



Thulia Dumakude

Poppie Nongena — Enthralling Musical Theatre

*Based on a novel by Elsa Joubert
Written for the stage by Elsa Joubert and
Sandra Kotze*

Directed by Hilary Blecher

Music by Sophie Mgcina

Designed by Douglas Heap

Lighting design by James Baird

*Cast: Thulia Dumakude, Sophie Mgcina,
Tsepo Mokone, Fena Kekana, Selaelo
Maredi, Michelle Maxwell and Alan Coates
Footbridge Theatre*

The internationally acclaimed anti-apartheid play **POPPIE NONGENA** will be presented by The Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust in association with The Festival of Perth, at the Footbridge Theatre, Sydney, for a two week season, commencing March 12, 1985.

POPPIE NONGENA is an intensely moving musical play which traces the life of a coloured servant of white South African masters, from her carefree youth to a shattered middle-age. It is the true story of a Xhosa woman, still trying to keep her family together in the face of the legalised violence of apartheid. The powerful musical score by Sophie Mgcina illustrates the close involvement music has in the daily lives of the Xhosa people.

Based on the novel by South African author Elsa Joubert and described by the

critic of The Guardian newspaper as one of the most impressive pieces of drama to emerge from South Africa in the past decade, this production has taken London and New York by storm, collecting a number of awards, including the prestigious Obie (for Outstanding Musical Performance). The company being brought to Australia by the Festival of Perth will feature most of the original New York and London cast, including Thulia Dumakude who has just been named Best Actress in a new play at the Laurence Olivier Awards in London for her performance in the title role.

POPPIE NONGENA is directed by Hilary Blecher who worked as resident director at the Market Theatre, Johannesburg, where she directed the original 1980 production with a racially integrated cast.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Tues Mar 12 to Sat Mar 23

Mon to Sat at 8 p.m.

Sat at 2.15 p.m.

AETT \$13.90

G.P. \$15.90

Pens/Stud \$10.00 (Mon to Thur and Sat
Mat only)

New David Williamson Play

SONS OF KANE BY DAVID WILLIAMSON

Directed by David Williamson

Set and costume design by Shaun Gurton

*Cast: Noel Ferrier, John Gregg, Max Cullen,
Sandy Gore, Libby Clark and Genevieve Picot
Theatre Royal*

It is now almost four years since David Williamson's last play **THE PERFECTIONIST** was premiered and in that time he has been working in other media creating a screenplay of **THE PERFECTIONIST** and writing **THE LAST BASTION** for television. But the attraction of the theatre was too great for him to stay away from live performance for long and a chance conversation with journalists in a pub one night provided the inspiration for a new play.

SONS OF KANE is about crime and corruption, an issue on which David Williamson has not focused his attention since **THE REMOVALISTS** in 1981 (coincidentally to be remounted at Phillip Street Theatre later this month). The managing editor of a big newspaper empire (played by John Gregg) uncovers clear evidence that an honest cop has been moved out of the force because he's too much trouble. The idealism of youth is rekindled and he brings in one of his friends (played by Max Cullen) whose career has taken a downturn to investigate the whole affair.

The production is of particular interest as it is to be directed by the playwright. Although David Williamson has directed a number of productions for other writers, this will be the first time he has directed one of his own plays.

The play is to be mounted by the Melbourne Theatre Company and opens in March in Melbourne. It will be presented in Sydney in conjunction with the Sydney Theatre Company and opens at the Theatre Royal in May. See Member Activities p.10 for pre-theatre dinner.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Tues May 14 to Sat June 15

Mon to Sat at 8 p.m.

Wed at 1 p.m.

Sat at 2 p.m.

AETT \$14.90 (previews May 10, 11
(2 p.m. and 8 p.m.), 13); \$15.90 (Mon to
Thurs during season)

G.P. \$18.90

Pens/Stud \$9.90

Intrigue and Espionage at Marian Street

PACK OF LIES BY HUGH WHITEMORE

Directed by John Krummel

Designed by Peter Cooke

Cast: Judi Farr, Barry Creyton, Ron Graham, Elaine Lee, Linden Wilkinson, Melanie Openheimer and Mary Ann Severne
Marian St. Theatre

A British play based on the Gordon Lonsdale/Krogers spy scandal of 1960 will be presented at Marian Street Theatre by the Northside Theatre Company later this month. It is the first stage play by British television writer Hugh Whitemore and opened in London in late 1983 with Judi Dench and her husband Michael Williams (seen here on ABC television in "A Fine Romance") in the lead roles.

PACK OF LIES tells the story of a suburban family household, the Jacksons, whose quiet, respectable life is disrupted by the arrival of a mysterious visitor. The family is plunged into a world of espionage and betrayal where secret observers are hidden behind lace curtains. The interest of the play lies in the effect the secret service operations have on the lives of the Jacksons. Writing in the London Times, Irving Wardle said:

"The effect on the couple ... is catastrophic and extremely painful to watch. Mr Williams, hands sinking ever deeper into his trouser pockets, contemplates the domestic crackup with an impotent smile. Miss Dench changes from an amiable relaxed figure into a twitchy recluse, withering in the climate of lies."



Judi Farr

At Marian Street the central role of the Jacksons will be played by Judi Farr and Ron Graham. The outstanding cast brought together for the production will be directed by John Krummel. The season opens on February 13 and seats are available for Trust Members at a \$5.00 discount on Sunday February 17 and Tuesday February 19.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Wed Feb 13 to Sat Apr 20

Tues to Sat at 8.15 p.m.

Sat and Sun at 5 p.m.

Wed Mat 11 a.m.

AETT \$11.90 (Sun Feb 17), \$12.90 (Tue Feb 19)

Pens/Stud \$10.90 (Feb 19 only)

Bookings for other performances on 498-3166

AETT discount \$1.00 (except Fri and Sat)

A Home for the STC

With the opening of the new Wharf Theatre at Pier 4 Walsh Bay the Sydney Theatre Company not only has a splendid new venue for its more innovative work but it also has a splendid home to house the company's diverse activities. Before moving to the Wharf the company's activities were spread over five locations: administration, rehearsal and wardrobe at one; set construction at a second; set and backdrop painting at a third; storage at a fourth; and of course performance at a fifth — the Drama Theatre of the Sydney Opera House. Not the ideal situation in which to develop good working relationships and a cohesive "house style"!

But the complex was not only designed for its residents; it is equally delightful for its patrons. A leisurely stroll down the 200-metre length of the wharf brings you to the theatre foyer with its magnificent views over the Harbour. Here patrons can enjoy pre-theatre or after-show suppers, take refreshments at the bar or enjoy a cup of espresso coffee.

