

Sugar Babies — The Quintessential Burlesque Show



Sugar Babies from the original New York production

SUGAR BABIES, conceived by
Ralph G. Allen and Harry Rigby
Directed and choreographed by Ernest
Flatt

Music by Jimmy McHugh
Musical direction by Dale Ringland
Scenery and costumes by Raoul Pene du
Bois

Starring Eddie Bracken, Garry
McDonald, David Atkins and Joan
Brokenshire
Her Majesty's Theatre

The final, definitive statement on the wonderful world of burlesque, SUGAR BABIES, had an unlikely beginning. It grew out of a scholarly paper presented at a conference of theatre historians in New York by Professor Ralph G. Allen who had compiled it with the help of a grant. Broadway producer,

Harry Rigby, happened to be at the conference and suggested that the material be developed into a "quintessential burlesque show".

Not too many people these days are familiar with burlesque which had its heyday between 1905 and 1930. It had a language and stylised format all of its own. In the first three decades of this century, there were more than 80 burlesque shows touring the two American circuits, as well as many stock troupes. There was no stripping, but lots of innuendo, high kicking and titillation. Spectacular dance sequences were interspersed with comedy sketches involving a variety of stock characters — 1st comic, 2nd comic, straight man, juvenile, soubrette. The outlines of the comedy routine were also standard — the restaurant scene, hotel scene, schoolroom scene and courtroom scene but each comic put into it his own

personality and his own jokes. Not all the companies, however, lived up to the audience's expectations; the comedians were not always brilliant and witty, the girls weren't always beautiful. This proved to be Ralph Allen's inspiration for SUGAR BABIES. "During the course of my research, one question kept recurring. Why not create a quintessential Burlesque Show out of authentic materials — a show of shows as I have played it so often in the theatre of my mind? After all, in a theatre of the mind, nothing ever disappoints."

After running for seven years in America — both in New York and on tour — the Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust will mount SUGAR BABIES in Australia, opening in Sydney at Her Majesty's Theatre on October 30. In February it will move to Melbourne and other cities, including Adelaide, Perth and Auckland. The tour is expected to last about 39 weeks.

Eddie Bracken, who is coming from the USA to star in the role of 1st comic in SUGAR BABIES, received rave reviews from critics in the USA. "Bracken, with his rolling eyes, rubber face and delightful slow burns, is the consummate performer," said Jim Arpy in the *Quad City Times*. Since his debut in 1931 on Broadway, Bracken has appeared in countless movies and stage shows. Garry McDonald will bring back to life one of Australia's greatest comics by playing his role as "Mo" (Roy Rene). Fresh from success in CATS, David Atkins will play the juvenile and Joan Brokenshire will be the radiant female star.

Trust members are invited to purchase tickets on Monday, November 3 and Tuesday, November 4 at a \$10.00 discount and may purchase as many tickets as they wish. See Member Activities (page 10) for details of pre-theatre dinner on Tuesday, November 4.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Thu Oct 30 to Sat Nov 22

Mon to Sat at 8 p.m.

Wed and Sat mat at 2 p.m.

AETT \$26.90 (\$23.90 Nov 3/4)

G.P. \$33.90

Pens/Stud \$20.90

Two AETT tickets per member (except Nov 3/4)

At Belvoir Street

SAVANNAH BAY by Marguerite Duras
Translated by Julie Rose
Directed by Kerry Dwyer
Designed by Robert Kemp
Cast: Fiona Stewart and Betty Lucas
Belvoir Street Theatre Upstairs

The Australian premiere of a new French play, currently playing in Paris, will open at Belvoir Street Theatre next month. SAVANNAH BAY is the subtle and moving story of the relationship between two women — one in her youth and the other an ageing actress who is no longer able to distinguish between her real life and the roles she played on the stage. The two women are played by Betty Lucas, who recently had a successful season in ROOM TO MOVE for the Griffin and Fiona Stewart, who has just finished filming the adaptation of Ruth Park's book, THE HARP IN THE SOUTH. Kerry Dwyer, who directed Betty Lucas in ROOM TO MOVE, will direct the play.



Betty Lucas

BOOKING INFORMATION
Thu Oct 2 to Sun Oct 19
Tue to Sat at 8 p.m.
Sat and Sun at 5 p.m.
AETT \$12.00
G.P. 15.00
Pens/Stud \$10.00
Two AETT tickets per member

French Parable

As part of Carnivale 1986, Sydney's professional French theatre company, Theatre Nouveau, will present a bilingual production of the Antoine de Saint-Exupery classic LE PETIT PRINCE (The Little Prince). The parable will be presented in French in the first

half of the performance and in English in the second part. Running time for the full performance is two hours. Theatre Nouveau director, Irene Spinadel, who will direct the French half, believes that audiences will find it interesting to compare two interpretations of the play with different actors, costumes, directors and cultural bias. Rachel Cliffe will direct the English half.

BOOKING INFORMATION
Science Theatre, University NSW
Sep 16 to 19 at 8 p.m.
AETT discount \$1.00
Bookings on 358 5806/358 3177

Theatre of the Deaf

WAITING FOR GODOT
by Samuel Beckett
Directed by Patrick Mitchell
Designed by James Bennet
Cast: Annie Mangan, Steven Ripley,
Carol-Lee Aquiline, Christopher
Saunders and Jean St. Clair
Seymour Centre, Downstairs

The Theatre of the Deaf's principal role is presenting theatre in education to infants, primary and secondary school children — it is one of the leading companies in this field in Australia today. But once a year the company mounts a production for adult audiences and this year they have chosen Beckett's WAITING FOR GODOT. Those who have not seen a performance by the company should realise that it is not a mime show nor is it theatre for the deaf. Vocal communication is provided by the hearing members of the company while the deaf actors communicate with the beautiful moving pictures and symbols of sign language. The result is a unique blend of aural and visual communication which makes for very exciting theatre.

