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marionette theatre
new bets for old tote
s.a.f.c. youth activities
german playwright in australia

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Front cover: Joanne Priest and
Ramzy Mishriky with
Dunwinnie the Emu in the
workshop of the Marionette
Theatre.



(Above)
*A group of Grade 5 and 6
students at Linden Park
Demonstration Primary School
enacting a scene on their theme
"Survival".*

(Right)
*Helmut Bakaitis—Director of
Youth Activities, S.A.T.C. He
has recently had a play for
children published by
Heinemann Educational Aus-
tralia Pty. Ltd. called THE
INCREDIBLE MIND-
BLOWING TRIAL OF JACK
SMITH...!*

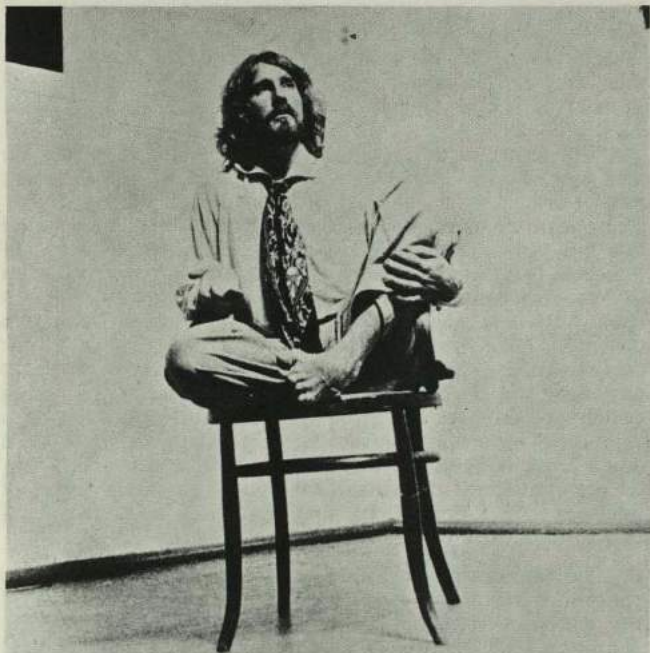
*N.B. Martyn Goddard was re-
cently appointed Publicity
Manager to the South
Australian Theatre Com-
pany. Prior to this appoint-
ment, he worked with the
Pageant Theatre in Educa-
tion Company and in
television in Melbourne.*

THEATRE for children has, in the past, been seen as the outcast of Australian drama. Ideally, theatre in schools should be a vehicle for the introduction to a whole range of art forms, an inspiration to future audiences and a catalyst for free expression and communication.

The reality usually falls short of that ideal. Because of low or non-continuing subsidies and the near impossibility of building a regular children's company of high standard, schools' theatre, apart from the few conspicuous exceptions, consists largely of touring performances of Primary School "entertainments" and the presentation in secondary schools of potted versions of set texts. This is not only inferior theatre; it has little to do with the needs of children.

If there is active participation in drama within the school on a long-term basis, the situation is changed. Theatre, to define it as widely as possible, means far more than simply performance. It can become a clearing-house involving almost anything you like: music, painting, writing, sculpture, woodwork, dance or architecture. The ideals which are shared by a lot of people working professionally in children's theatre are seldom fully achieved. The youth programme at the South Australian Theatre Company is run by Helmut Bakaitis. His title is Director, Youth Activities; but in fact he is a member, with George Ogilvie and Rodney Fisher, of the artistic triumvirate which runs the S.A.T.C. The significance of the Company's youth programme is that it is as important to the S.A.T.C. as the seasons of plays or the Theatre-Go-Round programme. Helmut Bakaitis says: "Initially I had complaints from actors that youth work was cutting across rehearsal time. I had to try to convince actors that the two things were as important as each other. I think it's still true to say that the standard of a great deal of children's theatre is appalling. I think everyone is to blame here. Any Tom, Dick or Harry can put on a syllabus play and make a profit. I think it's very important to establish high standards and maintain them."

Helmut Bakaitis, during his years with the Melbourne Theatre Company, became a very successful actor. But, given a completely free choice, he would never act again. He says: "Most actors say they're not totally involved, or they're not being used to their full capacity; and with me it's the same. I find that working with children I am totally involved. At the end of two hours I am totally exhausted, you know, and it's satisfying because I've been on a razor's edge for that entire time—disaster is so easy and so difficult to avoid."



S.A.T.C. youth activities

MARTYN GODDARD talks with HELMUT BAKAITIS

The sort of excitement and the sort of response one receives from working with children far outweighs anything in the theatre."

Probably the greatest problem in any school's drama scheme is the vast number of schools which should benefit. There is a temptation to include all schools in the State, so that this form of education is truly egalitarian. But that is a dangerous ideal in a way: if all schools were to be included, none would receive more than a superficial and inadequate idea of drama. So, 1973 began with 24 schools in the programme. None had any trained drama teachers, and few had any significant activity in drama. All S.A.T.C. work was to be completely free of charge to the children and to the schools. During first term, 18 schools were represented consistently at the Monday night teachers' workshops. Another four were less consistent, and two did not attend. Of those two, one pulled out of the programme because they had sufficiently trained teachers, and because the headmaster disagreed with the workshop method. The other simply discontinued. But the 18 who continued are good. Helmut Bakaitis wishes he could give them a diploma: "They have really found something. They will be good. Wherever they go, I'm fully confident that they will be able to do a great deal in drama."

Each school is visited seven times throughout the year, working with the same group of 80 children. Each Monday night, one teacher from each school attends the Teachers' Workshop, where further exercises and ideas are explored, so that follow-up work may proceed."

In the selection of schools, there is a tendency to favour less privileged schools: those without any drama department, and often those in poorer areas. The youth team has more than its share of problem schools. "At one particular school," says Bakaitis, "our experience was, by comparison with others, not so good. It's in an economically depressed area. The kids were little toughs. Eighty was too many. The week before we got to the school, a first grade boy had slashed open another boy's face with a nail. That weekend was the first that the school hadn't been broken into or set fire to. So there are a lot of problems. As a rule, teachers don't usually stay at that school for longer than two years: after that, they go on a rest cure. The teacher who has been

coming to the workshop has been attending consistently and, purely through her efforts, there is now a group of children who are so keen to go on with drama in any shape or form that they will slowly influence the whole school."

But most of the schools are neither very rich nor very poor, neither very good nor very bad. Some are better than others: an excellent half-hour play written and produced by children at Ingle Farm Primary School near Adelaide will be filmed by the newly formed South Australian Film Development Corporation.

Helmut Bakaitis began his involvement with children's theatre by writing plays for children. Then, just before he left Melbourne four years ago, John Sumner of the Melbourne Theatre Company asked him to conduct a week-long seminar for senior high school students about theatre. At the time Helmut had an idea for a play, so he used the seminar to try out his ideas. "The play was really experimental: it was about the massacre at My Lai in Vietnam, and it was called the Rusty Calley Revue. It was very bloodthirsty and it had everything which children's plays shouldn't have . . . I mean it had morality, it had sex, politics and drugs. Well, during the week I tried out all the ideas in workshops with the kids. Most of the ideas worked, but the most exciting thing I discovered was that it was the process of trying out of the ideas which really turned everyone on. I suddenly found that a whole series of doors had opened and at the end of the week I knew that group a hundred times better than I could have got to know them through performance, and I'd said the message a hundred times more clearly."

He began to develop a way of working which was put to Di Sharpe of Australian Theatre for Young People in Sydney. She agreed to a workshop programme called "Mutants." "It was a sort of make-your-own-monster show, where we visited about twelve schools not once but three times. We performed a play about Frankenstein. There was a group of four of us . . . a dancer, an architect, myself and an actor. We did a whole lot of exercises with the 100-odd children and at the end gave them a sort of make-your-own-monster kit. We came back a week later to look at all the monsters they'd made and gradually began building up plays about the theme of man creates monster, monster destroys man."

Some important results were achieved by the A.T.Y.P. workshops. At Bass Hill Primary School in Sydney, a small Italian minority was isolated from the other children. They made "The Wog Play," about a group of Italian families emigrating to Australia, constantly being rejected by Australian society until they were forced to band tightly together in order to protect themselves against their hostile surroundings. The families became criminals, who roamed the streets, bashed and robbed. Helmut says: "It was really a simplified version of a social problem. It was probably the first time that the other kids in that school had even understood the problem, and it was stated in such simple terms that it became meaningful. That's very idealistic, and happens only once in a blue moon. But there are so many effects like that. It happens in individual cases all the time where the shy boy, the one the teacher says has never spoken, who comes from a broken home, opens up and becomes confident. The reason we concentrate on the 9-12 age group is because of the traumatic shock between primary school, which on the whole tends to be a more creative environment, and secondary school. The transition from primary into secondary tends to be from freedom into a strict social system."

"We can show the sixth or seventh grade kids that play is just as important as work and that you mustn't separate the two because they are indivisible . . . then there's hope. The whole problem with Western society, if you like, is that work and play are in opposite camps and don't have any meeting-ground. By examining play, you enrich it; and if you bring the element of play into work, and the element of work into play, the two approach each other more closely and you begin to have a balanced outlook."

universal language of marionette theatre

by MARIE KNUCKEY

The Australian Opera and The Australian Ballet have become almost household words in Australia and have earned considerable acclaim, but there have been fewer fanfares for the third major company initiated by the Elizabethan Theatre Trust.

Yet the Marionette Theatre of Australia, formed in 1965, has taken its distinctively Australian performances, in 12 languages, from Tokyo to Mandalay, from Phnom Penh to Seoul, from Colombo to the Himalayas.

It has also taken this ancient form of theatre—performed by a remarkably young company—to tens of thousands of Australian children in the cities and country areas.

Overseas audiences have listened enthralled to the adventures of Little Fella Bindi in French, Cantonese, Japanese, Korean, Laotian, Malay, Sinhalese, Bengali, Urdu and Khmer. Bunyip Bluegum San is as much at home in Tokyo as in Sydney.

All the productions are done to soundtracks. The tapes are recorded in each country by the top local actors. Then they are sent back and the company has to learn word cues in that particular language in order to keep the flow of the production fitting with the dialogue.

