

Max Gillies stars in Trust Williamson production

THE DEPARTMENT

by David Williamson

Directed by Rodney Fisher

Designed by Shaun Gurton

Lighting by Nick Schlieper

Cast: Max Gillies, Tracy Mann, Helmut Bakaitis, Ben Gabriel, Ron Graham, Jeff Morrell, Matthew O'Sullivan, Kris Ralph, John Sheerin, Paul Williams

"Williamson's best play is an assured, rounded, acidly understanding dissection of bureaucracy."

Garrie Hutchinson, *The Australian*

"The funnier it gets — and it is very funny — the more urgently Williamson asks: how can anything be made to work, from a relationship between two people right through to an educational institution when human beings are the headstrong, contrary, passionate and self-seeking creatures that they are?"

Ron Blair, *Sydney Morning Herald*

Often hailed as Williamson's best play, perhaps because it mirrors his early life as a teacher and, therefore, a lot of its content comes from his own experience, **THE DEPARTMENT** is an ascerbic dissection of the world of the committee meeting. Robby, the head of the department, desperately tries to conduct a staff meeting — he contrives, he cajoles, he manipulates, sometimes he flounders, but always manages to remain ahead (just) of the rest! There are marvellous cameos in the rest of the staff: Gordon, the plain-talking technician, tolerated because of his practical abilities; Bobby, the perpetual procrastinator, never able to finish his work because he had to have a yarn with someone he ran into in the corridor; Al, perpetually in a turmoil because he hasn't had time to get anything done; and Peter Ph.D., whose attitude to student radicals harks back to the 1960s — confrontation. No wonder it was such a success in bureaucratic Canberra; no wonder it continues to be so apt today, exposing the bumbledom of public service in Australia. As ever, David Williamson is the chronicler of his own generation.



Max Gillies

Max Gillies in the lead role of Robby heads a strong cast, which also includes Tracy Mann, who has just completed a season at the Wharf Theatre in **WHEN I WAS A GIRL**. Max Gillies needs little introduction. He became a national treasure with his remarkable impersonations in TV's **THE MAX GILLIES SHOW**, and is currently playing in Alan Ayckbourn's **A CHORUS OF DISAPPROVAL** for the Melbourne Theatre Company. He's playing the role of Dafydd, the director of an amateur operatic society, a character well-suited to Gillies' personality since he loves to play every part in the opera, and is totally unable to delegate. In **THE DEPARTMENT** he once again takes on a "power" part. Whether it's Hawke, Dafydd or Robby, as Gillies says, *"I just don't get offered many parts as wimps."*

Trust Members are invited to attend a preview performance on Monday evening, October 26, when they may purchase as many tickets as they wish at \$8.00 per ticket discount. A \$3.00 per ticket discount applies at all other performances. See Member Activities (page 8) for pre-theatre dinner.

BOOKING INFORMATION

York Theatre, Seymour Centre

Tue Oct 27 to Sat Nov 14

Mon to Sat at 8 p.m.

Sat at 2 p.m.

Wed matinee time unconfirmed

AETT \$23.90 (Mon to Thu and mats),

\$24.90 (Fri/Sat), \$19.90 (Oct 26)

G.P. \$26.90 (Mon to Thu and mats),

\$27.90 (Fri/Sat)

Pens/Stud \$19.90 (Mon to Thu and

mats)

Two AETT tickets per Member except

Oct 26

Multilingual Drama

THE JOURNEY by Tes Lyssiotis
Directed by Tes Lyssiotis
Designed by Kenneth Evans
Music by Michael Kyriakakis and Stelios Tsolias
Cast: Lu Beranek, Fiona Corke, Evdokia Katahanas, Roberto Micali, Mary Portesi, Nikos Zakardis

The Australian Content Department of the Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust (which earlier this year presented the acclaimed production of *MAGPIE'S NEST* and *CHO CHO SAN*) will tour the Melbourne-based Filiki Players to Wollongong, Newcastle, Brisbane and Sydney in their production of *THE JOURNEY*.

THE JOURNEY portrays the lives, experiences and outlook of migrants who came to Australia in the early '30s and '50s. The interaction between the various old and new Australian cultures is depicted with bitter-sweet humour as we see the conflicts of these families and their children within an often hostile environment.



Nikos Zakardis and Fiona Corke in *THE JOURNEY*

THE JOURNEY is an important breakthrough in Australian drama as it is performed by a multilingual company. Three languages — English, Greek and Italian — are cleverly combined to create a dynamic dialogue accessible to everyone.

