



Robert Faggeter and Terry McDermott in FOOTROT FLATS

## Footrot Flats — An Hilarious Musical Frolic

*Based on the cartoon strip by Murray Ball  
Written for the stage by Roger Hall  
Music by A. K. Grant  
Lyrics by Philip Norman  
Directed by Brian Debnam  
Musical direction by Denis Follington  
Choreography by Kevan Johnston  
Cast Includes: Robert Faggeter, Terry McDermott and Wayne Comley  
Footbridge Theatre*

One of the most widely read cartoon strips in this part of the world is "Footrot Flats" by New Zealander Murray Ball which is syndicated into various Australian newspapers, including the Daily Mirror in Sydney. The strip is about the goings on at a whacky farm run by Wal Footrot and populated by a diverse range of four-footed friends led by Dog, Wal's co-star.

It is hard to imagine the strip being successfully translated into a stage musical but NZ playwright Roger Hall (whose play MIDDLE AGED SPREAD was seen at the Stables Theatre in November) working in co-operation with the strip's creator and composer and lyricist A. K. Grant and Philip Norman has succeeded in creating an hilarious family entertainment.

There is little attempt at plot. The show works instead through a series of sketches within the framework of some familiar themes: town against country, conservation against expediency, and, last but not least, the love of a good woman against anything that stands in its way. The various animals wear costumes but not masks as the production aims to dress the actor in a stylistic representation of the character and let the audience provide the imagination to create the cartoon characters.

FOOTROT FLATS premiered in New Zealand and then opened in Perth in May 1984 where it was a runaway success. A West Australian tour, Adelaide season and South Australian tour followed. The musical opens at Sydney's Footbridge Theatre on March 28. The season is presented by John Manford International by arrangement with the Gordon Frost Organisation.

**BOOKING INFORMATION**  
Mon Apr 1 to Sat Apr 13  
Mon to Sat at 8 p.m.  
Wed and Sat at 2 p.m.  
AETT \$14.00  
G.P. \$17.50  
Pens/Stud \$12.00 (Mon to Fri)  
Two AETT tickets per member

## Cats Opens in July

*CATS by Andrew Lloyd Webber  
Based on 'Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats' by T. S. Eliot  
Directed by Trevor Nunn  
Assistant Director and Choreographer: Gillian Lynne  
Designed by John Napier  
Lighting design by David Hersey  
Theatre Royal*

The eagerly awaited Australian production of the Andrew Lloyd-Weber musical CATS opens in Sydney in July. The production will feature an all-Australian cast (yet to be announced) with the London production team. CATS, which has been playing in London since May 1981, is the first major musical written by Andrew Lloyd Webber without the collaboration of Tim Rice. Their previous successes were JOSEPH AND THE AMAZING TECHNICOLOR DREAMCOAT (1967), JESUS CHRIST SUPERSTAR (1970) and EVITA (1975). CATS is based on T. S. Eliot's "Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats" which was published in October 1939. Eliot had a great affection for cats and 'Possum' was his nickname among his friends.

Most of the poems comprising the book have been set to music complete and in their originally published form; a few have been subject to a minor revision and eight lines have been added to "The Song of the Jellicles". However, some of the lyrics were discovered among the unpublished writings of Eliot.

Because of the anticipated demand for CATS tickets, we have been unable to negotiate the large discount normally available for major productions. We have arranged a small discount but more importantly, we believe, we have set aside prime seats in Stalls Rows L, M and N for members at specific performances. As the catwalk extends back to row G we believe our allocation to be the best seats in the house.

### BOOKING INFORMATION

Mon Aug 26, Thu Aug 29, Mon Sep 2,  
Wed Sep 4, Mon Sep 16, Mon Sep 23,  
Thu Sep 26 at 8 p.m.  
Sat Sep 7, Sat Sep 21, Sat Oct 5 (Long  
Weekend) and Sat Oct 26 at 2 p.m.  
AETT \$33.50, G.P. \$35.00  
No pens/stud discount  
Two AETT tickets and two G.P. tickets  
per member only  
AETT discount unavailable at Theatre  
Royal



## Public Season by Theatre Of Deaf

MAN EQUALS MAN by Bertold Brecht

*Directed by Ben Strout*

*Set design by Ilonka Craig*

*Costume design by Imogene Hall*

*Cast: Colin Allen, Carol Lee Aquiline, Janet Kitcher, David London, David Pidd, Steve Ripley, Martha Rundell, Catherine Gillard.*

*Studio at the Wharf*

The Theatre of the Deaf, the Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust's own in-house theatre company, will present Bertold Brecht's play *MAN EQUALS MAN* in the Sydney Theatre Company's Studio Theatre at the Wharf from April 10 to 27. It will be the company's first public season since *A WINTER'S TALE* in 1981. The production of this extremely funny play by the Theatre of the Deaf uses both music and the exciting theatricality of simultaneous sign language and the spoken word to create an innovative theatre piece.

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Tue to Sat at 8 p.m.

Sat at 4 p.m.

AETT \$11.90, \$10.00 (Apr 11 only)

G.P. \$13.90, Pens/stud \$9.00

Two AETT tickets per member

## A New Lease of Life for the Old Salt Factory

In March 1984 Sue Hill and Chris Westwood, principals of the theatrical promotion company, Understudies, learned that Nimrod was moving out of their Surry Hills premises and that the theatre would be up for sale. Commercial managements had expressed interest in the theatre but Understudies had different aspirations; they wanted to see the theatre firmly in the hands of the profession. They wanted to run a space in Sydney that would generate new work, a place for theatrical innovation and experimentation, to introduce new writers and performers and, through a broad range of exciting activities, to add much-needed colour and variety to Sydney's theatrical diet.

Actors, directors, designers were invited to contribute \$1,000 each to mount a tender. The response was remarkable. Within a short space of time, over 500 shares were sold and a successful tender was mounted. The result was a theatre owned debt free by the industry for the industry. Shareholders in the company read like a who's who of the profession — Robyn Archer, Neil Armfield, Patrick White, Noni Haselhurst, Barry Otto, Cathy Downes, Steve J. Spears, Mel Gibson and Stephen Sewell to name a few. Chairman of the Board is Mr. Justice McClelland.