The Marionette Theatre of Australia is unusual on more than one count.

It is one of the largest touring puppet companies of its kind in the world. And its young manipulators have earned an overseas reputation in a world where skilled marionette manipulators are becoming increasingly rare.

"This style of theatre is very similar to the 18th century Italian and French companies," says Miss Lesley Hammond, the company's young Administrator.

"They're not a commercial or economic proposition because of the high cost of running them. They need a subsidy. Consequently the only countries, apart from us, which now have something like this are the communist countries, and perhaps one or two others where theatre is very subsidised.

"Czechoslovakia is very keen on puppetry and has a university course on the subject.

"Germany has no large scale marionette theatre, but I think they give small grants to various puppeteers."

The biggest puppet theatre in the world is the State Central Puppet Theatre in Moscow. It has a permanent puppet theatre building—actually two theatres joined together.

It does some tours, but the touring productions are not as elaborate as those performed in its Moscow Theatre; whereas the Australian marionette company takes the same production that children in the capital cities see on its country tours.

Children in Zeehan or Savage River in Tasmania, Julia Creek in Queensland or Manjimup in W.A. see the same fully staged shows as those in Sydney or Melbourne.

However, the Marionette Theatre cannot match Moscow's State Central Puppet Theatre in technical sophistication.

Because the theatre was built specifically for puppets, they can pop up in the seat next to you or out of panels in the walls, and productions can feature full choirs and all sorts of elaborate technicalities.

There are a couple of hundred people on the staff and the theatre performs for adults as well as for children.

Miss Hammond spent two months overseas last year, and saw puppetry from most of the communist countries.

"I was amazed at the number of people that came out to take their bow at the end," she said. "They use twice the number of people to achieve anywhere near the effect that we do."

But to European puppet companies one hundred miles is a vast tour. To the Marionette Theatre of Australia it is one day's work.

"European companies found it impossible to understand that our year is like travelling from London to Moscow all the time. Our company is travelling for about three-quarters of the year and no other puppet company tours with a show anywhere near the size we do over such incredible distances," said Miss Hammond.

"I found there was very little of marionettes being done anywhere. In the communist countries they are doing mainly rod puppets and glove puppets. This is because it is so difficult to train marionette manipulators, which is a much more difficult art than that of rod or glove puppets. So the communist countries have turned to easier forms of puppetry, but I don't think they give as good a theatrical effect," said Miss Hammond.

So The Marionette Theatre of Australia is something of a rarity in the world of puppetry and unusual also because of the youth of the puppeteers—Graeme Mathieson, Phillip Edmiston, Bill Whittle, Joe Newey, Leonora Boyack and Douglas Lilley.

The youngest is 19 and their average age about 26.

Miss Hammond believes the Salzburg Marionettes is the nearest comparable company in a lot of ways. However, the Salzburg Group, which came to Australia for an Adelaide Festival, play strictly to adults.

Miss Hammond attended the World Puppet Congress in France last year, and then went to Zagreb in Yugoslavia to the communist countries' International Puppet Festival.

"Our puppeteers really have achieved very, very high standards of manipulation," she said. "I haven't seen anything other than Salzburg which is comparable. And I saw about 50 different companies from about 40 countries when I was overseas."

About 30 countries were represented at the world congress, from as far afield as Chile and Morocco, with five troupes from Japan.

"I think some of the most interesting and original puppetry being done at the moment is in Bulgaria. I saw a marvellous production they did for adults with huge stylised rod puppets about one of their folk heroes, Krali Marko, a sort of King Arthur-type figure."

There was a guest Indian company performing with large

A group of delighted school children getting to know the puppets from THE EXPLORERS.





The puppeteers and their puppets during a performance of THE MAGIC PUDDING.

shadow puppets and a guest Englishman doing the traditional Punch and Judy show at the International Puppet Festival.

It was competitive and Miss Hammond was a member—the only one from the West—of the jury of judges.

"Their performances were much the same length as ours—about 1½ hours—but the story content was totally different. For instance, they did THE UGLY DUCKLING, and I don't think there's enough meat in the Ugly Duckling to get an hour and a half's performance out of it. So our criteria for judging what was dramatically effective in terms of labouring a point tended to differ. They were more conditioned to the WAR AND PEACE's of this world."

The Australian company does a capital city season during school holidays and tours the country during term time.

Wherever they can set up their stage and children can come, they perform. For many of the children in the outback it is the only fully staged theatre they see, and they come in from as far as 200 miles away for performances.

The Company has about three tons of equipment and travels in a truck and a small bus, except in Queensland where the Arts Council, which sponsors the country tours, has a large bus. ("We wish they had one in the other States, too," says Miss Hammond.)

By now they've got touring down to a fine art, and all they need is space. They carry their own lighting, sound system and stage, so that they virtually build a stage on a stage.

They perform in theatres or town halls or wherever there is space.

It's a tough life. They do two performances in the morning, setting up the three tons of equipment and packing it away again before driving on to the next town the same day.

On the road for weeks or months at a time, they drive from the snows of the south to the steamy or burning tropics of Australia's north. All are keen music lovers, and their portable record players or tape recorders go with them, and their opera tapes or whatever spill music on the air as their small bus crosses the continent from north to south or from

east to west.

And if a cane toad hops across the stage in the middle of a performance, or there are plagues of fieldmice in their beds, it's all in a day's work.

The Marionette Theatre of Australia has been almost exclusively Australian in its productions. But last year they experimented with a Black Theatre production using PETER AND THE WOLF and A YOUNG PERSON'S GUIDE TO THE ORCHESTRA. They also brought out Jan Bussell, who is president of UNIMA, the world organisation of puppet theatres, and allowed him to choose his own production. Being English, he chose THE WATER BABIES.

THE WATER BABIES was a much more delicate production than the vigorous Australian productions had been, with their bolder puppet movements. THE WATER BABIES was delicately gentle, and the Trust is hoping that their new production, TALES FROM NOONAMEENA, will combine the best of both styles. It will have its gentle as well as its vigorous side.

TALES FROM NOONAMEENA, which will have its premiere at the Sydney Opera House on 4 December, is the most ambitious production the company has ever undertaken, and is expected to be its greatest achievement to date. Noonameena is an Aboriginal word meaning "a sleeping place in the bush" and the production tells of the spirit Baiamee who awakens the bush creatures from their sleep in the Dreamtime.

It includes the spectacular creation of the sun—when Brolga throws Dunwinnie, the Emu's egg, into the sky; a bushfire; a wildflower scene and the creation of the rainbow when Yurlunggur the rainbow snake tries to reach up to his wife, the Evening Star.

More than 100 people, including puppeteers, puppetmakers, actors, singers, musicians, will have contributed to its creation by the time it has its first performance.

Hal Saunders wrote the play and with Iris Mason wrote the music, with arrangements by Herbie Marks. Kenneth Rowell has designed the production and Joanne Priest is the director.

Miss Priest is tremendously excited about the show, and about the glittering venetian blind backdrop which Kenneth Rowell has designed, and which will allow spectacular effects of light and darkness.

In TALES FROM NOONAMEENA, the Marionette Theatre hopes it will be bringing Australian folklore, as ancient as the legendary Aboriginal Dreamtime, to Australian children and later, perhaps, to audiences in other countries.

However, it will be dressed in a modern sense of humour as well—Brolga is a dancer in pointed shoes, Phlumph the Wombat does a soft shoe shuffle and Wahn, the one-eyed crow, has a secret weapon—a telescope stolen from Dampier—tucked under his wing.

Marie Knuckey is a journalist with the Sydney Morning Herald.

This puppet seems quite at home with his real-life counterpart.



Leila Blake

in feminine plural



Leila Blake, the outstanding actress and director, will give performances of her one-woman show, **FEMININE PLURAL**, at the Sydney Opera House in November. Her witty and charming interpretations of the women of Shakespeare and Oscar Wilde have received wide critical acclaim in Australia and her Opera House performances are looked forward to with great pleasure.

Miss Blake has divided her professional career between Australia and the United Kingdom. English born, she arrived in Sydney in the early 1950's and became resident director at the Mercury Theatre in Phillip Street. Her productions at this theatre included **EMIL AND THE DETECTIVES** and the French-Canadian comedy **THE HAPPY TIME**; starring Rod Taylor and the late Lloyd Berrell. In 1956 she opened Sydney's first professional theatre-in-the-round, **The Intimate**, in Bligh Street, and directed Thornton Wilder's **OUR TOWN** and J. B. Priestley's **I HAVE BEEN HERE BEFORE**.

She returned to England in 1957 and among her productions there was Oscar Wilde's **AN IDEAL HUSBAND** at the Theatre Royal, York, to mark the occasion of the wedding of the Duke of York. At the 1961 Dublin Festival, Leila directed Harold Pinter's **A NIGHT OUT**, which she also adapted from the stage for television. This production was subsequently presented at the Comedy Theatre in the West End. In England, Leila also appeared in radio and television productions, including the **Armchair Theatre** and **Flying Doctor** series.

1965 saw Leila back in Sydney playing Honor Klein in Robin Bailey's production of **A SEVERED HEAD**, which was presented in Sydney, Melbourne, Canberra and Newcastle. She then formed the Melbourne-based company, Studio Australia, and with co-directors Kevin Howard and Ron Ferrier, presented a number of productions including **HALLOWEEN** and **BIRDBATH**. She also appeared at the Wayside Theatre in the solo role in Beckett's **HAPPY DAYS**.

In 1968, Leila toured South Australia for the South Australian Theatre Company playing Lady Macbeth and Gertrude in **HAMLET**. Settling in Melbourne, she appeared as Grace in the Melbourne Theatre Company's production of **A DAY IN THE DEATH OF JOE EGG**.

At the 1969 Perth Festival she was Mistress Quickly in John Sumner's production of **HENRY IV PART ONE**. Also in 1969, Leila appeared in Ron Ferrier's production of **BIRDBATH** at the Q Theatre, Sydney. For her performance as Velma Sparrow in this play, Leila was named Actress of the Year by Variety Magazine.

