

elizabethan trust news



30 CENTS

JUNE 1975 NO.15

IN
THIS
ISSUE

WOMEN
IN THE
ARTS



JUNE BRONHILL

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Assisted by Angela Wales

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editorial

This edition of the Elizabethan Trust News, in recognition of International Women's Year, acknowledges the contribution of a number of women in the arts — including music, dance, drama and theatre, and theatre management.

The September edition will celebrate the Trust's 21 years of involvement in Australian theatre.

We are calling for contributions for this publication — memorabilia or thoughts on the Trust over the years.

Also, we are considering ways of developing the magazine in the future and would welcome contributions and suggestions. All unsolicited articles will be considered for publication. Please address all correspondence to the Editor, Elizabethan Trust News, P.O. Box 137, KINGS CROSS, 2011.



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On May 27, ADD A GRATED LAUGH OR TWO opened for a four week season at the Pram Factory Theatre in Carlton, Melbourne. Subtitled "A show about women and madness", it was the latest production from the Women's Theatre Group, Australia's first feminist theatre group. The all female cast of nine performers, which included three musicians, researched, wrote, and developed the show, which was directed by Evelyn Krape and Yvonne Marini.

ADD A GRATED LAUGH OR TWO looks at why women go "mad" and explores links through time using myths and historical figures such as Artemis, Boadicea and Joan of Arc. It portrays what happens to those women who step outside their rigidly defined roles, the fantasies which sustain an otherwise empty existence, and the fate of those women who are cut completely adrift and react by going "mad".

ADD A GRATED LAUGH OR TWO was the biggest (in terms of length, budget and razzamatazz) Women's Theatre Group production to date. A grant from the International Women's Year Secretariat made it possible for the nine performers to rehearse seven weeks full time, a luxury which would have been inconceivable last year.

The W.T.G. was formed around January-February 1974. Its core and initial momentum were provided by a group of actresses and feminists in and around the Australian Performing Group at the Pram Factory in Carlton. Despite the comparative radicalism and flexibility of the A.P.G., shows at the Pram Factory shared with conventional theatre a dearth of interesting and fulfilling female parts, while even stereotyped parts were greatly outnumbered by male roles.

WOMEN'S WEEKLY VOL. 1, a late night show in the Back Theatre of the Pram Factory in March 1974, was the first W.T.G. production. It involved eighteen women and was a group-developed comedy revue satirizing advertising and media images of women with scripted scenes and songs. It was followed in April by WOMEN'S WEEKLY VOL. 2, in which two plays — Stringberg's THE STRANGER and Rossi di San Socondo's THE STATUE were performed. Both plays explored the nature of power relationships in marriage, as perceived by the women.

In May came the LOVE SHOW which dealt through songs and scripts with the romantic notions of love and marriage. In May/June the W.T.G. staged its first Women's Festival in the Front Theatre of the Pram Factory. A new piece, DOCUMENTARY THEATRE, was devised. Based on case histories and interviews, the show used improvisatory techniques to look at institutions for women, and in particular the "Exposed to Moral Danger" charge. Discussion (often heated) followed each performance. Other items during the ten day festival included a revised LOVE SHOW and a concert with all women performers, including Scarlet, a woman's band. The first of the now traditional W.T.G. Talent Shows

was held, together with a Bake-off, a dance, poetry reading, photographic exhibition, film screenings and jam sessions.

By this time the group also had two pieces of street theatre prepared, one on abortion and one on beauty contests.

A third piece of street theatre was performed in August at a demonstration in support of the demands of the prisoners at Fairlea Women's Prison.

At about this time there was a distinct slump in energy, and three months passed before the next production. WOMEN AND CHILDREN FIRST appeared in November/December. This show marked a radical departure from the revue-type format. The writer and five performers worked together for two months researching the myths and rituals of female culture, and relating them to their personal experiences. Fertility, pregnancy, childbirth and motherhood are central concerns for women; they are also among the most mystified of human functions.

The six women who created WOMEN AND CHILDREN FIRST felt that they were engaged in two processes during its development — they had to strip away the accumulated myths of patriarchy whilst they slowly built up female imagery and metaphor for their own experiences. The show ADD A GRATED LAUGH OR TWO attempted to do something similar with the concept of madness. The show is also linked with WOMEN AND CHILDREN FIRST in its theatrical form — both groups are trying to develop a style which is as female and original as the subject matter.

This completed the year's activity for the W.T.G., and over the summer we were able to draw some tentative conclusions about our work and the nature of our group. The keynote of the early shows was "inspired amateurism". Although most members of the group were theatrically inexperienced, our enthusiasm and the need to say the things we did kept the shows coming. The strong comic (sometimes manic!) element was probably a surprise to some men and women who accepted the media image of women's liberation as a bunch of dour angry females.

Audience response was electrifying. Every show was booked out, and the discussions which followed the performances were lively and constructive. There was



A scene from
WOMEN AND
CHILDREN FIRST —
with Rose Costelloe
and Carol Porter.

WOMEN'S THEATRE GROUP,

MELBOURNE

immense interest from a wide range of people, some from inter-state asking us to tour (unfortunately financially impossible) and asking the group for scripts. (A book of scripts will hopefully be published later this year.) The number of women in the W.T.G. itself has doubled and trebled. These developments made us increasingly aware of the potential of theatre as a means of talking to people about women's problems and of the need to meet and exchange ideas with women working creatively in other areas. The success of the Festival OUT OF THE FRYING PAN in May and June revealed how stimulating this could be.

By August, however, it had become obvious that the energy level needed to keep producing large cast shows with no money could not be sustained over a length of time; given that we were rehearsing at night since our members had full-time jobs or other acting commitments, and given the hassles over child-minding, husbands and home lives, which are problems endemic to a women's group. We also wanted to do community theatre work, by definition a day-time activity. For these reasons we applied for funding in 1975, and, being International Women's Year, we got it, somewhat to our amazement!

Funding has made a big difference to the members of the group, both personally and theatrically. Several of us were able to give up our previous work and devote ourselves to the W.T.G. full-time. Our first venture this year was the SISTERS DELIGHT Festival in March over the International Women's Day weekend. Two new shows were performed, THE TOO HOT STREET THEATRE, based on the retrenchment of women in the workforce in general and based on the Everhot sackings in particular, plus CINDERCLOGS, an updated version of Cinderella, set in a typing pool. Other activities included a concert, films, talent show, jam session, dance (with four women's bands), poetry reading, yoga and dance workshops, displays of gymnastics and Taekwondo, video and car maintenance workshops, films of natural childbirth with discussion, home hints, a sideshow alley and activities for kids, a photographic exhibition, a mural to paint, exhibitions of artwork, plus information stalls from many women's groups.

THE TOO HOT SHOW underwent a metamorphosis after the festival and emerged as A WOMAN'S PLACE IS . . .?, a twenty five minute piece about women in the workforce designed for touring round factories, schools and community centres. A lively, funny, fast moving show with lots of songs and a straightforward message, the audience response and the friends we have made all over Melbourne as a result of it, have proved how vital it is for a group like ours to take theatre to the classrooms and factory canteens, to people who, under ordinary circumstances, would never see live theatre. We will be doing another piece of Community Theatre later this year, THE TRAVELLING MEDICINE SHOW. Hopefully this will be done in conjunction with the Women's Health Collective, and will be about women, their bodies and the attitudes of the medical profession.

Other proposed projects for 1975 are a season of scripted plays by Australian women writers, and a schools project in which we would like to explore, through workshops and performances using video, sex-roles in school

situations. The former project points up another important function of the W.T.G.: to encourage and develop play-writing skills in women. It is significant that the A.P.G., while performing this role with some success on behalf of Australian male playwrights, was unable to unearth any women writers. In contrast, the W.T.G. is receiving scripts thick and fast in response to a single, circulated letter. This is not a reflection on the goodwill of the A.P.G. which has been sympathetic and generous with its support. Women's Theatre began and continues as a coalition of actresses and feminists. The dialectic between the two (or between theatre and politics within a single individual) gives the group its momentum. Every week new women arrive at the General Meeting eager to participate and learn theatrical skills. To this end the group has organised movement, drama and singing workshops. The technical aspects of theatre are not neglected. We do our own lighting, sound, set design and construction, posters and administration. We also run Supper Shows in the Pram Factory at roughly six-weekly intervals. A practice is growing up of Supper Show theatre projects — short, humorous pieces that run for twenty minutes or so and are performed for three nights over a weekend. Sharing the bill with Scarlet and/or Clitoris (the first a Melbourne, the second a Sydney based women's band), folksingers and poets and any other woman that wants to get an act together, the Supper Shows give us the opportunity to make our theatrical debuts in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere. We are also happy to give other women artists a much-needed venue.

The following are some tentative, general conclusions about the nature of women's theatre, as both an artistic and political form. The basis of our theatre as we see it is: to show the oppression of women in this society and to transcend it to show the possibilities of liberation through various styles of performance; to challenge sex-roles which fetter women in daily life; and to create new images for women in our society by working with them and performing for them.

We do these things within a democratic group structure; one which has no leaders, no permanently fixed roles such as writer, technician, actor, but permits a constant flow of women in and out of these roles. We work in an ensemble style that doesn't pick out or bill stars and we have a group method on scripts even when the basis is provided by a writer. The business of the group is carried on by a paid administrator, a position which rotates every three months; a weekly General Meeting; and a weekly Core Group meeting. Members of the Core Group are elected quarterly.

Finally, a word about men. We are often asked why we do not have men in our shows — they are welcome in our audiences and there are some men in the A.P.G. who work closely with us — or with the Theatre Group itself. One answer is that we feel a bit of positive discrimination in favour of women is needed to correct the bias of centuries. Women have under-achieved for so long that most of us need the supportive atmosphere of an all-women group to shed our inhibitions. However, we prefer to talk about our joy in working with women. We're new to the game and we make lots of mistakes but we're learning fast, and our enthusiasm and delight in what we are doing is, we think, reflected in our shows.

MOZART

IS KEY TO NEW OPERA ENSEMBLE

From now on, Mozart will be at the centre of all New Opera's programming, but this is not the paradox that it first may seem.

Myer Fredman, the company's new Musical Director, formerly of Glyndebourne Festival Opera where he was First Conductor and Head of Music Staff, believes passionately in the role of Mozart in a young ensemble company.

"Mozart is the Shakespeare of opera. His operas are the best vehicle through which to develop a fine sense of ensemble and individual talents in a company of players. His work is the fusion of the romantic with the discipline of the classical style. It has to be performed with discipline."

And what discipline! Singers fortunate enough to sit in on a Fredman Mozart session have been stunned by his quaver by quaver analysis . . . an analysis not of music per se but of how every bar relates to the development of character or of the action.

"I must be able to hear character in the voice . . . I must know what's happening without having to look at you. Mozart is a real human being today, not a monument.

"New Opera not only performs works it believes worthy of introduction to the public, but attempts to find new ways of interpreting standard repertoire. The word

new in this context has a number of meanings," he says. "Finding a fresh approach to a classical opera is like cleaning an oil painting of one of the old masters. By stripping away the overlaid traditions you reveal what the composer really intended."

New Opera's 1975 programme will provide ample opportunity for the company to express its individual voice in both classical and more modern repertoire.

Three full-scale operas will be presented. They are *COSI FAN TUTTE* (Mozart) *THE TURN OF THE SCREW* (Britten) and *THE THREEPENNY OPERA* (Brecht/Weill). These will be preceded by an adventurous programme entitled 'Opera in the Space', for which two double bills of music-theatre will be presented in the Festival Centre's studio theatre.

THE SOLDIER'S TALE (Stravinsky) and *DR MIRACLE* (Bizet) combine in one programme and *THE DIARY OF A MAN WHO VANISHED* (Janacek) and *THE MADRIGAL SHOW* (Banchieri) in the other. Both works in the second programme will be Australian premieres.

New Opera's guest directors, Anthony Besch, John Tasker, and Wal Cherry, are well known for their many outstanding productions. Mr Besch is known throughout Europe and the United States for his

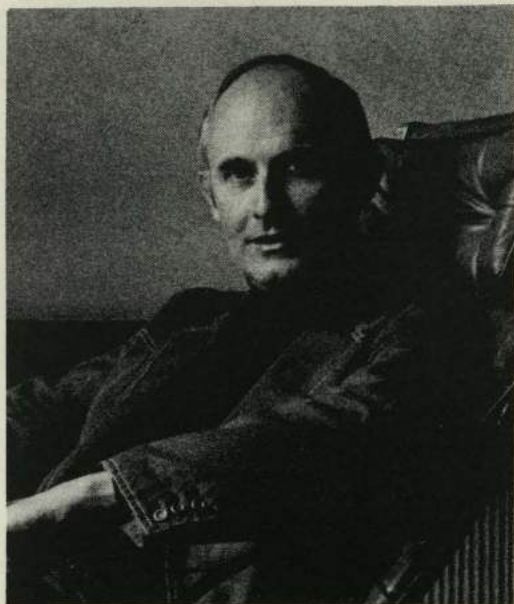
interpretations of Mozart. He will come from London especially to direct *COSI FAN TUTTE*. Expatriate Australian, John Stoddart, has designed the elegant eighteenth century sets and costumes.

John Tasker, who directed New Opera's highly successful 1974 Adelaide Festival of Arts production, *THE EXCURSIONS OF MR BROUCEK* (Janacek), will direct *THE TURN OF THE SCREW* this year.

Following the success of *THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS* which was the opening production at the Space, New Opera has again engaged Wal Cherry to direct Weill's best-known work, *THE THREEPENNY OPERA* in the Playhouse, Adelaide Festival Centre.

The company is fortunate in having a permanent group of talented singers which includes Welsh tenor, Dennis O'Neill, and widely acclaimed Adelaide soprano, Gwentyth Annear, who returns to her home city after many successes in opera houses overseas. Guest artists include Ronald Dowd (by courtesy of The Australian Opera), Ailene Fischer, Marilyn Richardson, James Christiansen and Robyn Archer.

The Musical Director for all shows will be Myer Fredman. He will be extremely busy because he is concerned not only



Internationally acclaimed director, Anthony Besch, makes his first visit to Australia to direct New Opera's production of *COSI FAN TUTTE*. But he is definitely no stranger to Australians. Recently a gathering of Australians hit the news pages of the British dailies. Besch directed an English National Opera production of *THE MAGIC FLUTE* at the Coliseum in which no less than eleven Australians took part. The designer was expatriate John Stoddart, and these two will combine again for *COSI FAN TUTTE*.

Mr Besch has directed opera for all the leading opera companies in Great Britain as well as for the New York City Opera, San Francisco Opera, The Teatro Colon (Buenos Aires) Theatre de la Monnaie (Brussels), Royal Opera (Amsterdam) and Deutsche Oper (West Berlin).

In 1974 he directed a highly successful production of *LA CLEMENZA DI TITO*, designed by John Stoddart, and conducted by Colin Davis with Janet Baker and Yvonne Minton in the leading roles. In January 1975, his new production of *THE MAGIC FLUTE*, also designed by John Stoddart, and conducted by Charles Mackerras, played to packed houses in the London Coliseum.

Mr Besch is also widely known for his direction of music theatre, and in London he is Director of Productions for the New Opera Company. He has directed works by such diverse composers as Elisabeth Lutyens, Harrison Birtwistle, and Humphrey Searle.

After leaving Adelaide in September, he will direct *OTELLO* (Verdi), *ARIADNE AUF NAXOS* (Strauss) and *COSI FAN TUTTE* for Scottish Opera in their new opera house, the Theatre Royal, Glasgow.

MOZART

IS KEY TO NEW OPERA ENSEMBLE

with the programme immediately at hand, but will also be developing aspects of the company necessary for its long term progress.

