

CROWN MATRIMONIAL — A Royal Drama



The original cast of CROWN MATRIMONIAL

Matthew O'Sullivan as the Duke of York, June Salter as Queen Mary and John Hamblin as Edward VIII (seated left to right)
Beris Marsh as the Duchess of York, Gai Smith as the Duchess of Gloucester, Brian Hinselwood as the Page, Faye Donaldson as Mabell, the Countess of Airlie,
Kay Eklund as The Hon. Margaret Wyndham and Fay Kelton as the Princess Royal (standing left to right)

CROWN MATRIMONIAL by

Royce Ryton

Directed by Peter Williams

Designed by Derrick Cox

Costume Design by Judith Dorsman

Cast: June Salter, John Hamblin, Faye Donaldson, Kay Eklund, Claire Crowther, Jane Seaborn, Antony Waddington, Virginia Rooksby
Playhouse, Sydney Opera House

Phillip Street Theatre director Peter Williams will remount CROWN MATRIMONIAL for a season at the Sydney Opera House in October. A director of wide-ranging talents in many facets of theatre, Peter Williams' productions of CROWN MATRIMONIAL have been one of his major successes and have toured nationally.

CROWN MATRIMONIAL is set in the grandeur and privacy of Queen Mary's London sitting room, Marlborough House, in 1936 and is a

penetrating study of the Royal Family during the love affair between HRH King Edward VIII and Mrs. Wallis Simpson.

There are no surprises in the plot. The story of the abdication of Edward VIII is part of history, but the play has attracted enormous attention since it was first staged for the Queen's Jubilee. Its fascination is in the treatment of the story by the playwright. He looks behind the headlines to show the private agony of the Royal Family. The follies of royalty are the follies of any family in a crisis the play argues. It is a touching expression of human passion and anger. "The love, the tenderness, the respect, the tension, the heartbreak, bring in turn gentle amusement or a catch in the throat," said Norman Kessell reviewing the 1978 production in the Sunday Telegraph.

The 1985 production will retain several cast members from the original production including June Salter and John Hamblin in the principal roles of

Queen Mary and Edward VIII. Frank Harris in the Daily Mirror described June Salter's earlier portrayal of Queen Mary as a "dignified and petrifying picture of a rigid tradition-bound head of a family".

Members are invited to see CROWN MATRIMONIAL at five special performances when a \$6.00 discount per ticket applies. You may purchase as many tickets as you wish at these special performances. See Member Activities page 9 for pre-theatre dinner on October 8.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Tue Oct 1 to Sat Oct 26

Tue to Sat at 8 p.m.

Wed and Thu at 11 a.m.

Sat at 2 p.m.

AETT \$19.90 Oct 8, 9, 10 (8 p.m.),

5 (2 p.m.) and 10 (11 a.m.)

\$24.90 (other performances)

G.P. \$25.90

Pens/Stud \$14.90

Two AETT tickets per member

(except Oct 5, 8, 9 and 10)



Robert Meldrum, David Jobling and Julie Forsyth in Anthill's *THE MISANTHROPE*
Photo by Jeff Bushby

Moliere's Misanthrope

THE MISANTHROPE by Moliere
Directed by Jean-Pierre Mignon for the Australian Nouveau Theatre
Designed by Wendy Black
Lighting design by Mark White
Cast: Robert Meldrum, Chris Ferguson, Bruce Keller, Julie Forsyth, Verity Higgins, Robert Lyon, Faruk Avdi, David Jobling, David Goldstraw and Gillian Seamer
Wharf Theatre

After 15 years of touring the French provinces as a comic actor running his own troupe, Moliere finally received the royal patronage of Louis XIV. A happy ending? Not quite. Moliere stirred up several hornets' nests in the court. Of the three plays he wrote and presented between 1664 and 1666, the first *TARTUFFE* was banned because it upset the clergy; the second *DON JUAN* was too close to home for some court members in its tale of an insatiable womaniser and was banned after fifteen performances. Only *THE MISANTHROPE* ran a full season.

To be presented by the Sydney Theatre Company, *THE MISANTHROPE* has been mounted by Jean-Pierre Mignon for Melbourne's Australian Nouveau Theatre (commonly known as Anthill). Anthill has frequently been acclaimed for its innovative and startling approach to the classics, including Moliere's *DON JUAN* for the 1984 Adelaide Festival. Reviewing the original Melbourne pro-

duction in *The Australian*, Helen Thomson said, "This is a fine production, intriguing, visually fascinating, making a classic play accessible and enjoyable."

THE MISANTHROPE's themes of pretentiousness, corruption and self-interest may be set in the 17th century but are still relevant today.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Wed Aug 28 to Sat Oct 12
Mon to Sat at 8 p.m., Wed at 1 p.m.,
Sat at 2 p.m.
AETT \$13.50 (Aug 23 and Aug 27)
\$17.00
G.P. \$19.00
Pens/Stud \$13.00
Two AETT tickets per member

Alvin Ailey Tour

Although preferential bookings have now closed for the Sydney season of this remarkable American dance company, members can still order tickets. They will be given the best available seats at the time of booking. If no A Reserve seats remain then you will be contacted. Enclosed with this edition of Trust News is a brochure on the company. Please disregard booking instructions. Members should order their tickets in the usual way on the enclosed grey form.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Performances: Evenings at 7.30 p.m.
Matinees at 2 p.m.
Programme A: Aug 20, 29, 31
Programme C: Aug 21, 24, 30, 31 (mat)
Programme B: Aug 22, 23 and 27
Programme M: Aug 24 (mat), 28
Special Youth (under 26) performance of Programme M: Mon Aug 26 at 6.30 p.m.
AETT \$32.00
G.P. \$38.00
Pens/Stud \$27.00
Youth (Aug 26) \$20.00
Two AETT tickets per member

Barry Humphries Show

Barry Humphries returns to Sydney in September to present a new show, *TEARS BEFORE BEDTIME*, at Her Majesty's Theatre. At the time of going to press we had no further information. Members wishing to book should therefore contact the Membership office on 357 1200 for details.