WAITING FOR GODOT will be directed by the company's artistic director, Patrick Mitchell. It is the story of two people, Vladimir and Estragon, who amuse themselves with conversation, alternating between hope and despair, while waiting for someone called Godot.

BOOKING INFORMATION
Sat Oct 18 to Sat Nov 1
Tue to Sat at 8 p.m.
Sat at 4 p.m.
AETT \$14.90
G.P. \$15.90
Pens/Stud \$10.00
Two AETT tickets per member

Eden Memories

TONIGHT WE ANCHOR IN
TWO FOLD BAY by Katherine
Thomson
Directed by Des Davis
Music by David Vance
Designed by Bruce Auld
Cast: Katherine Thomson, Faye Montgomery,
Lynne McGimpsey, Peter Corbett and Tom Sonsadene
Wharf Theatre



A scene from the original production of TWO FOLD BAY

Theatre South will make its first appearance in Sydney this month for a three-week run at the Wharf Theatre. TONIGHT WE ANCHOR IN TWO FOLD BAY deals with the lives of people living in the small fishing village of Eden. The playwright, who is also a member of the cast, spent five weeks researching local events and talking with many of the townspeople, especially the so-called "characters". The result is a piece of theatre rich in the memories and happenings of community life. The play had a successful season in Wollongong and on a South Coast tour.

BOOKING INFORMATION
Wed Sep 17 to Sat Oct 11
Mon to Sat at 8.15 p.m.
Sat mat at 2.15 p.m.
AETT \$16.00
G.P. \$18.00
Pens/Stud \$13.00
Two AETT tickets per member

Welsh Choir

Think of male choirs and you immediately think of Welsh voices, glorious, rich and melodic. The Treorchy Male Choir, from where-else but the

Rhondda Valley, Wales, was nominated in the recent Great Choir series as one of the world's finest choral groups, ranking alongside the Vienna Boys and Mormon Tabernacle Choirs. In Australia to celebrate the South Australian Jubilee, the 100-voice choir will give two performances only at the Sydney Opera House. The programme will include songs from Wales, classical works and popular music.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Concert Hall, S.O.H.
Tue Oct 14 and Fri Oct 17 at 8 p.m.
AETT \$15.90
G.P. \$17.90
Stud/Pens \$12.90 (B Res)
\$9.90 (C Res)
Two AETT tickets per member

High Society Drama

THE PHILADELPHIA STORY

by Philip Barry

Directed by Robyn Nevin

Designed by Anne Fraser

Cast: Victoria Longley, Emily Cook, Jennifer Claire, Tyler Coppin, Denise Kirby, John Howard, Rhett Walton, James Laurie and Ric Hutton
Drama Theatre, Sydney Opera House

THE PHILADELPHIA STORY may not mean much to many people but mention the name of HIGH SOCIETY, the musical developed from the play, and there are instant smiles of recognition. The two films of HIGH SOCIETY were popular successes in their day. Much of their success can be attributed to the craftsmanship of the original play which the Sydney Theatre Company will mount next month.

THE PHILADELPHIA STORY is set among Philadelphia high society and concerns the romances of Tracy Lord (played by Victoria Longley). Divorced from one husband she is about to enter a new marriage when her first husband reappears to raise doubts about the new relationship. It's all good fun while at the same time providing a moving commentary on human nature.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Thu Oct 9 to Sat Nov 1
Mon to Sat at 8 p.m.
Sat mat at 2 p.m.
AETT \$22.00 (except Fri & Sat evg)
G.P. \$25.00
Pens/Stud \$20.00 (except Fri & Sat evg)
Two AETT tickets per member

Centrestage

Centrestage, a new magazine for theatregoers, will be launched during the exciting new Spoleto Festival in Melbourne. As well as preparing you for the theatrical novelties on offer there, Centrestage will talk to Gian Carlo Menotti and explain the Spoleto Festival movement.

The magazine has appointed top theatre critics in every State to present an overview of where their local theatre is going. There'll be news, preview and reviews, personality profiles and theatre company portraits, and even a bit of backstage gossip. There'll also be listings of just what is on and where and the latest news from London and New York.

Trust Members are offered an introductory subscription at \$38 per annum or \$21 for six months. Subscriptions should be sent to Show Media, 62 Highfield Road, Lindfield, N.S.W. 2070.

China Spectacular

The Acrobatic, Beijing Opera and Martial Arts Troupe from Nanjing, China, will be touring Australia in October/November and will be in Sydney from October 13 to 22 playing at Her Majesty's Theatre.



The Nanjing Acrobatic Troupe, founded in 1957, has become one of the most famous acrobatic groups in China and has visited many countries. Its programme includes many acts requiring consummate skill and artistry. Among the new programmes they will present are "Split brick on chair", "Magic" and "Three layers of men on bicycle". The martial arts group from one of the areas of China famous for these skills, Jiangsu Province, has won many championships

and also has toured widely, showing their skills. The third section of the troupe, Beijing Opera, is China's oldest traditional art and has been called their National Opera. Among their presentations will be **ATTACK THE CAPITAL CITY** and **THREE FORKS**.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Mon Oct 13 to Wed Oct 22
Mon to Sat at 8 p.m.
Sat mat at 2 p.m.
AETT \$19.90
G.P. \$23.90
Stud/Pens \$18.90
Two AETT tickets per member

Tyneside Drama

AND A NIGHTINGALE SANG

by C. P. Taylor

Directed by Peter Kingston

Designed by John Senezuk

Cast: Anne Tenney, Nicholas Eadie, Robert Alexander, Bob Hornery, George Leppard, Catherine McClements, Pat Thomson
Playhouse, S.O.H.