The Wharf Theatre is situated on Pier 4, Hickson Road, Walsh Bay, approximately 250 metres from Pier 1 near the Harbour Bridge and The Rocks. At night and at the weekend parking is available in Hickson Road and Pottinger Street. To assist those who travel by public transport, the STC has arranged for a bus to take patrons to either Circular Quay or Wynyard at the conclusion of each performance. See Member Activities page 1 for Trust Member tour of the Wharf facilities and luncheon.

Shorts at the Wharf

Directors: Rex Cramphorn, Wayne Harrison, Anne Harvey, Michael Jenkins, Phillip Keir, Richard Lawton, Robyn Nevin, Richard Wherrett, Carol Woodrow

Production Design by Geoffrey Gifford

Lighting by Grant Fraser

Cast: Terry Bader, Gary Files, Lewis Fitzgerald, Kate Fitzpatrick, Drew Forsythe, Katrina Foster, Melissa Jaffer, John Polson, Diane Smith

"The truth is that industry spends a great deal of time and money on research and development while the theatre spends precious little." So said Richard Wherrett, artistic director of the Sydney Theatre Company announcing the season of **SHORTS** at the STC's new Wharf Theatre. The new harbourside venue will provide the opportunity to showcase new writing and new writers as well as provide special opportunities to expose and develop promising talent and allow established talent to experiment in new fields. A more unexpected role is to house rare and neglected classic works and to provide a place to experiment in new ways of presenting the classics.

The season of **SHORTS** which opened on January 17 and will continue until March 22 consists of ten short plays — five classic texts from the international repertoire and five contemporary Australian plays. As with the original **SHORTS** season that the STC produced at the Stables in 1981, three plays will be presented each evening with a new play being added to the repertoire each week and one being deleted. The season has been generously sponsored by **CHANNEL 7 Sydney**.

PERFECT MATCH, written by Kathy Lette and directed by Robyn Nevin, is a witty and fast-paced parody of the consequences of the current fad for computer arranged television romance.

SWALLOWING IS A VERY PRIVATE THING by Ailsa Mathieson and directed by Anne Harvey is the story of a woman trying to come to grips with herself.

THE BALD PRIMA DONNA, directed by Richard Wherrett, was written by Eugene Ionesco in 1948 and is one of the first plays in the Theatre of the Absurd movement.

August Strindberg's **PLAYING WITH FIRE** is a gentle middle-class comedy which was written in 1892. It is directed by Michael Jenkins.

THE DOCTOR IN SPITE OF HIMSELF by Moliere will be newly translated and directed by Rex Cramphorn.

AND THE BESTMAN MAKES THREE by GLADBAGS author Patricia Johnson and directed by Richard Lawton is a new Australian work about a New Zealand mother and her expatriate daughter who has gone a little "punk" in Sydney.

BOOKING INFORMATION

The Wharf Theatre Until March 22
Mon to Sat at 8 p.m. Sat at 4 p.m.
AETT concession \$1.00
Bookings on 250 1777

Perth Festival Cabaret Success

The Canadian cabaret act The Nylons will play at Kinselas from February 4 to 23. In the five years since they first sang for their supper at their professional debut in Toronto, the group has developed a performance style which is as much theatre as it is music. Initially they used no instruments other than the human voice and some percussive effects generated through finger snapping, foot tapping and thigh clapping. Now the sound effects are more sophisticated — tambourines, congas and electric drums. The resulting inventive arrangements combined with instant costume changes, dramatic lighting and dynamic choreography produce a stimulating entertainment which took Perth by storm at the 1984 Festival. Their Sydney season precedes a return visit to the 1985 Festival to play at the Perth Concert Hall. Their album "One Size Fits All" was voted the 1983 No. 1 Album of the Year in Germany and received the coveted Grammy in Holland.

Kinselas have a number of theatre only tickets available but the majority of their tickets are set aside for theatre-dinner patrons.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Mon Feb 4 to Sat Feb 23
Mon to Sat at 8 p.m. (except Feb 11 and 18)
Thurs to Sat at 11 p.m. (except Feb 7)
AETT \$19.00 (show only), \$25.00 (1 course and show), \$31.00 (3 course and show)
G.P. \$21.00, \$27.00, \$33.00 respectively
No stud/pens concessions

The Removalists Returns to Phillip Street

Written by David Williamson
Directed by Peter Williams
Designed by Derek Cox
Phillip St. Theatre

Phillip Street Theatre's 1984 production of David Williamson's play THE REMOVALISTS was a sell out. The Sydney Morning Herald said it was "undoubtedly one of the best plays ever written — it is a timely reminder that the abuse of power in our society is too deeply rooted a problem to be solved by an election". In 1971 when it was premiered, the play exposed for the first time on stage aspects of the bottled up aggression inside Australian society — the basic authoritarianism and the confrontation between the sexes which so often passes for human relationships.



Now 14 years later society has changed little and the play is equally relevant. THE REMOVALISTS opens at Phillip Street Theatre on February 26 and will be directed by Peter Williams. Cast details had not been finalised at the time of going to press. Trust Member nights when a \$5.00 discount applies are February 27, 28, March 1 and 2.

Other programmes in Phillip Street Theatre's recently announced 1985 subscription season are Tennessee Williams' THE GLASS MENAGERIE

which is presented to coincide with its 40th Anniversary, a third return season of the highly successful Richard Beynon play, THE SHIFTING HEART and David Williamson's THE CLUB.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Tues Feb 26 to Sat Mar 16
Mon to Fri at 11 a.m.
Wed, Fri and Sat at 8 p.m.
AETT \$13.90, \$11.90 (Feb 27, 28, Mar 1, 2)
G.P. \$16.90
Pens/Stud \$8.90

The Dross on the Golden Era

CHEAPSIDE BY DAVID ALLEN

Directed by John Bell
Designed by Michael Bell
Cast: Denis Moore, Jim Holt, Brandon Burke, Vivienne Garret
Everest Theatre, Seymour Centre

Thanks to Shakespeare, the reign of the first Elizabeth has been presented to generations of schoolchildren in a golden glow. It was the period when England found its tongue, beat off the Spanish Armada and made patriotism fashionable.

In CHEAPSIDE David Allen has taken a look at the other side of the coin — the squalor and violence, the public hangings, the brutality of the prisons, the annual appearance of the plague and the political intrigue and spying which belong to what we would call a police state.