Lamond and Sheldon together on stage

MADONNA AND CHILD, written and directed by Tony Sheldon
Musical director: Ron Creager
Cast: Toni Lamond, Tony Sheldon, Ron Creager
Off Broadway Theatre

After 10 years living and working in Los Angeles, Toni Lamond has returned to the Australian stage to play herself in the Off Broadway Theatre production, *MADONNA AND CHILD*, opening on July 19.

It's very much a family affair. The play with music was written by and co-stars her son, Tony Sheldon, and is the true story of their real-life relationship.

They last appeared on stage together in 1966 in *OLIVER* — with Tony aged 9 joining the chorus during school holidays.

The show includes monologues, soliloquies and songs. "They (the audience) think they're coming to see a cabaret," says Tony. "In reality we pull the rug out from under them and give them what they don't expect . . ."

BOOKING INFORMATION

Friday July 19 to Sat Aug 10
Tue to Sat at 8:30 p.m. Sat mat at 4 p.m.
AETT discount \$1.00
Bookings on 692 0964

New Actress joins the Theatre of Deaf

Carole Noonan has joined the Theatre of the Deaf to perform in *ODD BODS*, a new play for infant schoolchildren written by Richard Tulloch. Carole takes the place of Colin Allen who has left Australia to attend the National Theatre of the Deaf's Summer School in Connecticut, USA. Colin also hopes to work with deaf theatre companies in the USA.

For information on and bookings for the Theatre of the Deaf's schools' programmes, contact Richard Payten on 357 1200.

TRUST MEMBER BOOKING COUPON

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or charge my ☐ Bankcard ☐ Mastercard ☐ Visa

Expiry date

Name _____ Signature _____

I enclose a stamped addressed envelope for return of tickets



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|-----------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|------|---------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------|------------------------|
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BOOKING INSTRUCTIONS: Please add handling fee of 60c per ticket purchased to total ticket price. Performance and price information is given at the foot of each article in *Trust News*.

If you wish to book tickets for another Trust Member please quote their membership number alongside yours so that you can obtain the extra tickets at the Trust Member price. Although you are normally restricted to two tickets at T.M. price there is no restriction on the number of tickets you may purchase at the general public or pensioner/student price.

SPECIAL SEATING REQUIREMENTS: If through disability you have any special seating requirements, please contact your local membership office for inclusion in our disability register.

SEND COUPON TO:

AETT Membership Office in your capital city

PO Box 137, Kings Cross, Sydney 2011 357 1200
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Nuclear Comedy

WHEN THE WIND BLOWS
by Raymond Briggs
Directed by Richard Cottrell
Designed by Richard Roberts
Belvoir St. Theatre

Opening on July 18 is the award-winning black comedy by British cartoonist and writer Raymond Briggs. **WHEN THE WIND BLOWS**, which is adapted from the cartoon book, is about Jim and Hilda Bloggs, retired and living in London, who size-up the international situation and decide to build a nuclear shelter. Using the local council pamphlet "A Householders Guide to Survival", Jim sets to work when the bomb drops.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Thu Jul 18 to Sun Aug 25
Tue to Sat at 8 p.m.
Wed, Sat and Sun at 5 p.m.
AETT discount \$1.00
Bookings on 699 3273

New Play at Bondi

FRAMEWORK by Sandra Shotlander
Produced and directed by Glenda Milne
Cast: Sandi Garrett, Caroline Lewis
Bondi Pavilion Theatre

This is the first professional production by Sydney Acting School graduate Glenda Milne, and the first play by Sandra Shotlander. The play investigates the relationship between two lesbian women and attempts to show the thoughtful and sometimes funny course of their intimacy without being either clinical or polemic. **FRAMEWORK** has had a successful season at the Universal Theatre in Melbourne and been presented at the Meridian Gay Theatre in New York and the Adelaide Fringe Festival.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Wed Jul 3 to Sat Jul 27
Wed to Sat at 8 p.m.
AETT discount \$2.00
Bookings on 30 7211

The Lower Depths

THE LOWER DEPTHS by Maxim Gorky
Directed and designed by Derek Glenn
Rocks Players Theatre

THE LOWER DEPTHS is the best-known play by Maxim Gorky who was principally a short-story writer. Gorky was encouraged to write it by Chekhov and in 1902 it was premiered at the Moscow Arts Theatre starring Stanislavski and Chekhov's wife, Olga Knipper. The play observes the dwellers in a Moscow doss house over a short period of time.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Fri Jul 12 to Sun Aug 11
Thu, Fri, Sat at 8 p.m.
Sun at 5.30 p.m.
AETT discount \$1.00
Bookings on 569 0223

New Directions

Epic trilogy concludes

ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL, by All Out Ensemble
Directed and designed by Nicholas Tsoutas
The Performance Space

One of Sydney's most innovative theatre companies is in rehearsal for the final part of a trilogy which has already attracted great interest from enthusiasts of new theatrical form. The All Out Ensemble, directed by Nicholas Tsoutas, will present **ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL** at the Performance Space from July 17 to August 4.

Tsoutas, who is also Artistic Director of the Performance Space, is regarded as one of the country's most promising directors. **ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL** is the third play in a trilogy which included the acclaimed works, **AGE OF THE INNOCENTS** (April 85) and **PERMUTATIONS INTO DARKNESS** (October 83).

No other director in recent times has attempted to successfully portray the inner confusion of the human psyche.

In **ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL** Tsoutas uses powerful images, media and



The All Out Ensemble's production of THE AGE OF THE INNOCENTS presented at the Performance Space in April 1985

devices such as sculpture, poetry and music to take his audience on a never-to-be-forgotten trip which exposes the suburban banality which surrounds them. "**ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL** seeks to intensify our experiences. We are not living in tender times and it is very difficult to make anything happy convincing. But I want to show that human beings, the essence of reason, are really OK," says Tsoutas.