This charming play is the only one by C. P. Taylor to have been produced on London's West End. Cheerful and sentimental, it is about the resilience and spirit of an eccentric British Newcastle family during World War II. At the heart of the family is the daughter, Helen, club-footed and, in her opinion, unattractive. Her piano-playing father works at the local ship-yard, her mother is totally pre-occupied with the Catholic Church and her sister marries a local soldier and entertains many of the visiting ones! To this menagerie is added a comic grandfather who moves around the family with baggage and animals. Anne Tenney (Molly of "Country Practice" fame) plays the lead. Trust member nights when a \$5.00 discount applies are Thursday, October 16 (8.15 p.m.) and Friday October 17 (5.30 p.m.).

BOOKING INFORMATION

Sat Oct 11 to Sat Oct 25
Mon to Sat at 8.15 p.m.
Fri at 5.30 p.m. Sat at 2 p.m.
AETT \$20.00 (except Fri/Sat evg),
\$18.00 (Oct 16, 17 at 5.30 p.m.)
G.P. \$23.00
Stud/Pens \$17.00 (except Fri/Sat evg)
Two AETT tickets per member (except Oct 16/17)

Sidetrack Returns

SKITSOBUMSKI devised by the company

Directed by Kerry Dwyer

Designed by Robert Kemp

Cast: Jai McHenry, Tom Lycos, Adam Hatzimanolis

Seymour Centre Downstairs

As many readers will remember from SIDETRACK'S performance last year of ADIOS CHA CHA, this company specialises in plays that are controversial and which cultivate new ground in performing arts. Their latest production is no exception — SKITSOBUMSKI is a comedy combining realism with humour and it is described as an "entertainment" on the eternal themes of war, flesh, friendship and death. Its unique form derives from the storyteller's art and marries that with elements of cabaret and performance art. The original score is by Charlie Chan and Nina Bondarenko.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Thu Sep 11 to Sat Oct 11

Tue to Sat at 8 p.m.

AETT discount \$2.00

Bookings on 692 0555

Next at Nimrod

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE by William Shakespeare

Directed by Richard Cottrell

Designed by Hugh Colman

Cast: Liz Alexander, Ron Graham, Edwin Hodgeman, Ivar Kants, Barry Lovett and John Turnbull

York Theatre, Seymour Centre

One of Shakespeare's most famous romantic comedies, THE MERCHANT OF VENICE, joins Nimrod's repertory season in September. The story is divided between the hard-headed city of commercial Venice (where the merchant Antonio and moneylender Shylock carry on their business) and the fairytale country house of Belmont where the beautiful Portia is being sought in marriage.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Mon to Sat at 8 p.m. Sat mat at 2 p.m.

Sep 10, 11, 12, 13 (mat), 15, 17, 20 (evg), 24, 25, 27 (evg) and 29

AETT \$19.00 (Tue to Fri)

G.P. \$21.00 (Tue to Sat)

\$18.00 (Mon and Sat mat)

Pens/Stud \$15.00 (Tue to Fri)

\$12.00 (Mon and Sat mat)

Two AETT tickets per member

Authentic Hamlet

HAMLET by William Shakespeare

Directed by Colleen Clifford

Designed by Paul Lester

Cast includes Michael Bowie, Robert Cooper, Benita Hewson, Veronica Sweeney, Anthony Waddington, John Benjamin and John Davies
Bay Street Theatre

Ten years ago the late Robin Lovejoy described Michael Bowie as the best period actor in Australia. So it was a loss to the theatre when he chose to retire from the profession at a young age. Colleen Clifford has tempted him to make one of his rare returns to the boards to play the role of Hamlet in her forthcoming production. Sydney has seen quite a number of HAMLET productions this year, each with their own distinctive interpretation. By way of contrast, Colleen Clifford's production will be an authentic period production.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Tue Sep 2 to Sat Sep 20

Tue to Sat at 7.30 p.m.

Sat & Sun at 2 p.m.

AETT discount \$6.50

Bookings on 692 0964

Dialogue

by Carole Long, Membership Manager

This month we announce the 1986/7 series of lectures on The Magic of Theatre. It's designed to reveal something of the fascinating behind-the-scenes activity associated with our profession. As you'll see from the inside back cover of this edition we've got a great line up of speakers. It's also a good opportunity for members and their friends to meet with each other. Tea/coffee and sandwiches are provided before the lecture (so if you come straight from work you won't starve!) and there'll be the opportunity to discuss the evening's topic over a glass of wine afterwards. Space is limited so do book early.

If you've thought about hiring costumes from the Trust but the thought of trekking over to Kings Cross was too

much, you'll be pleased to know that we now have outlets in the City, at Parramatta and Hurstville. We've taken over the "Motley" Costume Hire Shops and have a dazzling array of fancy dress costumes at each centre. Enquiries about costuming for theatrical productions should still be directed to our Kings Cross base. And don't forget as a Trust Member you're entitled to a 20 per cent discount on all hires.

What a night to choose for our first younger set function! Despite having to brave the wettest Sydney day on record all but ten of those who had booked for dinner at the Glebe Terrace Restaurant arrived. The food and the company was great and there seemed to be general enthusiasm for a repeat performance.

The Trust's volunteer staff was stretched to the limit in July and August enrolling a large influx of new members. In July alone 419 members joined us — the biggest monthly increase ever and 135 more than our previous best month in March 1985. A big welcome to all those new members. We hope that you enjoy many hours of fine theatre. An expanded membership is important to us as it means a larger reliable audience for the performing arts; reductions in the "per member costs" which will allow us to extend our membership services; and an increase in our ability to negotiate better deals for our members.

Carole Long

MALCOLM written and directed by David Parker
Produced by David Parker and Nadia Tass
Starring Colin Friels, John Hargreaves and Lindy Davies
Opening September 18 at Hoyts

MALCOLM could be sub-titled "How a nice boy went bad and had a lot of fun doing it". Malcolm (Colin Friels) is not, on the surface, very bright. Socially and emotionally retarded by an over-bearing mother, at 30 he finds himself an orphan in his old home, and working for the tramways as a maintenance man. But Malcolm has talent — he is a mechanical genius and secretly builds a one-man tram which he ecstatically drives round Melbourne one dawn. The result is the sack from the tramways.