A separate board which is also the artistic directorate has been set up to run the theatre and members include a wide ranging expertise — directors, designers,

agents, lawyers and performers. Plans for 1985 are well ahead and include a fresh and invigorating programme of comedy, rock 'n' roll, drama, cabaret, talk, music, dance, exhibitions and variety. The theatre will be open seven days a week with late night shows and bar and food service. There will always be something going on. The theatre has been renamed the Belvoir St. Theatre and opens this month.

The theatre's pricing policy is equally innovative. Tickets for all performances are \$15.00, but instead of offering a subscription ticket the theatre invites patrons to purchase a book of ten tickets for \$100 which can be used by anyone at any performance. So for example a party of ten could use the book at one performance or a couple could use it over five visits.

Opening on March 7 in the Upstairs Theatre is *Ha Ha Ha*, a remarkable company which combines rock and theatre. It has been described as "*Like a rock clip on stage*". Harry M. Miller said of the group "*It's the only new frontier that I've seen in rock and roll or young music theatre in more than ten years*". Downstairs will be a series of films by new Australian filmmakers based around individual artists.

### BOOKING INFORMATION

Thu Mar 7 to Sun Apr 7

Tue to Sat at 8 p.m.

Wed, Sat and Sun at 5 p.m.

AETT discount \$1.00

No AETT discounts on ticket books

Bookings on 699 3273



Ken Tribe for Nimrod and Jim McClelland for the Syndicate exchange contracts in August 1984



- ★ **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  
Unlicensed  
Wheelchair access  
No credit cards  
On street parking

**DON'T KEEP IT TO YOURSELF!  
TELL A FRIEND ABOUT AETT MEMBERSHIP**

## MR/MRS/MISS/MS

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

P'CODE \_\_\_\_\_ TEL (day) \_\_\_\_\_ (evening) \_\_\_\_\_

I enclose cheque for \$20 (made payable to A.E.T.T.)

or charge my ☐ Bankcard ☒ Mastercard

Expiry date

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Signature .....

Membership valid for 12 months from date of joining.

PER TICKET	TOTAL COST	\$
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**SPECIAL SEATING REQUIREMENTS:** If through disability you have any special seating requirements please contact the membership office (357 1200) for inclusion in our disability register.

# he Australian Ballet

The Australian Ballet's 1985 season opens in Sydney on March 15 with the perennially popular ballet COPPELIA. Dame Peggy van Praagh will personally supervise the production. COPPELIA is the first of three programs to be presented by the Ballet in the next six months.

rogramme Two includes VARIATIONS ON A NURSERY THEME by ARTACUS' creator Laszlo Sergei, who will return to Australia to stage this work; Maurice Bejart's WEBERŒN OPUS IN THE NIGHT, Jerome Robbins' ballet which has been exclusive to the New York City Ballet and The Royal Ballet; and David Lichine's infectious GRADUATION BALL.

Christine Walsh in *COPPELIA*, Act 2

programme Three includes two works by the great George Balanchine, *RENADE* and *THE FOUR IMPERAMENTS*. The programme is completed by a new specially commissioned work by Robert Ray. Titled *THE SENTIMENTAL BLOKE*, it is a balletic version of the Australian literary classic.

## BOOKING INFORMATION

**COPPELIA:** March 15 to April 6

Programme Two: April 12 to May 2

Programme Three: May 8 to May 28

Mon to Sat at 7:30 p.m. Sat at 1:30 p.m.

Opera Theatre, Sydney Opera House

Subscription inquiries on 357 1200

single performance purchases:

NETT \$33.00, G.P. \$35.00

Child/pens \$25.00

Special Monday night concessions for those under 26 years

Two AETT tickets per member

AETT discount unavailable at S.O.H.



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*Directed by Ben Strout*

*Set design by Ilonka Craig*

*Costume design by Imogene Hall*

*Cast: Colin Allen, Carol Lee Aquiline, Janet Kitcher, David London, David Pidd, Steve Ripley, Martha Rundell, Catherine Gillard.*

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Sat at 4 p.m.

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★ **OFF BROADWAY (692 0964)**  
73-79 Bay St, Glebe  
Licensed bar  
Wheelchair access  
\$1.00 service charge for credit cards  
Free parking at Hodgson's Dye Agency, Bay St

★ **PERFORMANCE SPACE (698 7235)**  
199 Cleveland St, Redfern  
Unlicensed  
Wheelchair access  
No credit cards  
Parking on Cleveland St

★ **PHILLIP STREET THEATRE (232 8570)**  
169 Phillip Street, Sydney  
Unlicensed  
Wheelchair access  
No service charge for credit cards  
Parking near St. Mary's Cathedral or pay parking under Theatre Royal

★ **Q THEATRE (047 21 5735)**  
Cnr Railway and Belmore Sts, Penrith  
Licensed bar  
Wheelchair access  
No charge for credit cards  
Free parking in adjacent council car park

★ **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  
Wheelchair access  
\$1.00 service charge on credit card bookings  
Park and ride from Domain carpark (access from St Mary's Rd)

### Wheelchair access

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.



Signature .....

SHOW/EVENT/ITEM	1ST PREFERENCE (DAY AND DATE)	2ND PREFERENCE (DAY AND DATE)	TIME	STALLS OR DRESS CIRCLE	PRICE PER TICKET	NO. OF TICKETS	TOTAL	FOR OFFICE USE ONLY
							SUB-TOTAL	\$ .
							+ HANDLING FEE OF 50c PER TICKET	\$ .
							TOTAL COST	\$ .

**BOOKING INSTRUCTIONS:** Please add handling fee of 50c per ticket purchased to total ticket price and send to AETT, P.O. Box 137, Kings Cross 2011 with stamped addressed envelope (for return of tickets). Please note that tickets for different events may be mailed separately in which case the AETT will supply the additional envelopes. Performance and price information, for those shows for which mail bookings are available, is given at the foot of each article.