The Australian Content Department of the Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust, which encourages new forms of theatre throughout the country, is lending its support to Tsoutas' unique concepts and will be presenting the Sydney season.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Wed Jul 17 to Sun Aug 4
Wed to Sun at 8:30 p.m.
AETT concession \$1.00
Bookings on 698 7235

Opening Soon

Women Behind Bars

WOMEN BEHIND BARS, which was developed by playwright Tom Eyen in collaboration with director Ron Link in 1974, is both a spoof of the 'fifties women's prison pictures and a sad comment on the failure of the prison system.

The action takes place in The Women's House of Detention in New York where we see the female inmates during a series of New Year's Eve confrontations from 1952 to 1959.

WOMEN BEHIND *"is not for impressionable children or ultra-sensitive adults who cannot leave their social consciences at the front door"*, said Los Angeles Daily News theatre critic Rick Talcove. What it *"ultimately represents is a rare treat to laugh both with and apart from ourselves and our sensibilities"*.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Fri Jul 12 to Sat Aug 3
Mon to Thu at 8.30 p.m.
Fri at 7 and 11 p.m.
AETT discount \$1.00 (Mon to Thu),
\$3.00 (Jul 12, 13, 15, 16, 17 and 18 only)
Bookings on 692-9955
Footbridge Theatre

Cats

The long-awaited Australian premiere of the musical CATS takes place in Sydney on July 27. It follows one of the most innovative and successful advertising campaigns yet seen in Sydney. The first four months of the season are virtually sold out to the general public, although the Trust is still holding prime seats for Trust Members (see below). It is a remarkable achievement for London producer Cameron Mackintosh, but then the costs of putting on the show — over \$3 million — are equally remarkable.

CATS is based on T. S. Eliot's "Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats" which was published in 1939 — a collection of poems about his favourite cats from Grizabella, the Glamour Cat, Griddlebone, Mr. Mistoffolees, and Old Deuteronomy to Tum Tum Tugger. CATS has been mounted in Australia by the same creative team which first produced CATS in London, including international director Trevor Nunn.

The Trust has seats set aside for members in Stalls — Rows L, M, N and O — for specific performances.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Thu Nov 7, Tue Nov 12, Wed Nov 20,
Mon Nov 25 and Sat Mat Dec 14
AETT \$33.50 G.P. \$35.00
No Pens/Stud discount
Two AETT tickets per member
AETT discount unavailable at Theatre Royal

Arturo Ui

John Bell received considerable acclaim for his performance in the first Sydney production of Brecht's ARTURO UI in Sydney in 1971 and also in China where he presented excerpts. Those who missed it the first time will now have the chance to see it when it reopens at Nimrod on July 31, once again directed by Richard Wherrett.

Brecht's aim in writing ARTURO UI was to destroy the image of murderers, crooks and dictators as national heroes. His Hitler in the play is a Brooklyn crook running a protection racket; and his off-siders follow closely the characters of Hitler's cohorts, Goebbels, Goering and Roehm.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Wed Jul 31 to Sat Aug 17
Mon to Sat at 8 p.m.
Sat at 2 p.m.
AETT \$15.90 (Mon-Thu and Sat mat)
G.P. \$17.90
Pens/Stud \$12.00 (Mon-Thur and Sat mat)
Two AETT tickets per member
York Theatre, Seymour Centre



John Bell as Arturo Ui and Reg Gillam as Clarke in the ABC TV version of the Old Tote production of ARTURO UI

SDC Season

The Sydney Dance Company will commence a season in the Drama Theatre, Sydney Opera House this month following highly successful seasons in New York and in the Peoples Republic of China.

SOME ROOMS is the company's most successful work to date. Premiered in November 1983 it traces the voyage of a young man, in symbolic terms, from innocence to awakening. Clive Barnes, reviewing the work in the New York Post said *"... this Dantesque dreamworld, with its mists and visions is fascinating to watch."*

AFTER VENICE is the fifth full-length work choreographed and produced by Graeme Murphy. Inspired by Murphy's fascination with characters from Benjamin Britten's opera DEATH IN VENICE, the work starts where the opera finishes with the death of Aschenbach on the beach at Lido.

BOOKING INFORMATION

SOME ROOMS Wed Jul 24 to Sat Aug 3
AFTER VENICE Wed Aug 7 to Sat Aug 31
AETT discount \$3.00
Bookings on 20588
Drama Theatre, S.O.H.

The Shifting Heart

Opening on July 10 is Richard Beynon's classic Australian play THE SHIFTING HEART. Winner of the playwrighting competition run by The Journalists Club of Sydney, the play was first presented at the Elizabethan Theatre, Newtown, in 1957 by the Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust.

THE SHIFTING HEART is set in the Redfern backyard of an Italian family who have recently settled in Australia and portrays the culture shock they experience as well as the antagonism of many Australians. It is a warm, funny, and intensely moving play which, sadly, is as relevant today as it was in 1957.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Wed Jul 10 to Sat Jul 27
Mon to Fri at 11 a.m.
Wed Fri and Sat at 8 p.m.
AETT discount \$3.00 (Jul 10, 12, 13)
\$1.00 (other performances)
Bookings on 232 8570
Phillip St. Theatre

On Stage in London...

by Margaret Leask

There is never enough space in a column this size to give more than an idea of the many productions available to London audiences at any one time. Happily some events stand out for comment — such as the new play by Howard Brenton and David Hare which opened in May at the National Theatre with Anthony Hopkins in the leading role. The play is a large-scale “comedy about the newspaper world” called *PRAVDA* — a title which for many people conjures up the theme of distorted or manipulated truth through which Brenton and Hare, at times scathingly and with great wit, “expose” the pursuit of power that lies behind the apparently free press of Fleet Street. While I am sure it could be “adapted” to the Australian situation, it is a very topical, British play with Anthony Hopkins giving a superb performance (to many the best of his career) as Lambert le Roux, the South African who ruthlessly acquires and increasingly dominates (with manic determination) the staff, style and attitudes of a number of newspapers. Directed by David Hare, *PRAVDA* is in the National’s repertoire throughout the summer months — with loud indications from the company that this will be the last large-scale, large-cast production they will be able to afford in the foreseeable future.