Musical comedy audiences will remember Leila as Golde in **FIDDLER ON THE ROOF** at the Theatre Royal, Sydney, in 1970. She also appeared as Caroline Chisholm in the Pinne-Battye musical **CAROLINE** (which was based on her own idea) at the St. Martin's Theatre in Melbourne.

Her most recent performance in the commercial theatre was Elaine in **THE LAST OF THE RED HOT LOVERS**—the Seven Keys/Edgley-Williamson production which toured Australia. Leila returned to direction at the Claremont Theatre, South Yarra, with the notable production of Alexander Buzo's **ROOTED**, which ran for a record ten weeks. At the Independent Theatre, Sydney, she directed Jack Hibberd's **WHITE WITH WIRE WHEELS** and played the role of Bananas in **THE HOUSE OF BLUE LEAVES**.

Earlier this year, she toured Queensland for the Arts Council with Kevin Howard in the delightful comedy **THE TWO OF US**.

In May this year, yet another facet of this versatile personality was revealed when her first play, a one-act drama, **PREY**, premiered at the Q Theatre. Leila has just written a full-length play, **BRUTE FORCE**, which, hopefully, will be presented soon.

In **FEMININE PLURAL**, Leila Blake displays her special talent as a solo performer and creates an entertaining and enjoyable evening for all theatre-goers.

FEMININE PLURAL will be presented in the Musical Hall, Sydney Opera House, on 12, 15 and 19 November at 8.15 p.m. Two matinee performances will be given on Wednesday 14 and Thursday 15 November, at 1.30 p.m.

new bets for the Old Tote

by Norman Kessell

AS OH-Day, at long last, fast approaches, the four major bodies to occupy the Sydney Opera House are perfecting their plans for the big take-over.

For three of the four—The Australian Broadcasting Commission, The Australian Opera and The Australian Ballet—the major problems, apart from general expansion in size and sound of presentation, lie in adaptation to this handsome edifice's assorted advantages and drawbacks, factors which vary according to which school of thought you support.

The Old Tote Theatre Company, however, faces a much more formidable undertaking in that it involves a doubling, at least, of its present activities—administrative, technical and production.

All this must be devised and managed from its present limited headquarters on the Western campus of the University of New South Wales—premises it occupied originally as a temporary home in 1969 while the new Old Tote Theatre was to be built. Plans for this were shelved following a proposal that the company would play in the Opera House. So the Parade Theatre and its, at present, rather ramshackle outbuildings will continue to serve as the Old Tote Theatre Company's headquarters. Happily, this 10-year-old link between the university and a professional theatre is one that does credit to both sides.

The University has proved a benign benefactor, and, as Old Tote director Robin Lovejoy says, the theatre has meant something pretty profound to the University's public image and its way of life. This is something all will surely hope to see continue.

For as Mr. Lovejoy says: "This will continue to be our only home. The Opera House will be a place in which we present plays and that is all. There are neither storerooms, workshops nor administrative offices of any kind available. Kensington will still be the heart of our industry." And he sees 1974 as being a very difficult year.

"The Opera House has a whole lot of in-built assets as well as a great many in-built liabilities," he said. "And in the second year even those assets become almost liabilities. Novelty once worn off is worse than no novelty at all. After 1974, however, I think we'll be back to sanity and be able to gauge the real public reaction rather than the excitement of the moment."

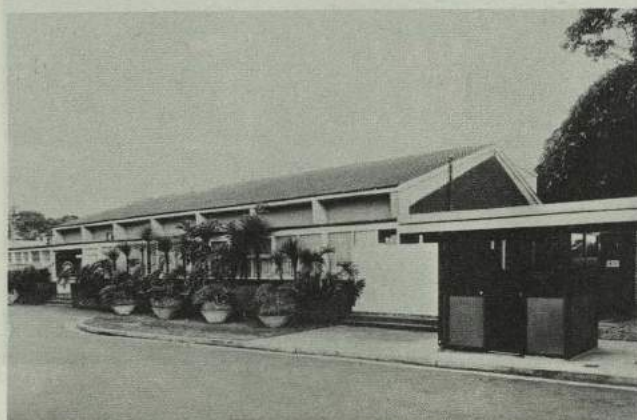
The company is counting on the proven success of the subscription system to cushion it over a difficult transition period. "I believe we are going to need the subscription pattern perhaps more urgently in 1974 than we have in 1973," said Mr. Lovejoy.

Accordingly, he plans to open the 1974 season with the Opera House drama theatre and the Parade Theatre operating jointly on a six-play subscription basis—three plays at each theatre.

Every effort will be made to select plays best suited to the image and style of each of the two theatres. And at each theatre the plays will be presented in repertoire.

Pattern for the Opera House will be set in the initial festival season of three plays presented in repertoire on a four performance basis.

It opens with *RICHARD II* on Tuesday, 2 October. This plays again matinee and night on Wednesday and on Thursday night—four performances. Brecht's, *THE THREE-PENNY OPERA* opens on Friday, 5 October, plays matinee and night on Saturday and night on Monday. Then David Williamson's new play, *WHAT IF YOU DIED TOMORROW?* opens on Tuesday 9 October, plays matinee and night on Wednesday, and night on Thursday. Then *RICHARD II* comes back on the Friday and this cycle continues with a change of programme every Tuesday and Friday till the season ends on 17 January, 1974.



The Parade Theatre, Kensington.

The company will continue with three-play repertoires at least for the first part of 1974 because, as Mr. Lovejoy says, it is a convenient and logical pattern. It means each play gets an equal number of Fridays, Saturdays and Mondays which would not occur with any other pattern.

At the Parade Theatre the pattern is likely to be different. Each play probably will run for a fortnight, then return for shorter periods. This is a matter still under discussion. There will be no need, of course, for the conjoint seasons to open and close on the same dates. In fact, this will be avoided to prevent any clash of opening nights.

Asked if there was any likelihood of the Opera House and Parade Theatre seasons being sold as separate subscription series, Mr. Lovejoy said: "I can make no promises for the first year. In the second year, yes, possibly."

Mr. Lovejoy said the schedule for the opening season at the Opera House gave an average of 38 to 43 performances of each play. He added: "After all the subscribers have been accommodated its open to us whether we do a few more performances of one play than another."

"Alternatively, we could bring forward a play from Season One of 1974 to replace one in the festive season for which there was little demand. That's why we have not announced a date for the opening of the 1974 season. We haven't even pencilled it in on our own calendars. We will literally be waiting to see the reaction to the opening season."

"We also have a certain amount of elasticity in being able to change a planned programme provided our decisions are made before the allocation of subscribers' tickets because people book for nights rather than dates."

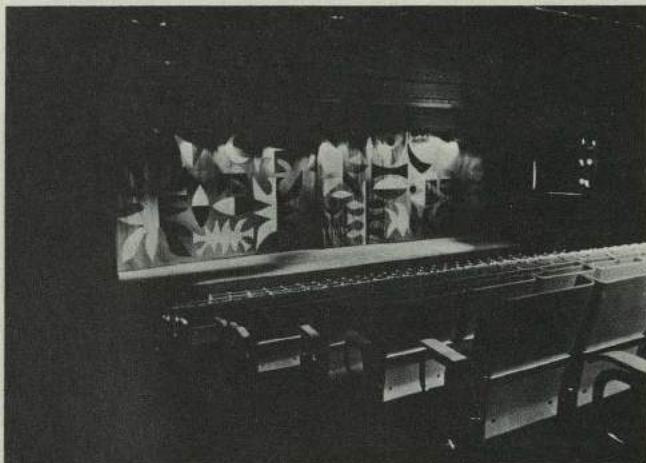
Mr. Lovejoy said the moment the first three plays were open and in their routine of running, the company would be in rehearsal for Season One of 1974 to open some time in January.

Inherent in the repertoire system is one of the Old Tote Company's biggest headaches at the Opera House—how to store and handle sets for three shows at a time.

"It's going to be exceedingly difficult," said Mr. Lovejoy. "The drama stage is not very easy in terms of access in the first instance. Secondly, there is no storage space available without moving sets up in a lift and out of the building to somewhere else."

"However, we are determinedly designing our sets in such a way that the two not in use can be stored in some area not currently occupied by the third set. I'll be frank and say this has not yet been worked out to finality. It is very much a technical problem."

He said it was not possible this time to devise interchangeable



Drama Theatre, Sydney Opera House.

sets because the three plays had been chosen for their diversity rather than their unity.

"I mean, the whole idea was that we should do a major classic, then a sort of modern pop classic and then a modern play. So we are getting a ritualistic staging for one, a pop art staging for the next and then we come to a realistic, naturalistic box set. They don't unify in any way—quite deliberately.

"The prime consideration was to give the public variety and my prime consideration really was that the opening programme at the Opera House should give some kind of signature on our intention, which is that the Opera House is making no difference whatsoever to Old Tote policies.

"We are simply moving under another roof, so I wanted our first season to be very strongly and very clearly of what our policy has been for years. In other words, I didn't want any member of the public to feel it is all some great new gimmick and tiara nonsense. That's not what we're on about, so the three plays, I think, are clearly representative of Old Tote style."

So in that case, what about the non-subscriber, the single-seat buyer? And also the request by the Opera House Trust that a percentage of seats be kept available for door sales?

Mr. Lovejoy replied: "There's no law that says we should have non-subscriber seats. It is, however a policy we've laid down ourselves. My policy is that there must be a minimum percentage of single seats available for every night, but that the aggregate percentage—which must be greater than that—might be reached by end of season availability.

"Furthermore, in addition to the single seats which are bookable 12 days ahead, there will always be available at the door on each day of performance a minimum percentage of seats carefully laid down not only as our own policy, but in agreement with the Opera House Trust."

Meanwhile, back at the Parade . . .

Final presentation this year was David Williamson's *JUGGLERS THREE*, with which the Melbourne Theatre Company reciprocated for the Old Tote Company's visit to Melbourne with *DON'S PARTY*. The theatre then closed to be re-equipped technically, principally by the construction of a fly tower.