BOOKING INFORMATION
 Wharf Studio
 Tue Sep 29 to Sat Oct 3
 Tue to Fri at 8.15 p.m.
 Sat 2.15 p.m. and 8.15 p.m.
 AETT \$13.00
 G.P. \$16.00
 Pens/Stud \$8.00

Theme Variation

THE ODD COUPLE by Neil Simon
Directed by John Krummel
Designed by Graham MacLean
Lighting by Tony Youlden
Cast: Kerry McGuire, Amanda Muggleton, Robina Beard, John Hanna, Liz Harris, Denise Kirby, Lynne Porteous, Tony Sheldon
Northside Theatre Company

Who can forget the marvellous original *ODD COUPLE* of Walter Matthau and Jack Lemmon. Now Northside Theatre Company are presenting a female version of one of Neil Simon's funniest plays. Kerry McGuire and Amanda Muggleton star as the odd couple. Divorced from her husband, Olive lives in the cheerful chaos of her bachelor flat. Enter Florence, newly separated and suicidal (or so she says). She moves in and is soon cooking, polishing, tidying-up — all the things that annoyed and lost her her husband in the first place. Olive is reduced to a nervous wreck and wait and see what happens when the Spanish brothers from upstairs arrive for dinner.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Marian Street Theatre
 Sun Sep 20 to Sun Oct 4
 Tues to Sat at 8.15 p.m.
 Sat and Sun 5.00 p.m.
 Wed mat at 11.00 a.m.
 AETT \$16.90 (Mon to Fri and mats except Sep 23)
 G.P. \$19.90
 Pens/Stud \$10.90 (except Fri and Sat evg)

Tour De Force

LILLIAN by William Luce (based on the autobiographical works of Lillian Hellman)
Directed by Egil Kipste
Designer: Michael Scott-Mitchell
Lighting: Mark Shelton
Cast: Jennifer Claire

LILLIAN is a veritable tour de force for the actress playing the title role. Jennifer Claire has long been acknowledged as one of Australia's most talented actresses. Here she plays Lillian Hellman, the American author. The date is 1961, the place the ante-room of a hospital ward where her lover and



Jennifer Claire

friend of 30 years lies dying of cancer. He is the detective author, Dashiell Hammett, and in her reminiscing, *LILLIAN* captures the humour, the anger, the affection and the heroism of their relationship. Lillian Hellman shares her life story, from her childhood in New Orleans to her appearances before the McCarthy Committee on Un-American Activities. She demonstrates her fierce independence and her determination not to conform, and as the play ends and she is told of her lover's death, shows the poignancy of her life.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Drama Theatre, S.O.H.
 Tue Sep 29 to Sat Oct 17
 Mon to Thu, and Sat at 8 p.m.
 Fri at 5.30 p.m. and 8.30 p.m.
 Sat mats at 2 p.m.
 AETT \$22.00 (except Fri/Sat evg)
 G.P. \$25.00
 Pens/Stud \$19.00 (Mon to Thu and Sat mats)
 Two AETT tickets per Member

Aussie Holiday!

CARAVAN by Donald Macdonald takes a light-hearted look at the holiday you should never have! Five best friends, nudging forty (and unhappily at that) take their first holiday together in a caravan. One brings along his all-to-young girlfriend and in the confined space tensions rise and laughter begins. A salutary look at age, friendship and holidays. This is the fourth production of the Forest Theatre Company, which has quickly succeeded in establishing itself as a highly successful force on the North Shore. *CARAVAN* had its Australian premiere in 1983 at the Opera House

and was then taken on tour by the Trust throughout Australia. It will be directed by Peter Williams and there will be special Trust Members' performances on Saturday, October 17 (matinee) and Monday, October 19 (evening). Members may purchase as many tickets as they wish at a \$6.00 per ticket discount. See Member Activities for October 19 pre-theatre dinner (\$32.00, including dinner and theatre tickets)!

BOOKING INFORMATION

Glen Street Theatre
Wed Oct 14 to Sat Nov 14
Mon to Sat at 8 p.m.
Wed mat 1.00 p.m., Sat mat 2.00 p.m.
AETT \$19.90, \$16.90 (Oct 17 and 19)
G.P. \$22.90
Pens/Stud \$14.90
Two AETT tickets per Member (except Oct 17 and 19)

Tennessee Williams

A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE

by Tennessee Williams

Directed by Roger Hodgman

Designed by Tony Tripp

Cast: Helen Morse, Sandy Harbutt, Barbara Stephens, Peter Curtin, Valerie Lehman, John Murphy, Jan Friedl, Lorna Holloway, Douglas Hedge, Paul English, Kurt Geyer
Her Majesty's Theatre