As part of a perceptible trend, the Royal Shakespeare Company has recently transferred two of its productions from the small Barbican Pit Theatre into larger theatres — a revival of Harley Granville Barker’s drama of political sexual scandal, *WASTE*, directed by John Barton with Judi Dench and Daniel Massey superb in their roles of “fallen women” and politician, has transferred to the Lyric Theatre and plays to the end of July. Stephen Poliakoff’s new play, *BREAKING THE SILENCE* has opened at the Mermaid Theatre with Alan Howard, Gemma Jones and Jenny Agutter leading a vivid and exciting portrayal of a Russian family after the revolution. It is set in an imperial railway carriage — the mobile home of a Russian aristocrat whose job as telephone surveyor for the Northern Railway is merely a front for his life’s work... the invention of the talkies!

Harold Pinter currently has two revivals of his plays, with starry casts, running in the West End — *OTHER PLACES* (a trilogy of one act plays) with Dorothy Tutin and Colin Blakely, directed by Kenneth Ives at the Duchess



Judi Dench who appeared with Michael Williams in the ABC TV Series *A FINE ROMANCE*

Theatre (with Tutin’s rivetting portrayal of a woman waking as from sleeping sickness drawing high praise); and *OLD TIMES*, with Liv Ullmann, Michael Gambon and Nicola Pagett in David Jones’ production at the Haymarket Theatre Royal. Meanwhile, Tom Stoppard’s entertaining *JUMPERS* is enjoying a successful revival at the Aldwych Theatre with Paul Eddington, Felicity Kendal (in the original Diana Rigg role) and Simon Cadell, directed by Peter Wood. The Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith, after a recent season of Ibsen’s *LITTLE EYOLF* with Diana Rigg in a moving and perceptive production, is also providing the opportunity for audiences to see stars at work. This time they are from the film world — John Hurt (1984 etc.), Samantha Eggar and Natasha Richardson are in the cast of Chekhov’s *THE SEAGULL*, a production which originated at the Oxford Playhouse.

On the musical side: *GUYS & DOLLS*, the National Theatre’s awardwinning musical, returns to London on June 19 (after touring to the larger regional theatres) and is booking through to January 1986! *BARNUM*, with the ever-popular Michael Crawford, has also been revived for the summer season at the Victoria Palace. On the opera scene, Australian soprano Marilyn Richardson made her British debut in the title role of *AIDA* for the English National Opera at the Coliseum in May in John Copley’s production which continues throughout June. Another name, familiar to Australian music lovers is that of Edward Downes (formerly conductor for the Trust Orchestra) currently popular chief conductor of the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, who recently gave the world premiere of Peter Maxwell Davies’ Third

Symphony in an enthusiastically received concert at Manchester’s Free Trade Hall.

Despite the lack of spring, the summer festival season is practically upon us and many festival brochures throughout the country offer an exciting range of events and personalities. Glyndeborune Opera’s season between May and July (always sold out months ahead) this year includes Peter Hall’s production of *CARMEN*, with his wife Maria Ewing in the title role and Warren Elsworth and Marie McLaughlin also in the cast. Rossini’s *LA CENERENTOLA* will share the limelight, conducted by James Judd. Chichester Festival Theatre recently announced its season with a company of artists, many of whom will be known to Australian theatregoers — Lewis Fiander, Joanna McCallum, Denis Quilley, Diana Rigg, Donald Sinden, Edward Fox and many others. Between May 15 and September 28 the company will present Coward’s *CAVALCADE*, Shakespeare’s *ANTONY & CLEOPATRA*, *THE PHILANTHROPIST* by Christopher Hampton and *THE SCARLET PIMPERNEL* by Baroness Orczy.

As usual, there’s still more to talk about — such as the current RSC revival of Trevor Griffiths’ *THE PARTY*; a gripping new play about athletes, *GOLDEN GIRLS* at the Barbican Pit; a new musical called *MUTINY* starring Frank Finlay and David Essex which opens in July... maybe next time...!



Marilyn Richardson made her British debut as *Aida* for the English National Opera

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

Some impressions of Chinese Theatre today

By Glenda Linscott

In March 1983 the Australian Centre for the International Theatre Institute in Sydney conducted a very successful conference entitled "Chinese Theatre in the Twentieth Century". As a result three Australian representatives of the ITI were invited to visit China this year in return for hosting three Chinese scholars. Marlis Thiersch, Director of the Australian Centre, Glenda Linscott, ITI Secretary and actress, and John Gaden, Chairman of the Board and well-known Sydney actor, spent four weeks as guests of the Chinese ITI Centre in Beijing visiting theatres and drama academies, meeting theatre personalities, enjoying the hospitality of the Chinese people and presenting some short excerpts of Australian drama.

We came away from a fairly intense month with more unanswered questions than answered. We felt that we were seeing China at a very interesting time when all things were changing. We saw not only the society opening up to the West but also the Government relaxing on issues of incentives and rewards, and also attempts to give wider freedom. We saw China experimenting with solutions, but as the Chinese are so intensely pragmatic, unsuccessful "solutions" can be discarded overnight.

Most of the theatre we saw was traditional Beijing (formerly Peking) Opera or provincial versions of it. At first it was



Director of Gui Ju traditional opera company in Guilin farewell's John Gaden after an afternoon's performance specially provided for us

very difficult to follow but having had four weeks watching different performances with the benefit of an interpreter giving us blow by blow descriptions, we experienced, with dawning insight, one of the oldest living art forms in the world. It is enormously demanding on the audience in that it requires a comprehensive knowledge of the symbols and images, stories and stylised representations of movements, costumes, colours, props and make-up masks.