Set against this background, David Allen portrays the backstage squabbles of Shakespeare, Marlowe and their rival playwright, Robert Greene, who fell out of favour when Shakespeare and Marlowe came along. The play is an intriguing mixture of fact and fantasy. CHEAPSIDE premiered in Melbourne last June where it received critical acclaim. The Sydney production will be directed by John Bell and designed by his brother Michael who is an artist living in Newcastle.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Commences March 2
Mon to Sat at 8 p.m.
Sat at 2 p.m.
AETT \$15.90 (except Fri and Sat evg) until March 23
G.P. \$17.90 Pens/stud \$12.00

Flamenco Artist Returns

Mario Maya, who is the leading dancer, choreographer, director and composer of his dance theatre, first visited Australia early in 1984 to perform *AY JONDO*. He returns this month with his full company of 8 dancers, 2 singers and 2 guitarists to tour Australia with his new and highly acclaimed productions, *AMARGO* and *FLAMENCO LIBRE*.

Mario Maya, himself a gypsy from the caves of Sacromonte, Granada, has stripped flamenco of its folkloric and degenerate touristic connotations and presented its authenticity and progression as an art form in its own right.

Mario's Maya's dance theatre presentations have great cultural and socio-political significance. In his earlier productions, *CAMELAMOS NAZUERAR* and *AY JONDO*, he made a claim for the gypsy people in drawing attention to their problems as a race, and then to the historical persecution of the gypsies in



Mario Maya

Spain. In his new production, *AMARGO*, Mario portrays the symbolism and understanding of "gypsyism" from a poetic and "Lorcan" viewpoint. Part Two of the programme, *FLAMENCO LIBRE*, is comprised of a number of traditional flamenco dances.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Everest Theatre, Seymour Centre

Feb 6 to 9 and 13 to 16

Nightly at 8.30 p.m.

Sat Mat at 2.30 p.m.

AETT concessions \$1.00

Bookings on 692 0555

Comment

by Kathleen Norris,
Chief Executive

Welcome to the new Trust News. Launching this monthly publication for you is one of my first projects as incoming Chief Executive of the Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust. I think you now will find more information about the AETT, about performances on offer from other companies, and about the arts and entertainment scene in general.

The Trust is a bit like a benign hydra-headed monster. We try to use our many heads to look at the performing arts scene in Australia, both on the service and the producing/presenting side, and see where we can make the most valuable contributions. Consequently, at any one time, we have an extraordinarily diverse range of programmes under way. To give you an idea of this, I would like to outline some of the performance activities we will have happening in the first six months of 1985. *THE PIRATES* are back and playing in Melbourne and Brisbane. In fact, *THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE* will be the first show to play in the new Queensland

Performing Arts Centre, even before the Centre is officially open. Rehearsals are under way now for a February opening at Sydney's Performance Space of a new experimental theatre piece, *SLOW LOVE*, written by Richard Murphett and directed by Kerry Dwyer. London's wonderful Theatre of Comedy company has come to Australia to perform their smash hit, *RUN FOR YOUR WIFE*, in Perth and Sydney, January to March. Also in March, in association with the Festival of Perth, we will be presenting in Sydney a South African company in a compelling work, *POPPIE NONGENA*, which deals with the issue of apartheid, and Aboriginal playwright Jack Davis's play, *NO SUGAR*, which was commissioned by the Trust, will be performed at the Maltings Theatre during the Festival of Perth.

Donald Macdonald's Australian comedy, *CARAVAN*, is on the road, and will play Adelaide, Launceston, Burnie, Hobart and Brisbane by the end of April.

Another play by Jack Davis, *HONEY SPOT*, this one written for children, will be part of the Come Out Festival in Adelaide in May, and will then tour South Australia. Also at the Come Out Festival will be our Theatre of the Deaf. Nor have we confined our activities to our own shores — in March a company of Aboriginal actors will be going to the United States to rehearse and perform Tom Keneally's new play, *BULLIE'S HOUSE*, for the acclaimed Long Wharf Theatre in New Haven, Connecticut.

The Trust has been working closely with the Long Wharf to ensure that this Australian work will have a successful American production.

In upcoming issues of Trust News we will try to take you backstage and highlight some of these specific programme areas. We will also be discussing possible new programmes and plans for the future.

In the meantime, best wishes for 1985, and I look forward to seeing you at performances throughout the year.

Run For Your Wife

The Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust starts off its 1985 programme with the first stage of an international theatre exchange which will see a major all-Australian production mounted this year in London's West End. Agreement has been reached with both British and Australian Equity to allow this exchange, the first of its kind, to happen, and in exchange the AETT will import an all-British cast from the highly acclaimed London Theatre of Comedy. The company will present their most successful production to date, the hilarious Ray Cooney farce, *RUN FOR YOUR WIFE*, at the Theatre Royal commencing February 21.

The Theatre of Comedy Company which was formed in 1983 includes the leading comedy talents in Britain and several members of the company touring Australia will be familiar to Australian audiences. James Bolam was one of "The Likely Lads" as well as starring in the popular TV drama,



James Bolam, Anita Graham and Bernard Cribbens in *RUN FOR YOUR WIFE*

"When the Boat Comes In"; Bernard Cribbens sang that crazy song of many years ago "Right Said Fred".

BOOKING INFORMATION

Thur Feb 21 to Sat Mar 30

Mon to Sat at 8.15 p.m.

Wed and Sat at 2 p.m.

AETT \$15.50, G.P. \$18.50 (Mon to Thurs and Mats)

AETT \$18.50, G.P. \$19.50 (Fri and Sat)

Pens/Stud \$11.50 (Mon to Thurs and Mats)

AETT discount until March 9 only

The Dream

Opening on February 7 is Nimrod's new production of *A MID-SUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM*, which will take a quite radical approach to the play's presentation.

The play will be set in a big city such as Sydney in the height of summer when everyone wants to escape from their daily routines. The characters in the play escape into the dream, and the transition from the city to the dream will be emphasised by casting. Hugo Weaving will play Theseus, the man of the city, as well as Oberon, his dream alter ego. Similarly, Angela Punch-McGregor will play Hippolyta and Titania.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Thu Feb 7 to Sat Mar 23

Mon to Sat at 8 p.m.

Sat at 2 p.m.

AETT \$15.90 (Mon-Thu and Sat Mat) until Mar 9

G.P. \$17.90 Pens/Stud \$12.00 (Mon-Thu and Sat Mat)

On Stage in London...

by Margaret Leask

Four of Britain's top actresses have been dominating the London stage in recent months — Glenda Jackson in Philip Prowse's production of Racine's *PHEDRA* at the refurbished Old Vic; Judi Dench as Brecht's *MOTHER COURAGE* in the Royal Shakespeare Company's production at the Barbican; and Maggie Smith and Joan Plowright as Millamant and Lady Wishfort in William Gaskill's Chichester Festival production of Congreve's *THE WAY OF THE WORLD* at the Haymarket.