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 Programme Two: April 12 to May 2  
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 Mon to Sat at 7:30 p.m. Sat at 1:30 p.m.  
 Opera Theatre, Sydney Opera House  
 Subscription inquiries on 357 1200  
 Single performance purchases:  
 AETT \$33.00, G.P. \$35.00  
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Two AETT tickets per member



## Not Another Theatre Company

### THE HEIRESS FROM PUNCHBOWL

by Tony Harvey

Directed by Malcolm Frawley

Designed by Colin Ratcliff

Cast: Richard Morgan and Tony Harvey  
Sydney Sailor's Home

No, our heading isn't a comment on the proliferation of new theatre companies in Sydney but the actual name of a new theatre company which is presenting its first Sydney season. The company was formed in March 1983 to produce new Australian drama and since then it has mounted 11 productions (mainly written by company members). Their venue was a large garage in Cammeray where they have been attracting increasingly large audiences. In June last year the company played at the Festival of Australia Drama in Canberra and won the prize for the best professional production of a new Australian play. They were subsequently invited to play at Canberra's Playhouse Theatre.



Tony Harvey in *THE HEIRESS FROM PUNCHBOWL*

*THE HEIRESS FROM PUNCHBOWL* is about a smalltime theatrical group (The Watson Bay Players) who face insolvency. They naively decide that the solution to all their problems is to write their own hit play. The result inevitably is chaos. An unusual aspect of the production is that the two characters in the play, two middle-aged women, are played by young men and yet the play is not a drag show.

#### BOOKING INFORMATION

Fri Mar 1 to Sun Mar 17

AETT discount \$4.00

Bookings on 273 274

## Bernard Shaw Revival

### HEARTBREAK HOUSE by Bernard Shaw

Directed By Robyn Nevin

Designed by Stephen Curtis

Cast: Tim Elliott, Jennifer Claire, Anna Volska, Simon Chilvers, John Frawley, Robert Coleby, Rhys McConnochie, Joan Bruce, Victoria Longley and Norman Hodges.  
Drama Theatre, Sydney Opera House

Conceived in 1913 and composed in the middle years of World War I, *HEARTBREAK HOUSE* clearly reflects the historical circumstances in which it was written. The play is concerned not only with individual experience of heartbreak, of shattered illusions and rejection in love, but also with a larger social malaise. The house, built in the shape of a ship, becomes, as the play develops, a symbol of a society which has lost its direction and is in danger of foundering. The occupants of the house are intelligent, witty, attractive and engagingly candid. But absorbed in private feelings and leading 'foolish lives of romance and sentiment and snobbery', they are seen as dangerously insulated from the realities of the world they inhabit. With its forceful and vivid portrayal of a civilisation on the brink of possible extinction, the play retains, in the mid-1980s, a grim topicality.

George Bernard Shaw was thirty-six when his first play *WIDOWERS' HOUSES* was produced in 1892. Thereafter his output as a playwright was prolific and by his death he had written thirty full-length plays and another twenty shorter works. The plays he wrote in the 1890's won him a considerable following. But it was not until the early years of the 20th century that Shaw achieved his position as the outstanding playwright of his day in England. In the English professional theatre, his plays continue to be performed more frequently than those of any other playwright, except Shakespeare.

#### BOOKING INFORMATION

Wed Feb 27 to Wed Apr 3

Mon to Sat at 8 p.m.

Sat at 2 p.m.

AETT \$14.90 (Mon to Thur and Sat Mat)

G.P. \$17.90

Stud/pens \$10.90 (Mon to Thur and Sat mat)

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Child/pens \$25.00

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## American Play for Ensemble

### IN THE SWEET BYE & BYE

by Donald Driver

Directed by Brian Young

Designed by Brian Young

Cast: Benita Collings, Barry Hill, Tony Korner, Caz Lederman, Beverley Phillips and Colin Taylor.

Ensemble Theatre

Opening at the Ensemble on March 9 is *IN THE SWEET BYE & BYE* by American playwright Donald Driver whose awardwinning play *STATUS QUO VADIS* was presented at the Ensemble in 1976.

*IN THE SWEET BYE & BYE* is a warm and funny play about the problems of people who spend too much time living in the past. Set in the Oregon countryside the play and the characters are immediately identifiable in Australia. Anyone who has lived in the bush, visited relatives in the bush, or even just passed through, will recognise and empathise with American bush counterparts. The play buzzes with life, love and humour.

#### BOOKING INFORMATION

Sat Mar 9 to Sat Apr 6

Mon to Sat at 8 p.m.

Sat at 5 p.m.

AETT \$8.00 (Mon to Thur and Sat mat)

G.P. \$10.00 (Mon to Thur and Sat mat)

\$14.50 (Fri and Sat)

Pens/Stud \$6.00 (Mon to Thur and Sat mat)

Two AETT tickets per member

place in Australian politics in recent times.

*KING RICHARD* is set in 1977 one week before the State elections; Victoria's goals are in chaos and there are allegations of corruption against the Premier. Sir Dundon secretly transfers prisoner leader "King Richard" from Pentridge to a presidential suite in order to win the election and save his reputation.

#### BOOKING INFORMATION

Tue Mar 12 to Sun Apr 21

Wed to Fri at 8.15 p.m.

Sat at 5.30 p.m. and 8.30 p.m.

Sun at 5.30 p.m.

AETT \$11.00

G.P. \$12.00

Pens/Stud \$8.00

Two AETT tickets per member

## Steaming Returns

*STEAMING* by Nell Dunn

Directed by Rodney Fisher

Designed by Shaun Gurton

Lighting by John Rayment

Cast includes Amanda Muggleton, Gwen Plumb, Genevieve Lemon and Maggie King  
York Theatre, Seymour Centre

"About four years ago I was suffering from one of those particularly flat aimless times of life. I wanted a change after 15 years of writing books and, perhaps most drastic, my youngest child was about to leave home.