"The fly tower was originally a part of the design we suggested to the university when it decided to convert what was Room 200 into the Parade Theatre," said Mr. Lovejoy. "But there was not then the money available to build the sort of theatre we desired.

"The best thing possible was to lay the foundation for a fly tower and stop it there. We preferred to work without a tower than to have to economise elsewhere. We said we would rather have a more comfortable foyer and better seating than a tower.

"Today's improvement is coming about by transference of

new bets for the Old Tote (cont.)

some \$21,000 raised by an appeal for funds to rebuild the original Old Tote Theatre and since held in trust. Every donor was written to and all agreed to the money being used for this new purpose.

"There will be certain other modifications, but they are all backstage and will not really be seen by the audience. All are designed to increase our efficiency. As of now, for instance, there is just nowhere to place lights to show on actors' faces. Our electricians work miracles, but we are all a little tired of working miracles for every single production."

Once the two theatres are operating, is there any likelihood of the Old Tote Company putting shows into other houses, as it did with *BUTLEY* at the Independent Theatre?

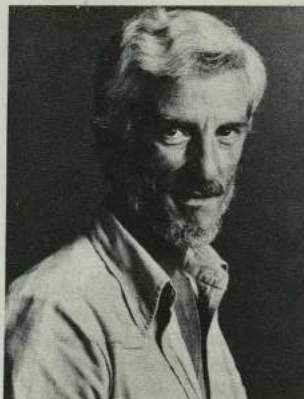
"Totally conceivable," said Mr. Lovejoy. "Let me put it this way. There is no end to what the Old Tote will attempt to do if it has the strength. If there is, in our opinion, a public need anywhere we will try to meet it.

"One has to consider first just how far one can spread the available pool of talent. And I'm not speaking only of acting talent, by any means. I'm talking about administrative, technical and all the other creative talents which go to make theatre. The pool is very small indeed."

Is this kind of expansion likely in 1974?

"Yes, it is highly possible. And not just in Sydney, either. Already our touring activity is expanding rapidly. We've not only had *O'MALLEY* and *DON'S PARTY* all over Australia, but we sent the former abroad.

"At last we seem to have overcome certain factors that were making country touring unrewarding, to use a euphemism. By determined regularity we are gaining audiences and also getting rid of some of the obstructions in the country system.



Robin Lovejoy.



Drew Forsythe.

We are spreading education in local areas to a point where they are actually helping us to put a show on.

"It's been a slow process, but today there's a great improvement on the situation of two or three years ago. Each year is getting better and therefore bigger."

Is there a place at the Opera House for the Australian Theatre For Young People, with which the Old Tote is now closely identified?

Mr. Lovejoy said he personally was against productions labelled as specifically for children, but the probability was that at one theatre there would be shows catering for the school holiday trade and at the other special extra matinees of shows designed for an adult audience, but likely to be attractive to younger people.

It follows that with all this increased activity there must be a substantial increase in the size of the permanent Old Tote Company?

"Certainly so, and this is another area where not only the Old Tote Company is feeling the pinch. Others are quite frantic in their efforts to find actors of experience."

Mr. Lovejoy said he shied off use of the term "permanent" company because the word meant different things to different people.

"By company I mean those people who have associated themselves with the Old Tote's styles and philosophies on a continuing basis," he said. "Permanent" might apply to those people we have on an exclusive basis.

"We have some on a 12 months' contract, others for as long as three years, but with certain options. If they get tired or something, they can go, but with a guarantee from us that we would like them to return.

"Then, of course, there are a great many other people whose personal and domestic circumstances make it unsuitable for them to be tied to continuous working. Ruth Cracknell, a very important permanent member of the Old Tote, is a prime example. I simply notify her of what roles in the year should be hers in my opinion and she has the option to say whether she wants them or not. If she wants any of them, she gives me her word she will be available at the time I need her.

"The same applies to Dinah Shearing. As long as she wants a home here she has it. The only way with senior actors is that they are tied to us on a philosophic and partly financial basis. That gives them some freedom to advance their careers in other areas. Ron Haddrick has always had this built in as a gentleman's agreement.

"I am totally reliant, with people of this stature, on their interest in us and bonds of another kind than those that can be made financially. I have never believed that a financial or contractual bond was worth a damn if there was not a bond of some other kind backing it up."

Mr. Lovejoy said the company now has available the service of 32 major players plus a number of extras.

"That will cover the Opera House season to 17 January," he said. "From that point on we will already be in rehearsal for the next development which may very well involve considerably more than that.

"Some of those people who are specialised personalities won't necessarily be right for the first three plays in the next season and may want to do a film or something, so their places will be filled by other people of equal specialisation.

"But the middle range group that I consider is the core of our growth will possibly continue on into Season One of 1974 without a break.

"That again is all part of my stepladder philosophy—that people enter the Old Tote from wherever, stay with us long enough to have absorbed some of what we stand for and then depart to other things, always knowing they can come back to the same kind of group feeling they left.

"I find it doesn't matter how long they stay away. They all fit in as if they haven't been away at all. Neil Fitzpatrick, Ron Haddrick, Dinah Shearing, Patricia Connolly were all members of the Trust Players and I suppose I am the continuation from there to here.

"They've all worked for the Old Tote and they've gone away and come back and there's never any bother at all.

"The same with youngsters like Drew Forsythe, to whom I can really say, 'See? It works.' I told him he would have to stay with us, that he had a kind of talent I didn't think commercial theatre would appreciate and that it was going to take three years.

"And almost on the button I was able to say to him the night before FORGET ME NOT LANE opened: 'Tomorrow you will be a star'. He didn't believe it, but it was true. Now he was ready for other scenes, which is why I put him in BUTLEY to give him a different kind of aspect and attitude to a different kind of play.

"Next he must go and do other things for other people, but I know wherever he goes in the world he will always return here comfortably and easily. No problem. And he will bring back to us what he learns elsewhere."

Mr. Kessell is Theatre Critic for the Daily Telegraph, Sydney.



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See p.20 of this "news" for details of the various courses on offer in early 1974 at the University.

lady caroline lamb

Set in Regency England, Robert Bolt's **LADY CAROLINE LAMB**, with Sarah Miles playing the title role, captures the elegance and excitement of the age when the poet Byron emerged dramatically as the central romantic figure in society and literature. The film tells the story of the vivacious, high-spirited Lady Caroline Lamb, whose extreme and passionate life dazzled and dismayed London high society in the early 19th Century. She loved and married William Lamb, a rising young politician—later to become Lord Melbourne and Prime Minister in Victoria's reign—but rushed headlong into a scandalous affair with the poet, Lord Byron. Before it was over, William's political career was almost ruined and Lady Caroline was on the brink of madness.

His first film as director, Robert Bolt also wrote the screenplay for **LADY CAROLINE LAMB**. Bolt's previous film achievements include screenplays for **LAWRENCE OF ARABIA**, **DOCTOR ZHIVAGO**, **RYAN'S DAUGHTER** and **A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS** (from his original stage play).

Filmed on location in some of Britain's most elegant stately homes and historical buildings, **LADY CAROLINE LAMB** has an all-star cast with Jon Finch as William Lamb, Richard Chamberlain as Lord Byron, Laurence Olivier as Wellington, John Mills as Canning, Margaret Leighton as Lady Melbourne and Ralph Richardson as King George IV.

LADY CAROLINE LAMB will be released in Australia in October by Greater Union Theatres.



1. Sir Ralph Richardson portrays King George IV in "Lady Caroline Lamb".
2. Sarah Miles, as "Lady Caroline Lamb", goes to a London society fancy dress ball dressed as a Nubian slave.
3. Laurence Olivier, as the Duke of Wellington, receives a visit from Lady Caroline Lamb (Sarah Miles).

4. John Mills, as wily politician William Canning, tries to warn friend William Lamb (Jon Finch) that his wife's behaviour is wrecking his political career.

5. Richard Chamberlain, as dashing poet Lord Byron, is surrounded by adoring debutantes at the Holland House ball.



5

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"LIVE A LITTLE"
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the melbourne scene

by BARRY BALMER

The Melbourne Theatre Company has formed an association with St. Martins Theatre, South Yarra on a leasing basis. The first M.T.C. production will be *ALL MY SONS* by Arthur Miller opening 19 September, followed by *THE PLAY'S THE THING* by Molnar opening 17 October. The association has been negotiated to build larger theatre audiences in preparation for the Victorian Arts Centre; to build a team of actors with the same view in mind; to provide a wider repertoire of plays at a better overall standard and to avoid duplication of costs and services.

Things at the Pram Factory, home of the Australian Performing Group have not been very stable of late. *THE DRAGON LADY'S REVENGE* did not go as successfully as the A.P.G. had hoped, so two films were presented instead for a short season.

Then just as Barry Oakley's play *AUSTRALIA COLOURED SPECTACLES* was about to be premiered, it was cancelled. However, just prior to deadline, a return season of the Bob and Joe Show, the Nimrod Theatre production of *HAMLET*, Jack Hibberd's *WHO?* and Pinter's *THE DUMB WAITER* were mooted.

Rumour of the month on the theatrical grapevine is that Aztec Services will shortly be announcing the third visit to Australia by the legendary Marlene Dietrich.

A certain pop columnist was all agog with the information and he was seen dining with Kenn Brodzyak and Colleen Hewett at Bernard's Restaurant so there could be something in the report.

Betty Pounder, J.C.W.'s choreographer and director, has left for America where she will study the necessary background for the new J.C.W. musicals *PIPPIN* and *NIGHT MUSIC*. Betty went direct to the airport from a luncheon date with her old friend and that well known dancing teacher, Phyllis Kennedy, ex Sadler's Wells and Borovansky ballerina.

Phyllis Kennedy has been chosen by Orbit Tours of Melbourne and Sydney to lead its 1973 European Theatre Tour departing 21 December and visiting Amsterdam, East Berlin, London, Paris, Madrid, Rome, Vienna, Budapest, Bucharest and Athens. In East Berlin Joachim Tenschert, who directed *MOTHER COURAGE* for the M.T.C. at the Princess Theatre, Melbourne, recently, has arranged a visit to the Berlin Ensemble and other East German theatres of note.