PHEDRA is a tragedy in the grand manner and Glenda Jackson's passionate portrayal of love for her stepson and the inevitable tragic humiliation that follows, in this intense and highly theatrical production, is excellently supported by a cast which includes Robert Eddison and Gerard Murphy. Judi Dench's *Courage*, directed by Howard Davies, "gives us both the battlefield vulture and the reckless survivor", bringing out, more

than any actress before her, "the role's brutal, cynical, chirpy humour" (The Guardian). John Napier's design — of a huge, unwieldy cart/multi purpose set on a centre stage axle and moved by the actors, has caused much critical comment! The production runs in the company's repertoire until March 1985.

THE WAY OF THE WORLD which opened in Chichester in the summer and has now moved to the Haymarket marks a welcome return to England (from Canada) of the much loved Maggie Smith. "I think that her Millamant will rank as one of the more adorable high comedy performances of this century" (The Guardian) — the role seems tailor made for Miss Smith — she gives a bewitching performance in a stylish production with eye catching costumes designed by Deidre Clancy.

The Royal Shakespeare Company, from its Stratford base, has announced plans

for the building of a new theatre, The Swan, in Stratford. It will be a 430-seat theatre which will enable the company to perform a large repertoire of neglected plays by Shakespeare's contemporaries.

The Society of West End Theatre, concerned with the promotion and development of London theatre activity, recently changed the name of its annual awards for achievement in theatre from the S.W.E.T. Awards to the Laurence Olivier Awards. Recipients in 1984 included Ian McKellen, best actor in a revival (*WILD HONEY*), and 42ND STREET — Best Musical. Thuli Dumakude, who will shortly be touring Australia in *POPPIE NONGENA*, won best actress in a new play for her role in that play.

Margaret Leask is a former editor of *Trust News* now living in London where she is an artist's agent.

In the Beginning *by Pamela Heckenberg*

The first in a series of articles on the development of theatre in Australia and the role of the actor-managers. Second article will appear in May Trust News.

On 4 June 1789, Governor Arthur Phillip and a large party of his officers attended the first theatrical performance in the young colony of New South Wales. The occasion was the birthday of King George III; the play was George Farquhar's *THE RECRUITING OFFICER*. And because Governor Phillip was responsible for the festivities appropriate to the birthday of his King, it seems reasonable to dub him our first theatrical entrepreneur. Among the audience on that June night was Captain Watkin Tench who, happily for us, recorded his impressions of the event,

The exhilarating effect of a splendid theatre is well known: and I am not ashamed to confess, that the proper distribution of three or four yards of stained paper, and a dozen farthing candles stuck around the mud walls of a convict-hut, failed not to diffuse general complacency on the countenances of sixty persons, of various descriptions, who were assembled to applaud the representation. Some of the actors acquitted themselves with great spirit, and received the praises of the audience...

A colonial governor and his officers assembled in a makeshift theatre to watch a haphazard company of convicts perform a play that had its roots in the indolent and witty world of the late Restoration, may perhaps seem an unlikely beginning for a national theatre but it was, in fact, entirely appropriate. Our proud pioneering tradition has its origins as much in our theatrical past as in our more familiar cultural motifs of stalwart settlers improvising the trappings of European civilisation in isolated and meagre huts. Indomitable energy and creative vitality as well as a determination to improvise, to adapt to an unfamiliar world, to cope with often inadequate conditions, and to ignore apparently insurmountable obstacles — these were essential qualities for the pioneers of our Australian theatre.

But if our first entrepreneur came here as His Majesty's appointed governor, our second came as His Majesty's reluctant guest. This was First Fleeter and



"The Critic and the Stage Box" from Heads of the People — February 6, 1848

sometime house-breaker, Robert Sidaway. By 16 January 1796, however, when he opened his theatre, Sidaway was not only a free citizen but one of considerable means and position in the young colony. His convict built playhouse (simply called the Theatre and managed by a business associate, John Sparrow) had a seating capacity of about 120 and admission was payable in either cash or kind — flour, meat or spirits. That Sidaway's theatre functioned for not much more than two years, perversely indicated its great popularity. When he decreed its closure, Governor Hunter announced that he had noted a marked increase in the rate of robberies in the colony on the nights that the theatre had been open.

Apart from Sidaway's brief resumption of activity in 1800, the only other records of eighteenth century theatrical productions were occasional convict performances at the Norfolk Island penal settlement during 1793 and 1794. Likewise, our earliest nineteenth century theatre was established by convicts. This rough structure on the Government Farm at Emu Plains, thirty-six miles west of Sydney, thrived between 1825 and 1830. Although its actors most often played to

their fellow convicts and their overseers, they were, according to a report in the *Sydney GAZETTE* of 21 July 1827, "occasionally honoured by the attendance and cheered by the plaudits of some of the first personages in the Colony, ladies as well as gentlemen."

While all these early ventures seemed highly laudable, they were nevertheless amateur and transitory and ultimately contributed little of significance to the establishment of any viable theatrical life in the young colony. In the local newspapers as early as 1824, the good citizens of Sydney had, in fact, discussed at some length the desirability of a permanent professional theatre in their town. But no matter how fervent the discussion, it can be no substitute for action. And when the first professional company eventually made its entrance onto the Australian stage it was virtually due to the single-minded vision, enormous energy and sheer tenacity of just one man — a young free settler called Barnett Levey who was to become our theatre's first professional entrepreneur.

He had arrived in Sydney on 18 December 1821 to join his prosperous ticket-of-leave brother, Solomon, in

business. By late 1825, Barnett Levey had opened his own wholesale and retail warehouse at 72 George Street, had married Miss Sarah Emma Wilson, and was advertising as an auctioneer and appraiser; and by mid-1826 he had organised his first amateur concert at Hackinson's Freemasons' Tavern. The evening was clearly successful because when Levey held a second concert two weeks later, the audience could not be contained comfortably in the tavern and the Governor granted his permission for subsequent concerts to be held in a large room above the Court House in Castlereagh Street.