I left school at 14 and got married young. I had virtually no education and never had a permanent job . . . I couldn't decide what I could do out there in the big wide world with so little experience. If I write a play, I thought, it will be dif-

ferent; there will be rehearsals, a company, a joint project, lots of fun and gossip. So that's what I set about doing."

— Nell Dunn

The result of British novelist Nell Dunn's foray into playwrighting was *STEAMING*, for which she was nominated most promising playwright by the London Evening Standard and Plays and Players Magazine. The play proved so popular when it opened in Sydney in September 1982 that it had two return seasons and has since played in all mainland States.

As the title might suggest, *STEAMING* is set in a Turkish bath house in London's East End. What might not be expected is that the bath is very much on stage and the cast regularly take to the waters during the action of the play! *STEAMING* is about six women who meet regularly at the bath house which is under threat of closure by the local Council. At first the women seem to be stock characters — abrasive Cockney mum, retarded daughter, good hearted tart, educated girl student, inhibited middle-class housewife/mother. But gradually they proceed from taking off their clothes to dismantling their marriages and sexual fantasies, their class prejudices and their innermost ideas of who they are, often in words a lady is not supposed to know.

#### BOOKING INFORMATION

Thur Apr 11 to Sat May 11

Tue to Sat at 8 p.m.

Matinees to be confirmed

AETT \$16.90, \$14.90 (Apr 16 and 17)

G.P. \$18.90 (Mon to Thurs & Mats)

\$19.90 (Fri and Sat)

Pens/Stud \$12.90 (Mon to Thur and Mats)

Two AETT tickets per member

## Steve Spears Play for Griffin

*KING RICHARD* by Steve J. Spears

Directed by Egil Kipste

Designed by John Senczuk

Cast: Michael Beecher, Terry Brady, Laura Gabriel, Steve Leeder, David Lynch, Pam Morrissey and Joe Petruzzi

Stables Theatre

The second production by Griffin Theatre Company for 1985 is Steve J. Spears' prophetic satire *KING RICHARD* which is being reworked by the playwright especially for this production. Originally written as a fiction the play predicts the dramas that have taken





## Children's Matinees

DIRTY RASCALS devised by Leeds Playhouse Theatre in Education Company  
*Directed by Nici Wood*  
 DANCING IN THE STREET  
 by David Holman  
*Directed by David Young*  
 Sydney Sailors' Home

The good news from the Sydney Sailors' Home is that there'll be children's matinees presented there each Saturday afternoon and, for those who want it, there'll also be catering for birthday parties. A number of different companies will be involved in the programme and during March it will be Toe Truck Theatre, one of Australia's leading theatre companies for young people. On March 2, 9 and 16 at 2 p.m. Toe Truck will present DIRTY RASCALS, a delightful, witty and optimistic play about three seven-year-olds who meet, play, fight, and eventually form a gang. The play is suitable for Primary students Years 2-4.



Glen Perry, James Porter and Joanna Lambe in DIRTY RASCALS

On March 23 and 30 Toe Truck will present DANCING IN THE STREET. It is about a group of breakdancing youngsters and their discovery of a pair of once famous but now forgotten dancers from a bygone era. The play is recommended for Primary students Years 5 and 6 and Secondary students Years 7 and 8.

**BOOKING INFORMATION**  
 DIRTY RASCALS — Sat Mar 2, 9 and 16 at 2 p.m.  
 DANCING IN THE STREETS — Sat Mar 23 and 30 at 2 p.m. Fri Mar 22 and 29 at 8 p.m. Sun Mar 24 at 4 p.m.  
 No AETT concession  
 Bookings on 273 274

## Opening Shortly

### Poppie Nongena

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. 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).

#### BOOKING INFORMATION

Footbridge Theatre  
 Tue Mar 12 to Sat Mar 23  
 Mon to Sat at 8 p.m.  
 Sat at 2.15 p.m.  
 AETT \$13.90  
 G.P. \$16.90  
 Pens/stud \$10.90 (Mon to Thur and mats)  
 Two AETT tickets per member  
 Member bookings first offered  
 T.N. Feb 85

### La Cage Aux Folles

Keith Michell and Jon Ewing star in the Tony Award winning Broadway musical LA CAGE AUX FOLLES which opens at Her Majesty's Theatre on March 2. The musical written by Harvey Fierstein, is based on the same Jean Poiret farce as the highly successful film of the same name.

The show, too, has been a popular success both in New York, where it has been

playing since August 1983, and in San Francisco. The reason for its success is not hard to find. According to the New York Times, LA CAGE AUX FOLLES "is an extravagantly produced, old-fashioned family musical, containing likeable characters . . . a sentimental love story, sumptuous sets and costumes — and that rarity, new songs that can be hummed on the way home."

#### BOOKING INFORMATION

Her Majesty's Theatre  
 Commences March 2  
 Mon to Sat at 8 p.m.  
 Wed and Sat at 2 p.m.  
 AETT \$22.00 (Mon to Thur until end Mar) \$17.00 (Wed mat until end Mar)  
 G.P. \$25.00 (Mon to Thur) \$27.00 (Fri and Sat) \$20.00 (mats)  
 Two AETT tickets per member  
 As bookings in March are heavy, Members requiring prime seats are advised to book in April at G.P. price.  
 Member bookings first offered  
 T.N. Nov 84



## The Second Stage by Pamela Heckenberg

*The second in a series of articles on the development of theatre in Australia and the role of the actor-managers.*

When Barnett Levey's company made its grand entrance onto the Sydney stage on December 26, 1832, it generated excitement, enthusiasm and confidence that reverberated far beyond the ornate walls of his Saloon Theatre Royal. In other colonies, suitable spaces were likewise converted to accommodate concerts and plays, and even before the gold rush of the 1850s many of these had been superseded by properly fitted-up and elaborately decorated theatres.