JUGGLERS THREE, the David Williamson play recently seen at the Parade Theatre, Sydney, which was the Melbourne Theatre Company's production presented by the Old Tote Theatre Company in Sydney, played to full houses and created much controversy on its recent Arts Council of Australia tour of Victoria.

The Victorian Division of the Arts Council is also presenting Frank Traynor and his Jazz Preachers, an exhibition of Hans Holbein drawings, the Marionette Theatre of Australia, *DON'S PARTY* with the Old Tote Theatre Company, the Elizabethan Trust Orchestra and Vidiam Trio to Victorian country audiences before Christmas.

Old pros never die. They seem to turn up in the most unusual places. Clem Alexander was originally one of Australia's leading acrobats. He toured the Tivoli circuit with the Four Lazanders, played the Tivoli Gardens, Copenhagen, the Scandinavian mecca of show biz greats, the Palladium, London, toured America with the Folies Bergere, Martha Raye and Mickey Rooney and now in his late 60's Clem is the Melbourne Theatre Company carpenter.

J. C. Williamson Theatres had a great success with the American negro blues team and folk singers, Bonny Terry and Brownie McGhee for two concerts at the Dallas Brooks

Hall recently, plus a lunch hour concert at Monash University. The man behind the venture is up-and-coming young executive, Wayne Stevens.

His scoop booking of the year is the top pop singer Helen Reddy for two concerts at Festival Hall in November. Helen recently paid a quick visit to Melbourne from America, where she is one of the biggest names in her field, to attend the funeral of her mother, Stella Lamond, veteran vaudevillian and *BELBIRD ABC* TV serial actress.

Cecily Tyson, star of the film *SOUNDER*, recently visited Melbourne for a promotional junket prior to the launching of the film at the Athenaeum Theatre. Cecily is a friend of the jazz great, Miles Davis and the last time I saw her, she was a guest of David H. McIlwraith, Melbourne impresario at Sardi's, New York, when he hosted an after the show party when *Les Ballet Africains* premiered in New York under his management.

Her beaded Afro hairstyle made front page pictures in all three Melbourne papers!

Jetting around Australia in their private Electra jet, *SANTANA*, the avant-garde pop group caused a stir in Melbourne with their lack of availability for press interviews.

However, for their packed concerts at Festival Hall, including a third midnight concert, they were more than generous. They were so engrossed with their music—with its Latin American and jungle influences—they played for three hours non-stop. Man behind this successful tour was promoter Paul Dainty, who is at present negotiating to bring Barbra Streisand and Elvis Presley to Australia.

Claremont Theatre has been established 18 months. Currently the repertoire of this experimental theatre includes a 20th Century adaptation of the Sophocles' classic *OEDIPUS REX* and on 11 October *UBI ROI*, the comedy from the Theatre of the Absurd by Alfred Jarry will be presented. Claremont are experimenting with their own ideas of theatre and are now evolving as an ensemble group.

Nick Enright, formerly of the Nimrod Theatre, Sydney, makes his directorial debut at Russell Street Theatre with his production of *PRESIDENT WILSON IN PARIS* opening 9 October. This play by Ron Blair has already been a success in Sydney, Brisbane and Perth.

It will be part of an Australian play season including *STOP-WORK* by Simon Hopkinson, M.T.C. Youth Activities Officer, *THE LAST OF THE KNUCKLEMEN* by John Powers and *THE FRANCIS JAMES DOSSIER* by Bob Ellis, music by Patrick Flynn.

The opening night of the Kirov Ballet at the Palais Theatre, St. Kilda, was a memorable event for balletomanes.

As well as the fine dancing on stage, in the audience were some of the ex leading dancers of the legendary Borovansky Ballet. They included Kathleen Gorham, taking time off from her thriving dance academy, wearing a new gamin hairstyle and applauding vigorously at each clever enchainment, Martin Rubenstein once a leading male soloist with Borovansky and now a Royal Academy of Dancing Examiner and teacher, and Phyllis Kennedy, who is also enjoying success as a teacher at Loreto Convent.

A Community Arts Seminar, sponsored by the Australian Council for the Arts was held at the Guild Theatre, Melbourne University from Monday, 20 August to Friday, 24 August. It was designed to assess the needs and resources for community arts activities with lectures, discussions, combined with practical arts workshops.

Amongst the speakers were the Rev. Albert McPherson of St. Paul's Cathedral, Mr. Brian Dixon, Victorian Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation and Assistant Minister for Education, Mr. John Duigan, Melbourne University Student Theatre, Mr. Ted Lane, Town Clerk, Nunawading City Council, Mr. Eric Westbrook and Dr. Jean Battersby.

behind the scenes of noonameena



TRUST NEWS recently visited the workshop of the Marionette Theatre of Australia where preparations are well under way for **TALES FROM NOONAMEENA** which opens in December at the Opera House.

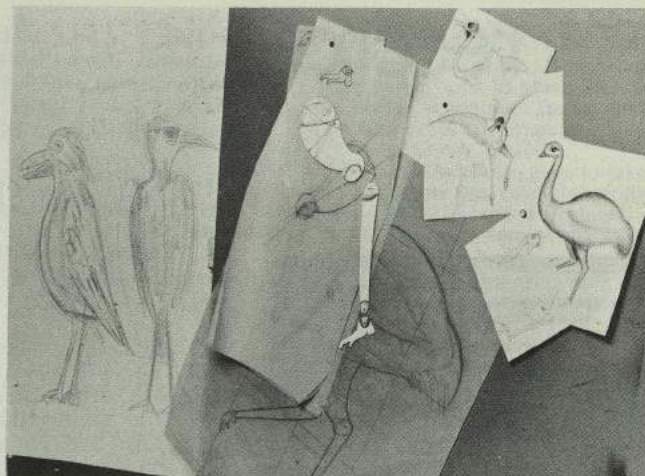
Joanne Priest, the director of **TALES** described what the production involves for her. Although Miss Priest has directed many productions for children, working with puppets for the **TALES** is a new experience for her. She has spent many hours backstage watching the puppeteers at work on the Marionette Company's previous production of **THE WATER BABIES**, learning about the technical aspects involved in the presentation of puppet theatre.

In the early stages of planning, Miss Priest listened to, and discussed, the songs and music for the production with the composers Hal Saunders and Iris Mason. She then expressed her feelings about the music to Herbie Marks, the musical arranger.

The production of **TALES FROM NOONAMEENA** involves many artists working in specialised areas to create the total effect. Miss Priest's role is to ensure co-ordination between the activities of the individual artists. She has already cast the roles that each puppeteer will 'play' and is planning the movements of the puppets.

The next step for Miss Priest is to train the singers in the characters of the animals they will portray, and to work on the small details of the production. By the end of October, the music will be ready and a first tape of the music and sing-

Ramzy at work on a puppet head.



Sketches and plans for the puppets.

ing voices will be made.

Meanwhile, the puppets are being made with skill and great care by Ramzy Mishriky. Working from scale drawings made from photographs and observation of the animals at the zoo, Ramzy is creating the animal puppets so that they appear realistic, yet have some exaggerated features, devised and designed by Kenneth Rowell, to suggest characterisation.

A clay mould of the head of the puppet is made first, along with a plaster mould to make copies. The actual head is made from a celastic material covered with brown paper. The mouth of the puppet is very important for characterisation and involves creating a skilful jaw-joint movement. All the joints of the puppet's limbs have to be very flexible and easily moved by the slight pull of a string.

When the head is made, Ramzy then concentrates on giving the animal puppet features appropriate to the character. For example, Dunwinnie the Emu has large, bright eyes and a big pointed mouth.

Then, the body of the puppet is made—within the measurement requirements of the designer, Kenneth Rowell. Each part of the body is carefully sketched then cut out from wood or whatever material is most suitable for realism and flexibility. Light wood is used to ensure easy manipulation for the puppeteers, and to enable smooth finish for the joints. Suitable materials are then chosen to cover the puppets with fabric which resembles real animal fur or feathers. The problem of finding the right colours and textures for this is still being solved.

The aim in the creation of the animal puppets for **TALES FROM NOONAMEENA**, is to make them as true to life as possible with some appealing human qualities as well.

When the puppets are complete and the Marionette Company has finished its current country tour, the puppeteers will string the puppets for which they are responsible.

Then Miss Priest will be casting actors and actresses for the speaking parts whose voices will match those of the singing voices. At the same time she will be working with the puppeteers, observing and timing each move of the puppets to co-ordinate the voices with the movement. While rehearsals are taking place, further sound tracks will be recorded of the speaking voices and sound effects. Finally, the entire sound track, incorporating orchestra, singing voices and speaking voices, will be made which will control each performance for the duration of the production.

The planning and preparation goes on, with obvious enjoyment for those involved and with the promise that **TALES FROM NOONAMEENA** will be a production to look forward to from the Marionette Theatre of Australia.

records

ROMEO AND JULIET—Tchaikovsky (Overture-Fantasy)—Prokofiev (Excerpts from the Ballet-Suite)—Berlioz (Love Scene)—SEIJI OZAWA and the SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA. An excellent recent release from Deutsche Grammophon 2530 308.

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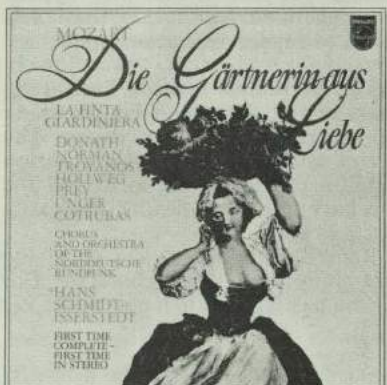
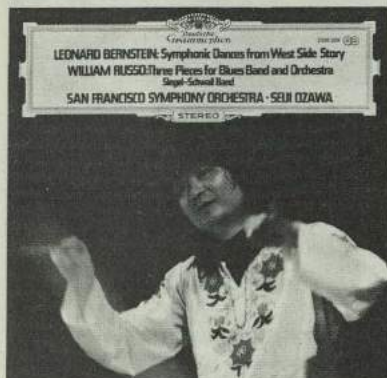
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STAGEWORLD

First steps have been taken to establish a YOUTH & CHILDREN'S THEATRE ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA to be administered by the A.E.T.T. The Association aims to promote communication, by means of newsletters and meetings, between Youth and Children's theatre groups throughout Australia. For more information about this important new activity, contact Carole Long, A.E.T.T., Sydney.