The more we saw of Beijing Opera the more we thought how extraordinary it was that such a heightened, technically accomplished physical and external discipline could produce such a dramatic and emotional effect. Time and time again we were moved and startled by the internal intensity achieved by the actors using external techniques. We were aware more than ever how little we as naturalistic actors use our bodies to express ourselves.

In the same way as the tradition of presenting Beijing Opera is passed down from generation to generation, so too is the audience appreciation. During the Cultural Revolution, however, it was forbidden to perform Beijing Opera (except the eight revolutionary operas), so there is now an entire generation of theatre-goers who do not understand traditional

opera, and find it unappealing. This is just one of the disturbing problems facing Beijing Opera today.

Primarily we were an official delegation from the ITI executing a diplomatic "cultural exchange". But as well as just talking, since both John Gaden and I were actors, we thought we would try to give a potted showcase of Australian drama, aware that we would have an audience of non-English speakers and that the visual component would be almost non-existent.

With this in mind we selected scenes and songs from six Australian plays which we performed in the training Academies and at the Forums organised for us by our various hosts to meet local theatre directors, actors and playwrights. And it is through these forums that we gradually began to find out about Chinese theatre and made contact with people working outside of Beijing Opera — in Spoken Drama.

There are a couple of basic things to understand. For example, all theatre workers, actors, directors, playwrights are guaranteed work for their whole career. When they leave their training academy they get "distributed" to a theatre company where they stay for life. (There are only two training academies for Spoken Drama in the whole of the country — a startling statistic when you



Sun Yujiao in THE JADE BRACELET presented by the Jiangsu Peking Opera Theatre in Australia in 1983

realise that Australia has the same number, plus all the universities and colleges, to cater for a population of 15 million, while China's population is one-fifth of the world.)

Leaving the obvious inherent problems aside, can you imagine our groans of envy when we contemplated the prospect of consistent work? However, to our astonishment, when we told the Chinese of our freelance, open-market theatre industry, it was met with similar exclamations. "If only we had that," they said, "it would lead to actors working hard for a contract of work. Harder work would lead to better acting!"

We got the impression that there were theatre companies working in every province — certainly in those that we visited. And they were very big. Some companies had up to 370 actors! This is the first big problem. If every actor is guaranteed a position with a theatre the companies will eventually become enormous. So what do they do? Well most companies were subdivided. Company B would understudy Company A. Company C would work in the community giving classes to amateurs, and Company A would be on tour. But there is still a large amount of dead wood. As you would expect the most talented actors are the ones used and reading between the lines there must be fierce competition within the company for the roles going.

Quite apart from that, the Big Pot Policy introduced after Liberation means that everyone's entitled to a basic wage. Anything that the company makes over and above this basic income is a bonus which is shared equally among all the company. This of course is very frustrating for the talented actors who are working very hard, and if the show is a success, provide the bonus which is everyone's.

Also there is the problem of censorship. This of course was never discussed as a "problem". But clearly all the Spoken Drama must conform to Party policy. There is no freedom of choice, or if there is it is strictly limited to what is suitable. Western drama is hardly, if ever, performed. There is a predominance of drama written in the thirties — it is fervent, nationalistic, and melodramatic. For those writers working today there is strong internal censorship. They are nudged in the right directions by their overseers, cadres, theatre researchers and critics. It is very hard for the ambitious and full, although when I

was talking this problem over a friend said that much was being done to allay the writers' fear of retribution.

We only saw three Spoken Dramas. A fair indication that the theatre as we know it is fairly elusive. The first was *LANE XIAO JING* by Li Long Yun. It was quite a strong piece marking the lives of the families living in this particular lane before, during and after the Cultural Revolution. The second we saw was a run of Acts 1 and 2 of *DESTINY*, provided for us after repeated asking after Spoken Drama, and a few days later we were taken to see a dreadful didactic piece of theatre which was pure party propaganda and excruciatingly boring.

On the whole the acting was sincere and heartfelt, but there was nothing really exceptional or outstanding. Perhaps I needed to know the language. But the acting was so sentimental and, particularly from the young actors, melodramatic, overacted and pushed.

The basic difference between their theatre and ours is that theirs is political and issues drama, and our drama is, for its thousand year tradition from the Greeks, based on the individual personal dilemma. So no wonder there is a gap. Their Spoken Drama is barely eighty years old and has been adapted for

political propaganda. In the thirties when playwrights attempted to write an individual story it was subjugated for political usage.

We take for granted the personal freedom to explore the subjects we like to argue about — questions of choice, conscience, individual freedom, private angst — but these are issues the Chinese cannot argue about and have no time to comprehend. Within a week of being in China we realised that priorities must be reorganised in the face of a Third World Country — in the face of overpopulation, poverty, food production and a one-party government.

But we met fabulously interesting people who are desperate for knowledge and change and are hungry for new ideas and concerned with their problems. They gobbled up the scripts we offered them, and stood back amazed and confronted at the concept of choice. They envied our system feeling that to fight for a contract of work would make the actors work harder and consequently better. Ironical, isn't it? They were very interested to see our work. Amazed at its "naturalness, relaxation and truth". All the Stanislavski things which at the moment sit very bulkily on their shoulders make their acting generally stiff, indicative, signpost; all those dreadful things that we fight against as actors in the West.

However, these are all criticisms that would apply to actors who are not very at home with themselves. And I think we are getting to the nub of the problem, that actors cannot afford to discover themselves too much or they might be having dangerous independent thoughts — the same problem facing the writers.