The men and women who leased these theatres were almost always actor-managers in the traditional English mold — that is, they not only hired the actors, decided the repertoire, mounted the production, organised front of house, and secured publicity, but they also performed, often in a central role. Perhaps one of the most interesting actor-managers, and the first colonial woman to work in that capacity, was Mrs Anne Clarke of Hobart. She had been a member of Sampson and Cordelia Cameron's original Hobart company and, as well, had directed her own amateur productions. On March 16, 1840, in partnership with a Mr Capper, she opened with her own company in Hobart's Theatre Royal. Although Mr Capper stayed only briefly in the partnership, Anne Clarke continued to entertain the audiences, not only of Hobart but also of Launceston, until the middle of 1847. The TASMANIAN DISPATCH WEEKLY's report of those first performances provides a vivid picture of colonial audiences and an interesting impression of colonial critics,

*Mrs Clarke was the great attraction of the evening, and we are happy to see her looking so well, and to hear her in such excellent voice. A criticism of the performance would be as ungenerous as was the treatment the performers received from the audience, patronised by gentlemen in the boxes who would have been kicked out from any other place of amusement but from one in a penal settlement . . . It was a scene to astonish even the New Zealanders in the pit. Near them sat one vagabond*

*who, by shouting, shrieking and whistling, acted in concert with the gentleman in the boxes, who was endeavouring with his stick to smash the panels of the place honoured by his presence. The first, and about twenty others, smoked their pipes, and kicked up a row in the pit, looking up to those for that approval, which was of course freely and uproariously awarded . . . But enough: we pass on to the next evening when there were not so many gentlemen present . . . We are informed that every evening since, the Theatre has improved, and certainly the performances of Mrs Clarke, Mr Capper, Mr Jordan, and of Mr and Mrs Harold on Tuesday night, are well deserving of praise and encouragement.*

*(March 20, 1840)*

Certainly, colonial newspapers abound with descriptions of the uncouth behaviour of local audiences. Unless, however, such behaviour is seen in the broader context of nineteenth-century British theatre, these descriptions can be misleading. It is not that our colonial audiences were not riotous and offensive but that they were in fact no more riotous and offensive than many contemporary English audiences. In 1826 a visitor to London wrote,

*The most striking thing to a foreigner in English theatres is the unheard-of coarseness and brutality of the audiences. English freedom here degenerates into the rudest licence, and it is not uncommon in the midst of the most affecting part of a tragedy . . . to hear some coarse expression shouted from the galleries in a stentor voice. This is followed, according to the taste of the bystanders, either by loud laughter and approbation, or by the castigation and expulsion of the offender . . . Such things happen not once but sometimes twenty times in the course of a performance, and amuse many of the audience more than that does.*

But nevertheless it was not easy to be an actor in colonial Australia.

A year after Anne Clarke had begun in management she was evidently sufficiently confident of the continuing success of her theatre to set out for England to engage new actors and singers. She was, in fact, one of the earliest actor-managers to import performers. She did so, however, because the colonial theatre was still so very young that there was a real dearth of competent local artists and she was not attempting, as were the majority of later actor-managers, to employ overseas performers at the expense of those already working here. She returned with a company that included Jerome Carindini, Theodesia Stirling (who was to become the mother of Nellie Stewart, the first locally born star of the Australian stage) and Emma, Clelia, John and Frank Howson — all actors who were to make a considerable contribution to the colonial theatre. By July 1842, Anne Clarke was again working with her own company in the substantially renovated Theatre Royal which, in loyal recognition of the new Queen, had been renamed the Royal Victoria.

Anne Clarke certainly seems to have struggled (there were for example reports of benefit nights having to be brought forward in the season) but she nevertheless survived. Her company played opera, melodrama and Shakespeare and as well presented promenade concerts in an attempt to woo those members of Hobart's society who did not patronise the drama. But in mid-1847 Anne Clarke, complaining that a visiting entrepreneur had "in a very dishonest manner" lured most of her company away, retired from the theatre. Her career had been short; but it had been significant. She was not only the first of the many women who controlled their own theatre companies in this country but she also had made an important contribution to early colonial theatre.

The visiting entrepreneur about whom Anne Clarke had complained so bitterly was George Selth Coppin. When he arrived in Sydney on March 10, 1843, he was just twenty-four years old and had already had seventeen years experience in





George Coppin in H. J. Byron's comedy *NOT SUCH A FOOL AS HE LOOKS* in his farewell performance at the Princess Theatre, Melbourne, on September 5, 1901. Photo courtesy The Latrobe Collection, State Library of Victoria

Poster courtesy The Latrobe Collection, State Library of Victoria

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THEATRE ROYAL, MELBOURNE.

Printed by G. COFFIN.

the English provincial theatre — much of it in his family's company of strolling players. A talented low comedian, Coppin performed occasional Australian seasons but his major influence was as an importer of overseas actors and as a builder of theatres. He was in fact much more an actor-entrepreneur than an actor-manager because, although he sometimes shared the bill with his imported stars, he tended to perform in his own stock plays. These were usually comic afterpieces and quite separate from the mainpiece, which was always the vehicle for the visiting star. By 1856, at what was probably the peak of his long career (he was still a director of the Melbourne Theatre Royal when he died in 1906), Coppin controlled four Melbourne theatres. The Olympic, always affectionally known as the Iron Pot, which had been prefabricated in Manchester and shipped out, was opened officially on July 30, 1855 with a prologue spoken by one of the greatest of Coppin's imported stars — G. V. Brooke.

In February 1856, Coppin took over Astley's Amphitheatre, carried out extensive renovations which included the installation of gas, and renamed it the Royal Amphitheatre; in June of the same year he took over the lease of Melbourne's Theatre Royal and by September he had opened his Cremorne Pleasure Gardens which included a theatre as well as numerous other attractions. Much later, in 1862, Coppin built the grand new Royal Haymarket Theatre and Opello Music Hall high on the hill of Bourke Street, Melbourne. But by that time his Olympic had been converted to a "Turkish, medicated, and swimming baths", and he no longer had control of the Royal Amphitheatre which had been renamed the Princess.