24 August saw the official launching by the Hon. Don Dunstan, Premier, South Australia, of CURRENCY METHUEN DRAMA PTY. LTD at the Len Evans Wine Cellars, Sydney. Originally, Currency Press Pty. Ltd. (Aust.), publishers of THE REMOVALISTS, THE SLAUGHTER OF ST. THERESA'S DAY, etc., and Associated Book Publishers, England, the new company publishes Australian plays. At the launching, the first publication under the joint imprint—Alexander Buzo's volume of three plays (NORM AND AHMED, ROOTED and the ROY MURPHY SHOW) was released.

To commemorate the tercentenary of the death of Moliere, the Green Room at the University of N.S.W., has just completed a highly successful and critically acclaimed three week season of Moliere's THE MISANTHROPE. Directed by John Tasker with a cast including John Krummel, Fay Kelton, June Collis and students at the University, the production was presented in association with an exhibition of photographs and items of interest from Moliere collections overseas. The production, thought to be the only commemorative one in Australia, coincided with the 15th A.U.L.A. Congress, held this year at the University. THE MISANTHROPE, with Diana Rigg and Alec McCowen in the leading roles, is currently part of the repertoire at the National Theatre at the Old Vic in London.

The Australian Ballet celebrated its 11th Anniversary while on tour in Warsaw, Poland in September. The Australian Ballet officially came into being on 1 September 1962 when Miss Peggy Van Praagh, now Dame Peggy, auditioned and gathered together dancers from the six Australian States to form the nucleus of Australia's first national Ballet company.

The Western Australian Theatre Company continues its popular series of rehearsed playreadings which began in April for students at the various educational institutions in W.A. The plays are selected from varying periods in theatre history. In October, Wilde's THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST and Shakespeare's ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA will be presented.

The Queensland Ballet is at present inviting applications from dancers for twelve month contracts with the company for 1974. Aarne Neeme has recently become director of the National Theatre at the Playhouse in Perth. His company of actors includes Robyn Nevin, Peter Rowley, Rod Williams, Terry Clarke, Raymond Duparc and Brian Blain.

Thirty-six artists from thirteen countries will exhibit paintings and sculptures at the first Biennale of Sydney at the Sydney Opera House in November. Directed by Mr. Franco Belgiorno-Nettis, the Biennale is being planned on the style of the Venice and Sao Paulo Biennales and will be held every two years, encompassing chiefly Asia and the Pacific.

The Community Theatre, Killara, has just announced a new subscription season and plans to take its production of Coward's BLITHE SPIRIT to Bankstown and Canberra in November.

Nimrod Street's production of John Bell's HAMLET, which earlier this year displayed a constant House Full sign in Sydney, will tour Melbourne and Canberra in October and return to Sydney in early November for a three week season at the Chapter Hall, St. Mary's Cathedral.

Rod McKuen, popular American singer, poet and songwriter, returns to Australia in November. After his guest appearance in concerts at the opening of the Opera House he will tour Australian cities for Aztec Services Pty. Ltd., appearing in Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth.

Jaap Flier a founder of the Nederlands Dans Theatre, has accepted a two year appointment as Co-Artistic Director of the Adelaide based AUSTRALIAN DANCE THEATRE. Together with Elizabeth Dalman, he will direct the artistic policies of the company recognised as one of Australia's leading modern dance groups. Plans are underway for an ambitious season for next year's Adelaide Festival of Arts.

New Opera, South Australia's new regional professional opera company, began its first season in the Adelaide Festival Theatre in September. Productions are performed in English with the repertoire drawn from the world of music theatre rather than grand

opera. In keeping with its aim to show that opera is not just for the initiated and can be fun, a 'surprise' performance, OPERA FOR ALL, is planned for 17 October at the Festival Theatre. It promises to be an entertaining and very lighthearted look at opera and its conventions—especially from the comic repertoire. Earlier this year, New Opera gave over 100 performances for primary school children in Adelaide and country areas of South Australia.

The Union Arts, a branch of Theatre 62 in Adelaide, aims to take theatre to the working man, and has begun this year presenting plays during lunch breaks at various factories and workshops—including Chrysler's, G.M.H. and the abattoirs—free of charge to the workers.

Good news for 1974! The Stratford Ontario Company will be arriving in Perth in February to present Moliere's THE IMAGINARY INVALID starring William Hutt.

The August school vacation was a very active one for the Queensland Theatre Company. A Theatre Experience week for senior high school students was held involving a live-in course of workshops and theatre activities. Special guest tutor was Richard Bradshaw, the Australian puppeteer who represented his country at an International puppet convention in Paris last year. A Theatre Techniques week was also held for students interested in the technical aspects of theatre. A highlight of the vacation activities was a performance by the Nambour Youth Theatre, of young Queensland playwright Michael Doneman's experimental plays THE COLOURS and HERE COMES THE SUN. Richard Bradshaw's Shadow Puppets also performed.

The Australian Theatre, Newtown, will present a jazz opera, WAR FOR PEACE, in a try-out season in November. Written by Sydney playwright Amy McGrath and composed by Arnold Butcher (working on a grant from the Council for the Arts), the opera is a



Moliere, 17th Century French dramatist.



Fay Kelton and June Collis in a scene from THE MISANTHROPE.

parable on modern protest marches based on the Children's Crusade of 1213. Directed by Peter Williams, the opera will make use of the flexible staging at the Australian Theatre, and has music for piano, bass guitar and drums. Trust members will be pleased to know they can receive concessions for productions at the Australian Theatre.

The University of Sydney Music Department, as well as its production of Benjamin Britten's opera PETER GRIMES, will be presenting, in arrangement with the Pro Music Society two other musical events of interest. On 24 October, a choral and orchestral concert of music by Mozart and Handel with soloists Sian Jessup and Barry Shepherd, will be held in the Great Hall and on 25 October a chamber music recital, including Dvorak's piano quintet, will take place.

Mark Furneaux, internationally known mime and mimographe, is at present in Australia at the instigation of New Opera, S.A., with financial assistance from the Australian Council for the Arts. He has already visited Perth and will be giving lecture-demonstrations on his art in Melbourne, Sydney, and Adelaide during October and November. Furneaux conducts mime and pantomime workshops with the Netherlands Opera studio, and in his role as Chesko the Clown he performs his Raree-Show (a street pantomime) which has been seen at the Olympic Games, the Holland Festival, Stockholm and at many festivals in England.

Madame Romola Nijinsky, widow of the world famous dancer, and authoress and ballet historian in her own right, will reminisce on her life with Nijinsky and the period when the great Russian dancer took Europe by storm, in a lecture at the Sydney Opera House on 21 October. Madame Nijinsky, who is visiting Australia for the opening festivities at the Opera House, published a biography of Nijinsky in 1934 which was translated into 16 languages and is currently being re-released throughout the world.

german playwright, tankred dorst in australia

interviewed
by
ORTRUN ZUBER



Tankred Dorst

Tankred Dorst was born in 1925 in Sonneberg, Germany, and now lives and works in Munich with the Bochum Schauspielhaus theatre company. He has become well-known in his own country and internationally through his plays and TV films. His dramatisation of the novel, LITTLE MAN—WHAT NOW? by Hans Fallada, recently made a dramatic impact in London as part of the 10th Anniversary World Theatre Season at the Aldwych Theatre. He visited Australia recently at the invitation of the Goethe Society to lecture at universities. While in Brisbane, he was interviewed by Ortrun Zuber, a graduate from Kiel University (West Germany) who teaches German language and literature at Queensland University and is a specialist in American Drama.

ORTRUN ZUBER: *Herr Dorst, during your visits to universities in New Zealand and Australia, lecturing on your work at the invitation of the Goethe Society, have you been able to form any impressions of Australian drama?*

TANKRED DORST: I have only seen one play in Australia, *DON'S PARTY* by David Williamson, which I liked very much. In fact, I immediately sent a copy to Peter Zadek, the director of my plays, to suggest that we should have the play translated into German and then transfer it onto the German stage.

O.Z.: *As far as I know there has been only one Australian play on German stages; Ray Lawler's THE SUMMER OF THE SEVENTEENTH DOLL.*

T.D.: That's right.

O.Z.: *Do you think that young Australian playwrights like Hibberd, Williamson, Buzo—whom you met while taking part in a broadcast discussion—have a chance to be internationally successful?*

T.D.: Oh yes, I think so. They have been influenced by English dramatists in the way of writing realistic plays with witty dialogues. The German tradition is different: the German dramatist has a tendency to create a work of art rather than to entertain his audience. He is more interested in problems of form that can make a play appear artificial and contrived. But English dramatists know how to write good and witty dialogues.

And I think the reason why Australian playwrights are mainly concerned with Australian problems can be explained by the new self-consciousness of Australia as a country. But any play can be adapted to the conditions of another country.

O.Z.: *Do you think it permissible for a play to be changed by a director with or even without the author's permission?*

T.D.: Yes, I think with a modern play of an open form, more than of the old dramatic form, it is not only permissible and possible, it is necessary to be adapted to the current political and social conditions in the countries where this play is performed.

In my opinion a play is not really literature, but it should be something that first comes into being on the stage and it is regenerated with each successive performance. There is no such thing as an "authentic" production of a play, and furthermore, there is no such thing as a sacrosanct play. To truly come to terms with, for instance, Shakespeare or Brecht, it is necessary to alter their works in the creative sense. Although the literary quality and spontaneity of the work will be heightened.

O.Z.: *You have written plays in two forms, parable plays before 1968 and open plays and cabaret revues after 1968. Would you consider that a development in your career as a playwright?*

T.D.: Yes I do, but I must explain that in detail. My earliest plays were marionette plays and then I wrote parable plays.

O.Z.: *For example, THE CURVE and THE GREAT DIA-*

TRIBE BEFORE THE WALL.