"They told me to take a Streetcar named Desire" are the famous first lines spoken by Blanche Du Bois in the play of that name — the young playwright, Tennessee Williams, took this image of a journey towards the ultimate in human passion and created one of the most poignant dramas of our



Helen Morse in *STREETCAR*

time. Blanche, the melancholy ageing Southern belle, arrives to visit her sister. Gradually, she reveals that far from being a respectable schoolteacher, she has a reputation for seducing teenage boys and has been the scandal of her home town. Her brief marriage to a homosexual, who later committed suicide, has further upset the balance of her mind. The last act of cruelty that she encounters in her sister's home seals her doom. One of the greatest female stage roles, Blanche Du Bois, is played by Helen Morse in a Melbourne Theatre Company production.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Her Majesty's Theatre
Sat Oct 24 to Sat Nov 21
Mon to Sat at 8 p.m.
Wed and Sat mats
AETT \$23.90 (all performances)
G.P. \$26.90
Pens/Stud \$19.90 (excl Fri/Sat evg)
Two AETT tickets per Member

Griffin Premiere

THE SECRET HOUSE

by Noel Hodda

Directed by Michael Gow

Designed by Judith Hoddinott

Cast: David Franklin, Bob Hornery, Susan Leith, Pat Thomson
Stables Theatre

THE GRIFFIN THEATRE COMPANY ends its 1987 season with a world premiere of a play by Noel Hodda, *THE SECRET HOUSE*, directed by the playwright Michael Gow (*AWAY, EUROPE, ON TOP OF THE WORLD*).

Glen returns home for his birthday a year after the death of his twin brother, hoping that his family has come to terms with the loss. Instead, he finds them still grieving. *THE SECRET HOUSE* deals with the emotions of a family and their efforts to resolve their tragedy.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Tue Sep 8 to Sun Oct 18
Tue to Sat at 8.15 p.m.
Sat and Sun at 5.00 p.m.
AETT \$12.00
G.P. \$14.00
Stud/Pens \$9.00
Two AETT tickets per Member

An Olympic Spoof

OLYMPUS ON MY MIND

by Barry Harman

Music by Grant Sturiale

Directed by Jim Fishburn

Cast: Bartholomew John, Billie Wilde, Michael-John Hurney, Judy Glen, Doug Scroope, Honor Murphy and Craig Horwood

The gods of ancient Greece certainly had some interesting experiences and Barry Harman selected just one of them and turned it into a musical bedroom farce.



The cast of *OLYMPUS ON MY MIND*

Jupiter (Bartholomew John) takes a fancy to Alcmene, the wife of Greek general Amphitryon. While Amphitryon is away at a battle, Jupiter impersonates him in order to spend a night with his wife. He takes along his son, Mercury (Michael-John Hurney) who dons the guise of Amphitryon's off-sider, Sosia. Jupiter behaves like a lovesick teenager after discovering the joys of mortal love but Mercury doesn't have such fun — Sosia's wife turns out to be a vinegary shrew!

The show is based on Heinrich van Kleist's "Amphitryon", written in 1807, but don't let that put you off — it's all in fun. Even the chorus is a send-up with three smirking male hoofers (Tom, Dick and Horace) and an out-of-step chorus girl, Delores.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Footbridge Theatre
Sat Oct 17 to Sat Nov 7
Mon to Sat at 8 p.m.
Wed and Sat at 2 p.m.
AETT \$24.50 (except Fri/Sat evg)
G.P. \$28.50
Pens/Stud \$18.50 (except Fri/Sat evg)
Two AETT tickets per Member

Argue on Thin Ice

Kinselas have done it again! This time, they have David Argue skating on an ice rink specially designed by his father. DAVID ARGUE ON EVEN THINNER ICE is a family affair; the choreography is by his mother, the routines feature his sister, Michelle, and brother Greg. Highlights of this unusual evening include a sketch on "Last Stupdenda", a send-up of the figure-skating duo "Heinrick and Magda" and a strip-tease by Roberta Quack, the disco duck queen. There will be two special preview nights on Tuesday, September 29 and Wednesday, September 30, when the price of dinner and show will be \$25 (no limit on tickets).