Coppin's activity was by no means confined to the theatre — he was a member of the Victorian parliament, first in the Legislative Council and later in the Legislative Assembly; he became the first Grand Master of the Masonic Lodge of Victoria; he founded the Old Colonists' Association of Victoria; he operated a copyright agency; he introduced camels, the English Thrush, Turkish baths and roller skates to Australia, and he was chairman of various companies and associations, including the Ocean

Amphitheatre Company, the Continental Hotel Company, the Purveyor's Association, and the Sorrento Steam Navigation Company.

George Coppin was the most active and successful entrepreneur of the Australian theatre in the mid-nineteenth century. For this he should be applauded. It can, however, be argued that his practice of promoting his imported stars in their imported repertoires was of significant detriment to the development of local actors and local playwrights. It is somewhat ironic then that Coppin was to be displaced as the most dominant figure in the Australian theatre by one of his own imported actors. In the letter that he received from his American agent, Andrew Birrell, stating that the two performers about to embark for Australia were "young, handsome, sober (and) sing and dance good" there was nothing to suggest the enormous impact that these two performers would have on Australia's audiences and the legendary position that one of them would occupy in the chronicles of our stage. They were James Cassius Williamson and Maggie Moore and when they opened in *STRUCK OIL* at the Melbourne Theatre Royal on August 1, 1874, they introduced an important new chapter in the history of the Australian theatre.

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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

**PLACES IN THE HEART** directed by Robert Benton

*Written by Robert Benton*

*Produced by Arlene Donovan*

*Starring Sally Field, Danny Glover, John Malkovich, Lindsay Crouse, Amy Madigan and Ed Harris.*

*Now playing at Hoyts Centre*

**PLACES IN THE HEART** is set in the 1930s in a small town in Texas, where four generations of director Robert Benton's family have lived. It is the story of Edna Spalding's struggle to keep her family together in spite of enormous hardships following the death of her husband. Robert Benton has sought, through a rich accumulation of detail, to recreate the tone and texture of life in this region during the 30's. **PLACES IN THE HEART** is full of the people he remembers and the stories he heard as a child. As the film unfolds, it is the qualities instilled in these people, their faith, patience and ultimate ability to forgive, that give them their simple dignity and indomitable strength.



*Lindsay Crouse and Sally Field in PLACES IN THE HEART*

**PLACES IN THE HEART** has received 8 Academy Award nominations — including Best Picture, Best Actress (Sally Field), Best Supporting Actor (John Malkovich), Best Supporting Actress (Lindsay Crouse), Best Original Screenplay and Best Director.

**CAL** directed by Pat O'Connor

*Screenplay by Bernard McLaverty*

*Produced by David Puttnam*

*Starring Helen Mirren, John Lynch and Donal McCann*

*Village Double Bay opening March 7*

A new film by the producer of **ACHARIOTS OF FIRE**, David Puttnam, **CAL** is set in Northern Ireland against the bleak background of the conflict there. It is the story of a young Catholic and his attempts to break out of



*Helen Mirren and John Lynch in CAL*

the straight-jacket imposed by his upbringing and his environment.

The casting of the seventeen-year-old Cal was not an easy task for the producers, as inevitably his age meant that the actor would almost certainly be extremely inexperienced, yet the choice was vital to the success of the film. The search ended with John Lynch, an Irish second-year student at the Central School of Drama in London. His co-star is the leading British actress Helen Mirren who plays an Italian Catholic widow with whom Cal becomes involved. Other roles in the film are played by distinguished actors from the Abbey Theatre, Dublin, including Donal McCann.

**A SOLDIER'S STORY** directed by Norman Jewison

*Screenplay by Charles Fuller*

*Produced by Charles Schultz*

*Starring Howard E. Rollins, Jr. and Adolph Caesar*

*Hoyts Centre opening March 7*

**A SOLDIER'S STORY**, adapted from the Pulitzer Prize-winning play, **A SOLDIER'S PLAY** by Charles Fuller, is set in America in 1944 near the end of World War II. Captain Richard Davenport (played by Howard E. Rollins Jr.), a polished, black, Howard University-trained military attorney, is sent by the Department of the Army to Louisiana to investigate the murder of a black soldier, Sergeant Waters. As Davenport unravels the circumstances surrounding Waters' death, the stories of the soldiers he speaks with reveal the changing social attitudes, both black and white, of the time.

Adolph Caesar, who has been nominated as best supporting actor in the Academy Awards, re-creates his stage role of Sergeant Waters, for which he won both an Obie and a New York Drama Desk Award as Best Supporting Actor in the original Negro Ensemble Company production. As told in flashback, Waters is revealed to be a man obsessed with bet-

tering himself in order to be more acceptable to whites. "Part of the problem that we faced as black people," says Caesar, "is that historically we believed that we could not move forward unless we became like white people. What I wanted to convey in **A SOLDIER'S STORY** was that it doesn't have to be so. We will move forward if we have something to contribute." **A SOLDIER'S STORY** has been nominated as Best Film in the Academy Awards.

## ACADEMY AWARD NOMINATIONS

Judy Davis has been nominated as Best Actress in the 57th Academy Awards for her role in the film of E. M. Forster's classic Novel **A PASSAGE TO INDIA**. She is competing with Sally Field (**PLACES IN THE HEART**), Jessica Lange (**COUNTRY**), Sissy Spacek (**THE RIVER**) and Vanessa Redgrave (**THE BOSTONIANS**).

Nominations for Best Actor went to F. Murray Abraham and Tom Hulce (**AMADEUS**), Albert Finney (**UNDER THE VOLCANO**), Sam Waterston (**THE KILLING FIELDS**) and Jeff Bridges (**STARMAN**).

The five films nominated for Best Picture are **A PASSAGE TO INDIA**, **AMADEUS**, **THE KILLING FIELDS**, **PLACES IN THE HEART** and **A SOLDIER'S STORY**.

## 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). Please note, no handling fee applies to film vouchers and members may purchase as many as they wish.

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.



# What's On Out-of-Town

**THEATRE SOUTH's** first play for 1985 will be researched, written and staged in the NSW South Coast town of Eden. Tentatively titled **THE EDEN PROJECT**, the play will be researched and written by Katherine Thomson and directed by Des Davis. It will centre on Eden, its past and present. Opening in mid-March in Eden, it will tour the South Coast before playing at Theatre South's home base in Wollongong.