His first task was, he said, to train his music staff. "You can't develop your singers properly until your music staff is fully trained." New Opera this year is providing training for a small group of musicians wishing to specialise in accompanying or conducting.

"New Opera is working towards a time when all aspects of drama and music will combine to produce a vital ensemble company with its own distinctive performing style," says Mr. Fredman, and he is setting about this task with a truly amazing level of energy and determination.

Why Myer Fredman in Adelaide? A faint smile indicates that he has been asked this question before — many times. "It was a big decision to cut the ties with Glyndebourne, and of course there is no single reason.

"While I was here working for the Australian Opera some time ago, I saw the sketch plans of how New Opera wanted to work. I liked them. I saw here an opportunity to build up something great from grass roots — the same opportunity that had existed in Glyndebourne a long time ago.

"I saw a chance for me to become totally involved in all aspects of the company's work which is not so easy in Glyndebourne or other major companies now because they are too big."

To build a company on the Glyndebourne model is a high aim indeed. "At the moment there is not the talent in the quantity or quality but as our work is seen this will improve. I am convinced that demand creates supply."

Mr Fredman is at present negotiating with the Department of Music, University of Adelaide, in the hope of developing some form of opera studio.

"This would be a tremendous asset for both New Opera and the students. The young singers will have the benefit of professional coaching while at the same time providing a pool of understudies and chorus members for the company. We can see where our next generation of singers is coming from.

"There is tremendous talent if we can harness it. It will take time. In this way New Opera can also be of service to the whole national scene. This kind of ensemble training enables singers to develop in step with their own progress. It is wrong for singers to be put into important roles too early."

Mr Fredman is also concerned that the company should be based on broad support from the community. To this end he is placing emphasis on the company's work in schools. "We must break down the prejudice that opera is a high-class/intellectual affair."

The schools programme, now in its third year, takes operas especially written for children into the classrooms throughout the state. DR MIRACLE, THE SOLDIER'S TALE, THE LITTLE MAHAGONNY (Brecht/Weill) and THE TELEPHONE (Menotti) have also been presented to youth audiences this year.

Holiday workshops have become increasingly important, and the schools team held a two-week workshop in Whyalla during the recent May holidays.

Approaches have been made to unions to take productions to the shop floor, and public lectures are held on major productions. Greater use will also be made of the media and at least one production will be televised this year.

"We need wide support from the community and we must work with our public. No company can exist purely because the Government says 'we want art'. Quality is the only way from here on."

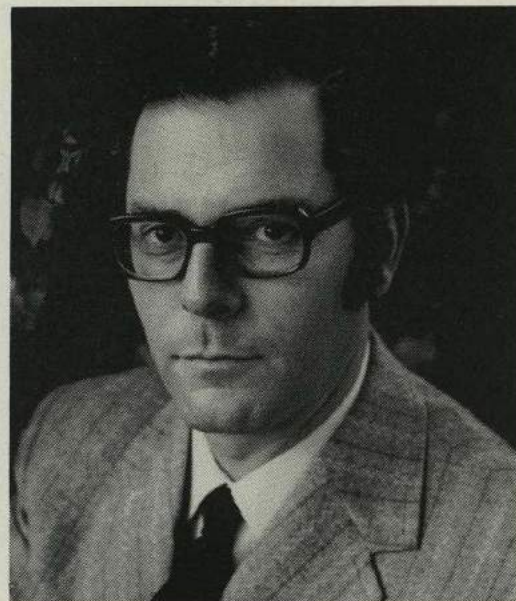
JUDITH JAMES

Myer Fredman has taken up the position of Musical Director for the New Opera, South Australia. Before moving to Adelaide, Mr Fredman had held, since 1968, the position of First Conductor and Head of Music Staff of Glyndebourne Festival Opera and Musical Director of the Glyndebourne Touring Opera.

The Glyndebourne Festival is a talking point in opera circles all over the world. Productions Mr Fredman has conducted for this Festival have included EUGEN ONEGIN, IL TURCO IN ITALIA, ARIADNE AUF NAXOS, MACBETH, DIE ZAUBERFLOTE, and Von Einem's THE VISIT OF THE OLD LADY. Touring productions which he has conducted include LA BOHEME, THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO, and INTERMEZZO. Other operatic engagements have included DIE ZAUBERFLOTE and DON GIOVANNI at Sadler's Wells.

He has made guest appearances in Belgium, Copenhagen, Poland, Romania, Paris and Sydney.

He has also had wide success as conductor of both symphony and chamber orchestras. During the past three years he has had engagements with the London Symphony Orchestra, the London Philharmonic, and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. He has recorded frequently for the B.B.C. in both television and radio. He has made a number of recordings for Decca and Lyrita, of which Bax's 1st and 2nd symphonies and Delius's "Walk to the Paradise Gardens" has received outstanding praise.



interstate news

qld.

THE NEW ARTISTIC DIRECTOR of the Queensland Ballet is Mr Harry Haythorne. Mr Haythorne was previously the assistant to the Director of the Scottish Ballet, and has danced with many of the important European companies, as well as having been Ballet Master and Artistic Director. The author of *HOW TO BE A BALLET DANCER*, Mr Haythorne has also been involved in film and television work.

The 1975 programme included five new one-act ballets, *IMAGES CLASSIQUES*, choreographed by Charles Lisner, *THREE CONVERSATIONS* choreographed by Graeme Murphy, *POSSESSED* choreographed by Leslie White, *BOUQUET GARNI* choreographed by Rex Reid, and *THE PARTY* choreographed by Leslie White. Leslie White is the ballet master of the Queensland Ballet Company. The company, with the help of the Queensland Arts Council, took the programme on tour earlier this year.

MR BILL AITKEN has been appointed Education Officer of the Twelfth Night Theatre in Brisbane. Mr Aitken has had experience in high school teaching and in teaching theatre techniques. He has also directed, acted in, and written, plays. Mr

Aitken will be in charge of Artistic Activities at the Theatre.

AN INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S FILM FESTIVAL will be held in Brisbane from 3-5 October at the Video Centre, Ground Floor, Coronation House, 109 Edward Street, Brisbane. (21 0987)

Films to be screened are made by women, and deal with the lives, triumphs and problems of women. Concurrent with the main programme there will be video tape screenings, a photographic exhibition, discussion workshops, and video tuition.

AT PRESENT MEMBERS OF THE QUEENSLAND OPERA COMPANY are touring the Cape York Peninsular by aeroplane! In fact, two aeroplanes, the one for cast members and the other for carrying sets and properties, are effecting this schools tour of the *LOADED DOG* written by Juliet and Denis Hoey and based on the Henry Lawson story. Although this opera has been seen already by many children in the State, the Queensland Arts Council has arranged this special tour to cater for the needs of some of the most isolated settlements and missions.

On a different level the Company is



Beverley Bergen

finalising preparation for its second Subscription Season, which this year will feature *THE FLEDERMAUS*, *CARMEN*, and *THE SERAGLIO* at the S.G.I.O. Theatre, Brisbane. *THE FLEDERMAUS* opens the season on 25th July and features as special guest artist Beverley Bergen formerly of the Welsh Opera and Glyndebourne Opera, who will alternate the role of Rosalinda with Phyllis Ball. Following the Brisbane season an interstate tour using local chorus is scheduled for Toowoomba, Bundaberg and Rockhampton.

CARMEN and *THE SERAGLIO* follow in the October/November period and feature Dorothea Deegon as Carmen, Valerie Hanlon as Micaela and John Brosnan as Osmin.

W.A.

Despite a lack of evidence to this effect in the east, the performing arts in Perth are alive and well, and as exciting as ever.

THE NATIONAL THEATRE COMPANY, under Aarne Neeme's vigorous direction, continues to maintain a high standard, often with limited resources. Last year the upstairs rehearsal room at the Playhouse (itself due for renovation) was converted into an intimate open-space theatre seating only 50, and re-christened the Greenroom. Some of the company's best work has been done here (the Australian premieres of *MAGNIFICENCE*, *HOME*, and *THE FLOATING WORLD*) and in other "alternative venues" — *CORALIE LANSDOWNE SAYS NO*, and *A HARD GOD*. In the main Playhouse — a proscenium theatre seating 700, too large for Perth — the National Theatre Company has been presenting more popular fare, most notably Richard Todd in *EQUUS* which did capacity business at the Festival of Perth. Todd returns to tour *EQUUS* to the North-West, Darwin and Alice Springs for five weeks in August/September and will be playing a return season at the Playhouse. Season 1 ends with *HELLO DOLLY!*, bringing together for the first time the four major performing arts companies in W.A.: the National Theatre, the W.A. Ballet Company, the W.A. Opera Company and the W.A. Arts Orchestra.

John Milson at the **HOLE IN THE WALL THEATRE**, an intimate space seating 160, is enlarging the theatre's audiences and having considerable success with Australian plays: *AN AWFUL ROSE*, *THE ROY MURPHY SHOW*, and Nita Pannel in her new one-woman show *ADAM'S RIB*. The theatre's subsidy does not allow a permanent company, and it has been good to see the improvement in local actors and in design over the last year. John Milson has also been in demand as a director of musical works: *COSI FAN TUTTE*, *THE BOYFRIEND*, and *THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE* — all in delightful productions.

At W.A.I.T. David Addenbrooke's **WESTERN AUSTRALIAN THEATRE COMPANY** pursues a policy of presenting modern and traditional classics in professional productions. Particularly impressive have been the Australian premiere *ALL OVER* and *HEDDA GABLER*. (Sad to say that once more the R.S.C. did not make it to Perth.)

The theatre arts course at W.A.I.T. is now in its third year and has 160 students of whom probably 50% intend to make a career in theatre, although not necessarily as actors: the course covers all aspects of theatre training — stage, backstage, and

front of house. The noted black American actor Robert Kya-Hill will be artist-in-residence for the second half of the year.

In the last two years or so these three companies between them have given Australian or world premieres of over twenty plays by such authors as Dorothy Hewett, Mary Durack, Alan Seymour, Mary Gage, Brenton, Hare, Albee, Ayckbourn, Whitehead, Tennessee Williams, David Storey — the list is impressive, and plays include *BONBONS AND ROSES FOR DOLLY*, *CATSPAW*, *SWAN RIVER SAGA*, *ADAM'S RIB*, *STRUCTURES*, *THE NEW LIFE*, *MAGNIFICENCE*, *KNUCKLE*, *ALL OVER*, *ABSDUR PERSON SINGULAR*, *TIME AND TIME AGAIN*, *ALPHA BETA*, *SMALL CRAFT WARNINGS*, *HOME*, *CABARET*, *NOTES ON A LOVE AFFAIR*, *STRAIGHT UP* (Syd Cheatle), *A WHO'S WHO OF FLAPLAND* (Halliwell), *MIME YOUR OWN BUSINESS* (a locally devised mime show), *SO WHAT ABOUT LOVE*, and *SATURDAY NIGHT AT THE CROWN*. Local critics and directors, in an attempt to overcome the feeling of isolation in the west, are asking editors of national papers and magazines to review, as a matter of policy, each play in its premiere professional production in Australia, wherever it may be.

A.J. AMES

Later this year the warm, exuberant Australian singer, Miss June Bronhill, returns from England to sing in Sydney and Melbourne. In London recently she chatted to Trust News about her plans and her varied musical career.

She is very excited at the prospect of singing opera again — having in the recent past been more involved in operetta and musical comedy. Her operatic roles have included Adele in *DIE FLEDERMAUS*, Gilda in *RIGOLETTO*, Norina in *DON PASQUALE*, Leila in *THE PEARL FISHERS*, Lucia in *LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR*, Zerbinetta in *ARIADNE AUF NAXOS*, The Vixen in *THE VIXEN*, and, of course, The Widow in *THE MERRY WIDOW*.

"I begin the tour in New Zealand singing *THE MERRY WIDOW*. I'm very excited as I've never sung in New Zealand, and as my ex-husband and daughter are living there now, it will be especially nice to go there. I'm performing there with an incredible man who is very well-known on television in New Zealand — a man called Max Crier. He's about six foot five (Miss Bronhill is five foot nothing on tiptoe!) so it should be hysterical! I've worked with a lot of very tall men over the last twenty years (I started when I was three, you see!) but the tallest to my knowledge was about six foot two — that was Kevin Colson, an Australian who played opposite me in *ROBERT AND ELIZABETH* after Keith Michell left the show. It'll be very interesting to play a role like the Widow opposite somebody way up there!" (True to her description of herself, Miss Bronhill acts out the potentially comic situation.) "However, we've discussed it and will probably work around it."

THE MERRY WIDOW is the role most associated with Miss Bronhill. When she was last visiting Australia and made a special appearance at the Darwin Appeal Concert she sang "Vilia" to an audience who would never have forgiven her if she hadn't! As it is impossible to imagine June Bronhill being bored with any role (her energy and enthusiasm bubble over constantly), the question doesn't arise. Instead, Miss Bronhill says immediately, "Oh, I think the Widow's the loveliest lady — she's so beautiful. I think I will eventually be the oldest Merry Widow in the business! Let's face it — I've been doing the role on and off since 1958. It's a beautiful role. She has a magnetic quality that very few roles have."

"After New Zealand I go to Sydney to play Gilda in *RIGOLETTO* with the Australian Opera. I'm sharing it with Glenys . . . Glenys Fowles. It's all very exciting for me, as I haven't sung opera for a long while — in fact since 1967 when I sang Norina in *DON PASQUALE* for the Trust Opera Company. I want very much to sing in opera again, especially in Australia, and especially *RIGOLETTO* and *MARIE STUARDA*. At the moment I feel I have never sung better in my life."

Miss Bronhill, who feels "her voice matures like a good wine", will also be giving a major concert at the Opera House early in December.

"After Sydney I go to Melbourne to sing Mary Stuart in Donizetti's opera for the Victorian Opera Company. I think Lance Grant is singing with me — we should have

JUNE BRONHILL



some lovely scenes together." Another major production in Australia is planned for January — "but that's not being announced yet!"

When asked what roles she still wants to play, Miss Bronhill responds "I don't know. . . a couple of years ago I would have said LA TRAVIATA — but I've now sung Violetta with a small touring opera company here in England. I love Lucia ('cos I'm very theatrical really. . .!) — would like to do both Violetta and Lucia again, and I'd LOVE to do a straight play eventually — a comedy like PRIVATE LIVES. I adore Noel Coward's sense of humour and wit. I think I could learn a lot doing it and it wouldn't worry me not to sing in a production. Also I adore reading poetry." (Rod McKuen is a favourite poet.)

One role she found totally absorbing was Elizabeth in the long-running ROBERT AND ELIZABETH — the musical love story of Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett. "I loved it — I think I notched up my one thousandth performance of Elizabeth in South Africa. I became very involved with her. I read a lot about her and the way she thought and felt. During the season I was never without a book about her. While I'm not sure a lot of it was completely true to what her life actually was, the musical was very close to the play THE BARRETTES OF WIMPOLE STREET. I still think, however, there was a certain amount of truth in the whole thing. I love especially Elizabeth's "Sonnets from the Portugese." She started writing these almost from when she first met Browning — each sonnet relates to a particular incident of their life. Eventually, when they had eloped to Florence she asked Browning to read them and tell her what he thought. He had no idea she had been writing them. They are the most beautiful love poems, which were not published until quite some time after she died. For a while nobody knew why they were called 'Sonnets from the Portugese'. It is now known that Browning called Elizabeth 'His little Portugese.' "Miss Bronhill breaks off, indicating that she really ought to be preparing the dinner as we must be "starving!" (Obviously she loves to play in the culinary department.) Her eye catches a large photograph in the room — "Oh, that was taken on stage at Drury Lane during the run of ROBERT AND ELIZABETH in 1965. Everybody who was appearing in the West End at the time came together for a special occasion. I remember as the photo was being prepared, Spike Milligan said 'If somebody dropped a bomb on Drury Lane now, all the cream of the West End performers would be wiped out!' "

This year Miss Bronhill has sung in many concerts throughout England — including the Darwin Appeal Concert at the Prince of Wales theatre with Danny La Rue, and several concerts at the Royal Festival Hall. A new recording — THE MAGIC OF VIENNA will soon be released. On it she sings a number of solos and duets. Miss Bronhill suddenly bursts into one of the songs, after which she adds a lighthearted soft shoe routine as she disappears into the kitchen!