BOOKING INFORMATION

Kinselas

Thu Oct 1 to Sat Nov 7

Mon to Sat at 7 p.m. (dinner) and 8.30 p.m. (show)

AETT \$20.00 show only (Mon to Thu)

\$25.00 dinner and show (Sep 29/30)

\$33.00 dinner and show (Mon to Thu)

\$36.00 dinner and show (Fri and Sat)

G.P. \$22.00 show only (Mon to Thu)

\$35.00 dinner and show (Mon to Thu)

\$25.00 show only (Fri and Sat)

\$38.00 dinner and show (Fri and Sat)

Two AETT tickets per Member (except Sep 29 and Sep 30)

Ayckbourn Comedy

WOMAN IN MIND

by Alan Ayckbourn

Directed by Richard Wherrett

Settings and costumes by Roger Kirk

Lighting design by Nigel Levings

Cast includes Robyn Nevin

When WOMAN IN MIND opened in London last September it was generally well received by the critics. In particular the *Guardian* newspaper commented that "Any lingering suspicion that Alan Ayckbourn is a boulevard lightweight should be ruthlessly dispelled by WOMAN IN MIND. It is about female frustration, despair and madness and shows its heroine torn between reality and fantasy, God and the Devil."

The play is about Susan, wife of a boring, self-absorbed vicar and unutterably depressed by the certainty that everything here today will be here

tomorrow. Mild concussion after stepping on a garden rake catapults her mind into a fantasy blueprint of the highlife she wishes she had — a grand house, passionate husband, loving family. But as her two worlds collide, fantasy fails her and there is neither escape nor consolation.

Yet despite its non trivial subject the play, in typical Ayckbourn style, is very funny. Robyn Nevin stars in the lead role of Susan. Trust Member performances when Members may purchase as many tickets as they wish are Thursday, October 1 and Saturday matinee October 3.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Drama Theatre, S.O.H.

Tue Sep 29 to Sat Oct 24

Mon to Sat at 8 p.m.

Wed at 1 p.m., Sat at 2 p.m.

AETT \$24.00 (Mon to Thu and Sat mat), \$22.00 (Oct 1 and Oct 3) (2 p.m.)

G.P. \$27.00

Pens/Stud \$22.00 (Mon to Thu and Sat mat)

Two AETT tickets per Member (except Oct 1, Oct 3 mat)

Stein and Toklas

In her play, GERTRUDE STEIN AND A COMPANION, Win Wells brings out the essence of the relationship between Alice B. Toklas and her loving companion of over forty years, Gertrude Stein. This play was one of



Miriam Margolyes in GERTRUDE STEIN

the highlights of the 1986 Sydney Festival and Miriam Margolyes, the English actress, will once again be playing Gertrude Stein. The part of her companion, Alice, will be played by the Melbourne actress, Pamela Rabe, who

received critical acclaim for her starring role in CHO CHO SAN at the Belvoir Street Theatre earlier this year. Sonia Fraser, who directed the original production, will be coming from England to direct.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Belvoir Theatre Upstairs

Wed Oct 7 to Sat Oct 31

Tue to Sat at 8 p.m.

Wed mat 2.00 p.m.

Sat and Sun at 5.00 p.m.

AETT \$16.00

G.P. \$20.00

Stud/Pens \$12.00

Two AETT tickets per Member

What a Dilemma!

DOUBLE ACT by Barry Creyton

Directed by Sandra Bates

Designed by Tom Bannerman

Starring Barry Creyton and Noeline Brown

DOUBLE ACT is a witty exposé of the private lives of two urbane people. It poses the delightful dilemma of what happens when two people fall in love, find they can't live apart so get married, find they can't live together, so get divorced. Later they meet again and again find that while they can't live apart, they also can't live together. What a problem!

Barry Creyton, who has written this light-hearted farce, will co-star in the production with Noeline Brown. There are two special Trust nights on Tuesday, September 29 and Wednesday, September 30, when Members may purchase as many tickets as they like at a \$4.00 discount per ticket.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Ensemble Theatre

Sat Sep 19 to Sun Oct 18

Tue to Sat at 8 p.m.

Thu at 11 a.m., Sat and Sun at 5 p.m.

AETT \$13.00 (Sep 29 and 30)

\$15.00 (Tue to Thu), \$17.00 (Fri),

\$12.00 (Sat and Sun mat), \$10.00 (Thu mat),

G.P. \$17.00 (Tue to Thu), \$19.00 (Fri and Sat), \$15.00 (Sat and Sun mat),

\$13.00 (Thu mat)

Pens/Stud \$12.00 (Tue to Fri)

\$11.00 (Sat and Sun mat), \$10.00 (Thu mat)

Two AETT tickets per Member except Sep 29/30

Robeson Tribute

Following a sell-out season in Brisbane and prior to a national tour, *DEEP BELLS RING*, a study of the life and songs of Paul Robeson, will play at the Seymour Centre.

Who can forget Paul Robeson's rendering of "The Volga Boat Song", "Old Man River", and his performance in "Sanders of the River". He identified with the poor and downtrodden and had a life-long crusade for world peace and justice.