And never before has it come home to me that the kind of theatre we have very much reflects the kind of government we have — a pragmatic, capitalistic, democratic society. It is the same for China. And after the initial shock we realise it is no wonder the state of Spoken Drama is as it is. One gets the feeling, however, that there are the beginnings of experimental drama, finding expression in chamber performances before select theatre cliques.

They want us to return with an Australian company so they can experience a full production, and so that greater and more extensive exchanges can take place. We can certainly benefit from their vast wealth of traditional theatre, and they can be let in on the virtues of private angst!



Final (4th Year) student production of Ibsen's *THE SEAGULL* at the Shanghai Drama Academy. More Western drama is performed in the two drama academies in China than you would normally find in the theatre. They are used, of course, as in-training experience

Focus on Films

Malcolm McDowell



GULAG directed by Roger Young
 Screenplay by Dan Gordon from a story by Dan Gordon, Raphael Shauli and Yehousha Ben-Porat
 Produced by James Retter and Dan Gordon
 Starring David Keith, Malcolm McDowell, Warren Clarke, David Suchet, John McEnery and Nancy Paul
 Opening July 11 at Hoyts Entertainment Centre

Don't be misled by the title of this film. It is not from Solzhenitsyn's master novel, "The Gulag Archipelago", but the setting is the same.

It's the story of an ex-U.S. Olympic gold medallist turned sports commentator who, while covering the Spartaka Games in Moscow, is set up and imprisoned by the KGB in the dreaded Gulag. He is the prototype American with a background of success, a happy marriage, and the bravado and idealism of another John Wayne. His never-say-die attitude contrasts throughout the film with the fatalistic acceptance of his fellow prisoners and he finally succeeds in organising a daring break-out from the desolate camp.

Malcolm McDowell (A Clockwork Orange, O Lucky Man) co-stars with David Keith as a cynical English spy, a canny arch-survivalist, who tutors the American in the realities of staying alive.

FULL MOON IN PARIS directed and written by Eric Rohmer
 Produced by Margaret Memegoz
 Starring Pascale Ogier, Fabrice Luchini, Tcheky Karyo, Christian Vadim, Virginia Thevenet, Anne-Severine Liotard
 Opening mid-July Dendy Cinema

An old Champagne proverb reads "A man with two women loses his soul, a man with two homes loses his mind".

Switch this to "A woman with two men . . ." and you have the theme of **FULL MOON IN PARIS**. Louise, played by Pascale Ogier, juggles two men and two homes until a third man, played by Christian Vadim, son of Roger Vadim and Catherine Deneuve, upsets the delicate balance.

The behind-the-scenes story about this film is a mixture of talent and tragedy. Pascale Ogier also designed the sets and the pied-a-terre which Louise, an interior decorator, refurnishes in the film were the work of the star herself.

In September 1984, Pascale won the Best Actress award at the Venice Film Festival; in November 1984 she died of heart failure at the age of 24.

HEIMAT (HOMELAND) written and directed by Edgar Reitz (Sub-titles)
 Starring Marita Breuer, Gebriele Blum, Gudrun Landgrebe
 Sat Jul 27 to Sun Aug 4 at Academy Twin Cinema, Paddington

For a few days in late July/early August you may wonder why some of your friends don't answer the phone. They will be at the marathon viewing of the longest film ever made, **HEIMAT**, which has a running time of 15½ hours and spans 60 years of life in a German village (from 1919 to 1982). It is in four parts and the whole film can be seen on Saturday and Sunday afternoon and evening on two weekends, or in four evening sessions from Monday to Thursday, with a 25 per cent discount if you book for all four parts.

Enormous in both scope and cost, it won the International Critics' Prize at the 1984 Venice Film Festival. The London Times called it "History in the palm of your hand". The London Observer said it was "An event that will be talked about for years to come", and The London Standard commented that "All human life seems to be inside it . . . don't miss it".

THE SHOOTING PARTY directed by Alan Bridges

Screenplay by Julian Bond from the novel by Isabel Colegate

Produced by Geoffrey Reeve

Starring James Mason, Dorothy Tutin, Edward Fox, Cheryl Campbell, Rupert Fraser, Judi Bowker, Robert Hardy, John Gielgud and Gordon Jackson

Opening July 5, Academy Twin Cinema, Paddington

In the lush and nostalgic setting of a grand English country house in Edwardian times, **THE SHOOTING PARTY** is an elegy for a way of life soon to dissolve in the trenches of France.

A group of assured, elegant and rich men and women gather for a weekend shooting party. They dine, gossip, and flirt according to the etiquette of those times when anything was allowable as long as it was discreet.

But all is not as predictable as it seems. Someone is accidentally shot and the shoot ends in tragedy. The members of the shooting party are shocked out of their complacency. Is it a premonition that their way of life is doomed; that the values which have ordered their glittering world will no longer have any meaning in the new age about to dawn?



Sir Randolph Nettleby (James Mason) and his clapper in **THE SHOOTING PARTY**

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

LITTLE KILLINGS WITH A PRIVATE VIEW is the latest season of **Canberra Dance Ensemble** to be presented at the Canberra Playhouse from July 3 to 6. The season features new choreography from international Australian choreographer Graeme Watson and from Stephanie Burrige, the Artistic Director of Canberra Dance Ensemble. Also included in the programme is a revival of Andris Toppe's hilarious dinner party spoof, "DINNER AT 8½".

Human Veins Dance Theatre will present their second 1985 season at the Arts Centre, ANU, from July 11 to 20. Included in the programme is the world premiere of **TRUE BLUE AND THE**

DREAMERS by Graeme Watson and a revision of **STROLLERS** by Don Asker. **STROLLERS** "reflects on some of the dreams and realities of youth today. I hope," says Don Asker, "that the dance will also appeal to the older generation, as it's often they who create an environment and conditions in which youth must participate."

Following its Sydney season, Jack Hibberd's **STRETCH OF THE IMAGINATION** will play at the Canberra Playhouse from July 10 to 20. First presented at Melbourne's Pram Factory in 1972 it has become a classic of Australian theatre. Bruce Spence plays the role of Monk O'Neill in this one-man retrospective of life.