When asked if she has had any formal singing training, she looks quizzical — obviously the word 'formal' is not in the Bronhill vocabulary! She studied, and still works with when possible, a 'wonderful woman' in Sydney — Marianne Mathy.

"She's the only person I've worked with vocally. I went to her when I was twenty and worked with her until I came to England. In England I studied with an Italian tenor, Dino Borgioli. . . When I arrived here, I wanted to study with Dino — I had heard recordings of him and felt his incredible sensitivity and style. I wrote to him asking if I could sing for him as I wanted him to teach me — and he agreed. I used to have two or three lessons a week with him. As you know, the people from Broken Hill had raised the money to enable me to study in London — I was very lucky as I didn't have to work. I used to have lessons with Dino at ten in the morning. I was very happy as it was the first lesson of the day, and if I arrived half an hour early I could sit outside and listen to him singing beautiful Italian arias to himself. I worked with Dino until he died in 1960. Actually he died when I was in Australia doing THE MERRY WIDOW. I was heartbroken as I was very devoted to him. Apart from the fact that he was a fantastic singing teacher, he was a wonderful man. He was very much like my father and I had a great bond with him.

"Whenever I go back to Australia I work with Marianne. In London an Australian boy, Brian Stanborough, is my coach. He understands a great deal about the voice, and also before he came here he used to play for Marianne's lessons in Sydney, so he understands her approach. He can tear me apart vocally because he knows what Marianne would be saying to me! Marianne is in her eighties now, and knows an incredible amount about the voice. I admire her greatly. When I first came here I was rather frustrated because I was very young and hadn't quite been able to understand Marianne. (She's half French and half German.) She'd taught me a lot but I hadn't understood fully. I came to Dino, an incredibly warm Italian man and I understood him. Even though his approach was completely Italian, both he and Marianne meant the same thing. Suddenly all the things she'd been saying registered and I was able to do all the things she said. I feel as a singer I am very lucky to have had the best of all the schools — Italian, German and French."

June Bronhill returns to Broken Hill whenever she can — she was born there, and from that town she has (like Nellie Melba) taken her stage name. She talks, with light-hearted amusement, of an incident which occurred when she was there in 1971. "My manager and I felt it would be good to do a couple of concerts in Broken Hill — they have a new Civic Centre and hall — we thought we'd 'pack it out'. However, the first concert was only about three quarters full. I was rather shattered. . . however, after the concert my brother took us to the Masonic Club where we saw quite a few people who'd been to the concert. I didn't really recognise anyone except a 'boy' who'd been to school with me. He'd never changed — he was still like a great big school boy! He said 'Ello, Goughy' (her maiden name) and I asked if he'd been to the concert. When he said no I suggested he might be coming to the next one. 'Oh no,' he replied 'I heard you sing at school, didn't I . . .!'"

A CASE OF BANANAS PLAYWRIGHTS

"I would like each of you" says director Richard Wherrett, addressing his actors, "to tell me what is happening in this play — from the point of view of a psychologist, a mythologist, a scientist, a politician and a theologian."

Actor Peter Adams launches into his fairy-tale version of *AN EPITAPH FOR ANTS*, by Robert Evans, a young Melbourne writer whose play was among those chosen for workshop at the third Australian National Playwrights Conference, held in Canberra in May. By the end of this rehearsal session, a host of new insights into the play have been gained, and the cast are ready to proceed with their interpretation with greater conviction and understanding. In other rooms nearby, several other plays are undergoing the same or similar treatment. "Do we want the audience to think she is or isn't a gorilla, or are they meant to wonder about it?" asks an actor of Richard Bradshaw, author of the one-act comedy *BANANAS*, in which a young man brings home his fiancée, Julie — a gorilla. "Oh, they mustn't ever know," says Richard, "they must be kept wondering all the time." So that point is cleared up — or not, depending on how you see it.

The Australian National Playwrights Conference is intended as a service to playwrights. In an atmosphere free from economic and opening night pressures, a group of selected new Australian plays are given intensive workshop treatment over a two week period, using the best directors and actors available. For the writers, most of whom have very little theatrical experience, the Conference is a unique opportunity to learn their craft, to discover the differences between a play written and a play performed, and also, which is just as important, to meet people who can give them positive help with their work, both at the Conference and later.

To this end, Artistic Director Alex Hay assembled an impressive cast of top professional actors, directors and dramaturgs, which included directors Richard Wherrett, Aubrey Mellor and Jean Marshall, actors John Derum, Ronald Falk, Patricia Kennedy, Ric Hutton, Jacqueline Kott, Don Reid, Peter Adams, Carole Skinner, Elizabeth

Chance, Pat Bishop and Robert Levis, and dramaturgs Dr Philip Parsons, Helen van der Poorten and Carmel Dunn. The function of the dramaturg is to act as a "buffer state" between the writer, actors and director, and also to act as a second voice and literary adviser with textual or structural problems.

Close to one hundred new scripts were submitted to the Conference for consideration by the Play Selection Committee, and of these, seven were chosen for workshop by the Conference. Plays were generally of a much higher standard than those submitted in previous years, which would indicate that the Conference is at last beginning to achieve some status among aspiring writers. The plays chosen were *BLOODY HARRY* by Michael Aitkens, *BANANAS* by Richard Bradshaw, *IN CASE OF* by Bruce McKendry, *FOR THESE DEAD BIRDS SIGH A PRAYER* by Peter Matheson, *THE ADULLAMITES* by Norman Street, *AN EPITAPH FOR ANTS* by Robert Evans, and *MY PLAYMATE'S GOT THE BLUES* by Geoff Sykes. In addition several of the runner-up playwrights were invited to attend the Conference as observers, and were subsidised by the Conference. Plays by three of these observer playwrights were given readings by the actors in the evenings — *CLOSING DOWN* by Linda Aronson, *NO VISITORS PLEASE* by Joan Ambrose, and *RUN AWAY* by Robert Kimber. It was found that these readings were very valuable experience for the writers concerned, and the experiment will probably be continued in future Conferences.

Over two hundred people attended the Conference as observers, some of whom attended for the whole two weeks, and others of whom came for what time they could — a week, three days, or just a weekend. A special programme was arranged for the observers, most of whom were themselves aspiring playwrights; but the group also included members of the theatrical profession and others interested in the future and development of Australian drama. Mornings were taken up with attendance at rehearsals of the plays, and seminar/group discussions

were arranged for the afternoons. Some of the topics chosen for discussion in these afternoon sessions were *The Writer's Role in the Theatre*, *The Director and the Play*, *The Actor and the Play*, *Company Management and Selection of Repertoire*, *Writing for Film and Television*, *Commercial Theatre*, *The Critic's Responsibilities*, and *The Role of Theatre and its Future*. Members of the profession travelled from all parts of Australia to take part in these sessions, and among them were directors John Tasker, Rex Cramphorne, Stanley Walsh and George Whaley, theatre manager/directors Alistair Mitchell, Bettie Fisher, Alan Edwards and John Timlin, and critics Katharine Brisbane, Virginia Diagan, Brian Hoad, Len Radic, Kevon Kemp and Romola Constantino. Playwright Alisdair Skinner was sent from Scotland to attend the Conference as an observer by the Scottish Arts Council, and the special guest of the Conference, Miss Helen Montagu, joint managing director of H.M. Tennent's theatre management, came from London.

Most exciting of all these seminar/discussion groups was held on Friday May 9, which was set aside free from rehearsals as a seminar day and which was chaired by Professor Frederick May. The morning was entitled *Technical Aspects of Play Production*. "Imagine" said Professor May, "that I am the author of a play about reckless man in a political, money-wielding society. There is a cast of four men, who represent everything from with-it monarchy to nimble-witted Bob Hawke, and 3 women: one of whom is a nubile but distraught 13 year old, another of whom is a 40 year old nymphomaniac, and the third of whom is a grandmother who is paralysed in a wheelchair. The scenes are a formica kitchen, a fairy-tale king's study, the king's ballroom, a wild heath for hunting on, a bridge and a seashore with a rock for lamenting on. There are inset comedy scenes depicting violence in South Vietnam, Australia and South America, and a laughing statue and a man dressed as a parrot. My production team here is about to mount this production, and are here to tell you how they are going to do it."



Playwrights whose plays were selected for workshop at the Conference: Norman Street, Peter Matheson, Bruce McKendry, Michael Aitkens, Robert Evans, Richard (alias Julie) Bradshaw and Geoff Sykes.

IN CANBERRA

Within ninety minutes, production team Helen Montagu, Alan Edwards, director of the Queensland Theatre Company, Allan Lees, designer, Peter Roehlen, technical director, Melbourne Theatre Company, and Peter Smith of Strand Electric Lighting, had cast, budgeted, designed, negotiated contracts, plotted lighting and activated the publicity machine for what promised to be the most exciting theatrical event of the century. The audience were spellbound.

The afternoon saw gathered together an all-star cast of writers and playwrights — Tom Keneally, Dorothy Hewett, Bob Ellis, David Williamson, Simon Hopkinson, John Powers and Alisdair Skinner — who discussed the various problems afflicting playwrights, talked about their various working habits, and affirmed the fact that being a playwright in Australia makes you paranoid! This session was particularly valuable to many of the beginner playwrights in the audience, who were reassured that all playwrights, be they just beginning or already established, had to cope with similar problems and prejudices.

Another all-star cast assembled on Sunday afternoon to take part in the session *The Emergence of Urban Aboriginal Identity Through the Arts*. Those taking part were Brian Syron of the Aboriginal Arts Board, Jack Davis, Editor of *Identity* magazine, Bettie Fisher, administrator of the Black Theatre in Sydney, Lorraine Mafi, writer, Hyllus Maris of the Victorian Council for Aboriginal Culture, and Bob Randall, lecturer at the Torrens College of Advanced Education in Adelaide. This session, a particularly interesting one, was later made into a Lateline programme for the A.B.C.

The final rehearsal/readings of the plays selected for workshop were held on the final Friday and Saturday of the Conference. Lively discussion followed each reading, and the feedback in an audience situation was of great value to the writers. It was also interesting at this point to see the designs made for each play by the three design students from N.I.D.A. who attended the Conference as part of their course.

It is certain that this year saw the firm establishment of the Playwrights Conference as a positive and creative force in Australian theatrical life. This is in no small measure due to the excellent administration provided by the Elizabethan Theatre Trust under the supervision of Carole Long, and also to the dedication and professionalism of Alexander Hay, Artistic Director of the Conference. But quite apart from these factors, the Conference is at last beginning to assume a shape and identity of its own; for the experience gained and the lessons learned in the first two years of its existence are at last beginning to bear fruit. As a result of this experience, the Conference has been modified from its original American model to suit the Australian situation and the special needs of the Australian writer.

It is difficult to assess the value of the Conference in terms of results — it is not important whether any of the selected plays go on to professional production — but what is important is that the playwrights concerned go on to write more plays. And the Conference gives them the opportunity to meet professional theatre people who will be in a position to help them get their plays read and performed in the future.

Feedback is all positive. "If it hadn't been for the Conference, I wouldn't have known what to do with my play," said one writer. "It would have lain around in my bottom drawer for years, I suppose. But to have such professional people working on it was a miraculous opportunity, and has taught me a great deal. And it was marvellous that there were so many people who came who are involved in the profession — the contacts I have made will be of immense value."

Bob Ellis sees it from a different angle. "The Conference is all it should be. Apart from being a workshop situation, it is also a place where theatricals from all over Australia can come and meet one another and establish relationships on neutral ground, as well as discuss the problems which are common to us all. For myself, it has been a wonderful experience to get to know and like people of

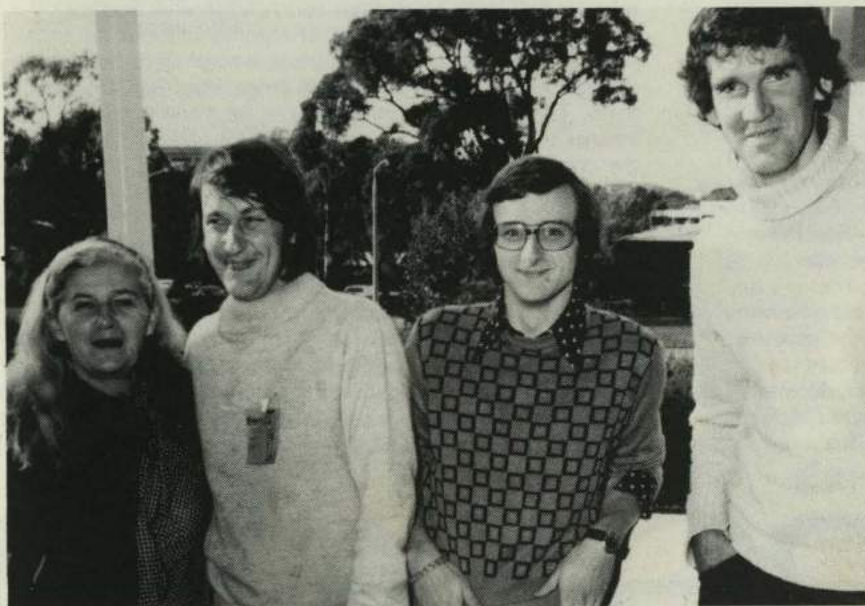
whom I had been previously suspicious, and I'm sure the reverse applies too. Old scores can be settled, partnerships established — anything can happen, and the Conference is practically the only situation in which it can."

"I feel as though I have a fairy godmother, who has suddenly decided to give me a push," says Mary Gage, an observer playwright whom the Conference brought from Perth. "It's so difficult to know what's going on when you are in Perth, or even to know who people are. I have learnt so much from just watching the rehearsals and talking to people that I can't wait to get home and get on with my next play."

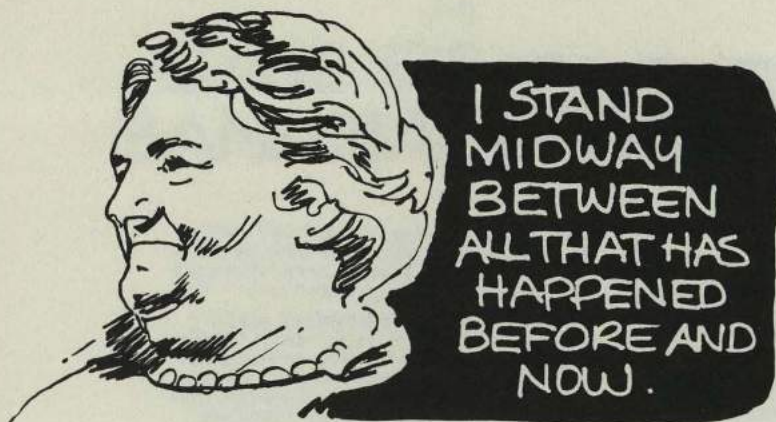
Another observer playwright, Lawrence Bruce, says "It's value to me was inestimable. There was enough common-sense and stimulation to last a lifetime, so even if I never go again, I have learned things about the craft that are fundamental and ineradicable. You see, the great thing about the Conference is that it cuts corners for you. In that tightly compacted climate, with highly qualified and professional people to surround you, so much 'spins off' that it is difficult to express in words."