Margaret RoadKnight

The cast for *DEEP BELL RING* includes the folk and blues singer Margaret RoadKnight, Jeannie Lewis and Mark Penman. Two actors link the songs with snippets from the singer's life.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Everest Theatre, Seymour Theatre Centre
Wed Sep 23 to Sat Oct 3
Tue to Thu 8 p.m.
Fri 7 p.m. and 10 p.m.
Sat 2 p.m. and 8 p.m.
AETT \$13.00
G.P. \$16.00
Stud/Pens \$10.00
Two AETT tickets per Member

Walkers and Talkers

A MOUTHFUL OF BIRDS

by Caryl Churchill and David Lan

Directed by Hilary Beaton

Designed by Peter Bartlett

Cast: Mary Regan, Laney Tupu, May Lloyd, Gary Stalker

Earlier this year, the newest theatre company in Sydney, Walkers and Talkers, attracted critical acclaim with their presentation of *SHOUT ACROSS*

THE RIVER. Their second production, the Australian premiere of *A MOUTHFUL OF BIRDS*, will be presented at the Wharf Studio theatre in September, hot on the heels of its extended season at the Royal Court Theatre in London, where it was voted the critics' choice in *Time Out* magazine. Written by Caryl Churchill, author of *TOP GIRLS*, *CLOUD NINE* and David Lan, author of *FLIGHT*, the play probes the hidden corners of seven characters who leave their normal existence for obsessions beyond their control. Their stories deal with possession, ecstasy and abandonment — a modern version of *THE BACCHAE* perhaps? *Time Out* described it as a play of "compassion, humour, beauty and intelligence".

BOOKING INFORMATION

Wharf Studio Theatre
Fri Sep 4 to Sat Sep 26
Mon to Sat at 8 p.m.
Sat mats 2 p.m.
AETT \$16.00
G.P. \$20.00
Pens/Stud \$15.00
Two AETT tickets per Member

SDC Return

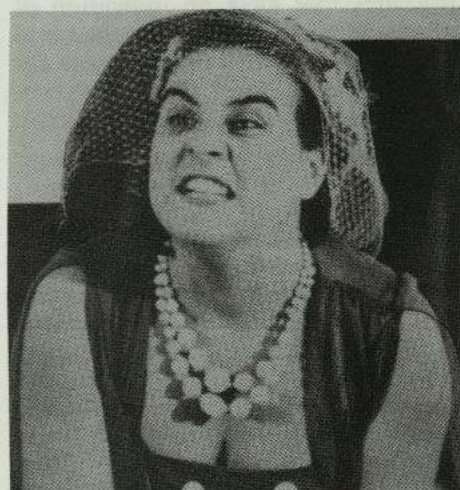
After over fourteen weeks of extensive touring in Australia and overseas, the Sydney Dance Company is back for its annual season at the Opera Theatre. The company will present a two programme season and Graeme Murphy has chosen his two most powerful full-length works that have proved so popular with audiences. *AFTER VENICE*, Murphy's re-telling of Thomas Mann's "Death in Venice", opens the season. Garth Welch will dance the role of Aschenbach. *SHINING*, which is a pure dance work to music by Karol Szymanowski, follows.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Opera Theatre, S.O.H.
AFTER VENICE:
Wed Nov 4 to Sat Nov 14
SHINING:
Tue Nov 17 to Sat Nov 28
Mon to Sat at 7.30 p.m.
Sat at 4 p.m. (except Nov 21)
AETT \$23.50
G.P. \$27.50
Stud/Pens \$22.50
Two AETT tickets per Member

At the Space

Seasons by two Sydney-based companies who specialise in an innovative approach to theatrical performance will be presented at the Cleveland Street Performance Space in September. The Margaret Barr Dance Drama Group will present *PUEBLO DE MAIZ*, *COMING OF THE RAINS* and *WILD COLONIAL BOY*. For the first work, Margaret Barr has researched the culture and traditions of the people of Guatemala and the dramatic presentation is complemented by the music of Ricardo Andino, from El Salvador. *COMING OF THE RAINS* is an abstract work set to music by Laurie Hagerty and *WILD COLONIAL BOY*, a black satire with music sung by Cecil Grivas.