His self-appointed minder is the local milk bar proprietor who has had enough of extending credit to the naive, childlike and now broke Malcolm, and suggests he take in a boarder. That's where the fun begins for Malcolm and the audience. Boarder Frank (John Hargreaves) is a crim who moves in complete with blowsy girlfriend Judith (Lindy Davies). Recognising Malcolm's genius as an inventor, Frank sees how it can be used in bank hold-ups. Crime doesn't pay? Well, not often, but there's one big winner here and that's Malcolm who finally grows up.



Colin Friels as Malcolm



James Woods in *SALVADOR*

SALVADOR directed by Oliver Stone
Screenplay by Richard Boyle and Oliver Stone
Produced by Oliver Stone and Gerald Green

Starring James Woods, John Savage, Jim Belushi, Michael Murphy, Cindy Gibb and Elpidia Carrillo
Opening September 11 at the Roma (G.U.) and Academy Twin, Paddington

Co-author Richard Boyle has been a war correspondent on four continents; since 1980 in El Salvador. *SALVADOR* is based on his personal experiences there. The film originally envisaged by Boyle and his friend, Oliver Stone, was to be a low-budget semi-documentary with Boyle playing himself. To get permission to film in El Salvador, they doctored the script for the authorities, portraying the anti-government guerrillas as "bad guys". Increased urban terrorism and the assassination of a military attache changed the government's attitude and permission to film was withdrawn. Two Mexican-based film companies combined to produce *SALVADOR* in Mexico as a feature film with professional actors.

James Woods plays Boyle, portrayed as a journalist on the skids. Salvador's atrocities change him and he determines to expose the injustices and to save the El

Salvador woman he loves. Dr Rock, an unemployed disc jockey who goes to El Salvador "for the joy ride" with Boyle but finds self-redemption there in his terror, disgust and a growing love for the country, is played by Jim Belushi. John Savage has the role of a newspaper photographer who believes in the nobility of his profession.

CACTUS directed by Paul Cox
Scenario by Paul Cox
Produced by Jane Ballantyne and Paul Cox
Starring Isabelle Huppert, Robert Menzies, Norman Kaye
Opening September 4 at Village Double Bay

Paul Cox needs no introduction to Australian movie buffs. His long list of successes include *MAN OF FLOWERS* and *MY FIRST WIFE* on both of which Jane Ballantyne was co-producer, Tony Llewellyn-Jones associate producer, Yuri Sokol, director of photography, and Asner Bilu production designer. The same team made *CACTUS*, which virtually ensures its success.

It is a gentle and unusual love story between two blind people. A French tourist, Colo (Isabelle Huppert) regains consciousness in hospital after a car accident to find she has lost the sight of one eye and the other is failing fast. She cannot cope and begins to withdraw into herself. Her host in Australia (Norman Kaye) takes her to a gathering of cactus growers where she meets Robert (Robert Menzies), a blind lecturer at a school for the blind. His wit and cheerfulness intensify her feeling of isolation and worthlessness, but she gradually becomes aware of other dimensions in life. The two are drawn together and become lovers. Robert's love for Colo upsets his self confidence and when Colo's husband arrives in Australia, both face problems of choice.

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. \$6.50 (\$1 saving), Hoyts \$5.50 (\$1.50 saving), Village \$5.50 (\$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 (\$2.50), and the Academy Twin, Paddington (\$2.50), at all performances except after midday Saturday. Members should present their membership card at the box office. Discount available on one ticket per member.

Musical Theatre — Fifty Years of Pure Escapism

by Noel Ferrier

It all began about forty-six years ago when Stoll decided to buy IM WEISSEN ROSSL, an Austrian-based musical, which was doing very well on the Continent and decided to anglicise it for a West End presentation. And so IM WEISSEN ROSSL became WHITE HORSE INN and another couple of numbers were added to the Benatzky score. One, "Goodbye", became probably the most famous musical comedy hit of all time, and was sung and recorded by just about everyone making records in the 'thirties. WHITE HORSE INN was the first and certainly the most successful of a new breed of musical entertainment in the theatre.

It was originally a German farce which was adapted to the musical form by Benatzky and presented at Berlin in 1930. Sir Oswald Stoll heard of it, saw it and bought it and so made the jump from the operetta musical comedy form. To say that WHITE HORSE INN was a revolutionary show would, of course, be nonsense. It was a traditionally based entertainment full of easy catchy melodies of the old Viennese kind; its story was a foundation for spectacle rather than high drama; its intellectual level was the lowest possible. Yet, coming in 1930, WHITE HORSE INN was just in time to assert that that sort of Viennese operetta vein would survive (though some writers gloomily saw it as sounding the death-knell of true operetta), and to assert, with its very impressive performance figures, that the big family show was going to fulfil a need.

WHITE HORSE INN was a pioneer work in the spectacular musical field, full of romance mingled with humour, full of easy tunes. It was the ancestor of such shows as SOUTH PACIFIC, THE KING AND I and THE SOUND OF MUSIC, all excellent pieces that combined realism with romance in a pleasingly melodic way. The intellectual writer on the theatre could describe it as "a Weimar Republic musical comedy — a morbid growth, which combined nostalgia with affected sophistication", dealing "Viennese operetta its most crippling blow", but this did not affect the fact that this was the kind of entertainment that most people wanted.



Julie Anthony played the lead role in the AETT's production of *THE SOUND OF MUSIC*

At about this time Flo Ziegfeld was engaging Oscar Hammerstein and Jerome Kern to adapt Edna Ferber's best seller *SHOW BOAT* into a stage musical. Of course the original Edna Ferber book does not have a happy ending; *Magnolia* is not reunited with Ravenal at the end — Ravenal, being the gambling cur he really is, is tossed aside (reluctantly) and at the end the *Show Boat* goes off up stream minus Ravenal. But Ziegfeld wanted a happy ending and so *Magnolia* and the swine Ravenal are happily reunited and all ends well — well, for the moment anyway. In any event the musical comedy as we know it today was born on both sides of the Atlantic at almost the same moment — WHITE HORSE INN in Europe and *SHOW BOAT* in America. Both concepts set the style for the musical form of the future.