Special Conference guest, Miss Helen Montagu, is also convinced of the value of the Conference to Australian theatre. "I think it has more value here than it would in England, because at least in England most of the playwrights can keep closely in touch with one another — I mean, that's if they want to, and everybody knows, all together in the theatre, what's happening all the time. There's no way a play, even in the provinces, can go on, that has any merit or any sort of spark, without a lot of people seeing it. It's so easy to see everything that's going on, with all the fringe theatres in London and lunch time theatres. . . like Steven Polliceroff, a young writer who's done only lunch time theatre but he gets very big notices and people go and see it; and of course he's commissioned. They're built up in this way — by everyone being in the same spot and nurturing them. I mean, it's very hard to nurture someone who lives in Cairns. So anything that brings people together rather seriously to exchange ideas or just to spark off each other is a good idea."

ANGELA WALES



Playwrights Dorothy Hewett, Bob Ellis, Simon Hopkinson and David Williamson at the Canberra Conference.



In Australia recently, to challenge and stimulate drama teachers and students, was Dorothy Heathcote from the University of Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, England. She conducted concentrated teacher and children's workshops at the Drama Resource Centre, Melbourne, and in Victorian schools during January and February. In March and April she lectured at the University of N.S.W. and worked in Sydney schools with the Education Department and members of the Educational Drama Association. Teachers had stimulating opportunities to view and discuss her films and work. She constantly challenged and questioned teachers, demanding they find solutions within their individual classroom situations. The following thoughts and ideas from Mrs Heathcote are an indication of her dynamic down-to-earth approach to drama in the school.

"What do all teachers hold in common? We can assume the wish to communicate, or at least the responsibility for communication (if only of the one-way type) to be accepted. One can also assume interest in the subject area, presumably, too, a modicum of concern with measurement of that which has been communicated, together with some basic training for the job and the need to survive in the job. No one teaches a teacher how to teach. Teachers are made in the classroom during confrontations with their classes, and the product they become is a result of their need to survive and the ways they devise to do this. In my view insufficient emphasis is placed on this during the training period or at any time later when new skills are required.

One should be prepared to define one's terms. For the present purpose, I will define a teacher as "one who creates learning situations for others." That is, his energies and skills are at the service, during the professional situation, of his pupils. A teacher's rewards come because those energies flow into other people and therefore can make the return journey through the teacher's own intake ability from his classes. The total person a teacher is, is employed in this task, properly filtered through the professional principles and duties. What he knows he

requires to communicate. What he is is his means of achieving this.

Drama is becoming 'respectable' in our schools. Many timetables now take cognisance of this activity and the word is being introduced into our staff rooms and conferences, but to many teachers it still remains a great mystery better left alone, and not the least mysterious facet of it is the activity called 'improvisation'. Why should this be? One reason lies in the fact that there are as many definitions of it as there are practitioners. Improvisation in my view means 'discovering by trial, error and testing; using available materials with respect for their nature, and being guided by this appreciation of their potential.' The end-product of improvisation is the experience of it. Any artist in any field will tell you this.

I define educational drama as being 'anything which involves persons in active role-taking situations in which attitudes, not characters, are the chief concern, lived at life-rate (i.e. discovery at this moment, not memory based) and obeying the natural laws of the medium.' I regard these as being (i) a willing suspension of disbelief (ii) agreement to pretence, and (iii) employing all past experiences available to the group at the present moment and any conjecture of imagination they are capable of, in an attempt to create a living, moving picture of life, which aims at surprise and discovery for the participants rather than for any onlookers. The scope of this is to be defined by story line and theme, so that the problem with which they grapple is clearly defined. I maintain that problem-solving is the basis of learning and maturation.

The teacher is a sender and a receiver; the student is a sender and a receiver. What the teacher sends, the student needs to be able to receive; what the student sends, the teacher needs to be able to receive. As the teacher receives a particular sending from the student, the teacher needs to be able to organise a response which is relevant to what the student can next receive and use. Thus continues the sequence of communication. As each receives and sends, he has to be able to project into the inner world of the other and to sense what is forming there. Then his communication can be meaningful (a means) to the sequential and emergent development of the communication. Otherwise, communication fails; education fails. Communication is the centre of the educative system.

I am concerned then with two main aspects of teaching; the first is the way a teacher confronts his class and the two-way flow of communication takes place. This is the living reverberating matter of teaching, firmly based upon mutual respect by each for the other's contribution. I have to create situations in which classes can first throw their behaviour in my face in order that I may make an assessment of their needs and therefore of starting points. Also, for drama, I require that a class shall be made to

DOROTHY

feel like a group. Desks isolate individuals, therefore my instinct is to discard them unless I require individual differences to emerge, then I hurry to desks in order that behaviour may emerge. Eye feedback and eye impact is important. The teacher who requires the class to look (and to feel to be) a small number in a large space, functions very differently from the one who prefers a class to seem a large group in a relatively small space.

I also believe that decision-taking is an important educational experience and one means of securing involvement. Group decision-taking is not easy but there is nothing quite so revealing of either the needs or resources of any community as making this demand. Drama-making involves groups in a vast range of decision taking, and progression in this field is related to more and more subtlety of feeling, perception, language, social adjustment and drama expertise. I want my classes to learn to make decisions, and to understand the problems and rewards of these decisions, so I regard it as my prime task to ensure that they clearly understand the choice between the possibilities, the nature of the decision taken and the demands likely to be put upon them because of the decision taken. This is another reason why drama is such a wonderful educational tool.

The teacher's role in employing drama in education is

- a) To create a climate in which value judgements do not apply, but where honesty of individual contributions is valued, and respect is shown to individuals' ideas and methods of contribution.
- b) To employ children's ideas and make them "work" positively, employing the natural laws of the medium.
- c) To create a working situation of integrity, employing his adult world within the situation but allowing the children their own world of concepts and values.
- d) To thoroughly understand the way drama functions in promoting the release of varying and conflicting attitudes within the group.
- e) To be able to 'forward' the work towards teaching ends without destroying the children's contribution.
- f) To be able to prepare and plan, yet retain for the children the necessary "surprise-confrontation" element.
- g) To understand that drama is **not** stories re-told, but confrontations between individuals standing up, lived at life-rate."

To illustrate this at work in a classroom, the following is a synopsis of a session with a class of six year olds. The situation is established that they are orphans who have come to a cave with the thought of living there. The teacher (Mrs Heathcote) in the role of a hunter says: "You don't own this cave, do you?" The children reply

IS THERE
ANY IDEA
YOU'D
LIKE US TO
WORK ON?



"Yes." She retorts with "Prove it!" Then later — "You can't stay in the cave all the time. That's against the law — you have to go to school." Thus the children are challenged to face up to the reality of the situation. They have been helped by a kind lady who goes to the village and buys food for them. One day she comes back and says she has no more money! Suddenly the children are faced with the problem of how they will survive. The session continues with the working out of this problem.

In conclusion, Mrs Heathcote says:

"Medicine is an art regarded with reverence. Why should the ability to stimulate and shape a mind be less valued than the surgical skill to remove a tumour from a damaged one? This is itself a measure of our present lip-service to creativity. We want people who are original, creative, spontaneous, innovative. But we want them to be produced by teachers whom we condemn in a hundred ways to be overworked and uninspired, unrespected and underpaid. We have seen what a related activity has done in the arts where we overvalue the product while we undervalue the living painter, allowing him to starve or eke out a miserable living with commercial art, while we auction off the works of his comfortable dead predecessor for \$100,000 a painting. So, also, we would like children to be creative, to learn about creativity, while we make the best chance they have to learn, to respond to teaching, as uncreative as possible.

There is only one sure way to develop creativity in all the different kinds of children in our schools. We must cherish all the way through — in the normal school and the teachers college, in the way the teacher's job is set up, in the freedom granted to the teacher to teach while others perform the thousand chores which are no essential part of this task and this art, in the time given to the teacher to read and explore and think and plan and search for new materials — the creativity of all those who have elected to become teachers because they want to teach."

Paul Roebuck and the Victorian Drama Teachers' Association Journal are acknowledged for their assistance in the research and preparation of this article.

HEATHCOTE

Elizabeth Anderton



In February of this year, a feminine whirlwind roared into the Australian Ballet Centre in Flemington to take up her appointment as Guest Teacher and Personal Assistant to Sir Robert Helpmann. Elizabeth Anderton, former principal dancer with the Royal Ballet, commenced her six month visit with a flourish. Her myriad of duties and responsibilities included daily teaching, assisting American choreographer John Butler with his new work *NIGHT ENCOUNTER*, and assisting Robert Mead with his reproduction of Ashton's *THE TWO PIGEONS* — all the while settling into Melbourne and getting to know the company and staff.

Elizabeth Anderton was born in London and trained with Nesta Brooking before joining the Royal Ballet School in 1954. The following year she graduated to the Sadler's Wells Opera Ballet and in 1957 transferred to the Royal Ballet. Her first original role was the young girl in *SWEENEY TODD*, an early John Cranko ballet.

She established herself as a principal dancer with the Royal Ballet in the 1960's, dancing classical roles such as Princess Aurora and the Bluebird pas de deux in *THE SLEEPING BEAUTY*, and dramatic roles including the bride in *BLOOD WEDDING* and the Betrayed Girl in *THE RAKE'S PROGRESS*. She was also a noted interpreter of the title role in *GISELLE* and the fiery Gypsy Girl in Ashton's *THE TWO PIGEONS*.

In 1970 Elizabeth Anderton split her achilles tendon during a performance, and this necessitated an absence of eighteen months. Because of an unsuccessful operation, she was unable to perform in the great classical roles, but continued to appear as a character and mime artist.

During the eighteen months she was away from the Royal Ballet, she studied daily with Winifred Edwards, then principal teacher at the Royal Ballet School. On Miss Edwards' retirement, Elizabeth Anderton took over some of her duties, which included private tuition of principal dancers of the Royal Ballet.

In August 1974, Elizabeth Anderton left the Royal Ballet and has since been guest teacher to companies including the Ballet Rambert, the London Festival Ballet, and the New London Ballet.

She hasn't changed her "modus operandi" for the Australian Ballet: "My job here is exactly what I expected. The Australian Ballet is very similar to any company in the world. A member of the artistic staff must be prepared to stand in for anyone, to be anywhere, to cope with any eventuality. But I definitely enjoy teaching most."

"I feel very much at home with the Australian Ballet; it is similar structurally to the Royal Ballet; the way in which dancers are trained in the classical style is similar; and given a few more years, they will attain the same standard as the Royal."

"I'd like to see the Australian Ballet do every conceivable kind of work; to become a museum of modern and ancient arts . . . but the dancers must retain their classical technique; either that or burn their pointe shoes and become Martha Graham followers; pointe work is so special, so stylised."

"When I injured my achilles tendon during a performance of *THE TWO PIGEONS*, I wasn't initially concerned. If I had known I had done something dreadful, I would have been upset, but I was certain I would get better. I was 31 years old, had toured for 17 years, and once I sat down and faced six months of not working, I realised there was more to life than 8 performances a week in provincial England. I had received a good run for my money and I wasn't desolate."

"I had two operations. The second was one year after the injury occurred, and they re-opened my foot and poked around. By then it was hopeless, and the struggle back was very difficult. Even now I must always wear shoes with some kind of little heel."

"Winifred Edwards was my inspiration for teaching. She is a wonderful woman. At age 18, she was the first English girl to be accepted into Anna Pavlova's company. She saw Pavlova dance and it changed her life. She travelled all over the world with the Russian company, and then went to the Royal Ballet to teach. All the leading ballerinas (Antoinette Sibley, Merle Park, etc.) were her pupils and proteges. She is now 82 years old and still does barre work every day — a marvellous woman."

"She made me feel able to teach. I am an impatient person, both with myself and with other people. She gave me confidence in my knowledge. I thought I was just a stupid dancer. Dancers have a reputation for using their bodies and not thinking much, and Miss Edwards made me believe in myself and my knowledge."

"She was one of the first ecological buffs; she taught us all to 'put back what was taken out'. The Royal Ballet trains dancers in the classical tradition, hoping they will put back into the company the knowledge and expertise they have acquired. I suppose I'll end up there after experiencing other companies. It's my home, it's where I belong, it's where I received all my feeling for the dance."

There was an unexpected English "reunion" for Elizabeth Anderton in Melbourne. Old friends, former dancing partners and work mates were all in residence at the Ballet Centre. Robert Mead, ballet master of Germany's Hanover Ballet, was there to reproduce *THE TWO PIGEONS*. ("He is brilliant . . . to remember the ballet

after nine years. The finesse and special touches of the ballet are still there.") Choreographer Ronald Hynd and designer Desmond Heeley paid a brief visit to discuss the forthcoming production of *THE MERRY WIDOW*; English choreographer and television director Gillian Lynne was liaising with Associate Director, Bryan Ashbridge, for a special colour television production, and, of course, principal dancers from the Royal Ballet, Alan Alder and Lucette Aldous, both old friends, were there on hand to welcome her.

"It was a real gathering of the clan," Elizabeth exclaimed. "None of us realised the others would be in Melbourne, and it was a great surprise." Elizabeth worked very closely with Robert Mead. She first danced the role of the Gypsy Girl in *THE TWO PIGEONS* in 1961. "Sir Frederick gave me a role that suited me . . . we would both look good if it worked out; it was a reflection on both of us. I was known for my dramatic roles and my rather tempestuous personality; that's what he was after; I was never a retiring violet, I believe in living life to the full. I didn't particularly like the role of the Gypsy Girl — it was too much like hard work. I liked to sit in a restaurant with a good steak and red wine AFTER the performance — especially if I hadn't made a mess of it."

Elizabeth Anderton is a difficult lady to corner for an interview . . . one gets very tired trying to keep up with her demanding routine and seemingly endless supply of energy. At the Sydney Opera House, a week after the opening of *THE TWO PIGEONS*, she sat still in the Green Room and answered questions staccato:

AUSTRALIAN AUDIENCES: "I first experienced the Australian Ballet on their home territory during the *ROMEO AND JULIET* season. The audiences for *ROMEO* seemed most appreciative — and they filled that huge auditorium (the Palais Theatre). They knew what they liked; they were not just clapping the tricks and difficult lifts, but appreciated it in every sense. However, I think classical ballet will always be an 'elitist' art form, inevitably, because it is so specialised. Anyone can jiggle and rock and enjoy music, but only a few can master the technique, the pointe work for classical ballet. Inevitably it is whittled down to the few who can do it, and it is really appreciated by only a few, unfortunately."

MALE DANCERS: "Throughout the world the 'unisex' look is in, and this syndrome shows itself very strongly in ballet, especially modern dance. It's a thing I loathe passionately — I like to see men and women, not wonder 'Is that a boy or a girl?'. I like to know. Thankfully, the male dancers of The Australian Ballet are athletes as well as dancers. They look marvellous."

DANCERS' SOCIAL LIVES: "You have a non-existent social life and personal relationships are usually most disastrous. And they are few and far between. You are always on the move, and besides, I would personally prefer to socialise with people outside ballet. I wouldn't like to relive the day's activities at home. I'd want to talk about music, or art or acting, or whatever."

ELIZABETH ANDERTON — ARTISTIC DIRECTOR?: She is most adamant about one thing: she does not want her own company. "I would hate to be tied to administrative work; I want to have as much contact with the dancers as possible, and not be concerned with the paperwork and daily administrative decisions."