Sidetrack Theatre Company in *KIN*

Following successful seasons in Canberra and Brisbane, the Sidetrack Theatre Company will present a season of their new play *KIN* for a four-week season. *KIN* is the result of a collaboration between Pat Cranney, writer, Gail Kelly, director, and Jim Cotter, composer. It melds music, comedy and drama into a compelling story of three women, their families and their search for identity in Australia.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Performance Space
Margaret Barr Dance Drama Group:
Thu Sep 3 to Sun Sep 13
Thu, Fri, Sat at 8 p.m.
Sun at 2.00 p.m. (except Sep 6)
Sidetrack Theatre Company:
Wed Sep 6 to Sat Oct 10
Tue to Sat at 8 p.m.
AETT discount \$1.00
Bookings on 699 5091

Where have all the old picture theatres gone?

by Patricia Roberts

"One seemed to have stepped from under the dull skies of everyday life and passed into an enchanted region where the depth of the blue heavens had something magical about it and something heavily exotic. Clouds passed lightly over then the stars began to twinkle. Then all was blue and clear." So said *The Sydney Morning Herald's* reviewer following the first performance in Sydney's Capitol Theatre in 1927.

The rise of the 1920's picture palaces had been preceded by a decade of building characterised by barn-like structures that gave no indication of the splendour to come. With the rapid growth in the Australian market for films the large American studios competed to provide the best entertainment possible, including the buildings in which to show them.

This led to exotic "picture palaces" being designed. Cinema architects attempted to make these theatres as much an attraction as the moving pictures themselves. Many of the theatres lavishly affected the decoration of European opera houses. The effect of this, for the working class patron, was the removal of social distinction. It was the poor man's dream.

In 1914 approximately 350,000 people attended Sydney cinemas every

week and by 1916 this had risen to 427,000. There were 18 cinemas in the city and 96 in the suburbs. By comparison the population was only about one-third of what it is today. In 1985 the three largest cinema companies in Sydney operated only 16 suburban auditoria and a total of 21 city theatres where the move had been to centralise the auditoria into complexes.

More than the loss of numbers is the loss of historically significant architecture and style. Very few examples remain in Sydney of the art deco influence on theatre design. Suburban theatres suffered the most. They were originally built to cater for much larger audiences than are now economical. In the Sydney city region there are only two remaining examples besides the Capitol — the State Theatre in Market Street and the Regent in George Street.

The picture palaces of the 'twenties were inspired by U.S. creations and sometimes directly copied them, but the link with the U.S. was more than just cinema design. Australia was the largest importer of American films outside of North America, and imported twice as much as Great Britain.

While the lavish effects of the picture palaces appealed to the audiences, conservative architects rejected the latest

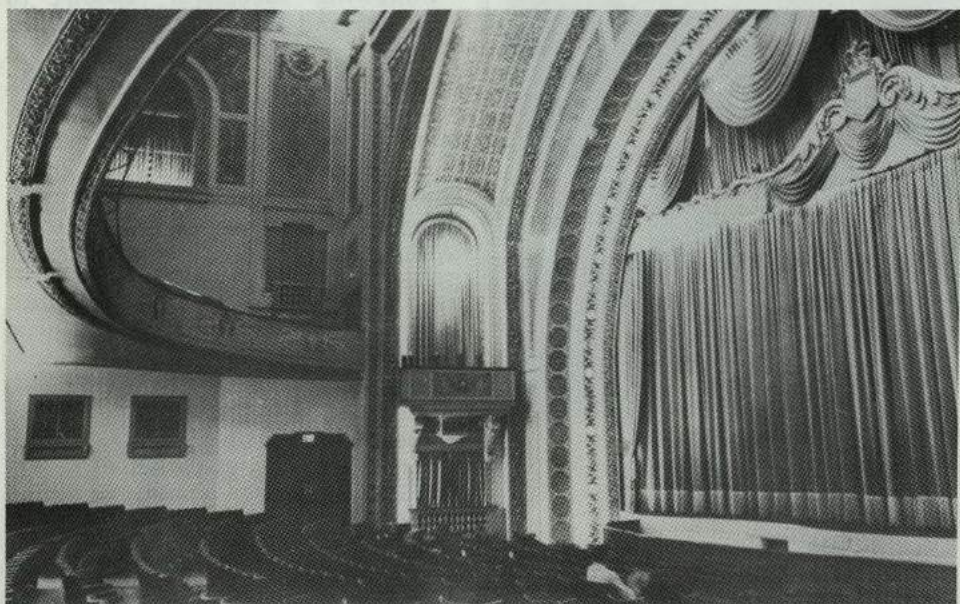
in cinema design as faddish and vulgar. They expected correctness in revivalist design, not a mixture of architectural style and effect that is so often found. Audiences, however, flocked to the new cinemas and American architects such as John Eberson, delighted them by creating Mediterranean walled gardens, open to the sky.

The really lavish cinemas commenced with the Prince Edward in Sydney, the Wintergarden in Brisbane and the Capitol in Melbourne. They all opened within a few months of each other towards the end of 1924.