Despite the fact that Levey, always a man of action, had built his theatre by the end of June 1828 and had taken steps to still the voices of his chief opponents — both the official and self-appointed moral guardians of the convict colony — his grand opening night was still a long way off. His unauthorised erection of a mill had already raised the considerable ire of Governor Darling and now the Governor was officially informed by the Colonial Secretary, Alexander McLeay, that the Governor had no intention of granting a licence for any theatre. Undeterred, Levey confidently announced that his theatre would open on the first Monday in October 1828. Governor Darling was not, however, to be so peremptorily ignored. The GAZETTE of 3 September announced the Legislative Council's hastily passed act "for regulating places of public exhibition and entertainment". Liberally borrowing terminology from the English Theatre of 1737, it banned all unlicensed stage performances in the colony and decreed that the place where any such performance occurred would be "deemed a disorderly house" and every person found therein "deemed to be a Rogue and Vagabond". It further stipulated that the £50 fine for any breach of this regulation was to apply, not only to the theatre owner, management and company, but also to every member of the audience. Barnett Levey was effectively thwarted — but he had no intention of accepting defeat. Apparently changing his tactics, he devoted his energy to completing his Royal Hotel, at the front of his warehouse and on the same level as his theatre; and by June 1829 he had achieved at least a minor victory — a licence to hold balls and concerts in the saloon of his hotel.

His first concert, advertised beneath the banner, "The Royal Assembly Rooms", took place on 20 August 1829, and the AUSTRALIAN's account of the event clearly indicates that Levey had by no means abandoned his battle for his theatre.

... the farther end (of the saloon) opens upon the entrance to the pit of the theatre, which gradually became occupied by respectably dressed persons. The lower tier of front and side boxes appeared to be more filled than the pit, and the upper boxes had their share ... The proscenium displayed a green curtain, surmounted by various devices ... The house was pretty well lighted.

AUSTRALIAN, 26 August, 1829

But Governor Darling was not to be so easily circumvented. While he remained responsible for the colony, there would be no official relaxation of high moral standards and consequently there would be no theatre. It was not, in fact, until 16 May 1832, almost four years after his theatre had been completed, after almost four years of dogged and determined battle, of move and counter-move, and after Governor Darling had finished his term of colonial office and had returned to England, that Barnett Levey received a letter, written on behalf of the new Governor of New South Wales, Governor Richard Bourke, which stated that there was no longer any official objection to the execution of his plan to provide Sydney with a professional theatre company working in its own permanent home. He began immediate and extensive alterations to his theatre. When, by November, the work was still incomplete, he announced that he would fit up his spacious saloon "with a tier of boxes and other requisitions" as a temporary theatre.

Although the renovated Theatre Royal did not open until 5 October 1833, it is, quite rightly, from 26 December 1832, the night when Barnett Levey's company made its entrance onto the stage of his temporary Saloon Theatre Royal, that Australia charts the history of her professional stage. The programme began with Douglas Jerrold's nautical melodrama, BLACK EY'D SUSAN, and concluded with the comic afterpiece MONSIEUR TONSON. While the Sydney HERALD's critic considered that "a little smarter motion in (scene) shifting would not be lost and a few more lights throughout the house would be attended with good ef-

fects" the evening was generally pronounced a success and particular praise was bestowed on the leading actors, Mrs Love and Mr Meredith.



THEATRE ROYAL, SYDNEY.

ON WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER the 26th, 1832.
THIS THEATRE

Will open for the first time, with New Scenery, Machinery, Dresses, and Decorations, under the management of
MR. MEREDITH.

The Pieces selected for the opening are first:

THAT MUCH ADDED

Nautical Melo-Drama.
IN THREE ACTS.

BLACK-EYED SUSAN;

ALL IN THE DOWNS.

ADMIRAL, by Mr. Vale. DOUGLASS, by Mr. Buckingham.
CAPTAIN CHRISTIE, by Mr. Cooper. JACOB TWID, by Mr. E. C. Cook.
LIEUTENANT PIKE, by Mr. Raymond. GUNTER, by Mr. Hale.
BLUE PETER, by Mr. Richardson. PLAYGIRL, by Mr. Vasey.
SEAWARD, by Mr. Taylor. HATCHET, by Mr. Hale.
QUID, by Mr. Kirby. YARN, by Mr. Vasey.

WILLIAM, BY MR. MEREDITH.

BLACK-EYED SUSAN, by Mrs. Love. DELLY MAY-FLOWER, by Mrs. Warren.
Captains, Midshipmen, Sailors, Villagers, &c. &c.

To conclude with that Famous Light Comedy Piece,

IN TWO ACTS.

MONSIEUR TONSON.

MONSIEUR TONSON, by Mr. Meredith. MR. THOMPSON, by Mr. Vale.
FROM KIM, by Mr. Cooper. BUSTY, by Mr. Hale.
JACK ANDERLY, by Mr. Buckingham. NAP, by Mr. Ryder.
CUPP, by Mr. Raymond. ZIP, by Mr. Hollingsworth.
WANTON, by Mr. Taylor. WAITER, by Mr. Raymond.
TRAP, by Mr. Kirby. SNAPE, by Mr. Ryder.
ADRIENNE DE COUDRY, Mrs. Warren. MADAME BELLEGARDE, Mrs. Love.
MRS. THOMPSON, by Mrs. Ward.

The Performance to be supported by the Band of His Majesty's 17th Regiment, kindly
donated by General Desbarras, and conducted by Mr. Lewis.

BOX SEATS, 5s. PIT SEATS, 3s.

There seems, however, no better expression of the enormous significance of that night than that made by George Buckingham who, in the role of Doggrass, spoke the very first lines of BLACK EY'D SUSAN. He said, "I was one of the first to establish the regular drama in New South Wales, and assisted in placing it on that rock where nothing can shake it."

PORT PHILIP HERALD,

11 May 1841.

Buckingham's statement was confident, challenging — and prophetic.

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West, John, THEATRE IN AUSTRALIA. Cassell Australia, 1978.

Pamela Heckenberg is a tutor in the School of Drama, University of New South Wales. Her major research areas are: Australian Theatre up to 1950; contemporary Australian playwrighting; and women in the Australian Theatre. She is one of eleven contributors to the recently published: Harold Love, ed., **The Australian Stage: A Documentary History**. U.N.S.W. Press, 1984.

Focus on Films

AMADEUS directed by Milos Forman
 Screenplay by Peter Shaffer
 Starring F. Murray Abraham, Tom Hulce,
 Elizabeth Berridge
 Hoyts Centre opening mid Feb

The story of **AMADEUS** will be familiar to Sydney audiences who saw the Sydney Theatre Company's 1982 production of the award winning play which starred Drew Forsythe as Mozart and John Gaden as Salieri. Playwright Peter Shaffer has written the screenplay and describes it as "a fantasia on Mozartian themes. It is not a documentary biography but many of the elements are true. **AMADEUS** is really a view of Mozart as seen through the jealousy maddened eyes of his rival Salieri. Above all the film much more than the stage production is a celebration of Mozart's timeless music as well as a gripping drama."