Newcastle's professional theatre company, the **HUNTER VALLEY THEATRE COMPANY**, opens its 1985 season with a play which was voted best new play 1984 by The Sydney Morning Herald when it was presented by Sydney's Griffin Theatre last year. **US OR THEM** by Ned Manning is a moving play about the subtle and sometimes not so subtle interplay of power between students and teachers and between junior and senior teachers at a high school. It will be directed by Alan Becher and play at the Playhouse between March 13 and April 4.

The first programme in **THEATRE ACT's** 1985 programme is **A HAND-FULL OF FRIENDS** by David Williamson and directed by Chris Johnson. The play opens on March 4 and runs for three weeks at the Playhouse Theatre. Also in March, John Derum, Theatre ACT's new artistic director, takes up residence in Canberra.

Since 1973 John has directed his own theatre company which produced and toured nearly 300 performances of **MORE THAN A SENTIMENTAL BLOKE** and the concert series **PIAF**.



John Derum

As an actor John Derum has worked with almost all the major theatre companies in Australia, including Theatre A.C.T. for whom he also directed **THE ZOO STORY** as part of the 1984 Briefs season.

Two works which have been seen in workshop performance will form part of **HUMAN VEINS DANCE THEATRE's** programme at the ANU Arts Centre, Canberra, from March 7th to 16th. **ILLUSIONS** by Don Asker and **CAGED WHISPERS** by Peter Sperlich are both dramatic works. **CAGED WHISPERS** looks at relationships through the eyes of a retarded person. The March season is the first of three planned for the Arts Centre during 1985. The company will also continue their Sunday studio performances at Gorman House throughout the year. The second of these takes place on March 31.

AETT discount all performances \$1.00  
See local press for booking information

# On Stage in New York...

by Irvin S. Bauer

**B**roadway has finally gotten underway for the 1984-85 season. **MA RAINEY'S BLACK BOTTOM** by August Wilson, directed by Lloyd Richards, offers some of the best acting in town. Charles S. Dutton, as the trumpet player with his own vision is spell binding and the ensemble playing of the entire cast is wonderful to watch. If Mr. Richards had paid as much attention to his plot line as he did to the character nuances perhaps the play might have been fully satisfying. No matter, it's a play well worth seeing.

**THE KING AND I**, Rogers and Hammerstein's classic, has returned to Broadway for Yul Brynner's "farewell" appearance. If one hasn't seen it, although this production is a bit tired, the songs are hummable, the story still holds up and of Yul is every inch the undisputed and forever King of Siam. It's fun.

Off-Broadway, **BURKIE**, a small play by

Bruce Graham, is distinguished by a bravura performance by always wonderful character actor Eddie Jones. Further Off-Broadway, in fact in New Haven, Connecticut, is **A LITTLE LIKE MAGIC** by The Famous People Players. It's an enchanting show. I guess it's a kind of revue specialising in "black light" techniques, where lifesized fluorescent puppets and props are manipulated under the illumination of ultra violet light with incredible results. The black-cloaked performers present their impressions of such varied subjects as Liberace, Superman, James Bond, Elvis and a most exciting version of Scherazade. The style, the imagination, the enormous theatricality of this group's work makes one laugh, cry and cheer their efforts. This is not a children's show. It crosses all boundaries. At the end when the unhooded young people, 14 in all out of Toronto, Canada, step forward to take their well-earned bows and one realises that most of the performers are mentally

retarded ... the enormity of their achievement is clear.

Off-Broadway, again, we have Lanford Wilson's **BALM IN GILEAD**, directed by new acting sensation John Malkovich. It is an atmosphere looking for a play. All of the technical sleight of hand, sound overlays, dazzling lighting effects, freeze frame and blackout techniques can't cover the fact that there is no play here. I still want something I can care about, feel for, be moved by, and this one only succeeded in moving me out of the theatre, which as a point of interest is Off Broadway's newest, **The Minetta Lane**, a real beauty.

Irvin S. Bauer is a Playwright-Producer based in New York where he heads **THE DEVELOPMENT STAGE**, a place where the Writer is encouraged to fulfil the potential of his work.



# Now Playing

## Sandinista!

The New Theatre's first production for 1985, **SANDINISTA!**, is about the way the revolution in Nicaragua happened and why. With the action concentrating on one Sandinista group, the play unravels the emotional and intellectual impulses that create a revolutionary and shows the strengths ordinary people are able to call up for a greater good. Its band of revolutionaries are a strong but humanly frail group of people whose lives, like those of their compatriots are coloured by poetry and song. **SANDINISTA!** also has a good deal to say about the nature of revolutions and about the United States' assumption of its right to act in the affairs of its small Central American neighbours. It is a passionate and compelling play that makes its points without shaking a fist.

The play was devised and workshopped by the Great Canadian Theatre Company based in Ottawa and the New Theatre's production is its Australian premiere. The New's sister company, Melbourne's New Theatre will produce **SANDINISTA!** later this year.

### BOOKING INFORMATION

Until March 3  
Fri and Sat at 8:15 p.m.  
Sun at 5:30 p.m.  
AETT discount \$1.00  
Bookings on 519 3403

## Pack Of Lies

Judi Farr and Ron Graham star in the British play **PACK OF LIES** by Hugh Whitmore which opened at Marian St. Theatre in mid-February. Based on the Gordon Lonsdale/Krogers spy scandal of 1960, **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 visitor has a devastating effect on the lives of the Jacksons and this is where the main interest of the play lies. Other cast members include Barry Creyton and Elaine Lee. The production is directed by John Krummel.