The Prince Edward was one of Sydney's best loved theatres. This remarkable theatre ran between Elizabeth and Castlereagh Streets with the entrance in Castlereagh Street. Subtitled "Theatre Beautiful", it lived up to its name. Decorated with fine Italian marble and glittering chandeliers, it featured a Wurlitzer Pipe Organ and a hydraulically raised orchestra platform which enabled live shows to be incorporated into its cinema programme.

Described by architect and writer Robin Boyd as "*possibly the finest picture theatre ever built anywhere*" the Melbourne Capitol was erected in 1925-27 opposite the Town Hall in Swanston Street. It was designed by Canberra's planner, Walter Burley Griffin. Its elaborately modelled plaster ceiling conceals coloured lights which change through many hues and intensities. The 2000-seat capacity was reduced in 1965 to 785 seats with the building of a shopping arcade through the theatre's lowest level. Australian cinema exhibitors and distributors, Natalie Miller and Michael Walsh, have taken over the cinema. It is now being used as a prestige showcase for the finest in international cinema.

The site of Sydney's Capitol Theatre was originally known as the Haymarket Reserve and was used from the late 1980s as an open market on a Saturday night, complete with stalls and entertainment for passers-by. After the fruit markets had expanded and could no longer be used there, the circus owners, Wirth Brothers, obtained a lease for part of the site and operated a circus. It



Regent Theatre, Sydney. Photo courtesy The Macmillan Company

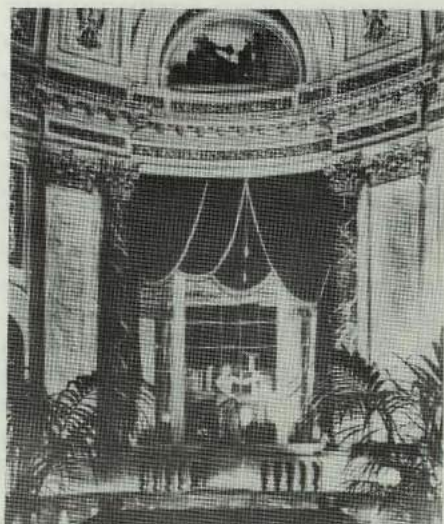
was known as the Hippodrome. The Hippodrome became the Capitol in 1927 when Union Theatre took over the lease and remodelled the interior. So the present auditorium is the result of two remodellings which changed a fruit market into a circus amphitheatre and an amphitheatre into an "atmospheric" cinema auditorium.

Architect Henry White and Union manager Stuart Doyle had been travelling the U.S. when they found the design they wanted to use for the Capitol. They had inspected Eberson's "Riviera" theatre in Omaha and were impressed by its atmospheric design. "Atmospheric" design was Eberson's specialty and involved creating the illusion of an Italian walled garden, open to the sky, in the auditorium. The walls were painted to resemble a garden and the roof was made to look like the sky, complete with stars and clouds. These effects were achieved by special cinema projectors that made scudding clouds disappear across the sky and lights that threw cypress pines onto the walls.

The Italian theme used in the Capitol's auditorium was carried through to the foyer. In the centre stood a gilded and elaborate ticket box, and on either side marble stairs led up to the auditorium. The ornate decoration imitates the medieval Italian architecture of the aristocracy and looks incongruous in a cinema. However, the theatre drew the crowds and being situated in the downtown area, the attraction and curiosity of the new cinema had to be great.

At the moment the theatre is vacant, awaiting redevelopment. In April 1985 the Capitol had a interim conservation order placed on it. A permanent conservation order was placed on the theatre on May 29, 1987.

Many of the theatres of the 1920s period were designed as a mixture of styles. The Capitol is an example with its new style auditorium and imitation medieval Italian foyer. Some of the more extreme examples included non-European features such as Chinese, Indian and Hindu features with other traditional elements. The Regents, a series of theatres built by Hoyts in capital cities, tried to avoid this. The Sydney Regent Theatre was built in 1929 and its design stems from early Renaissance architecture, with some features from Gothic.



The Rotunda of the State Theatre, Sydney
Photo courtesy The Macmillan Company

As a result, the building invokes a sense of state and grandeur. The size of its entrance foyer, the grand staircase and the barrel-vaulted dress circle, reproduce features of the Renaissance period. Only reproduction period furniture was used to decorate the surroundings, and this added to the effect.

Like the Capitol, the Regent has been in the news in recent years. Following an inquiry by the Heritage Council in 1979, a permanent protection order was placed on certain features of the theatre, the grand staircase, the exterior facade and the foyer. The future of the Regent Theatre as a whole has recently been the subject of a public enquiry by the Offices of the Commissioners of Inquiry. As a result of the public enquiry a report has been presented to the Minister for Heritage and is under consideration by him at the present time.