THE NEED FOR A 'HOME THEATRE' FOR THE AUSTRALIAN BALLET: "The dancers have got to feel at home . . . then we will build world shakers; until then they will feel like gypsies and vagabonds. And a theatre, a home base, will be like a magnet for all the wonderful Australian dancers currently performing with overseas companies."

The sophisticated lady in the long elegant dress, with cropped brown hair and elfin eyes is a secret football fanatic. "English football", she quickly points out, "not Aussie Rules. I sat and watched the World Cup during my tendon recovery and became an avid fan. In fact, I stayed up late the other night and watched the F.A. cup final on television . . . I became so homesick I rang my mother in the middle of the telecast."

Gucci shoes, football, chunky gold rings, hoop earrings, Italy, BALLET and blue jeans — Elizabeth Anderton is a vivacious, fun-loving and intense person. She is many-faceted, a lady who lived the word 'liberated' long before the Women's Movement gained recognition: and she is a valuable asset to any ballet company fortunate enough to gain her expertise and infectiously friendly personality.



OVERSEAS

LONDON

At the National Theatre, Peter Hall's production of Pinter's latest play, *NO MAN'S LAND*, is attracting great interest. This is mainly for superb performances by Sir John Gielgud and Sir Ralph Richardson. Gielgud, normally immaculate and poised, plays the seedy and dishevelled Spooner, a house guest of Hirst, a wealthy and successful literary man, played by Richardson. As the Observer review in April says "Altogether Spooner must rank, in Gielgud's performance, among Mr Pinter's finest creations."

STRATFORD

Despite the economic gloom, the R.S.C. at Stratford are doing full justice to the pageantry of *HENRY V*. Also in the summer repertoire are *HENRY IV* parts I & II — using the same casts and an enormous stage especially constructed for the season. Alan Howard, as Henry V, gives an exciting, virile performance, clearly demonstrating the growth of a king in a challenging world. Designed by Farrah and directed by Terry Hands, the production begins on a very low note. Suddenly, with the decision to march on France, the stage comes to life with an enormous heraldic canopy and stunning armour and leather uniforms.

As part of its centenary celebrations in June, the R.S.C. presented a gala recital programme with such stars as Paul Scofield, Dame Peggy Ashcroft, Sir Michael Redgrave, Dorothy Tutin and Judi Dench.

CHICHESTER

The May to September season at the Festival Theatre opened with Jose Ferrer's production of *CYRANO DE BERGERAC* by Edmond Rostand. Keith Michell played the romantic, fascinating lead, Barbara Jefford the lady he loves in silence. Unfortunately, something of the necessary magic was missing — it all seemed rather too down to earth, although the production was colourful and fast-moving. Other plays in the season are Ibsen's *AN ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE*, with Donald Sinden playing Dr Stockman; *MADE IN HEAVEN*, a new play by Andrew Sachs; and *OTHELLO* with Topol as the Moor and Keith Michell as Iago.

PARIS

At the Theatre D'Orsay, recently constructed inside an old railway station, the Madeleine Renaud — Jean-Louis Barrault Company have in their repertoire a superb production of Colin Higgins' *HAROLD AND MAUDE*,

directed by Barrault himself. Known to film goers, it is a delightful love story of an older woman and a young man. The legendary Madeleine Renaud plays Maude with a joyous simplicity in a production which makes full use of the open thrust stage.

BRUSSELS

In May, prior to a European tour, *THE PENNY ARCADE PEEP SHOW* was presented by Le Plan K in a converted greenhouse in the Botanical Gardens. Devised from the writings of the American William Burroughs, it explores and exposes the destructive nature of our society. During most of the performance three naked actors manipulated four heavy silver "sculptures" around the room, accompanied by jarring sounds — presumably illustrating the pointlessness of much of our existence!

Also in Brussels in May, Jose Geal's Theatre Toone was delighting audiences with an unrecognisable but highly entertaining version of Corneille's *LE CID*! The Theatre Toone is a puppet theatre for adults whose main feature is the virtuoso live performance every night by Geal of all the voices of the characters presented.

M.L.



1. Sir John Gielgud as Spooner in *NO MAN'S LAND*
2. Madeleine Renaud and Daniel Riviere in *HAROLD AND MAUDE*
3. A scene from *THE PENNY ARCADE PEEP SHOW*
4. *LE CID* at the Theatre Toone, Brussels

music

OLD RECORDINGS SOUGHT

Old gramophone recordings and sheet music are being sought by the National Library of Australia in Canberra for its recently established Music and Sound Recordings Section.

The library wishes to secure ALL types of sound recordings, including cylinder phonograph records, 78's, Edison Diamond Discs and Pathe records. It will also be collecting 45's and L.P.'s.

In addition to sound recordings the National Library is collecting associated documents, such as:

- * Gramophone record catalogues and monthly supplements.
- * Publicity brochures relating to radio programs, such as serials.
- * Information on the history of the gramophone, music and broadcasting industries, together with biographical material on the pioneers involved (such as George Edwards, Jack Davey, "Mo", George Sorlie, Florrie Forde, etc.)
- * Information on the careers of Australian performing artists and composers (such as scrapbooks, personal papers, photographs, concert programs, etc.) Information is sought not only on international artists but also prominent local and district performers and groups.
- * Australian sheet music.
- * Australian piano rolls.
- * Old music magazines.

The major function of all this collection building is to preserve all these materials for the benefit of present and future generations.

It is intended to preserve ALL types of music including dance, ballet, jazz, hillbilly, opera, folk, band music, Aboriginal, classical, rock and roll, blues, old time, etc.

At present the collection totals 170,000 recordings. By 1978 it will be the largest such archive in the Southern Hemisphere.

Persons seeking further information on the establishment of this national collection of music and sound recordings should write to Mr P. Burgis, Project Officer, Music and Sound Recordings Section, National Library of Australia, Canberra, ACT 2600. (Telephone 621 513)

MUSIC ROSTRUM AUSTRALIA LIMITED is the most exciting new development on the Australian music scene since the A.B.C. was formed in 1932.

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The Programmes for Rostrum '75 are broadly based with music by Monteverdi, Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, and a selection of the most important works of this century.

Preceding **Rostrum '75** the unique Youth Rostrum (August 23-31) provides a massive injection of in-depth training to young artists who need to broaden their horizons in attitude to technique, interpretation and repertoire by working alongside such top Australian and international professionals as GEOFFREY PARSONS, RONALD SMITH, CATHY BERBERIAN, LUCIANO BERIO, YUJI TAKAHASHI, ROGER WOODWARD, JAN WEBER, JOHN HOPKINS, JOHN PAINTER and REX HOBECROFT.

Administratively the Rostrum has a sound group of Patrons and Directors. Patrons include Sir Bernard Heinze, Dame Joan Hammond, the Prime Minister of Australia, the Premier of Victoria, and the Premier of South Australia. Directors are H.C. Coombs (Chairman), Frank Barnes (Deputy Chairman), Rex Hobcroft, James Murdoch, John Painter and Warren Thomson.

Subscription discount prices are available to A.E.T.T. members who subscribe to two or more concerts. Brochures are available by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to:

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ΕΘΝΙΚΟ ΘΕΑΤΡΟ

Latest figures indicate that there may now be as many as half a million people living in Sydney whose native tongue is not English. Even for a city such as Sydney, whose cosmopolitan nature is well-established, this is a very large number. Most of the people who make up this number come from Southern and Eastern Europe, from countries whose cultures are not only much older than, but also very different from, our own. It may come as a surprise to some, however, to learn exactly how many of these foreign-language communities are perpetuating their cultures in Australia through theatre and performing arts groups. In the last six months in Sydney alone, there have been a large number of theatrical or performing arts activities performed by and for local ethnic groups.

Probably the most active of these groups is the "Turk Halk Tiyatrosu" or the Turkish Australian People's Theatre, which operates from a small basement in Surry Hills under the direction and guidance of a remarkable Turkish lady called Ayten Kuyululu. Mrs Kuyululu emigrated to Australia with her family in 1971, and in October last year formed, with some of her friends and family, a small group in order to put on a Turkish play. "Most of the Turkish people who come here come from the villages," says Mrs Kuyululu, "and not only are not able to speak English, but have to learn to cope with a city environment, as well as language and cultural differences." The first play the group put on was a Turkish play called HOME by Turkish playwright Turgut Ozkan. The play is about a Turkish family who move from their village to the city, and the group adapted it to fit the situation of rural Turks who move to an Australian city in pursuit of a better life. The opening performance on December 7, 1974, played to a packed house in the Balmain Town Hall, and two more performances of the play have filled Balmain Town Hall since then.

Then, using the scanty door-sales from Balmain (they only charge \$1.50 for tickets) they took the play on tour to Auburn, Wollongong and Melbourne, and had full houses wherever they went. On the strength of this, and also on the strength of Mrs Kuyululu's obvious dedication and talent (she spent 15 months singing with the Australian Opera, and her film A HANDFUL OF DUST was one of the finalists at the 1974 Sydney Film Festival) the group were awarded a grant of \$10,000 by the Australia Council. With this money they were able to rent the basement of a warehouse in Surry Hills, which they have converted into a community activities centre. Freshly painted and sparklingly clean, the centre has a rehearsal room, a wardrobe room, an office, a sewing room, a props room, a "green-room" and nearing completion is a dark room for photographic enthusiasts. The centre will also be used from time to time for exhibitions of Turkish arts and crafts, for English lessons for women migrants, and for musical activities. The group are lucky to have their own composer, who composes all the incidental music for their plays.

The next play produced by the group was KARALARIN MEMETSLERI, by Cahit Atay, another modern Turkish playwright; the story traces the very different lives and life-styles of three different men, all called Memet, who have lived in the village of Karalar. Once again, the play packed houses in Balmain, Melbourne and Wollongong.

The present production, now playing, is a tragic drama called DUVARLARIN OTESI, or "Beyond the Walls" about three Turkish gaol escapees who come to terms with love and life just before they are recaptured and shot.

For the future? Mrs Kuyululu plans to organise and produce a different play every six weeks or so. "It's difficult," she says, "and the people involved have to make a lot of sacrifices in terms of time and energy; most of them have full-time jobs in factories and offices, and give their spare time to us. And if we didn't have the support from the Australia Council we couldn't keep going. But," she adds with a smile, "it's worth it. It has made so much difference to the lives of the Turkish people in Australia already. So many of them are so much happier."

Mr Christos Mandouridis, who runs the Hellenic Theatre Group in Sydney, also thinks it's worth it. He emigrated to Australia, a Greek refugee from Egypt, (where he had been an actor) in the 1940's and has been producing Greek plays in Australia since 1949. His group receives no financial assistance from the Australia Council (they have not applied for it) and all expenses come from their own pockets, which they recoup to some extent from door sales. The continuing financial problem, however, means that they have to limit their activities to one or two (occasionally three) productions a year. Mr Mandouridis tries, as far as possible, to give the Greek community as wide a variety of programmes as he can, from ancient Greek tragedy (translated into modern Greek) to modern Greek comedy. "Theatre," he says, "is something alive — the perfect involvement. Also, it is the perfect form in which to teach people. That is why I don't like to do just modern comedies — although they may be entertaining, their vision is very limited. I want to tell people not just about their own culture, but about other aspects of life." The first play Mr Mandouridis produced in Australia, at the Conservatorium of Music in 1949, was THE SACRIFICE OF ABRAHAM, a Cretan poetic drama from the island's short-lived Renaissance, before they were conquered by the Turks. Since then he has produced HECUBA, OEDIPUS TYRRANOS, and many other classical plays, as well as THE COUNTESS OF VALERANA, a 19th century play from the Ionian Islands, O IALINOS KOSMOS (The Glass Menagerie) by Tennessee Williams, CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS by Nikos Kazantzakis (author of "Zorba the Greek" and "Christ Recrucified" — this particular production was a world premiere) and two plays by a local Greek playwright, Theo Patrarchareos, called O THEOS AP' TIN AFSTRALIA, and PETA TI PHYSARMONIKA PEPINO, which has now been made into a film, using several members from the Hellenic Theatre Group. This play is about a migrant living in Australia who "buys" a bride that he has never seen before from Greece. Due to be released soon, the film is called THE PROMISED WOMAN, and the music is written by a migrant musician, Vassilis Daramaras, who after several years as a bricklayer, storeman packer and labourer, is now studying composition at the Conservatorium of Music in Sydney. He also writes much of the incidental music for productions by the Hellenic Theatre Group.

The latest production by the Hellenic Theatre Group was a heroic drama called PHOTINOS by modern Greek playwright Katiphoris, at the Teacher's Federation Theatre in Sussex Street, Sydney, in April of this year. Photinos is an old guerilla who fights for the freedom of his island from the Franks, and the play was inspired by the heroic poem of the same name by the Greek poet Valaoritis.

Future productions planned by the group are ANTIGONE, which will be in collaboration with the Institute of Languages at the University of N.S.W., and I PLEIOPSIPHIA TOU ENOS, or, as it is known in English, "A Majority of One" by Leonard Spigelglass.

Other Greek drama groups have sprung into being from time to time, but none, it seems, last very long, and none have had the consistency of vision and quality provided by Mr Mandouridis. Many Greeks disagree with Mr Mandouridis' policy of producing "classical" and "quality" drama, and several attempts have been made to set up groups with a more commercial base, playing, for example, the modern comedies of Psathas, who is a sort of Greek Neil Simon. One group which does seem to be succeeding in this area is a group in Belmore, which has been going since 1970 or so. This group has its own theatre, and produces plays for the specific purpose of raising money for their church. So the Greeks do have some choice in their theatrical diet.

Nancy Caruana, another Egyptian Greek originally trained in classical ballet, began her Greek folk-dance Group in 1966. "I wanted to teach Greeks to be proud of their culture, for them to have something which Australians could understand and admire, so that the Greeks could have an identity here and be

ETHNIC IN SYDNEY

ANGELA WALES

proud of it," says Nancy. "When I first began teaching, they wouldn't wear their national costumes, but now they are all being pulled out of trunks and drawers and used." Her first big break came when in 1970, for the Captain Cook celebrations, the group performed the story of Ulysses in dance, and Nancy choreographed a sequel telling the story of the modern Ulysses, the migrant Greek who comes to a new land. This performance, in the Sydney Town Hall, made the group's name; since then, Nancy Caruana has done a large show in the Opera House each year, including several performances for schools. Nancy has worked with Dora Stratou, the internationally acclaimed expert in Greek folk-dance, and has travelled to Greece collecting dances, costumes and folk art from remote areas. She is hoping for a travel grant from the Australia Council to collect more in the near future, and hopes to write a book on the subject. Her last show at the Opera House was in March of this year, where, as well as traditional dances performed in national costumes, the group danced some dances from ancient Greece, and Nancy choreographed a new dance to illustrate the poem "Candles" by the Greek poet Cavafy, and a dance/mime to illustrate the story of the birth of the Greek theatre. The music for these was written by another migrant composer, Thamos Mexis.

The Italian group calls itself simply "Il Gruppo" and was formed in 1973 by Bruno Buttini, who wanted to help fill what he calls the "cultural emptiness" in the Italian/Australian community. Their first play, LUMIE DI SICILIA, by Pirandello, was performed in the St James theatre in Sydney. Since then, they have produced LA PATENTE (Pirandello) IL REDICE (a 17th century play by Ruzante) IL MALATO PER TUTTI by Marotta and I LADRI VENGONO PER NUOCERE by Dario Fo. They now use the Eisteddfod Theatre in George Street, and their latest production was a modern Italian satire, IL BUCCO E LA SPADA by Nicola Manzari. This year they received a grant from the Australia Council to take the play to a wider audience, and in consequence held performances in Fairfield, Blacktown and Canberra. The season has just finished. The play apparently caused some controversy among the older Italians, because of a satirical reference to the Pope. "You have to be so careful," sighs Mr Buttini. "We depend so much on the Italian community for support, in help, money, advertising, and so on, that we really can't afford to alienate even a few. But the reference wasn't even very offensive; it was just misinterpreted by some of the more conservative people." He sees choice of repertoire as being one of the main problems, as well as the continuing financial and time problems. However, the play has been a great success, and more productions are planned for the future.