Mozart (Tom Hulce) in **AMADEUS**

The film takes full advantage of the opportunities of the medium; creating authentic sets, including a complete seven hundred-seat, eighteenth-century theatre; using location shots at Prague's Tyl theatre and expanding the musical score in staging authentic versions of Mozart's operas.

ANOTHER COUNTRY directed by Marek Kanievski
 Screenplay by Julian Mitchell
 Starring Rupert Everett, Colin Firth with Anna Massey, Betsy Trantley
 Pitt Centre opening Feb 7

ANOTHER COUNTRY is an adaptation of Julian Mitchell's play of the same name inspired by the Guy Burgess/Donald Maclean incident. The

play was seen in Sydney some years ago with Robert Morley in the leading role.

The film unlike the play, which is set in Russia, is for the most part set in England at that ultimate bastion of privilege, the British boarding school. In this setting it examines the influences acting on susceptible blue-blooded adolescents which could cause them to betray their country.

THE HIT directed by Stephen Frears
 Written by Peter Prince
 Starring John Hurt, Terence Stamp, Tim Roth, Laura del Sol, Fernando Rey
 Academy Twin, Paddington

Winner of the 1984 Los Angeles Film Exposition, **THE HIT** is a macabre and teasing yarn about a pretty crook (Terence Stamp) who is overtaken by his ex-cronies ten years after having "grass-ed" on them in court. Coolly, even debonairly, he is awaiting Nemesis in his Spanish villa when they break in, bundle him into a car and head north for a rendezvous with their boss who is waiting to give sentence.

The film is the tale of the car journey in which chief kidnapper (John Hurt), a sour, taciturn thug, seems set to bring about Stamp's demise at every turn. The director takes that supreme cliché of adventure films, the "We're going to kill you but not yet" syndrome and transforms it into a teased-out mystery of manners in madcap slow motion.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Concessional vouchers can be purchased from the AETT and exchanged at Hoyts, Greater Union and Village cinemas for tickets. The vouchers are open dated but some Saturday/Public Holiday restrictions apply to their use. See vouchers for details.

G.U. \$5.50 (\$1 saving), Hoyts \$5.00 (\$1.50 saving), Village \$5.00 (\$1.50 saving).

Discounts are also offered at the Dendy Cinema, Martin Place (\$1.00) and the Academy Twin, Paddington (\$2.50) at all performances except after midday Saturday. Members should present their membership card at the box office.

THE KILLING FIELDS directed by Roland Joffe

Screenplay by Bruce Robinson
 Starring Sam Waterston, Haing Ngor and featuring Graham Kennedy
 Pitt Centre opening Feb 14

Played against a backdrop of the war in Cambodia, **THE KILLING FIELDS** is the story of two men's friendship. It brings to the screen an intensely personal story of the relationship between Sydney Schonberg (an American journalist) and Dith Pran (his Cambodian assistant). They became inseparable as their friendship and professional relationship blossomed under the rigours of covering an increasingly brutal war. To Sydney Schonberg, Dith Pran was indispensable — as an interpreter, troubleshooter, reporter and friend, there was no equal.

The day the Khmer Rouge troops entered the capital city of Phnom Penh, Dith Pran saved the lives of Schonberg and several other foreign correspondents, but when the Khmer Rouge ordered Cambodians out of the cities and into the countryside, Schonberg could do nothing for his friend. Three million Cambodians died in **THE KILLING FIELDS** of Cambodia's beautiful countryside.



Dith Pran in **THE KILLING FIELDS**

Schonberg's guilt and anguish over his friend's unknown fate stayed with him for four and a half years until he began his search for him. Then on 5 October 1979 Dith Pran crossed the border to Thailand, and freedom.

"The central friendship is not between equals," says producer David Putnam (who also produced **CHARIOTS OF FIRE**), "but initially between master and servant. As such the story becomes a metaphor for the United States' involvement in South-East Asia and possibly in a more timely way, Central America."

Theatre of Sound

Created and directed by Colin Offord
Ensemble: Colin Offord, Twins Seven Seven,
Greg Sheehan, Christopher Offord, Tunji
Beier
Off Broadway Theatre



Colin Offord

Theatre of Sound is a recently formed ensemble, directed by Colin Offord, based around his unique "sound sculptures" and images. *"It's my own idiosyncratic direction in music and painting and a fusion of different art forms which then become a forum where people from different disciplines can come together."*

Central to Colin's work is an instrument he calls the "Grand Redbow", a unique instrument of his own devising which could be described as a one-string playable sculpture. After Theatre of Sound's recent performance at the opening of the Victoria Arts Centre, Tom Duggan of the Melbourne Age described the "Grand Redbow" as having *"elements of cello, side drums, double bass, flute, didgeridoo and heaven knows what else all mixed in. It should sound atrocious but it doesn't. In fact it's undeniably pleasing."*

BOOKING INFORMATION
February 7, 8, 9 at 8 p.m.
AETT discount \$1.00
Bookings on 692 0964

Slow Love on Valentine's Day

SLOW LOVE by Richard Murphet
Directed by Kerry Dwyer
Designed by Edie Kurzer
Sound design by Elizabeth Drake
Cast: Jo Kennedy, Stephen Burton, Cathy Paul, Brian Joyce
The Performance Space

A modern love story written in an excitingly innovative way by Melbourne author Richard Murphet and directed by Kerry Dwyer opens at the Performance Space on Valentine's Day, February 14. The play breaks up the traditional idea of the narrative of a love story by showing four performers in a series of repeated action sequences which develop an idea of a relationship, then change and let us see another possibility. These sequences are separated by blackouts and have a cinematic quality . . . like offcuts of a movie.

The soundtrack is being designed by Elizabeth Drake and will consist of three layers; one is dialogues from the movies which recall our collective fantasies of love, such as the films of Lauren Bacall and Humphrey Bogart; the next is a number of songs from different periods of history including Schubert's lieder, the Rolling Stones and Grace Jones; and the third is a pulse, beating like an underlying music track which draws the whole piece together.

Richard Murphet describes the play as being akin to an epileptic fit, where the actions repeat themselves in the mind at a very rapid rate, bringing the piece close to rock and roll in its ability to energise an audience.