### BOOKING INFORMATION

Tue to Sat at 8:15 p.m.  
Sat and Sun at 5 p.m.  
Wed mat at 11 a.m.  
AETT discount \$1.00  
Bookings on 498 3166

## The Removalists

Phillip Street Theatre's first production for 1985, the David Williamson play **THE REMOVALISTS**, has just opened. Written in 1971 the play exposed for the first time on stage the bottled up aggression within Australian society and

was considered to be one of the best plays ever written. Phillips Street's revival will be directed by Peter Williams and will include actress sisters Carol and Rainee Skinner in the roles originally played by Carol Skinner and Jackie Weaver.

### BOOKING INFORMATION

Mon to Fri at 11 a.m.  
Wed, Fri and Sat at 8 p.m.  
AETT discount \$3.00  
Bookings on 232 8570

## Shorts Continues

The Sydney Theatre Company's inaugural season of **SHORTS** at its new Wharf Theatre continues into March and will include two new plays. **A JUBILEE** by Anton Chekhov was written at the beginning of his career as a writer in 1981 and is a one act farce adapted from his short story, "Defenceless Creature". **THE MARGARINE CONSPIRACY** by Lissa Benyon is a light-hearted look at the relationships between three people during one long, hot summer. Lissa Benyon was a founding member of Fools Gallery Theatre Company in Canberra and wrote **WOMEN OF MARCH FIRST** for Nimrod Downstairs.

### 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

# Member Activities

## WHARF THEATRE INSPECTION

Thur 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. The tour of inspection arranged by the Sydney Members Committee 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.

## GOULBURN AND BRAIDWOOD TOUR

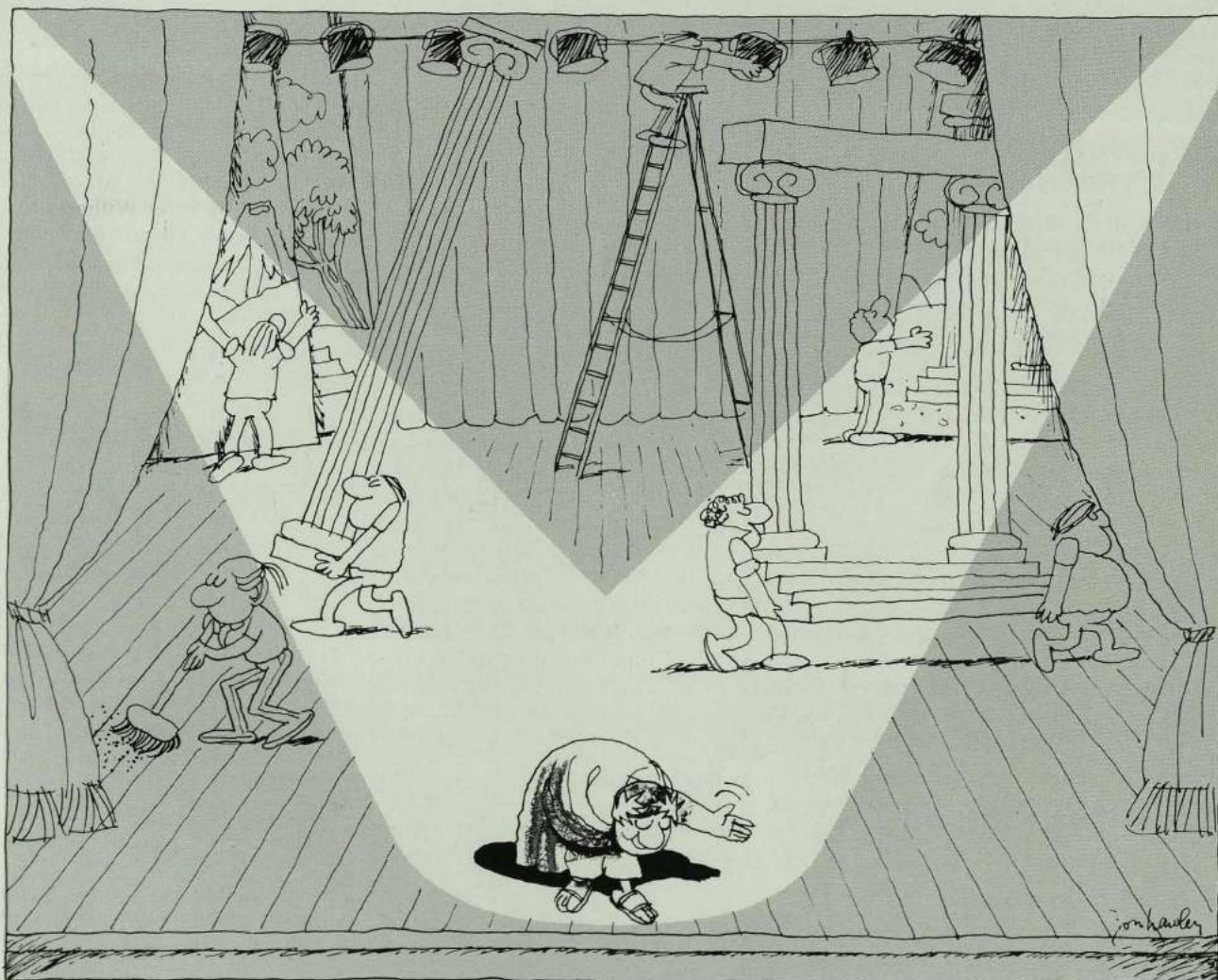
Sat Mar 16 and Sun Mar 17

Join Sydney Members Committee President Shirley Hay for a weekend in the country touring the Goulburn-Braidwood district. Saturday lunch will be a barbecue at Pelican Station where

there will be the opportunity to see different varieties of sheep and sheep dogs working. The afternoon will be spent visiting Riversdale, a National Trust house which is furnished in the early colonial style. Dinner will be at the Fireside Inn, Goulburn.

On Sunday the tour will explore the town of Braidwood and Bedervale Colonial Homestead designed by the well-known architect, John Verge. Bedervale, which is a working property, has remained in the same family for over 100 years. Cost for the tour is \$150 which includes bus transport, all meals, twin share accommodation (single supplement \$15) and all entries.





# Great Performances.

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(Incorporated in the A.C.T.)

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The Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust is a founder member of CAPPA.

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