T.D.: Yes, especially these two one-act plays are parables. But I soon found that these model plays which we thought contained the larger truth in a nutshell failed to provoke the audience which simply accepted the play as a work of art. These models, even with their provocative themes, were only fairy tales without the slightest relevance. As a spectator, I felt frustration with this outmoded view of the unchallengeable certainties of life.

O.Z.: *So what did you write and what were the characteristic features of your following plays?*

T.D.: I started to write my play *TOLLER*, but this time without a preconceived plot or model.

In brief sketches I tried to show how people from all walks of life—middle-class people, workers, students, politicians, professors—behave in certain situations. For "characterisation", I tried to penetrate the innermost being of each individual, and to reveal the real person devoid of all superficial traits. Sometimes only a sentence or a few casual observations were needed.

O.Z.: *Would you say that it was a literary style or fashion to write model plays at that time? For example, Max Frisch's ANDORRA was produced in 1961, only a year after your play CURVE.*

T.D.: Yes, you may call it a fashion.

O.Z.: *When did this fashion start and by whom were you influenced?*

T.D.: I suppose all writers after Brecht were influenced by Brecht in some way or other, or at least impressed by him. And all Brecht's plays are parable plays.

O.Z.: *And later, when you were writing more realistic plays?*

T.D.: I was influenced by nothing but my own experience, I think. Brecht has castrated a whole generation of playwrights, because they all tried to imitate him. It was time to break out of this tradition.

O.Z.: *What led you to adapt Fallada's novel, LITTLE MAN, WHAT NOW?*

T.D.: That has something to do with the problem of German theatres: audiences have been diminishing rapidly during the last year. Peter Zadek, the director of the Ruhr Theatre in Bochum and one of the four best German theatre directors (Peter Stein, Peter Palitzsch, Hans Neuenfeld) asked me to write a play that was interesting for the working-class people in this industrial district. So I wrote this huge review-like show aimed at attracting large audiences.

O.Z.: And it was a great success.

T.D.: Oh, yes, we have had 60 performances so far, whereas until last year, a play which ran for 10 to 12 performances was regarded as a success. We have managed to gain a new audience. The middle class doesn't simply go to the theatre as before to have its education comfortably confirmed.

O.Z.: Would you say that the audience is completely new or simply enlarged?

T.D.: No, enlarged. We don't want to lose the middle class, but they now represent only a small part of a greatly increased audience.

O.Z.: Is this sort of play still demanding enough for the old intellectual audience?

T.D.: Yes, very much so. I think in future we'll have to combine "Volkstheater" and intellectual drama. We proved with *LITTLE MAN, WHAT NOW?* that that is possible. It was not only a great success in Germany, but also in London at the Aldwych Festival of World Theatre where 7 to 8 best world productions from all over the world are performed once a year.

O.Z.: You mentioned the diminishing audiences in Germany; don't you think that this is a problem all over the world because of film and television?

T.D.: Yes, in a way. But in Germany, there is a special problem, because theatre has been and still is subsidised. That means that dramatic producers and directors had money and an audience with season tickets. They could afford not to worry about their audience in writing, selecting and producing plays.

Peter Zadek gave up the subsidised system, and the season ticket holders can decide which plays they want to see.

O.Z.: It is a question of principle, whether theatre should be subsidised or not. In America, for example, on Broadway the audience decides whether a play is good and successful or not. In Germany, it has long been believed that theatre should be subsidised, so that authors who write for an intellectual audience can be produced. Otherwise, someone like Bertolt Brecht couldn't have written and produced his plays.

T.D.: I think I am writing for an intellectual as well as an uneducated audience. I believe that theatre should be subsidised, because a good production is very expensive.

O.Z.: I think there is another problem in Germany: the discrepancy in the reception of a play between audiences and critics. You might read favourable reviews of a performance, yet find only twenty people in the audience. How is that possible?

T.D.: Firstly, because critics don't care about audiences. Secondly, critics only come to the opening night, and directors tend to have one marvellous premiere to impress the critics and to let the world know that this production was done by a genius. They don't care about the rest of the performances.

O.Z.: Because they don't have to worry about money?

T.D.: That's right.

O.Z.: Do you think one could overcome this difficulty of subsidising theatres on the one hand, the inconsiderateness of directors on the other, by introducing profit-sharing schemes?

T.D.: No, I don't think so, directors earn a lot of money in Germany. That's not the problem. The director's concern is to have a certain image as a good and famous director which has nothing to do with the success of a play among the audience, only among the critics.

O.Z.: A critic could be one of the audience, just a bit more informed, experienced and more critical. So why is there this gap?

T.D.: Critics are a group apart. They are not free: they watch each other's reviews, they are prejudiced and afraid not to be "in" any more.

O.Z.: You gave us one example in *LITTLE MAN, WHAT NOW?* of how to revive German theatre. Do you see any other

way of filling the theatres?

T.D.: Many theatres in Germany want to follow the direction we took with *LITTLE MAN, WHAT NOW?* and they asked me to write adaptations of novels. But I refused. I don't want to repeat myself.

O.Z.: Yet isn't your latest play *DIE EISZEIT (ICE AGE)* which was both published and produced in March this year, an adaptation or rather a biography of Knut Hamsun, the Norwegian writer?

T.D.: *ICE AGE* is the story of a 90-year-old quisling writer in Norway. And although the name of Hamsun isn't mentioned in the play, it's true that he was the model. I didn't write a play on Hamsun. I only used biographical details of his later years.

O.Z.: Why did you choose Knut Hamsun as a model? Were you impressed by his work?

T.D.: No, I hadn't read his work at that time, and I didn't even like his titles.

A German film company (Polyphon) asked me to write a film on Knut Hamsun. They had told me his life story, of which only the latter part interested me. And when I was on Crete, reading Hamsun, I saw an old American man walking to the beach and washing in the sea every day.

I was interested in the daily repetition of actions, his vitality for clambering over rocks and swimming reduced by age. And I started to write *ICE AGE* which is not a documentary play on Knut Hamsun, but a realistic play. Its subject is politics, but it is not a political play, as I don't want to instruct or provoke.



A scene from *LITTLE MAN, WHAT NOW?*

O.Z.: *ICE AGE* is so much different from *LITTLE MAN, WHAT NOW?* What was the audience's reaction, when they saw it?

T.D.: I was a little afraid that the audience had certain expectations after *LITTLE MAN, WHAT NOW?* And in *ICE AGE* there is not much action and not much music either, except *La Paloma* sung by Victoria de Los Angeles. Yet it was a great success, partly because the old man was played by the famous character actor O. E. Hasse.

O.Z.: Your play *TOLLER* was directed for television by Peter Zadek. What about *ICE AGE*?

T.D.: I wrote *TOLLER* after the film was made. *ICE AGE* began with a film script in mind, but I am glad it turned out to be a play.

O.Z.: Why?

T.D.: Because with a play you have a number of different performances. If one is bad, others can be better. If a film turns out well, one is lucky. I hope to direct films next year. In writing a television film one is much more dependent on the director than in a theatre, which has several directors.

O.Z.: Have there been any other performances of *ICE AGE* since the premiere in Bochum?

T.D.: Yes, in Hamburg, featuring Werner Heinze, and in Stuttgart. And all three performances had script alterations.

O.Z.: What are you writing now?

T.D.: I am writing a series of eight self-contained television plays about a family in Germany between 1920 and 1970, and these plays will also appear on the German stage.

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THE MAKING OF AUSTRALIAN DRAMA

LESLIE REES



THE MAKING OF AUSTRALIAN DRAMA by LESLIE REES

Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 1973. Recommended retail price \$10.

Australian drama has recently emerged as a dynamic force in the local theatre scene. The publication of Leslie Rees' absorbing historical and critical survey of its long, and often difficult, development is timely and significant. Mr. Rees—journalist, dramatic critic, author and founding member of the Playwright's Advisory Board, has written a large, comprehensive book covering the two hundred years of our dramatic history from the convict theatre in 1796 to DON'S PARTY in 1972.

Illustrated with many photographs of theatre personalities and productions of Australian plays, THE MAKING OF AUSTRALIAN DRAMA contains entertaining accounts of early melodramas; the struggles for a truly indigenous Australian drama; the beginnings of television plays; and experiments like THE LEGEND OF KING O'MALLEY. Of special interest to Trust members is an account of the beginnings of the Elizabethan Theatre Trust and its role in encouraging Australian drama.

Mr. Rees' close, personal involvement with playwriting and writers tends to create some imbalance in the work. He has devoted too much time, perhaps, to plays like THE SUMMER OF THE SEVENTEENTH DOLL and at times it is difficult to distinguish fact from opinion.

The book, however, is a valuable and unequalled reference work (and enjoyable reading) recommended for all those interested in the development of Australian stage, radio and television drama.



University of Sydney Opera
presents

PETER GRIMES

by Benjamin Britten

with **RON STEVENS,**
ARETE ZANTLOTIS

Chorus Master: Neil Flottman
Orchestra Leader: Eva Kelly
Musical Director: Eric Gross
Producer: John Milson

UNION THEATRE, UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

Saturday 13th, Tuesday 16th, Wednesday 17th
OCTOBER at 8 p.m.

Tickets: \$5, \$3, \$2—Department of Music (660 0522
ext. 2923). Sydney University Union, David Jones,
Mitchells.

CONCESSIONS FOR PARTIES, STUDENTS and TRUST
MEMBERS.

committees' diary

LADIES' COMMITTEE—N.S.W.

PREVIEW CELEBRATION AT THE SYDNEY OPERA
HOUSE—Friday, 12 October, 6-9 p.m. Reception Room.
Black Tie. Smorgasbord and drinks—\$10 per person. A
scale model of the Sydney Opera House in sterling silver, set
on pink rhodonite and blue aquate, has been commissioned
by the Ladies' Committee and designed and made by Mr. R.
Hammond of Micawber's Antiques, Wentworth Hotel,
Sydney. This valuable and exquisite work of art, valued at
\$1,000 will be on display and raffled during the evening.
Tickets are \$2.

Please contact the President, Mrs. John Sheehy-637 7405
or Miss Alison MacDonald-357 1200 for further details
about the Ladies' Committee.