The Ukrainians have just finished a season of a large revue/variety show called FOR ADULTS ONLY, which was produced by Roman Maslak, a honours student in Drama at the University of N.S.W. The show included music, dance, revue sketches (they had a Ukrainian Edna Everage!) and two one-act plays, written by local Ukrainian writer Jaroslaw Maslak. They opened in Newcastle to a full house, had two packed performances in Sydney, and then took the show to Melbourne, for two performances there. This show was subsidised by the Ukrainian Youth Community Centre and Club at Lidcombe, and was so successful that moves are now afoot to establish a permanent group. There is a permanent group devoted to the performance of classical Ukrainian drama which has been going for some years, but this does not enjoy popular support among the young Ukrainians, many of whom are now almost completely assimilated into the Australian community. This group also uses the Centre at Lidcombe, and so does the Boyan, the Ukrainian choir, and their folk-dance group. Both these latter groups have given public performances in the Town Hall and the Opera House.

A Croatian group, who stage periodical performances of plays in Croatian, are at present preparing a production of the play VARASKA SANJARIJE ("Devilish Dreams") which was written by local Croatian playwright Karl Kiseli. Another of his plays, THE SADDLER'S DAUGHTER, was performed in Sydney and

Canberra in 1971, in Croatian. Mr Kiseli submitted a script in English to the Australian National Playwright's Conference earlier this year, and was invited to attend the Conference as a subsidised guest observer, since, although the play was not considered relevant to Australian audiences, it was felt by the reading committee that he had dramatic talent which ought to be encouraged. The Croatian plays are normally performed at the Croatian Club in Sydney, but for the present production they are looking for a venue with more suitable stage facilities. "We did apply to the Australia Council for a grant some time ago," says Mr Kiseli, "but we got back a huge bundle of forms — it was impossible." The application form has since been streamlined and simplified to two pages instead of sixteen.

Other groups to which the Australia Council have given some subsidy include Planica, the Slovenian Australian Club, who held a village wedding festival in Wollongong in April, the Australian Federation of Polish Youth Associations, who held a multi-arts festival by the river at Colo in January, and the Polish Folklore Theatre, who held a festival Polish concert at Bankstown in April. The Planica village wedding began with a procession in the streets of Wollongong, then continued in the Town Hall, and was attended by the Mayor of Wollongong and the Yugoslav Consul. It was filmed in colour by the Australia Council.

Most of these groups have problems in common — they have to find and pay for venues and theatres, find costumes, props, and, most important of all, participants. Most of the group leaders point out that the people involved, all being amateurs, must sacrifice a lot in terms of time, energy, and even money. Money is always a big problem, and so, often, is finding an efficient administrator who is willing to give his services for nothing. Choice of repertoire, as Mr Buttini points out, can also be a problem — it is difficult to find plays which will please everyone. The Italians would like their next production to be an Australian play translated into Italian, but even here, the choice is difficult.

Is subsidy justified? Mr Kevin Morgan, who holds the "ethnic dossier" in the Community Arts Division of the Australia Council, thinks it is. "So long, of course," he says, "as they can prove that the project is worthwhile, and they are serious about it. The existence of these groups in Australia enriches our own culture, as well as giving Australians a greater understanding of the different components which make up our society. And of course, they go a long way towards helping migrants with many of their problems. For a start, it brings them together in community activities they would not otherwise have. Then, many migrants who have children here find that there is an enormous generation gap between themselves and their children. By perpetuating their culture in this way, that gap is narrowed. But the most important thing of all is that they improve the quality of life for the non-English speaking migrant. They feel more 'at home', easier in their surroundings, happier. Life is easier for them in a strange land."



The Hellenic Theatre Group in PHOTINOS, Sydney, April 1975.

melbourne scene

by Barry Balmer

ALTERNATIVE THEATRE. The Melbourne Theatre Company is developing an Alternative Theatre program this year. The initial season commenced with a production of Bill Reed's Australian play *YOU WANT IT, DON'T YOU, BILLY?* at La Mama in Farady St Carlton. The play, which opened the same week at the Nimrod Theatre in Sydney, is an unnerving and intriguing thriller. The objects of the Alternative are to perform local and overseas plays which are generally not offered to the Melbourne theatre-going public, and to offer a different sense of audience values than in usual theatre practice, with an emphasis on imagination and the development of a special communication with the audience. In this way the M.T.C. is hoping to provide stimulation for the continuation of the company as a whole, and introduce new and exciting theatre experiences to its audiences. Included in the Alternative repertoire will be the works of such overseas writers as Copi, Arrabel, Steinheim, Heathcote Williams, and Marguerite Duras, and Australian writers Jill Dwyer and John Wood.

GYPSY, the Broadway and London musical comedy success, opened at Her Majesty's Theatre in Melbourne in early May. A highlight of English director Barrie Ingham's production was the stellar performance by Gloria Dawn in the role of Rose, the ambitious stage mother. Having seen Ethel Merman and Angela Lansbury in this role, to my mind Gloria Dawn surpassed them all with the scope of her talents as an actress and singer. Miss Dawn received a ten minute standing ovation on the first night.

SYDNEY ACTRESS KATE SHIELS has joined the Melbourne Theatre Company to appear in the Ibsen classic *THE LADY FROM THE SEA* at St Martin's Theatre. Kate is well known to television viewers for her roles in *Homicide*, *Matlock*, *Ryan*, *Boney*, *Shannon's Mob*, and the ABC *Prix Italia* entry, *BUT WHY MARIANNE?* Kate studied Italian at the Università Per Stranieri at Perugia in Italy during her recent overseas travels, and apart from her career is mainly concerned in areas of community responsibility, such as the retention of low income inner-city housing and resident action groups.

THE LAST TIME TONY LLEWELLYN-JONES was part of a new theatrical venture the roof leaked and the Prime Minister was in the audience — at the opening of the New Nimrod Theatre. However, nothing like that happened on the first night of the Alternative Theatre when he played in *YOU WANT IT, DON'T YOU, BILLY?* at La Mama. Tony has recently finished playing the homosexual transvestite convict, Brenda, in the Jim McNeil play *HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW?* and his role of Tim in *BILLY* is another deviate role. By the time this column goes to press he'll be playing Claudio in *MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING* at the Russell Street Theatre. Tony's mother, Elizabeth Kirkby, is best known for her role as Lucy in the T.V. serial *NUMBER 96*, and his father, Derek Llewellyn-Jones, is associate professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at Sydney University and author of the best-seller, *EVERY WOMAN*.

MICK RODGERS, whose productions of *EQUUS*, *DOUBLE DEALER*, and *ABSURD PERSON SINGULAR* have been enthusiastically praised by the Melbourne press, returns to England to the EMMA Theatre Co. after the opening night of the Alan Ayckbourn London success at the Russell Street Theatre.

Originally from Adelaide, Mick is returning to the U.K. for contractual reasons, but hopes to return to Australia in the near future.

JONATHAN HARDY is a young man totally committed to involving young people in the arts. He is the director of the MTC Theatre-in-Education unit, which has now added N.S.W. to its touring schedule, and which has been delighting young audiences with such plays as *CUPID IN TRANSIT* and *GATEHOUSE* with their contemporary approach to theatre.

THE KOREAN SONG AND DANCE GROUP are visiting Melbourne in July and appearing at the Palais Theatre, sponsored by Edgley and Dawe Attractions. Over one hundred performers appear in excerpts from such popular revolutionary operas as *THE FLOWER GIRL*, and in exquisite ethnic dances and folk singing. An artistic involvement of this dimension with our Asian neighbours is very welcome, especially with Australia's new identifications in this area.

PAUL KARO, who plays Lee Whiteman in the Crawford T.V. serial *THE BOX*, returned to the stage on June 24 to play the title role in Shakespeare's *HAMLET* for the Alexander Theatre Co at Monash University. The Alexander Theatre Co. had a great success recently with the famous Tom Stoppard play *ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN ARE DEAD*.

CAROLINE CHISOLM, the lady of the \$5 notes, is the picturesque leading role in the Peter Pinne/Don Battye musical *CAROLINE*. First staged at St Martin's Theatre in Melbourne in 1971, the show has since been revised, with new music added. The Doncaster Templestowe Musical Society recently revived it as part of their district centenary celebrations.

THE KALOBOK DANCE COMPANY, which gets its name from a European folk tale, has gone professional. Artistic Director is Madame Marina Berezowsky, who is also head teacher of folkloric dance at the Australian Ballet School. The aim of the Company is to translate dance traditions from all over the world which have been brought to Australia by migrants, and give them artistic expression. The company is at present touring Victoria and interstate on a Commonwealth grant.

WITH ERIC SYKES AND JIMMY EDWARDS at the helm, buffoonery is the order of the day at the Stardust Theatre Restaurant, St Kilda. Located at the original Palais de Danse, the play *BIG BAD MOUSE* is given a unique dimension in the outrageous humour of these two well-known comics. Edwards and Sykes opened at the Stardust direct from a Canadian and American tour of this farcical entertainment.

TENOR SOLOIST Robert Gard of the Australian Opera sang Helen Gifford's composition *PARDON GODDESS OF THE NIGHT* for the M.T.C. production of Shakespeare's *MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING* at Russell Street Theatre. The play was directed by John Sumner.

THE FLYING TRAPEZE CAFE in Brunswick Street, Fitzroy, is noted for its unusual and diversified cabaret offerings. In early June, National Times critic Ian Robinson appeared onstage with his own particular individual style of entertainment.

THE LEGENDARY MARLENE DIETRICH will return to Melbourne for her one-woman show in August — her favourite champagne is Moët et Chandon, and she always uses an Olivetti typewriter. No more free plugs, but it's all part of the Dietrich magic. I wonder whether she'll be cooking in Kenn Brodziak's kitchen this time around, or using her portable first aid kit for any injured backstage staff? But she most definitely will be wearing her priceless white mink.

THE VICTORIAN OPERA COMPANY production of *KING ARTHUR* at the National Theatre, St Kilda, was a very spectacular presentation. While Ronald Dowd, Loris Synan and Graham Wall were outstanding, Neal Easton as Merlin brought the most warmth his role.

PETER OYSTON, the recently appointed Dean of the School of Drama at the Victorian College of the Arts, has arrived in Melbourne. His mother is well-known character actress Sheila Florance.

FRIENDS OF THE AUSTRALIAN BALLET

Kelvin Coe pirouetted and arabesqued through his solo piece four times before the pigeon came to rest in the right place; but the audience was delighted. This, after all, was what they had come for.

The audience for the dress rehearsal of the Frederick Ashton ballet **THE TWO PIGEONS** on April 28 was no ordinary audience. It was a group of dedicated ballet fans who have joined together as an organisation called The Friends of the Australian Ballet in order to learn more about the ballet and what goes on behind the scenes, and to involve themselves more fully in the Ballet's activities.

The Friends of the Australian Ballet grew out of the Ballet Society of New South Wales, and was officially born at the Gala Screening of the film **DON QUIXOTE** at the Opera House in August 1973. Although the Friends is still in its infancy, there are now over 700 members, and this number is rapidly growing.

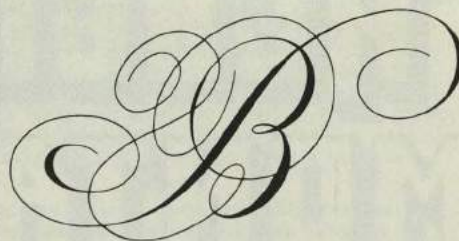
Membership is \$10 a year, and in return for this, members are entitled to free attendance at some of the Company's dress rehearsal (unfortunately, tight schedules and other considerations make it impossible to open ALL dress rehearsals to the Friends) and free or cheaper attendance at other functions such as film nights, seminars and parties. In 1974, there was a huge attendance at the dress rehearsal for **CINDERELLA**, and the first dress rehearsal for 1975, **THE TWO PIGEONS**, also had an enormous audience. The 1974 seminar held on **The Ballet ROMEO AND JULIET and its Making** was not very well attended (even though those who came enjoyed it very much) but numbers were much greater at the most recent seminar **The Preparation and Presentation of a Ballet Season** held in the Recording Hall at the Opera House in May, and it is hoped that interest in these events will continue to increase. On June 10 there was a special screening of a

film about the making of the film **DON QUIXOTE**, and on July 4, Friends of the Ballet will be able to attend the non-subscription performance of **DON QUIXOTE** for a special price of \$8 in A reserve seats.

Later in the year it is hoped to hold a special dress-rehearsal of the first three-act ballet to be performed by the Company, **THE MERRY WIDOW**, and it is also hoped that there will be an opportunity for some kind of function where Friends can meet and talk to the Company.

What happens to the money? Disposal of funds is, of course, largely dependent on the views of the contributors (that is, the Friends), but at the present time the funds are being invested as an emergency fund from which the Ballet can draw in times of need or crisis. Who can forget the terrible losses that the Opera suffered when Her Majesty's Theatre burnt down in July 1970? Eventually, however, it is hoped that there will be enough funds in hand to finance some special project — maybe the establishment of a scholarship, or the commissioning of a new work, or even (dare we dream?) the establishment of a ballet centre in Sydney.

If you are interested in becoming a Friend, fill in and post the form on this page, or, if you would like some more information, telephone Angela Wales on 357 1200.



FRIENDS OF THE AUSTRALIAN BALLET

Membership of Friends of The Australian Ballet entitles you to free attendance at dress rehearsals (usually the evening before the premiere), special functions and talks by ballet personalities, and your copy of our news and information Bulletin.

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HELEN MONTAGU

Miss Helen Montagu is a dynamic theatrical personality who has had considerable influence on the development and encouragement of new English playwrights. She visited Australia recently as a guest at the Australian National Playwrights Conference, after which she visited theatre people throughout Australia. In this interview she discusses her work in England and her impressions of theatre in Australia.

Q. Miss Montagu, what does your job at Tennent's involve? Is it different from your previous work at the Royal Court Theatre?

'Well, I'm joint managing director of H.M. Tennent's with Arthur Canter — which means we're totally responsible for the company and its activities. In fact, I look after the English and European side and Arthur is responsible for the American side. I have to find plays, get the money and support from backers and put them on. The 'putting on' is finding the right cast, director, designer, set builders, touring theatres and theatres in London.

I've only been at Tennent's for one year — prior to that I was administrator of the Royal Court Theatre. My work there was different because I was looking after a theatre and a big staff. A lot of my time was taken up just running the theatre and coping with the inevitable daily disasters. My office was rarely free of people coming in to tell me what was wrong and what was needed. I was in charge of running the theatre from every point of view — publicity, accounts, electrics, carpentry, front of house etc, and at the same time I was responsible for producing the plays. Now I don't have any structure to support like that. I spend much more of my time producing plays. Whereas at the Court there was only one play every six weeks, Tennent's have a lot going on at the one time. At the moment we have four shows in the West End, three on tour and some in America which we have to look after. These shows include Paul Scofield in *THE TEMPEST*, which is very popular; Alastair Sim in *THE CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE*; the highly successful *BILLY* with Michael Crawford, and the not so successful *LENNY*. I'm afraid one of our big successes (which I had nothing to do with) is an American musical we really can't get rid of — *GODSPELL*! It's gone on and on and on! It was taken off through a sense of desperation and then everyone wanted it all over England so it went on tour, and now the West End has demanded it back so it returns in July. But of course that's good for box office receipts so I suppose we shouldn't complain.