It is interesting to know that many of the great composers that followed credit either one or both these musicals as their creative yardstick. *SHOW BOAT* is the one generally recognised as being the "first" musical play but in actual fact I think WHITE HORSE INN probably

won by a short head. Certainly it does not have the strong story line which is much of the strength of *SHOW BOAT*, but, nevertheless, it was still the first really commercially successful musical comedy, breaking as it did right away from the strict operetta format. Here was a show with a real (well, almost) situation featuring real (well, almost) people, lots of toe-tapping songs, beautiful girls, a couple of comics, some pageantry, and all set against the Austrian Alps. How could you miss? Well, as Sir Oswald soon found out, you couldn't and he had a hit on his hands. The musical comedy had arrived and London and New York were full of them — in London Novello and Coward — in America Kern, Porter and Hammerstein, Berlin.

America took up the "musical" and, despite the efforts of some brilliant Englishmen, the musical became synonymous with Broadway. Between 1930 and 1940 Broadway was home to something like 700 new musicals. The musical bred a new style of star, Ethel Merman, Mary Martin; it required new production techniques and design — we

even created a few ourselves which were quite successful (COLLETT'S INN was one of our first). The pre-World War II musical was generally in the form of a musical comedy, with emphasis on girls, girls, girls, laughs, laughs and laughs and lots and lots of toe-tapping songs, many of which are remembered and performed today — the musical from where they originated having been completely forgotten.

But the order of the day from the great impresarios was to turn out shows with plenty of laughs and catchy songs along with girls, girls, girls — and that is exactly what the composers and librettists did. It was post depression and the world wanted escapism and fantasy. World War II arrived and post-war affluence. Along came some of the all-time great musical comedy giants starting with Rodgers and Hammerstein, Irving Berlin, Lerner and Loewe and a totally new form of musical play. First was a show based on a book called "Green Grow the Lilacs" which Rodgers and Hammerstein turned into OKLAHOMA. This was a far cry from WHITE HORSE INN but not all that far removed from SHOW BOAT. The great American take-over of the musical stage had begun in earnest and was to hold sway for forty years in quantity and quality. The English were coming up with the odd one but never reached the heights of or the output of their American cousins — until today — a period when Broadway is in the musical doldrums with the Brits about to take over.

So what makes people go to musicals more than any other theatre attraction? For this writer there is still nothing more exciting, when I take my seat in a theatre, whether it is Sydney, Melbourne, New York or London, than listening for the first sounds of one of the orchestra tuning up to the performance, then seeing the lights dim and the creation of so many differing talents — writer, composer, librettist, director, designer, musical director, lighting and sound engineers, stage managers — coming together; and then the talent on stage and in the pit — working on their own, performing the musical as written and directed. The audience for the "musical" has still the biggest audience going to the theatre — far outnumbering the opera, ballet or drama buffs. But still in this country there is no Musical Theatre Company — a company dedicated to performing the great classics of the musical



June Bronhill, John Woods and Marina Prior in the original PIRATES OF PENZANCE

theatre stage from Romberg, Frimml, Coward, Kalmann through to Porter, Kern, Rodgers and Hammerstein and Lerner and Loewe up to Sondheim.

In Australia we now have a wealth of brilliant musical theatre talent — from writing to direction and design through to performers. It is time for us to establish an Australian Musical Theatre Company; to provide a continuous repertory of all that is best in musical theatre for the audience, which is quite obviously there, but also to provide a platform for our own young writers, directors, designers and performers to perform Australian musicals, written, created and performed by Australians. We have managed to make the world sit up and take notice in the areas of film, TV, drama, ballet and opera; now it is time for us to crash through the international musical theatre barrier and present our astonishing young talent in this field to the world.

We can only do this by providing the means and wherewithal for these talents to have their works produced. Already our creators of opera and ballet have outlets for their work through the Australian Opera or the Victoria State Opera and through the Australian Ballet and the Sydney Dance Company. Our drama writers have any number of outlets for their works, but where do the budding Rodgers and Hammerstein go to have their work assessed and possibly work-shopped?

An Australian Musical Theatre Company performing the standard musical classics in repertory (much as an opera company operates) could provide that

much-needed platform and it is something that Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust is now moving towards. In other words a company operating on a purely commercial and profitable basis would provide the financial backing for the creation of and workshoping of Australian musicals. In a sort of a way the great musicals of the past would provide and become the angels of the new Australian Musical Theatre. The Trust has in the pipeline two totally new Australian musicals and much of the finance for their development will be provided by the Trust's two new musical productions, LENNON and SUGAR BABIES. LENNON is the wonderfully entertaining and absorbing story of the life of John Lennon and the Beatles, while SUGAR BABIES is a celebration of the long-gone world of burlesque and variety (see story page 1). With the exception of one performer, both musicals will star Australian casts, featuring some of the truly great names in Australian show business. Nineteen eighty-seven will be the year of the Australian Musical — BE THERE!

Noel Ferrier is 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 hit THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE. He is also an actor and author; his biography "There Goes Whatsisname" was published last year. He is the executive producer of LENNON and SUGAR BABIES.

Opening Soon

Kids' Stuff

One of last year's finest productions, **KIDS' STUFF**, returns to the Belvoir Street Theatre from September 2.

KIDS' STUFF is a captivating solo performance by Julie Forsyth in which she recreates a French boy's childhood and, through his eyes, portrays a whole world of people. The audience discovers he has a young friend, Marcel. There's the small boys' delight in peeping over the fence watching the butcher at work, and the fun of squinting through the keyhole of Marcel's sister's bedroom! Towards the end of the play, however, there is the gradual exposure of the tragedy of life through a child's eyes; of the senselessness of adult hypocrisies and the failures of nerve. **KIDS' STUFF** is directed by Jean-Pierre Mignon for the Australian Nouveau Theatre.