One of Noel Coward's most popular plays, **PRIVATE LIVES**, will be presented by the **Hunter Valley Theatre Company** at the Playhouse from July 23 to 27. The play centres around Amanda and Elyot, who are divorced and re-married to different partners. Though they are loath to admit it, they are still very much in love and the sparks are rekindled when they meet while honeymooning in adjoining suites in a hotel in France. The production will be directed by Brent McGregor.

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

Member Activities

SCONE DISTRICT WEEKEND August 24/25

Members Committee President Shirley Hay will be taking Members and friends for one of her famous weekends to the Scone district. The visit will give you the opportunity to visit some of the splendid grazing properties in the area which are not available to the general public — properties such as Glenalvon, Murrurundi, Turanville, Middlebrook Park Farm, Elmswood and, of course, the famous Belltrees Station. Since our last visit to Belltrees Judy White has been made a Governor of the Trust so she will be particularly looking forward to our visit. The cost for the weekend, which includes bus transport, all meals, share motel accommodation and all entries, is \$150. As space is strictly limited please book early (enclosing a \$30 deposit per person).

NOTRE DAME INSPECTION Sunday July 14 at 11 a.m.

The Sydney Committee has arranged a day at Notre Dame, the magnificent home of Emmanuel and Cecile Margolin at Mulgoa (near Penrith). This remarkable home is not open to the general public, so our private visit has special significance. Notre Dame is

situated in 100 acres which include a tennis court and pavilion, three-storey sports complex, a zoo, rainforest and Shinto Temple. Adjoining the house is an equestrian complex where we will be entertained by Andalusian horses. The main entertaining and living areas of the house are liberally furnished with priceless antiques and treasures. Lunch will be provided in the Cabana adjoining the Rainforest and is included in the cost of the visit. Our coach departs Kings Cross at 9 a.m. following North Shore pick-ups and will then pick up on the route out west. Tickets are \$25 each or \$20 if you use your own transport. Friends are very welcome but sorry no children under 12. Please ring Wendy Tapper on 289 9293 or Beverley Guest on 482 334 to make your bookings.

DINNER AND OPERA Thursday September 19

We have had a number of requests from Members to arrange another evening at the Opera. We have chosen the delightful comic opera **DON PASQUALE** by Donizetti with the ever-popular Ronald Maconaghie in the title role. The price for two-course dinner with wine in The Bennelong Restaurant plus A Reserve opera tickets is \$48.00 per person.

BOLSHOI BALLET DINNER Saturday August 10 at 6 p.m.

Sadly there are no A reserve seats left for the Bolshoi Ballet. But those holding theatre tickets for August 10 are warmly invited to complete what will undoubtedly be a very special night by joining us for dinner in the Cosmopolitan Restaurant at the Entertainment Centre. Tickets which include two courses and wine are \$16 each.

CROWN MATRIMONIAL DINNER Tuesday October 8 at 6 p.m.

If you're planning to see **CROWN MATRIMONIAL**, why not choose October 8 so you can join us for dinner beforehand in the Banks Restaurant at the Wentworth Hotel. We'll arrange transport down to the Opera House afterwards for those who want it. Dinner tickets are \$17 for a two-course meal with wine. Theatre tickets should be ordered separately.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Unless otherwise stated bookings for Member Activities should be sent in on the same grey booking coupon as your theatre bookings. The handling fee does not apply to Member Activities.

Now Playing

RENTS, at the Wharf Studio until July 13, is by British writer Michael Wilcox and is directed by Egil Kipste. Set in Edinburgh in the mid-seventies, **RENTS** focuses on the antics of drama student Phil and jeans salesman Robert who are also "rent boys" or male prostitutes. The play provides an intriguing and often comic insight into the lifestyles of the rent boys. The London Sunday Telegraph called it "*Brilliantly funny and desolatingly sad*" and commented that it had "*a lot to say not merely about homosexuality but about humanity in general*".

AETT discount \$1.00

Bookings on 250 1777

David Williamson's play **WHAT IF YOU DIED TOMORROW?** has just opened at the **Marian-Street Theatre** and continues until end August. It stars Steven Tandy in the central role of a young writer coping with parents, publishers and domestic strain. One of David Williamson's earlier plays, it's a semi-autobiographical comedy about the conflicts and confusions of the middle classes in the permissive society.

AETT discount \$1.00 (except Fri and Sat)
Bookings on 498 3166

What would happen if "Morena" (Zulu for Jesus) came to South Africa today? This is the question which **WOZA ALBERT!** addresses in its current season at the Everest Theatre, Seymour Centre. It also describes the black experience in South Africa in a series of sad, funny and satirical vignettes. Nimrod Theatre will present **WOZA ALBERT!** until July 13 with the original black South African cast who have received acclaim in the UK, USA and Europe.

AETT discount \$2.00

Bookings on 692 0555

ON A CLEAR DAY YOU CAN SEE JANE CLIFTON continues at **Kinselas** until July 15. It's a one woman show by Jane Clifton, which combines her many and varied talents into an absorbing evening's entertainment. Jane Clifton starred in the highly successful Robyn Archer show, **PACK OF WOMEN**, and is well known to TV viewers as Margo in "Prisoner".

AETT discount \$2.00

Bookings on 331 6700



Lisa Peers and Lawrence Woodward in rehearsal for **FOOL FOR LOVE** at the **Sailors Home Theatre**

Sam Shepherd, who is considered to be one of America's leading current playwrights, had his first play, **COWBOYS**, produced in New York when he was 19. Since then he has won a Pulitzer Prize and 10 OBIES in the course of writing 40 plays. Currently playing at the **Sailors' Home Theatre** is **FOOL FOR LOVE**, which continues until July 28. Set in a sparsely furnished motel room at the edge of the Mojave Desert, **FOOL FOR LOVE** has been described by the New York Times as a "*western for our time*". The play is a verbal "High Noon", a gunfight of words between four characters who have lost their identities and their roots. It is directed by Terry O'Connell and stars Lisa Peers, Lawrence Woodward, Robert Noble and Sean Scully.