'you have to have some feeling for it - otherwise it's just a waste of time.'

We also have different money worries too. At the Court it was keeping to the yearly budget which was very small and influenced our activities. Also at the Court everyone was responsible for helping new writers and their work — in fact if you really liked a playwright's work you could push him very far. At the Court we did nearly all of the plays by people like Edward Bond, Christopher Hampton, David Storey and John Osborne. Tennent's do present new plays but also revivals. I'm in an odd situation actually, because all the writers I know and have helped to build are now attached to other commercial managements through my efforts — like Christopher Hampton and Edward Bond, and I can't now 'have' them for Tennent's.

So this year I've tried to create my own writers — from seeing works done by rep. companies and by reading scripts sent to me. I've commissioned quite a few plays, and will probably commission about fifteen to twenty a year. Some don't want commissions so I have to encourage them to write and submit scripts. I now have three plays I'd like to do, but, as often happens, I have to wait for the right people to become available. I mean, Paul Scofield and Michael Crawford are absolutely right for two parts I have in mind, but they are both in shows, so I have to wait.

Since I've been at Tennent's I've pushed mostly writers, not plays. I've asked N.F. Simpson (whom I like and have rather neglected) to write a play for Spike Milligan, while Christopher Hampton is adapting a French play for Kenneth Williams — a man I very much admire. He's an extraordinarily stylish actor — just right for elegant French farce. These two projects are going ahead. Also I'm pushing a woman writer, Felicity Brown, for another script. I already have a very good one from her. Also there's a new young Oxford writer I'm keen to help — Howard Carpenter.

Q. What do you look for in new plays?

'That's really impossible to answer — I mean, everything sounds clichéd. You have to like it, have some feeling for it — otherwise it's just a waste of time. I think you can only respond to some truth you find in the play that affects you and which you think others may share. You can only have a go — it's a gamble every time, otherwise we'd be total millionaires, and no-one is that in the theatre. No-one has ever had an unbroken record of success in predicting what the public wants. For example, *BILLY* was considered a big gamble when we put it on. In Manchester, before the show went to London, people were predicting dire results. But I always thought it would succeed with Michael Crawford and a well known story. They're the sort of ingredients that can make something go. Also the music for *BILLY* is in the tradition of the British Music Hall.

Q. Do you think in London there's an almost suicidal dependence on the tourist trade which is reducing experimentation? What do you see happening to London theatre in the next couple of years?

'I think it will be a big testing time this winter — whether the pattern of last winter will continue, because that was disastrous, and whether we are now totally dependent on the tourist trade and summer business. . . I hope not! For instance I'm entering into quite an expensive thing in the autumn doing one or two plays with Lindsay Anderson — one a classic and the other hopefully a new play with the same cast. That's an expensive sort of season to set up in the West End but we're going ahead. Maybe that's suicide, but I know they will be very good productions with the people we have in mind. I can only hope and I'm going ahead as if there isn't the crisis. The V.A.T. (Value Added Tax) imposed by the Government can greatly affect a show. It's the thing that can take a show off during the bad months — it's very high and it affects all the commercial theatres.

Long running plays perpetuated by tourist audiences can be worrying because theatres don't become available for other plays and the plays that are touring round often can't get in because of lack of theatre space. I mean, one can't but be pleased for them, but it is stupid that *THE MOUSETRAP* is still running. It's been taking up a lovely little theatre for 23 years and it's simply dreadful — on every count you could possibly imagine! Maybe if I was Minister of State I wouldn't allow anyone to go!

Q. When were you in Australia last?

"The last time I came back to Australia was two and a half years ago. That was a very exciting time for me as new things were in existence that I hadn't seen before. Like the Nimrod Theatre and the Pram Factory. Now it seems the Pram Factory have moved more towards the actors creating their own thing and the Nimrod seems to have become, as it were, an established theatre. It seems now that you need more theatres challenging them and taking over their role and this time I haven't quite seen those theatres. What I do see is a big sort of surge forward, but without a control over who is doing it. I think there should be more people in command desperately wanting Australian drama to succeed — perhaps in the way George Devine did in the early days of the Court, and in fact as a lot of people do in England now. Not only the commercial theatres, but the National, RSC and Royal Court, as well as the provincial theatres, are all pushing playwrights. I think (and this is very superficial because I haven't been here long enough) there are not the people pushing, developing and encouraging playwrights and helping them to share and adapt their work. Except for the Playwrights Conference which has great value. I think pushing from behind and tugging from in front is what is needed at the moment to bring Australia into the next stage. You have the initial stage of interested people, but soon I think producers have to take the reins a bit. Also, there is possibly the situation where directors, having done a lot of Australian drama, feel they can only fulfil themselves doing Ibsen. You know, directors can very easily take over a theatre. Somebody who can give balance to the whole thing is an essential, although often disliked, figure — the producer, administrator, manager — whatever you like to call him. This person needs to give a balance to all the various egos going on. I think running a theatre is 90% creating an atmosphere in which people can do their best work — it's little more than that. That's the major contribution you as an administrator can make. Everything else you do must be sort of below the surface and not seen to be really work.

Q. Do you think with the current rate of inflation we are in danger of losing at least a percentage of the arts?

"I think we may be, you know. There is always a large percentage of people in times of economic crisis, when they are out of work, who are ready to listen to the arguments against the arts. Like: "My family has never gone to the theatre, why should we be supporting it? and what do you mean by culture and the soul of man?" I would say it's a constant question made more evident by the economic crisis. The National Theatre are obviously having difficulty — Peter Hall has always played it very close and they have always run out of money and got more. I don't know what will happen with the National — they've created it, so I suppose they'll have to go through with it. It would be a national scandal to leave it idle. Hall has budgeted on something like 99% capacity, so obviously he's not going to run it on the money he's been given. No doubt the friction will continue, as many people consider the National has already had too much money and Hall hasn't created a truly national theatre. The RSC will probably give up their London base and concentrate their work in Stratford. There's talk also of them not doing repertory but just one play at a time. Repertory really has become a luxury."

Q. Of the current English writers, who do you think will be remembered from this era?

"Always John Osborne. You can't ever disregard him. People don't like his later plays but you can't ignore the fact that he occasionally displays raw emotion and that is very theatrical. Then I come into personal bias — I say David Storey — but then I'm devoted to his works. Then I would say Edward Bond. I think *SAVED* was possibly, when I first saw it, one of the most extraordinary experiences I've had in the theatre. I've never presented Pinter, and his plays have not had a profound effect on me, so I don't know about Pinter."

Q. What sort of direction do you think theatre is going to take in the future?

"I don't know. . . If you look at it totally economically I suppose you'd say a sexy two-hander with a star would be bliss. . . but you never can tell. Pornography is on the wane in America and

I don't think the latest pornographic play in London, *LET MY PEOPLE COME*, is doing at all well. People get saturated quite easily and want something different. I suppose you will always find in drama an audience for recognising themselves, for recognition of their own state of mind etc. I would have thought, a little while ago, that theatre was moving out of the West End into more fringe or smaller theatre activities but now I don't know. The fringe and lunch time theatres are not doing well at the moment. I guess you have to be aware that things are in a constant state of change and move with them as much as possible."

Q. Australian theatre is to some extent in trouble this year — theatres like Nimrod and the Pram Factory have betrayed, to some extent, their audiences, although probably unwittingly. They have become bureaucratised and overstaffed to a point where they can't afford to put on plays for a limited audience.

"Yes, I can understand that. You can get to the stage where you budget for more and more. Also, once you've had a number of successes you get frightened of failure and then safer and safer and lose the ability to surprise and be successful.

One thing I've noticed here is the popularity of 'eating theatres' where you can have a meal and watch a show. However, not many plays are suited to that situation. When I saw *DIMBOOLA* the actors were very good but they did actually have to shout all the time!

When I was in Melbourne I saw *SHINDIG* by John Powers. I was amazed at the youth of the audience, who were ecstatic about the show. It had bad notices I believe, but the audience loved it and laughed hilariously throughout. I think it had a gutsy, earthy humour that reached out without any pretence to them. Certainly they recognised some of the characters — it's about very ordinary people behaving in a heightened reality that the young audience appreciated. They obviously liked the language, which, funnily enough, was not over coloured but always straightforward and direct with no airs of grandeur.

Q. Do you agree that certain theatres can develop a character and audience and then find it difficult to sustain?

"Yes, I think that's true. It's very hard for a theatre to keep it up for any length of time. There is always a new impetus which can only take you so far before you need fresh ideas and people. I certainly wouldn't let someone run a theatre for too long. I think George Devine was quite right — no one should stay longer than seven years in the one theatre. What all theatres should do, but very few do, is to train people all the time — a lot of people, not just an heir apparent, but a number of people. I keep quoting George Devine — but he was an extraordinary man of the theatre — when he was at the Court people were being trained under his guidance all the time. Lindsay Anderson, John Dexter, Bill Gaskill, Anthony Page — all those people were trained as assistant directors, any one of whom could have taken over from George. I feel that's what you must do in a theatre — then you get a continuity of a certain house style with new ideas. I think it's good that there are other people wanting to take over with new vigour and strength."

— From a discussion with Bob Ellis and Trust News staff.



books

I SCREAM FOR ICE CREAM

Pearls from the Pantomime presented by Gyles Brandreth. Eyre Methuen, London, 1974
Recommended retail price \$11.10 (Paperback \$5.50)

"Welcome my friends! Come spend a happy time,
Enjoy once more the world of Pantomime.
I am the Rose, spirit of England past . . ."

Thus utters one of the many immortals who speak prologues to British pantomimes and open doors to fantasy and fun for young and old. As Gyles Brandreth says in his 'Overture' — "Pantomime is a phenomenal phenomenon." He asks "How could the country's most popular form of theatre — consisting, as it does, of a romantically farcical fairy-tale set to music, peopled with men dressed as women, women dressed as men, humans dressed as animals, and packed with spectacle and slapstick, topical jokes and old chestnuts, community singing and audience participation — be described as anything else?"

I SCREAM FOR ICE CREAM is an attempt to record some of the tales and words that have survived or been adapted on the British stage throughout the years.

The most vivid memories from pantomimes are usually those of characters like the Dame, Buttons or the Villain, or the performers like Dan Leno, George Rober, Stanley Lupino and Arthur Askey (to name but a few). Brandreth believes that the "real unsung heroes of pantomime" are the writers — Planche, Blanchard, Henry Byron and Sir Francis Burnand — a Victorian foursome who were responsible for hundreds of pantomime scripts.

The stories used have long and varied backgrounds, like CINDERELLA, THE SLEEPING BEAUTY, PUSS IN BOOTS and RED RIDING HOOD. Brandreth estimates the two most popular panto stories are CINDERELLA and ALADDIN. Over 400 versions of the CINDERELLA story have been traced — all differing.

Brandreth has included extracts from the Prologue, the Dame, the Principal Boy, the Principal Girl, Buttons, the Villain, the Pantomime Animals and the Grand Finale. Songs and Comic Interludes are also included. He has juxtaposed early pieces with more recent examples — with regret one realises that certain elements have been discarded — in keeping with our less 'innocent' society.

The Epilogue laments that the Harlequinade, which 150 years ago was at the very heart of panto, has been mostly forgotten. Joseph Grimaldi, the master performer of the Harlequinade, died in 1837, when the decline began. Our modern spectacles are a far cry from the individual wit, skill and pathos of Grimaldi.

However, as the 1954 London Palladium pantomime, MOTHER GOOSE, bids us:—

A grand old custom, sprung from ancient time,
Insists that ev'ry honest pantomime
Should point a Moral. So, I now produce
The moral of our tale of Mother Goose:
Good people, be contented with your lot;
Like what you've got, don't sigh for what you've
not!

If on the Treble Chance you ring the bell,
Don't yearn to win a beauty prize as well!

I SCREAM FOR ICE CREAM, besides recording words, contains an excellent pictorial record of pantomime artists.

M.L.

BRUMBY INNES and BID ME TO LOVE
by Katharine Susannah Prichard. Currency-Methuen
Drama. (The National Theatre) 1975. Hardback
\$4.75, paperback \$3.00.

Katharine Susannah Prichard is well-known to us as a novelist; but less well known is the fact that, in all, she wrote seventeen plays. This volume gives us two of those plays, both very different from one another, but both striking in their modernity and hard-hitting grasp of reality.

BRUMBY INNES is the story of a rough, blunt and unsentimental station owner who woos and wins by force May, a sophisticated but naive city girl, who becomes a victim to the harsh environment in which she finds herself. In his exploitation and rough treatment of the aborigines, his hard drinking, and his cruelty to May, Brumby Innes does not elicit much sympathy; but at the same time, against the background of the raw, bleak environment and the necessity for survival which make Brumby and his like what they are, May's sophistication is shown for the weak, shallow thing it is. The play won the Triad play competition in 1927 (other entries were from Vance Palmer and Louis Esson) but was at that time considered too immoral and daring to produce. In fact, the play was not finally produced until 1972, three years after the author's death.

BID ME TO LOVE, in contrast, is a sophisticated, city-based domestic comedy about Greg and Louise, who have "liberated" ideas about sexual freedom and marital fidelity, but who find they are not quite as liberated as they thought when confronted with the actual situation. Striking in its modernity, the play makes an interesting contrast to BRUMBY INNES; this is the sophisticated, elegant world of liberal ideas and "civilized" people to which May belongs, and which make her incapable of understanding or adapting to the basically primitive world which is Brumby's.

The remarkable thing about both these plays is the author's clear sighted grasp of the truth about the situations she puts before us — and it is possibly her refusal to compromise on this truth that made her dramatic work so unacceptable in its day. Had Katharine Susannah Prichard been born today, it is quite possible that she would have made her reputation as a dramatist, rather than as a novelist — for it is certain that she had great dramatic gifts, and it is only a pity that the theatre of her time was unable to support such talent.

A.W.

IT WON'T LAST A WEEK!

The First Twenty Years of the Melbourne Theatre Company by Geoffrey Hutton.
Sun Books, Melbourne, 1975. Illustrated.
Recommended retail price \$3.95

The Melbourne Theatre Company had its beginnings on August 1, 1953 at the Union Theatre, University of Melbourne. Known originally as the Union Theatre Repertory Company, under the directorship of John Sumner, it has developed into one of the major theatre companies in Australia.

Geoffrey Hutton, a Melbourne journalist who has reviewed M.T.C. productions over the years, states in his preface that he agreed to write a record of the Company because he believed "that it had done more than any other to create an indigenous theatre, not only in Melbourne, but in Australia. The M.T.C. is now one of several, and is continually involved in a battle for maintaining and raising its artistic standards. There are other highly professional theatre companies in other states, but I believe the old UTRC was the true begetter and that its early struggles deserve to be put on record, like those of the pioneer explorers."

Mr Hutton's account is a very personal one. IT WON'T LAST A WEEK contains many reminiscences and past newspaper reviews. The M.T.C.'s first ten years, at least, were pioneering to a large extent — the concept of permanent state theatre companies is relatively new in Australia. The Old Tote in Sydney wasn't established until 1963. Yet Mr Hutton has not objectively demonstrated the new ground broken in those early years. The tendency has been to list productions presented by the company, together with a few details and anecdotes. As such, IT WON'T LAST A WEEK is not an effective historical document, although the lists of productions and players in the Appendices are important records.