BOOKING INFORMATION
Belvoir Street Theatre Upstairs
Sep 2 to Sep 14
Tue to Sun at 8 p.m.
AETT \$13.00
G.P. \$15.00
Pens/Stud \$10.00
Two AETT tickets per member

Adrian Mole's Diary

The stage adaptation of Sue Townsend's best-selling book, **THE SECRET DIARY OF ADRIAN MOLE**, continues to take a funny and heart-warming look at the world through the eyes of a teenager. Adrian considers himself to be an "intellectual". On the other hand he can be constantly cast down from such dizzy heights when considering yet another image-threatening pimple. Adrian Mole is played by Miles Buchanan, who was so successful earlier this year as Eugene in Neil Simon's **BRIGHTON BEACH MEMOIRS**: Bernadette Ryan plays the beautiful Pandora, the object of Adrian's adoration, and his long-suffering mother is played by Amanda Muggleton.

BOOKING INFORMATION
Footbridge Theatre
Sep 17 to Sun Sep 28
Tue to Sat at 8 p.m.
Wed at 11 a.m. Sat at 2 p.m.
Sun at 5 p.m.
AETT \$18.90 (except Sep 23)
G.P. \$23.90
Pens/Stud \$16.90
Children (under 12) \$13.90
Two AETT tickets per member

Affairs in a Tent

Intimate Exchanges is a series of eight related plays devised by the British master of comedy, Alan Ayckbourn. All the plays begin with a woman facing a small, trivial decision. Should she resist having her first cigarette of the day before 6 p.m.? By the end of the first scene, another character has to make a further decision, and as each scene ends, further and more crucial choices have to be made. Each choice leads to a different direction for the story — and a different play. **AFFAIRS IN A TENT** is the first of four of these plays to be presented by the Ensemble Theatre between September and January. See Member Activities (page 10) for younger set dinner.

BOOKING INFORMATION
Ensemble Theatre
Tue to Sat at 8 p.m.
Mats Thu at 11 a.m. Sat and Sun at 5 p.m.
AETT \$14.00 (Tue to Fri), \$10.00 (mats)
G.P. \$16.00 (Tue to Thu), \$18.00 (Fri and Sat evg), \$14.00 (Sat/Sun mat), \$13.00 (Thu mat)
Pens/Stud \$12.00 (Tue to Fri), \$11.00 (Sat/Sun mat), \$10.00 (Thu mat)
Two AETT tickets per member

What's On Out-of-Town

It's back to the Keystone Cops era for the **Canberra Philharmonic Society's** production of **MACK AND MABEL** at the Canberra Theatre from September 19 to 27. Set in the period between 1919 and 1934, it's the love story of silent movie director, Mack Sennett, and film star-comedienne, Mabel Normand. The cast of nearly 60 is directed by Sydney's Robert Hatherley.

Local professional company, **Black Inc.** will present Ibsen's **A DOLL'S HOUSE** at the Canberra Playhouse from September 5 to 20. It is directed by Paul Corcoran and portrays a young mother's quest for her own individuality. Written in 1879 it was one of the first theatre productions to deviate from the happy ending tradition and was thought to be shocking at the time.

Corille Fraser will direct **THE PRIME OF MISS JEAN BRODIE** at the **Canberra Repertory Theatre**. It is a play about the influence of a woman "in her prime" who is trying to project her own idealised passions for Beauty, Truth, Art (and the art teacher) onto her young impressionable students. It will play at Theatre 3 from September 20.

Does the rising cost of living sometimes make you feel desperate? At the **Hunter Valley Theatre Company** this month you'll find out how an Italian family reacted and the hilarious consequences. The play is Daniel Fo's **DON'T PAY, DON'T PAY**, which will be shown from September 3 to 27.

Four one-act plays under the title of **THE TWO OF US** will be presented by **Theatre South** from September 12 to

October 4 at their Bridge Theatre. The plays, by Michael Frayn, are all concerned with marital situations between couples of varying ages and social standing.

Two shows connected with the International Year of Peace will be at the **Orange Civic Theatre** this month. First, on September 5 and 6, will be **THE NOT TOO LATE SHOW** by the Bombshells of Sydney. It is a cabaret written under an Australia Council grant for the Year of Peace. The second, on September 19 and 20, will be Shopfront Theatre's peace play **PIECE BY PIECE**, which has toured overseas.

AETT discount applicable all performers. See local press for booking information.

BREAKING THE SILENCE by American playwright Stephen Poliakoff launched the 20th anniversary season of the **Northside Theatre Company**. The scene is Russia after the revolution; the mood is both funny and touching. The play deals with the material and spiritual adjustments a Jewish upper middle-class family have to make when forced to live in a railway carriage for some years. The father spends his time (and government money) while ostensibly employed as a Telephone Examiner, trying to record sound onto film. Meanwhile the mother copes with everyday existence (was it ever thus!). Directed by John Krummel, it stars Judi Farr and Dennis Olsen. At the Marian Street Theatre until October 18. AETT discount \$1.00 (Mon to Thu and mats) Bookings on 498 3166

Jim McNeil's career as a playwright began in Parramatta Gaol and when released, he was hailed as a "prison playwright". Although his work was given wide coverage, the emphasis was given to his criminal record rather than his talent and his literary worth was virtually ignored. He died a derelict in 1982. His best play is considered to be **THE OLD FAMILIAR JUICE** and this, together with **JACK**, are being presented by the Griffin Company. The first play shows how the prison system brutalises the inmates, while **JACK** demonstrates the prisoner's changed attitude to life outside the prison walls. At the Stables Theatre until September 28. AETT discount \$1.00 Bookings on 33 3817

