MUSIC CONCERT, CHALWIN CASTLE, OCTOBER 6 at 8.15pm.

Final concert for this year by the Trust's Sydney Chamber Group at 27 Shellbank Avenue, Cremorne. Programme includes the BRANDENBURG CONCERTO NO. 2, Bach; CONCERTO FOR OBOE AND VIOLIN, Bach; and CONCERTO FOR FOUR VIOLINS, Vivaldi. Tickets for Trust Members and friends \$2.20 each - coffee served at interval. Bookings, Noelene Griessel 357 3126.

ELIZABETH SWEETING - SEMINAR, OCTOBER 12

Distinguished Theatre Administrator from Oxford University Playhouse (see article in Trust News), Miss Sweeting will be leading a seminar on theatre practices in Sydney on SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12. Trust Members are invited as observers. Time and venue to be finalised. Please ring Margaret Leask, 357 1200, if you are interested in attending this seminar.

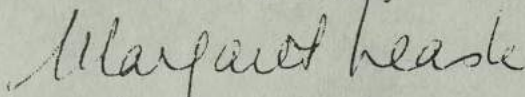
YOUNG ELIZABETHAN MEMBERS - DIARY DATES

SUNDAY OCTOBER 20 - ALPHA BETA at the Bondi Pavilion Theatre 7.30pm tickets \$3.50 - includes party after the show with the cast. Don't miss this moving drama - Plenty of parking near theatre. For bookings and further information please ring Janice 7991248. Closing date October 16 - so book immediately.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 20 - ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of Y.E.M.S. 6.30pm 153 Dowling Street, POTTS POINT. Drinks served prior to meeting. Please contact Janice for proxy form.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8 - GALA CHRISTMAS PARTY with special guests from the AUSTRALIAN BALLET Company. Private home, 1pm. Late smorgasbord luncheon with all the festive trimmings. \$3.00 each. CLOSING DATE DECEMBER 2. Enquiries and bookings - Janice Iverach, 2/56 Orpington Street, ASHFIELD, 2131. Telephone: 799 1248.

Yours sincerely



Margaret Leask

A.E.T.T.

153 Dowling St, Potts Point

357 1200

N.B. IF YOU HAVE NOT YET RENEWED YOUR MEMBERSHIP - PLEASE DO SO BY OCTOBER 31.