The reader is not given any insight into the shaping of the policies and ideals that must form the basis of the M.T.C. today. While John Sumner is the central figure and has obviously played an important role in the company's development, there is little awareness of the conflicts and struggles inherent within and between personalities in building and sustaining a theatre organisation over twenty years. More objectivity and honesty are needed when the events recorded are still so close in time.

M.L.



records



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A CONVENIENT NEW BOOKING SERVICE

is now open at the offices of the Elizabethan Theatre Trust, 153 Dowling Street, Potts Point, Sydney. (Telephone 357 1200) Theatre patrons who live in the Eastern suburbs (or anywhere else for that matter) can now park their cars and collect their theatre tickets in comfort. Tickets are available for all Sydney's live theatres, including the Opera House, and phone bookings are accepted, providing the tickets are collected 48 hours before the show. Hours are 8.30 - 5.30 on weekdays, and 9-12 on Saturdays.

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES OPERA COMPANY have planned an exciting season of five new productions for 1975. First to be staged will be Rossini's *THE TURK IN ITALY* at the Science Theatre, U.N.S.W., on June 11, 13 and 14. Directed by Aubrey Mellor and designed by Kim Carpenter, this will be the first performance in Australia of this exciting work, which has been newly translated by Roger Covell. Other productions will be Jacopo Peri's *EURIDICE*, directed by Alexander Hay (August 22, 29 and 30), Monteverdi's *THE RETURN OF ULYSSES* at the Opera House in October and Benjamin Britten's masterly version of *DEATH IN VENICE*, which won international acclaim when it was first performed at the Aldeburg Festival in Britain in 1973. In May, the U.N.S.W. Opera Company were involved in an exciting new experiment in music-theatre, a production of Alison Bauld's *IN A DEAD BROWN LAND* and *EXILES*. The programme was directed by Rex Cramphorne.

DISTINGUISHED TENOR, MR GERALD ENGLISH, is the first Visiting Fellow in Music at the University of New South Wales. Apart from teaching in the Music department there, Mr English will give concerts and recitals, conduct seminars, appear with the University of New South Wales Opera Company, and will lead a new vocal consort (the Grainger consort) to be formed around him. Mr English is internationally acclaimed for his performances of the works of Dallapiccola, Stravinsky, Britten, Tippett, Monteverdi and Cavalli, among others, and his many recordings of their works are among the best available today. He has appeared as a concert or opera soloist in most of the large opera houses in the world, including Rio de Janeiro, Toronto, Vancouver, Rome, Milan, Lisbon, Amsterdam, Stockholm, Brussels, Tel Aviv, Cologne, Hamburg, Prague, Barcelona and Vienna.

SEPTEMBER OF THIS YEAR will mark the opening in Sydney of an exciting new major centre for the performing arts — the Seymour Centre.

Built with a \$4,000,000 bequest from Everest York Seymour, the complex

contains three fully equipped professional theatres, rehearsal studios, extensive backstage facilities, display areas, bars, restaurant and a multi-storey car park within the grounds. The University of Sydney Music Department and the Department of Drama Services are housed in the building.

Situated on the corner of Cleveland Street and City Road, only three kilometres from the centre of Sydney, the Seymour Centre is a city complex, readily accessible by public transport.

The unique concept and design of the Centre, its central location, the great flexibility of the three theatres, the provision of full facilities for patrons as well as the policy of keeping the Centre alive all day and late into the evening with a vast variety of activities, ensure that it will be a vital new addition to the entertainment life of Sydney.

The two major theatres have been named after the Centre's benefactor — the Everest and the York. The smaller downstairs theatre is called simply Downstairs at the Seymour.

The Everest Theatre, seating 605, is designed primarily for the performance of music, the large open-end stage being sufficient to accommodate a full symphony orchestra. The design of the stage and the auditorium allow for conversion from concert hall to proscenium arch theatre, with or without pit. As a proscenium arch theatre, the Everest will provide a venue for the presentation of chamber opera, dance, operetta and musicals.

The York Theatre, designed primarily for the presentation of drama, seats 785 in amphitheatre formation around a thrust stage. The shape of the stage and of the auditorium and the relationship of the two, with no seat further than 52 feet from the centre of the thrust, give the advantage of intimacy without precluding the possibility of larger scale and multi-cast productions. The stage of the York develops the concept of the Elizabethan open thrust. Acting areas at various levels, a two level rising stage and mobility of sections in the thrust allow for great flexibility in productions. Local and overseas actors and directors who have visited the Centre during its construction have been tremendously excited at the potential of this theatre.

The third theatre, Downstairs at the Seymour, is an open space auditorium with seating for up to two hundred people on tiered movable rostra. This is a totally flexible area, ideal for experimental presentations, for community groups and youth activities.

SINCE PETER WILLIAMS ARRIVED IN SYDNEY three years ago, he has managed to chalk up an impressive number of credits — both as a director and an actor.

In the early days, as Assistant Director to Doris Fitton at the Independent Theatre, he directed two children's plays — *THE RED SHOES* and *THE PIED PIPER*. Following this, he was Artistic Director of the Australian Theatre, Newtown.

Described by Sydney critics as a fast-rising producer/director, he recently formed his own production company and presented three outstanding plays — *HELLO AND GOODBYE*, which later went to the Adelaide Festival of Arts; *ALPHA BETA*, and *LET ME HEAR YOU SMILE*, both of which played to excellent houses at the Bondi Pavilion Theatre.

Opening on September 29 he will present the Australian premiere of Mart (Boys in the Band) Crowley's *A BREEZE FROM THE GULF*, at the Australian Theatre, Newtown.

The cast for this brilliant play is Bunney Brooke, Ben Gabriel and Alan Wilson, who will make the most of what Clive Barnes, the eminent New York Theatre critic, called "three old-fashioned grandstand performances."

N.B. Trust Members will receive concession price tickets and preferential mail bookings. Look for more information when your new membership card arrives!

Recently in Adelaide, **THE ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY THEATRES (ACT)** held its first general meeting. Twenty-seven performing arts organisations, including several Colleges of Advanced Education, the Theatre-in-Education team and drama societies from far and wide were represented.

The chairman of ACT is Frank Ford (Icon Theatre Company) and his board consists of Alderman Mrs M. Fitzgerald (St Peters City Council), David Griggs (Adelaide Theatre Group), Chris Winzar (freelance director), Wayne Anthoney (Humbolt Enterprises) and Rob Brookman (trainee theatre administrator).

In a statement after the meeting, the chairman said one of the first tasks facing his board was to lobby for better Festival fringe activities. He said that many member organisations had complained that last year's efforts to mount viable fringe activities were a shambles. He announced that ACT would stage a community theatre day on Saturday, November 1, when the Community Theatre would perform on the plazas and grounds of the Festival Centre. This would be a springboard for ACT members' involvement in more developed fringe activities during the 1976 Festival of Arts. He went on to state that ACT hoped to educate the government, the public and the media on the value and importance of the work done by the local alternate theatres and amateur societies.

showguide

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

NEW SOUTH WALES

AUSTRALIAN THEATRE, Newtown
Peter Williams Productions — "A Breeze from the Gulf" (M. Crowley) opens September 29.

BONDI PAVILION THEATRE
"When Did You Last See My Mother" (C. Hampton) July

MARIAN STREET THEATRE, Killara
"Semi-Detached" (D. Turner) to July 19
"The Cool Duenna" July 24 - August 30
"The Sunshine Boys" (N. Simon) September 4 - October 4

INDEPENDENT THEATRE, North Sydney
"The Play's the Thing" (Molnar) July - August
"Once Upon a Time And All That" (J. Kemsley) Saturday matinees.

PARADE THEATRE, Kensington, Old Tote Theatre Company
"The Sea Horse" (E.J. Moore) to August 9
"Home" (D. Storey) August 22 - October 4

CHALWIN CASTLE, Cremorne
Elizabethan Trust Sydney Chamber Group.
Recitals July 27, August 2, August 31, September 7, 28, October 5.

MUSIC HALL, Neutral Bay
"The Spectre of Wycliffe Manor" (S. Walsh) Concessions Monday and Tuesday evenings.

COAD CANADA PUPPETS
Will be performing at Castle Hill, Parramatta, Penrith, Mt Druitt and Blacktown, September 1 - 5. Contact 357 1200 for details.

MARIONETTE THEATRE OF AUSTRALIA
"Tintookies" (Scriven) N.S.W. Country tour July.

SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE

OPERA THEATRE, The Australian Opera
"Ariadne on Naxos" (Strauss)
"Rigoletto" (Verdi) "Simon Boccanegra" (Verdi) "The Elixir of Love" (Donizetti)
"Tosca" (Puccini) "Fidelio" (Beethoven) and "A Masked Ball" (Verdi) in repertoire, July 22 - November 1.

DRAMA THEATRE
"Brief Lives" — Roy Dotrice as John Aubrey, July 15 - August 30
Old Tote Theatre Company — "Ivanov" (Chekhov) September 5 - October 11.

VICTORIA

RUSSELL STREET THEATRE, Melbourne Theatre Company
"Much Ado About Nothing" (Shakespeare) July - August 9

"The Department" (Williamson) August 14 - September 27

ST MARTINS THEATRE, Melbourne Theatre Company
"Absurd Person Singular" (Ayckbourn) July 3 - August 23

"Kennedy's Children" (Patrick) August 28 - October 11

PRAM FACTORY, Carlton
Australian Performing Group — "Hill's Family Show" — June 26 - July 30
"Measures Taken" (Brecht) August

PRINCESS THEATRE
"Brief Lives" with Roy Dotrice July 1 - 12, "The Magic Show" (Schwartz) opens August 2

NATIONAL THEATRE
"Othello" (film) July 28 - August 2

QUEENSLAND S.G.I.O. THEATRE, Queensland Theatre Company
"The Importance of Being Earnest" (Wilde) to July 5, "The One Day of the Year" (Seymour) September 24 - October 11

LA BOITE, Queensland Theatre Company
"The Removalists" (Williamson) July 16 - August 16

TWELFTH NIGHT THEATRE
"Rookery Nook" (Travers) July 15 - August 9

ARTS THEATRE, Petrie Terrace
"Measure for Measure" (Shakespeare) July, "Rip Van Winkle" — Saturday matinees

HER MAJESTY'S, The Australian Ballet
"Romeo and Juliet", "Sacred Space", "The Two Pigeons" July 9 - 23

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

THE PLAYHOUSE, South Australian Theatre Company
"Old Times" (Pinter) July 10 - 26

FESTIVAL THEATRE, The Australian Ballet
"Sacred Space", "The Two Pigeons", (Programme I), "Romeo and Juliet" (Programme II), "Superman", "Night Encounter", "Medium Cool" (Programme III) August 7 - 30

THE SPACE, New Opera
"The Diary of a Man Who Vanished" (Janacek), "The Madrigal Show" July 1 - 5

HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE, New Opera
"The Turn of the Screw" (Britten) August 13, 16, 20, 23
"Così fan tutte" (Mozart) August 19, 21, 22, 26, 28, 30

WARNER THEATRE, S.A. Film Corporation
"Sunday Too Far Away" July

MARIONETTE THEATRE OF AUSTRALIA
"Tintookies" (Scriven) August 23 - September 6 Country Tour - August

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

THE PLAYHOUSE, National Theatre Company
"Hello, Dolly!" (Steward and Herman) July 5 - 26, "Equus" (Shaffer) September 8 - 20

THE GREENROOM, National Theatre Company
"A Stretch of the Imagination" (Hibberd) July 4 - 26

ON TOUR
"Equus" (Shaffer) August 6 - September 6

THE HOLE IN THE WALL
"Bedfellows" (Oakley) July 9 - August 9
"Happy Days" (Beckett) August 14 - 30
"The Maids" (Genet) September 17 - October 11

THE OCTAGON, Hole in the Wall Company
"Arms and the Man" (Shaw) August 12 - 23

W.A. THEATRE COMPANY, W.A.I.T.
"Lear" (Bond) July 17 - 31
"Sweeney Todd" August 12 - 30
"J.B." (MacLeish) September 16 - October 4

MARIONETTE THEATRE OF AUSTRALIA
"Tintookies" (Scriven) Country tour September

committee's diary

LADIES COMMITTEE — N.S.W.

Plans are underway for the Trust's 21st year celebrations in September - October. Contact Mrs Hay, A.E.T.T. 357 1200 for further information.

LADIES COMMITTEE — Q.L.D.

Contact Mrs Mackenzie-Forbes c/- A.E.T.T. 21 9528

LADIES COMMITTEE — S.A.

Contact Mrs D. Bright, c/- A.E.T.T. 51 8444

TRUST MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Please assist by returning your renewal notice and remittance as soon as possible. For details of exciting coming events, and for new membership applications, please contact the Trust office in your state.

**UNIVERSITY
OF NEW
ENGLAND
ARMIDALE
NSW
2351**

Some RESIDENTIAL
EVENTS being held at the
University in January 1976

A major grouping of DANCE events includes:

3rd - 22nd January (i) two concurrent CHOREOGRAPHIC WORKSHOPS: membership is by invitation only.

4th - 17th January (ii) a Seminar on the history of dance, on varied aspects of its aesthetics and on dance criticism — conducted at an advanced level. Enrolment strictly limited and applications must be in by the end of August. Fees \$116.

18th - 23rd January (iii) a School for all those who are interested in learning more on dance at the "informed audience" level: similar to the much praised earlier events held in 1967, 1969 and 1974. It will be of benefit and interest to many dancers too — as was indicated by the previous Schools. Fees \$72.

(i) The Directors of the Choreographic Workshops are MARTHA HILL, Director, Dance Division, Juilliard School, Lincoln Centre, New York, and NORMAN MORRICE, internationally recognised for his work as a choreographer and as Artistic Director of Ballet Rambert, London.

(ii) The director of the seminar is PETER BRINSON, of London, who is an international authority on dance: among other things, co-author of "The Choreographic Art" (with Peggy Van Praagh) and "Ballet for All" (with Clement Crisp). He was the Founder-Director of the Royal Ballet's "Ballet for All", is an ex-director of the Royal Academy of Dance, and was for several years the dance critic of "The Times Educational Supplement." He has conducted similar seminars in Canada.

(iii) The three persons mentioned immediately above, i.e. P. Brinson, M. Hill and N. Morrice, will all be at the School; plus PEGGY VAN PRAAGH and other leading Australian dance personalities. The dates are such that the School will be able to view the Choreographic Workshops during their concluding stages.

3rd - 13th January MUSIC SCHOOL — with Chamber Music (string and woodwind): Choral; Recorder: Renaissance Instruments sectors.

The Music School will follow closely the lines of the highly successful like events held in January 1974 and 1975 and with most of the same outstanding tutors, viz: Strings: ELIZABETH MORGAN; Woodwind: RICHARD McINTYRE; Choral: CHARLES COLMAN; Recorder: FRED LENFFER; Renaissance Instruments: ALAN MURPHY. The tutors will be augmented by a strong team of assistant tutors. Director: CAMPBELL HOWARD. Fees \$100. N.B. Enrolments for the Music School cease at 31st October.

12th - 22nd January ORFF METHOD — for teachers of music in the schools. Tutors: KEITH SMITH, JENNI BEALE, and BERNARD HOESMAN.

A follow-up to the much acclaimed, initiating events held in January 1975. It will be conducted at three levels — *inexperienced; intermediate; advanced*. (The dates of the Music and Orff Method Schools allow full participation in both events.) Fees \$108.

Plus Schools in CREATIVE EMBROIDERY DRAMA PAINTING

The fees are all for full residence, viz. all meals and tuition. Full details of these, and other Summer Schools, are readily available on request from the address at the top.

ENROLMENTS CLOSE 30TH NOVEMBER — but early enrolment is advisable as most events have a limit on the size of their intake.