The Elvis Presley play, **ARE YOU LONESOME TONIGHT?**, opens with "The King" on the final day of his life — pill-popping, ageing and bloated. It continues with a series of flash-backs showing Elvis reliving his earlier life — the death of his twin brother and of his mother, his accession to the sex throne of rock and the adulation it brought him. Sixteen Presley numbers are included. Martin Shaw, star of the London production (and well-known to TV audiences as one of "The Professionals") is the older Presley, David Franklin plays his younger self. Throughout September, at Her Majesty's. AETT discount \$5.00 (Mon to Thu and Sat mat) Bookings on 212 1066

The **Sydney Dance Company** has returned to Sydney after five months of touring, and opened with a brand new three-act work by Graeme Murphy — **NEARLY BELOVED**. Murphy takes characters from a country town in the 1950s showing them as a recognisable slice of Australian life. He gives us a pot-pourri of humour and pathos, a balance of past and present, reality and fantasy. The dancers have double roles: those they dance and those they portray in a full-scale Hollywood-style gangster movie, when the on-stage characters literally "go to the movies" in the opening scene. Until September 27 at the Drama Theatre, S.O.H. AETT discount \$3.00 Bookings on 2 0525



Stephen Page and Darren Spowart in **NEARLY BELOVED**

Although **WILD HONEY** has concluded the first part of its season for **Nimrod** at the Seymour Centre, it will return later in the year. Meanwhile Oliver Goldsmith's **SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER** continues with **THE MERCHANT OF VENICE** (see story page 4). **SHE STOOPS** is a delightful eighteenth-century comedy about a young man who finds it hard to relate to women from his own social milieu. So to win his heart the heroine pretends to be a barmaid. AETT discount \$2.00 (Tue to Fri) Bookings on 692 0555

There was drama off-stage when Barry Creyton broke his leg in Perth and was forced to retire from his role in **CORPSE**. Still it's an ill wind . . . and in

his place for the Sydney season is Keith Baxter, who played the role of the twin brothers in London. His co-star is Gordon Chater in the role of a hit man hired by one of the twins to murder the other. **CORPSE** continues at the Footbridge Theatre until September 13. AETT discount \$3.00 (except Fri and Sat evg) Bookings on 692 9955

ON TOP OF THE WORLD by Michael Gow began as a **Sydney Theatre Company** playreading in 1985. It is set on the Gold Coast roof of a luxury apartment where a retired father (played by Ron Haddrick) lives. The action takes place at a family birthday party where the characters reveal their long pent-up frustrations and anger (how true of so many family gatherings!). However, this is not a domestic drama but a bitter-sweet comedy with some very funny moments. Michael Gow describes the play as "*A post-baby boom family comedy with epic overtones*". Directed by Peter Kingston, it's at the Wharf Theatre until September 27. AETT discount \$2.00 (Mon to Thu and mats) Bookings on 250 1777

Kinsela's newest show, **STOP IN THE NAME OF LOVE**, is a froth and bubble all-girl tribute to the '50s and '60s and to those who sang the popular, delightful and, may we say, tuneful, music of that time. The show traces the rise and fall of the girls, their shows, their hits. Naomi Evers, Karen Johns and Sheryl Black are the singers — "Stop in the Name of Love", "Locomotion", "Walking in the Sand" are but a few of the songs everyone will recognise. At Kinsela's until September 20. AETT discount \$2.00 (except Fri and Sat show only) Bookings on 331 3100

Based on the story of a Queensland Aboriginal, Alwyn Peter, who was charged with murder in 1979, **STATE OF SHOCK** takes a look at the conditions of life on reserves in that State. Directed by Neil Armfeld, it's on at the Belvoir Street Theatre Downstairs until September 28. AETT discount \$2.00 Bookings on 699 3273

On Stage in London...

by Margaret Leask

London's West End seems to be suffering this summer from a lack of tourists, but there is no dearth of imported material on its stages. A transfer from Broadway (at the Apollo Theatre) is Herb Gardner's excellent comedy *I'M NOT RAPPAPORT* — a study of old age which brings a superb performance from Paul Scofield accompanied by Howard Rollins. Set in New York's Central Park, they play a pair of myopic octogenarians who share a bench and delight in fables. Another American play, starring Faye Dunaway, has transferred from Hampstead to the Wyndhams. Donald Freed's *CIRCE AND BRAVO* has Miss Dunaway (in a vivid and very watchable performance) playing the American First Lady under surveillance at Camp David because at a time of national alert, she does not share the President's belief in a winnable nuclear war. A flawed, uneasy play, Miss Dunaway faces very little real argument on stage as she confronts the Secret Ser-

vice man guarding her, but it is a thought-provoking piece and worth seeing for her performance.

To redress the balance somewhat, two British dramas are on stage at the RSC Barbican. Pam Gems' new large-scale *THE DANTON AFFAIR* (based on Stanislaw Przymyszewski's novel and directed by Ron Daniels), explores the clash between Danton and Robespierre, revolutionaries with identical aims but opposing personalities. While the play draws riveting performances from Ian McDiarmid as the cold, intellectual and incorruptible Robespierre, and Brian Cox as the warm, sensual and corrupt Danton, Miss Gems remains neutral, meticulously balancing the characters and their acts, leaving the audience wondering why or what she wanted to say about them.

Also at the Barbican in the small Pit Theatre is another new play — *THE DEAD MONKEY*, by Nick Darke. A

surreal, in turn funny and disturbing play, it explores the relationship of a Californian couple whose marriage has been based on their love and dependence on their surrogate "child", and the sequence of events following its death.

"New" musicals in the West End include Gillian Lynne's revival of *CABARET* at the Strand with dancer Wayne Sleep as the MC and Kelly Hunter as Sally Bowles. Michael Billington writing in the *Guardian* felt that despite the show's inherent indestructibility, the production "*almost smothers it in an atmosphere of hectic, strenuous decadence*". Meanwhile, at the other end of the scale, Suzi Quatro is Annie in the transferred Chichester production of *ANNIE GET YOUR GUN* at the Aldwych — all good clean fun!