AETT Discount \$1.00

Bookings on 273 274

Described as a "working class comic opera", **YOBBO NOWT** by John McGrath is set in the only-too-well-publicised desolation of present-day Liverpool, England. The unlikely heroine, Marie, is a disillusioned housewife and battler who throws out her husband, and sets out to earn a living for herself and her feckless children. She finds that living on social security and working in an electronics factory reveals the welfare state as a "*world of half true lies, where helping's a word for controlling and truth means compromise*". With its earthy Liverpoolian flavour and black humour, it's at the **New Theatre** until August 3.

AETT Discount \$1.00

Bookings on 519 3403

Continuing this month at the **Genesian Theatre** is the Neil Simon play **PLAZA SUITE**. It is a three-act play set in a single suite at the Plaza Hotel where three quite different scenarios are acted out. There's the 23rd wedding anniversary celebration that goes wrong; the successful producer trying to use his casting couch; and the wedding party with the reluctant bride. The acts are all complete in themselves and, in usual Neil Simon style, are very funny.

AETT discount \$1.00

Bookings on 267 7774

Little known in Sydney until recently, one of Melbourne's most eminent theatre companies, the Australian Nouveau Theatre, generally known as Anthill, continues its production of **KIDSTUFF** at the **Belvoir St. Theatre** until July 14. Julie Forsythe, playing the role of a small boy, shows through conversations with friends what it is like to be a kid. The play is by Raymond Cousse and is directed by Jean-Pierre Mignon, Anthill's artistic director.

AETT discount \$1.00

Bookings on 699 3273

Adelaide author Mij Tanith drew on her own experiences as a social worker in Vietnam as background for her play, **BLIND CIRCUMSTANCE**, being presented at the Stables Theatre by the **Griffin Theatre Company** until July 28. Maggie, working in a Saigon orphanage just before the first airlift of Vietnamese children to Australia and the U.S., develops a deep affection for one of the children but her husband thwarts her plans to adopt him. The story unfolds with great compassion and a deal of suspense.

AETT discount \$1.00

Bookings on 333 817

Continuing at the **Ensemble** into July is **SOME NIGHT AT JULIA CREEK** by Terry Stapleton. Set in an isolated town in North-West Queensland, the play draws together three couples who have reached a crisis point. Feelings which have remained hidden for years are exposed, irretrievably changing the relationships. The play is both profoundly moving and very funny.

AETT discount \$1.00

(except Fri and Sat evg)

Bookings on 929 8877

Join us!

The Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust, in association with Qantas, is proud to present our inaugural series of lectures on **THE MAGIC OF THEATRE**. Trust Members have an opportunity to reserve tickets for the series prior to the general public, so to avoid disappointment act quickly!

1 TUESDAY, AUGUST 27

The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater is undoubtedly the world's leading contemporary dance company. Audiences from New York to Moscow, from London to Tokyo and from Paris to Rio de Janeiro have greeted its performances with standing ovations and demands for encore after encore.

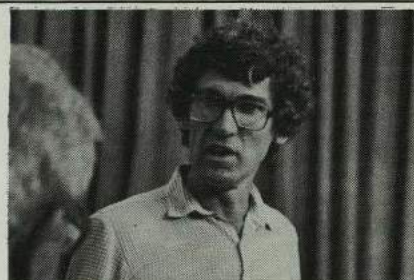
Coinciding with the company's Sydney season, Alvin Ailey or one of his close associates will talk on the work of the company which has revolutionised the world of modern dance.



2 MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 23

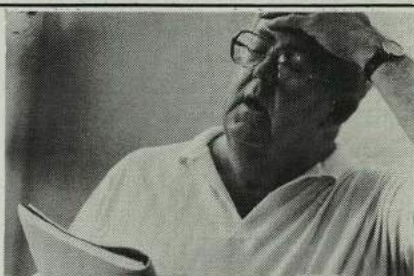
David Williamson is undoubtedly Australia's best known contemporary playwright. As a playwright dealing with vital issues affecting society, he has become a very influential social commentator. His latest play **SONS OF CAIN** is a skilful treatment of the highly controversial and topical subject of corruption.

Brian Kiernan, Senior Lecturer in English at Sydney University has written a critical biography on David Williamson and will deliver a talk on the social themes and implications of David Williamson's works. David Williamson will be present to answer questions following the talk.



3 WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 23

Noel Ferrier is one of the great theatrical personalities of Australia. An actor and author, he is also executive producer of the Musical Theatre Division of the Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust. In that capacity, he co-produced **THE SOUND OF MUSIC** with Julie Anthony and the box office smash hit **THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE**. Ferrier will talk on the resurgence of interest in musical theatre both in Australia and on the stages of New York and London.



4 MONDAY, NOVEMBER 25

The make-up process which is so much a part of the magic of theatre is a craft of great skill and there is no greater expert in this field than Peggy Carter. Ms. Carter who has worked on many major stage and film productions will give a talk and practical demonstration on make-up techniques including the ageing process. An actor will be used as a model.



Programme correct at time of publishing. AETT reserves the right to change the programme without notice.

BOOKING INFORMATION

5.30 pm – 6 pm For light refreshment
6 pm – 7 pm Lecture

Qantas Theatre
Qantas International Centre
(off York and Grosvenor Streets, Sydney)

LECTURE PRICE SCHEDULE

Trust Members – Series of 4 lectures \$28.00
General Public – Series of 4 lectures \$40.00

Trust Members: Please use the grey booking coupon in Trust News to order your tickets. Due to the expected heavy demand, Trust Members are limited to 2 tickets at T.M. price.

Trust News

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