SLOW LOVE is the first production for 1985 in the Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust's Australian content programme, which is administered by former actress Wendy Blacklock. The aim of the programme is to give Australian talent financial and administrative assistance so that new work can be created in a support and professional environment.

BOOKING INFORMATION
Thur Feb 14 to Sun Mar 10
Tue to Sat at 8.30 p.m.
Sat and Sun at 5 p.m.
AETT discount \$1.00
Bookings on 699 5091

Prisons and Dreams off Broadway

REPORT TO AN ACADEMY by Franz Kafka
DESPATCHES FROM ANOTHER WORLD by Virginia Rose
Directed by Jose Farinas
Designed by Ricardo Artigas
Cast: Justine Saunders and Athol Compton
Off Broadway Theatre

The central theme of the two one-act plays being presented by La Troupe Theatre at Off Broadway this month is survival. The main characters in both Kafka's *REPORT TO AN ACADEMY* and *DESPATCHES FROM ANOTHER WORLD* by Virginia Rose are survivors fighting their way out of the cage of civilisation that oppresses body and spirit. Through their determination and will to survive they gain humour and hope.

DESPATCHES, which is the first play by Virginia Rose to receive a professional performance, is an insider's report from the frontlines of third world poverty. A young widow, played by Justine Saunders, takes western reporters beyond the televised images of pathos to show them her world; where hope and courage are as much a part of daily life as disaster.

Athol Compton performs *REPORT TO AN ACADEMY*, Kafka's devastating vision of the human condition as seen through the experience of an ape whose ancestry is lost in the pain of modernisation. But, justly proud of his struggle, it can still laugh at the pretensions of European civilisation.

La Troupe Theatre is a Sydney-based collective founded in 1981. They combine diverse skills to experiment with a wide range of theatrical concepts and traditions to create high quality theatre. Athol Compton will be remembered for his recent performance in *THE CAKEMAN* at Phillip Street Theatre whilst Justine Saunders is renowned for her role in the television production of *WOMEN OF THE SUN*. Both actors are Aborigines.

BOOKING INFORMATION
Wed Feb 20 to Sat Mar 9
Mon to Sat at 8 p.m.
AETT discount \$1.00
Bookings on 692 0964

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Zastrozzi

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Colin Friels and Tina Bursill

H. G. Kippax in *The Sydney Morning Herald* said Colin Friels as Zastrozzi "is splendid . . . exuding comic danger, insolence and diabolic glee, commanding a kind of awful delight. They are all good."

AETT discount \$2.00 (Mon-Thurs and Sat Mat) until February 16
Bookings on 692 0555

The Marginal Farm

For its 25th Birthday production the Ensemble is presenting the first Sydney production of a new play by Alexander Buzo. Most of it is set in Fiji in the late 1950s where Buzo sets the stage for clashes on several levels between generations, between races, between colonialism and budding independence, between old values and ones that are preparing to ripen in the 1960s. The play has received a generally good reception from the press.

AETT discount \$2.00 (except Sat evg)
until Feb 22
Bookings on 929 8877

Slippery When Wet

A new play by the author of **LOVE AND THE SINGLE TEENAGER**, which recently had a very successful return season at the Off Broadway Theatre, opened the Griffin Theatre Company's 1985 season at the Stables Theatre last week.

SLIPPERY WHEN WET is a series of scenes (ranging from backstage at a ballroom dancing competition to a radio

talk-back session in a Volkswagen beetle) that twist and turn their way through an evening of suspense, knockabout humour and thought-provoking fun — with just a dash of music.

Griffin Theatre recently won the Sydney Theatre Critics Guide award for excellence in its pursuit of an all-Australian policy.

AETT discount \$1.00
Bookings on 33 3817

Masterclass

The Sydney Theatre Company's presentation of The Stage Company of S.A.'s production, **MASTERCLASS**, has opened to enthusiastic reviews from the Sydney critics. It is set in the Kremlin where Prokofiev (Dennis Olsen) and Shostakovitch (Huw Williams) have been summoned by Stalin (Peter Carroll) and Zhdanov (Simon Chilvers).

The time is 1948 and Zhdanov, having already imposed his will on literature, theatre and film, has turned on musicians.

AETT discount \$1.00
Bookings on 250 1777

Member Activities

GOULBURN AND BRAIDWOOD TOUR

Sat Mar 16 and Sun Mar 17

The Sydney Members Committee President, Shirley Hay, will lead this two-day tour of the historic towns of Goulburn and Braidwood. Saturday will be spent lunching at Pelican Station and inspecting the historic homestead of Riversdale at Goulburn as well as the museums of Goulburn and Garroorigang.

On Sunday the tour will explore the town of Braidwood and Bedervale Colonial Homestead designed by the well-known architect John Verge who also designed Camden Park and Elizabeth Bay House. It was built for Captain John Coghill in 1836, then passed to his daughter and son in law in whose family it has stayed ever

since. Cost for the tour is \$150 which includes bus transport, all meals, twin share accommodation (single supplement \$15) and all entries.

WHARF THEATRE INSPECTION

Thu March 21 at 11 a.m.

Pier 4, Walsh Bay

The Sydney Theatre Company's new Wharf Theatre is one of the more interesting theatrical venues to be opened in Sydney in recent times. Not only does it have an intimate theatre for the company's more innovative work but it also provides a home for all those activities involved in getting a play on stage — rehearsal, set building, costume making. Our inspection of the Theatre will include all these areas of the building and then culminate in a basket luncheon in the

Theatre's magnificent foyer overlooking Sydney Harbour. The company's general manager, Donald McDonald, will tell us something of the Wharf's development and the company's plans for its use. Tickets are \$10 each and members are very welcome to bring friends along. It should be a fascinating morning.

SONS OF KANE DINNER

Banks Restaurant, Wentworth Hotel
Fri May 10 at 6 p.m.

Before seeing a performance of David Williamson's new play, **SONS OF KANE**, at the Theatre Royal, join us and other members for dinner at the Wentworth Hotel. Tickets are \$16.00 each which includes a two course meal with wine.