YOUNG ELIZABETHAN MEMBERS—N.S.W.

WARATAH FESTIVAL—Y.E.M.S. are entering a float in
the Pageant on Saturday, 27 October. The theme is Eliza-
bethan Music—ideas and participation welcome.

ROCKS PUSH INFORMAL GET-TOGETHER for
Y.E.M.S. and friends. 109 George Street, Wednesday, 31
October at 6.30 p.m. Food, wine, music—no pre-booking—
just come along and enjoy yourselves.

Y.E.M.S. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING. All welcome
on 21 November. 153 Dowling Street, Potts Point. Wine and
cheese—6.15 p.m.

GALA CHRISTMAS PARTY—Sunday, 16 December. 153
Dowling Street, Potts Point. Special guests will be members
of the Australian Ballet. Bring a friend. Tickets \$2.50 each.
DON'T FORGET—all A.T.M.S. CAN BE Y.E.M.S.!
For further details and booking information, contact Janice
Iverach on 799 1248.

showguide

NEW SOUTH WALES

ELIZABETHAN THEATRE

—Newtown

SIR RALPH RICHARDSON—
"Lloyd George Knew My
Father" to October 13
Ballet Australia
November 4

INDEPENDENT THEATRE

Anna Russell—One Woman
Show
October 8-18
"The Third Secretary" (Ralph
Peterson)
October 20-December
Children's Play—"The Red
Shoes"
Each Saturday

MUSIC HALL—Neutral Bay
"Sold in Marriage" (Stanley
Walsh)

Concessions Mon., Tues.

AUSTRALIAN THEATRE

—Newtown

Dale Woodward's Marionette
Theatre—"Peter Pan"
October 1-6
10 a.m., 1.30 p.m., 8 p.m.
"Captain Swift" (C. H. Cham-
bers)
October 10-November 3
"War for Peace" (A. McGrath
and A. Butcher)
November 7-December

KILLARA COMMUNITY

THEATRE

"Don't Start Without Me"
(Rayburn)
October 10-November 10
"Blithe Spirit" (Coward)
November 14-December 15

RICH BROOKE THEATRE

"God Save The Queen"
October-December

CLASSIC CINEMA—Mosman
Two tickets per membership
card. Concessions Mon.-Fri. &
Sat. Matinee only

UNION THEATRE SYDNEY

UNIVERSITY

University of Sydney Opera—
"Peter Grimes" (Britten)
October 13, 16, 17

A.E.T.T. SYDNEY

ORCHESTRA—Chalwin Castle
Chamber Music Concerts
October 28 and November 4

SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE

CONCERT HALL: "Sunday
Night at the Sydney Opera
House"
October 7, 14, 21, 28-November
4, 11, 18, 25

"South Pacific Festival"
October 23

OPERA THEATRE: The Aus-
tralian Opera—"War and
Peace", "Nabucco", "Il Ta-
barro", "The Magic Flute",
"Tannhauser", "The Barber of
Seville"
October 1-December 1
The Australian Ballet—"The
Sleeping Beauty"
December 7-26

DRAMA THEATRE: Old Tote
Theatre Company—"Richard
III"

October 2
"The Threepenny Opera"
(Brecht)

October 5
"What If You Died Tomorrow"
(Williamson)

October 9 (3 plays in repertoire
to December)

MUSIC ROOM: LEILA
BLAKE—"Feminine Plural"
November 12, 15, 19

THE MARIONETTE
THEATRE OF AUSTRALIA
"Tales from Nooneena"
December 4-23

VICTORIA

PRINCESS THEATRE

Des O'Connor
October 3-20

MELBOURNE TOWN HALL

South Pacific Festival
November 1-3

COMEDY THEATRE

MELBOURNE THEATRE
COMPANY "Paying the Piper"
(Feydeau)
October 10-November 3

"The Time is Not Yet Ripe"
(Esson)
November 7-December 1

ST. MARTIN'S THEATRE

MELBOURNE THEATRE
COMPANY "The Play's the
Thing" (Molnar)
October 17-November 10
"A Long Day's Journey Into
Night" (O'Neill) S.A.T.C. guest
appearance
November 14-December 8
"Design for Living" (Coward)
December 12-January

RUSSELL STREET THEATRE

MELBOURNE THEATRE
COMPANY "President Wilson
in Paris" (Blair)
October 9-27

"Stopwork!" (Hopkinson)
October 30-November 17
"The Last of the Knucklemen"
(Powers)

November 20-December 8
"The Francis James Dossier"
(Ellis)

Com. December 11

PALAIS THEATRE

The Australian Ballet
October 25-November 17

PRAM FACTORY

AUSTRALIAN PERFORM-
ING GROUP "Hamlet"
(Nimrod Street Production)
September 28-October 27

DALLAS BROOKS HALL

Rod McKuen
November 19-20

QUEENSLAND

S.G.I.O. THEATRE

QUEENSLAND THEATRE
COMPANY "The Effect of
Gamma Rays on Man-in-the-
Moon Marigolds" (Zindel)
November 1-24
"Sleuth" (Shaffer)
November 29-December 22
"A Christmas Pantomime"
December 27-January

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

THEATRE 62

New Opera South Australia
"Music Theatre"
December 12-15

THEATRE 62 REGIONAL

COMPANY Inc.

"Fortune and Men's Eyes"
August 30-mid October

"The Suite in Three Keys"
November-December

UNION THEATRE

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN
THEATRE COMPANY—
"Hans Kohlaas", "Comedy of
Errors", "Long Day's Journey
Into Night", "Alpha Beta", in
repertoire to November 17

ADELAIDE FESTIVAL

THEATRE

Rod McKuen
November 22

ROYAL THEATRE

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN
THEATRE COMPANY
"Rookery Nook"
November 28-December 15

CANBERRA

CANBERRA THEATRE

The Australian Ballet—"Con-
certo"/"Gemini"/"Carmen"
October 17-22

CANBERRA PLAYHOUSE

Theatre 62
October 29-November 3
"Blithe Spirit" (Community
Theatre production)
November 5-10

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

NATIONAL THEATRE AT

THE PLAYHOUSE

"The Devil's Disciple" (Shaw)
September 29-November 3
"The Chocolate Frog"/"The
Old Familiar Juice" (McNeill)
October 17-November 21
"The House of Blue Leaves"
(Guare)

November 10-December 15
"Jugglers Three" (Williamson)
November 28-January 2 (plays
in repertoire)

PERTH CONCERT HALL

Rod McKuen
November 23-24

TASMANIA

HOBART—Theatre Royal

"Godspell"
October 3-20
Tasmanian Opera Company
"The Barber of Seville"
November

DEPARTMENT OF UNIVERSITY EXTENSION
THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND ARMIDALE N.S.W. 2351



ARMIDALE is at 3300 ft. in the New England region; it is midway between Sydney and Brisbane and is some 100 miles in from the coast. The UNIVERSITY itself sits in pleasant parklands about three miles from the City.

ACCOMMODATION is in single rooms in modern colleges. There are excellent **SPORTING** and **OTHER FACILITIES** with provision for golf, bowls, swimming, squash and tennis—if not at the University, then in the City; other clubs exist and they invariably extend a warm welcome to members of our residential courses. School members are also entitled to full use of the facilities of the University Union.

TRANSPORT services are good with air travel concessions, $\frac{1}{3}$ off normal fare (but for travel on "East-West Airlines" only), given to members of our Schools.

ALL THE FEES QUOTED ARE FOR FULL RESIDENCE; there are appropriate reductions for those who opt to be non-resident.

PROGRAMME OF RESIDENTIAL SUMMER SCHOOLS AT THE UNIVERSITY IN JANUARY, 1974

PAINTING

January 3rd-24th

TUTORS: Andrew Sibley, John Firth-Smith

A practical School to help aspiring painters improve their techniques and gain insights into painting. **Fees: \$160**

LIFE DRAWING

January 3rd-15th

TUTOR: John Olsen

The first School of this type we have held: there will be a professional model. **Fees: \$108**

CREATIVE EMBROIDERY

January 4th-16th

TUTORS: Heather Joynes, Pat Langford, Cynthia Sparks

The Embroidery School will be the sixth in a very successful series held at the University. Students will explore the relief qualities of Sculptural Quilting or Three-dimensional Canvas Work. **Fees: \$102**

DANCE

January 5th-12th

TUTORS: Dame Peggy van Praagh, Keith Bain, Ian Farr, Shirley McKechnie, Wendy Pomroy, Garth Welch

This School will run in very close association with a Choreographic Workshop. **Fees: \$56**

MUSIC

January 3rd-13th

This will consist of three sections: their overall direction will be under the control of ACM. (Cam) HOWARD.

(i) **CHAMBER MUSIC:** in two parts *string* and *wood-wind*.

TUTORS: **STRING:** Elizabeth Morgan

WOOD-WIND: Richard McIntyre

(ii) **CHORAL:** **TUTOR:** Charles Colman (iii) **RECORDER** and **RENAISSANCE INSTRUMENTS:** **TUTOR:** Alan Murphy

Fees: \$70

OPERA WORKSHOP

January 13th-23rd

TUTORS: **Vocal:** David Parker, Gwen Halstead, Wendy Pomroy, Marie Van Hove

Movement: Keith Bain

This Workshop will be the third in a highly successful series. The aim is to provide amateur singers with the opportunity to sing under the guidance of experienced operatic coaches—both as soloists and in chorus work; but some movement coaching will be given also. **Fees: \$75**

MODERN WRITERS; JRR TOLKIEN

January 18th-20th

DIRECTED BY: Associate Professor John Ryan

A follow-up to an earlier course on this important author; this 'repeat', but with a difference, is by demand. **Fees: \$25**

In addition to the work in the individual Schools during the day there are plentiful activities in the evenings—discussions, film shows, performances, etc. In fact it can be said that there is an embarrassing richness of things to do and choose from.

Full details of any or all of these Schools will be sent immediately upon request to the address at the top of the page.

ENROLMENTS CLOSE 11th DECEMBER. Some events are restricted in numbers and early enrolment is advisable.