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

Member Activities

RACE DAY AT RANDWICK

Wednesday, October 1, at 11.30 a.m.

The Members Committee's day at Randwick for the Spring Carnival is always a popular event, so book early if you'd like to attend this year. Lunch and afternoon tea will be provided in the Doncaster Room of the Members' Stand. Tickets are \$30, which also includes entry to the Members' Stand.

SUGAR BABIES DINNER

Tuesday, November 4

Come celebrate Melbourne Cup day with a pre-theatre dinner at well-known seafood restaurant, Cyren's, followed by a performance of *SUGAR BABIES*. Dinner tickets are \$23.00 each. Theatre tickets should be ordered separately.

BREAKFAST AT MISCHA'S

Thursday, September 11, at 9.45 a.m.

Do join us for a delicious breakfast and a parade of clothes by Mosman's Mimi Finley Boutique. Tickets are \$18 each, with proceeds to the Theatre of the Deaf.

SPOLETO IN MELBOURNE

Friday, September 19 to Sunday, September 21

There are still places available to join Sydney Committee President, Shirley Hay, on a three-day visit to Melbourne for the Spoleto Festival. It's the first time this prestigious Italian Festival has been presented in Melbourne so it will be an opportunity to see some fine theatre as well as to take in other activities, including a full-day visit to Sovereign Hill at Ballarat. Accommodation will be at the Regency Hotel and the all-inclusive cost is \$695 (including air fare) per person twin share. A \$50 per person deposit should be sent with your booking.

YOUNGER SET DINNER

Ensemble, Wednesday, September 24

Our younger set dinner before *CORPSE* was so well supported that we're organising another dinner for the under 45s in the Ensemble's delightful harbourside restaurant. Join us for dinner and then for Alan Ayckbourn's *AFFAIRS IN A TENT*. Tickets are \$32 each which includes dinner and the theatre.

DAY AT Tocal

Saturday, October 4

Tocal Homestead at Paterson is not normally open to the public, but Judy White, Trust Governor and authoress, has arranged an invitation for Trust Members to celebrate the launch of her book about the historical homestead. Members will see over the homestead and rural buildings and will then be given a picnic lunch. Tickets are \$38, which includes bus transport.

STOP PRESS! The visit to the Scone District scheduled for the weekend of August 30/31 has been changed to September 4/5. Anyone wanting to join the two-day trip which includes visits to some of the fine homes in the area should ring the Trust on 357 1200. AND keep October 31 free for a Halloween Party at Paddington Town Hall. More details October *Trust News*.

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.

Join us!
again!

The Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust and Continuing Education, University of NSW are pleased to announce the 1986/87 series of talks on THE MAGIC OF THEATRE. Subscription tickets are now available for sale. Any unsold tickets at October 1 will be offered for single ticket sale. But space is strictly limited so to avoid disappointment reserve your tickets now!

1 CLARE VENABLES – MONDAY, OCTOBER 20

The Crucible Theatre, Sheffield is the largest regional theatre in England and Clare Venables, as director, is the driving force behind the theatre's success. She has been brought to Australia by the Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust to direct the Australian production of LENNON, the musical about the life of John Lennon, which she directed for the London stage. LENNON opens in Sydney on October 16. Ms. Venables will talk both about her work for the Crucible Theatre and her involvement in the LENNON musical.

Clare Venables



2 JOAN LONG – MONDAY, NOVEMBER 24

One of the most distinguished figures in the Australian film industry today, Joan Long's career has encompassed both scriptwriting and production. She wrote screenplays for the feature films CADDIE and THE PICTURE SHOW MAN and is the producer of some of the best known feature films of the past decade – THE PICTURE SHOW MAN, PUBERTY BLUES and SILVER CITY. As well as supervising all aspects of their production, she continues to look after their marketing and the servicing of sales. Ms. Long will talk freely about her experiences as an independent producer.

Debra Lawrence and Gosia Dobrowolska in SILVER CITY.



3 DAVID KRAM – MONDAY, FEBRUARY 16

In any production of opera the role of the conductor is critical. It is the conductor who must bring together the musicians and the singers to create that magical harmony between voices and instruments which sets opera apart from other theatre forms. Following ten years conducting for major European opera houses, David Kram joined the Australian Opera as resident conductor in 1978 and has conducted such memorable works as DER ROSENKAVALIER and MADAMA BUTTERFLY. David Kram will attempt to crystallise the real and psychological effects of the conductor on the musicians, singers – and the audience.

Rosamund Hill as Cio-Cio-San in MADAMA BUTTERFLY



4 KIM CARPENTER – MONDAY, MARCH 2

There are few theatre professionals in Australia who are more concerned with the visual aspects of performance than Kim Carpenter. Commencing his career as a designer (and working on over 20 Nimrod productions), he has broadened his field to include direction and is now known as a designer-director. In 1985 he both directed and designed Nimrod's acclaimed production of A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM and earlier this year translated David Malouf's novel, AN IMAGINARY LIFE onto the stage. Kim Carpenter will give an audio-visual talk on visual aspects of theatre production from the point of view of the director/designer.

Angela Punch-McGregor and Hugo Weaving in A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM



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

BOOKING INFORMATION

5.30 pm – 6 pm	Tea/coffee and sandwiches in the theatre foyer
6 pm – 7 pm	Lecture and question time
7 pm – 7.30 pm	Discuss the evening's topic over a glass of wine in the foyer

Rocks Theatre,
(formerly Sydney Sailor's Home)
106-108 George Street, Sydney

PRICE SCHEDULE (all prices include refreshments)

	Series of 4 lectures
General Public	\$36.00
Trust Member & Student concession price	\$28.00
Trust Members: Please use the grey booking coupon in Trust News to order your tickets. Trust Members are limited to two tickets at T.M. price.	

Trust News

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