Theatre Guide

- ★ **BELVOIR STREET (699 3273)**
25 Belvoir St, Surry Hills
Auditoria: Upstairs and Downstairs
Licensed bar
Wheelchair access to both auditoria
Credit cards accepted
On street parking
- ★ **BONDI PAVILION (30 7211)**
Queen Elizabeth Drive, Bondi Beach
Unlicensed
No wheelchair access
No credit cards
Parking in Queen Elizabeth Drive
- ★ **ENSEMBLE THEATRE (929 8877)**
78 McDougall St, Milson's Point
Licensed restaurant and bar
Wheelchair access
\$1.00 service charge for credit cards
On street parking
- ★ **FOOTBRIDGE THEATRE (692 9955)**
University of Sydney, Parramatta Rd,
Licensed bar
Wheelchair access
\$1.00 service charge for credit cards
Parking on Parramatta Rd and Arundle St
- ★ **GENESIAN THEATRE (267 7774)**
470 Kent St, Sydney
Unlicensed
Wheelchair access
No credit cards
Pay parking at Kings, 452 Kent St
- ★ **HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE (266 4800)**
Quay Street, Sydney
Licensed bar and restaurant
Wheelchair access
\$1.50 service charge on phone credit
card bookings
Pay parking at Kings cnr Thomas and
Quay Sts
- ★ **KINSELAS (331 3100)**
Oxford Square
Two licensed restaurants
Cocktail bar
Theatre restaurant
No wheelchair access
No service charge for credit cards
On street parking
- ★ **MARIAN STREET THEATRE (498 3166)**
Marian St, Killara
Resident company: Northside Theatre
Company
Licensed restaurant and bar
Wheelchair access
No charge for credit cards
Theatre carpark
- ★ **NEW THEATRE (519 3403)**
542 King St, Newtown
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★ **PERFORMANCE SPACE (698 7235)**
199 Cleveland St, Redfern
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★ **PHILLIP STREET THEATRE (232 8570)**
169 Phillip Street, Sydney
Unlicensed
Wheelchair access
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Parking near St. Mary's Cathedral or pay parking under Theatre Royal

★ **Q THEATRE (047 21 5735)**
Cnr Railway and Belmore Sts, Penrith
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Wheelchair access
No charge for credit cards
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★ **THE ROCKS PLAYERS (569 0223)**
Cnr Marion and Renwick Sts, Leichhardt
Unlicensed
Wheelchair access
No credit cards
On street parking

★ **SEYMOUR CENTRE (692 0555)**
Cnr Cleveland St and City Rd, Chippendale
Resident company: Nimrod
Auditoria: York, Everest and Downstairs
Licensed restaurant and bar
Wheelchair access to Everest and Downstairs
\$2.00 service charge on phone credit card bookings
Pay parking under Centre (access from Shepherd St)

★ **ENTERTAINMENT CENTRE (266 4800)**
Haymarket, Sydney
Licensed bar and restaurant
McDonald's family restaurant
Wheelchair access
\$1.50 service charge on phone credit card bookings
Pay parking at Centre (access from Pier or Quay Sts)

★ **SYDNEY SAILORS' HOME (273 274)**
106-108 George Street, Sydney
Resident company: Marionette Theatre of Australia
Licensed bar
Wheelchair access
No service charge on credit card bookings
On street parking

★ **THEATRE ROYAL (231 6111)**
King Street, Sydney
Licensed bar
Wheelchair access
\$1.00 service charge on phone credit card bookings
Pay parking under theatre

★ **THE WHARF THEATRE (250 1777)**
Hickson Road, Walsh Bay
Licensed bar and light refreshments
Wheelchair access
50c service charge on phone credit card bookings
On street parking

★ **SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE (20588)**
Bennelong Point, Sydney
Resident company: Sydney Theatre Company
Auditoria: Concert Hall, Opera Theatre, Drama Theatre and Playhouse
Licensed bar and restaurant
Self service restaurant
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As accommodation for wheelchairs is limited at all above venues it is essential that wheelchair space is reserved at time of booking. Assistance as needed can then be given by the theatre to provide access to the auditorium.

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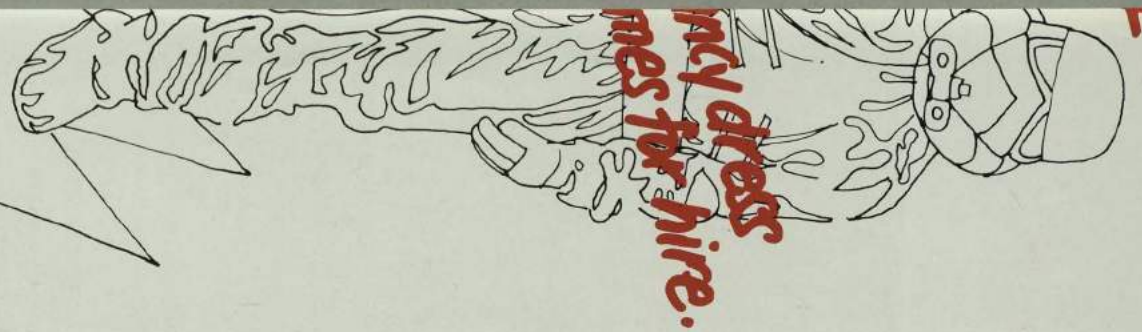
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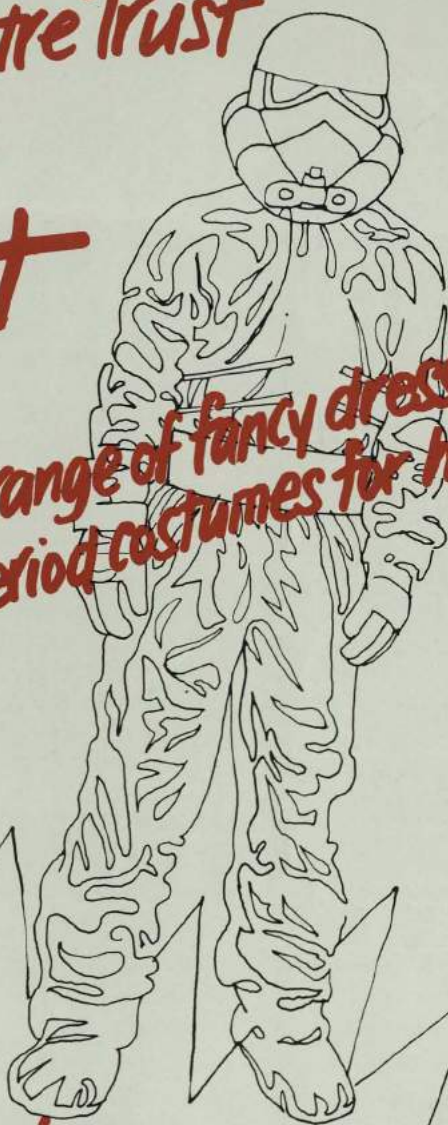
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The New South Wales Government through the Premier's Department, Division of Cultural Activities.

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TRUST NEWS is a publication of the Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust and is mailed to its 5000 members in New South Wales eleven times per year.

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