The State Theatre in Market Street closed in 1980 for complete restoration. The auditorium had not been

painted for 50 years, plaster decoration was chipped and peeling, upholstery was worn and needed replacing. When it re-opened, the theatre captured some of the original glamour of the period. With the opening of the musical RASPUTIN last month the theatre is now being used for live theatre for the first time in its history.

The State, of all the theatres, is perhaps the greatest example of the mixing effect. All the styles employed are European in nature but sometimes quite different in time and origin. The entrance hall is based on 14th century Gothic architecture. The auditorium imitates scenes and styles of the French Kings Louis XIV and Louis XVI, while the two stairways in the Grand Assembly were prefabricated in Italy. Many decorations in the State have been copied to create an effect but much is real or expensively reproduced. Much of the furniture and fittings were chosen by Doyle during visits to Europe. The effect of the theatre is one of opulence. Apart from the surroundings, the theatre provided an army of usherettes. This was common among many of the larger theatres and in particular the Prince Edward.

The State was one of the last theatres to be built before the depression of the 1930s. With the advent of sound films during this period, cinema was kept alive, but the expansive designs of the '20s period were curtailed. As such, the State represents the height of lavish design and decoration of this period.

Today, much more money is poured into film production than into cinemas. The 1920s was a unique period of cinema design and building that is not likely to be repeated and so the few remaining examples of this type of architecture are especially significant. With the Darling Harbour Scheme and the redevelopment of the Anthony Hordern's building, the face of the downtown Sydney area will rapidly change. Such changes, from lavish neo-European architecture through to the functionality of modern entertainment venues, can be best appreciated when the 1920s picture palaces are considered in the wider context of the on-going patterns of development in Sydney architecture.

We need your help!

The Sydney City Council is currently reviewing the possibility of renovating the Capitol Theatre for use as a 2000-seat Lyric Theatre. **Sydney Needs Another Theatre.** So we won't miss out on such attractions as the Royal Shakespeare Company and others which currently pass us by or are economically impossible, we urge Trust Members to write to: Sir Eric Neal, Chief Commissioner, Sydney City Council, G.P.O. Box 1591, Sydney 2001. By expressing your support for the Capitol Theatre renovation, you can help save the Capitol.

Patricia Roberts is a free-lance journalist with a particular interest in history and the environment.

Member Activities

ENSEMBLE FASHION PARADE

Wednesday, September 2 at 12 noon

There's just time to ring in and book for our Members' Committee luncheon and fashion parade at the Ensemble Theatre in Kirribilli. Both the luncheon and fashion parade will be held in the Theatre Restaurant with its splendid outlook over Sydney Harbour. Fashions are from the Mimi Finley boutique of Mosman. Tickets are \$30 each and friends are very welcome.

SWAN PREMIUM TENNIS

Wednesday, October 14 at 5.45 p.m.

Sydney Entertainment Centre

We feel sure there are many Members who'd appreciate a chance to watch the Australian Indoor Championships in convivial company. A buffet meal will be served from 5.45 p.m. with tennis to follow. We expect to have the opportunity of meeting at least some of the players prior to the start of play. Tickets, including the meal, are \$42 each.

WEEKEND IN TAMWORTH

October 3 to 5

Trust Governor Shirley Hay's tour of the Tamworth district is shaping up to be a weekend to remember. The tour will include a visit to Harry and Wendy Miller's property at Manilla as well as the famous Goonoo Goonoo property. A visit to Arrowfield Wineries will be included on the outward journey. The trip departs early Saturday, October 3, and returns Monday evening. All-inclusive price, which includes bus transport, accommodation, meal and entries, is \$265.

THE DEPARTMENT DINNER

Monday, October 26

Seymour Centre

The Seymour Centre restaurant is the venue for a pre-theatre dinner prior to the special Trust Member preview of David Williamson's play THE DEPARTMENT. Tickets are \$22.00, which includes two-course meal with wine and coffee. Friends are very wel-

come! Theatre tickets should be ordered separately.

CARAVAN DINNER

Monday, October 19 at 6 p.m.

A delightful meal of bagels, crepes or pasta with pastries to follow is served at the Glen Street Coffee Shop prior to performances. The Trust night for CARAVAN at the Glen Street Theatre, Frenchs Forest, seems an ideal time to try out their fare and at \$32 for two-course dinner with wine and coffee and theatre tickets, it's a bargain.

RACE DAY AT RANDWICK

Wednesday, September 30 at 11.45 a.m.

The Spring Meeting is a rare opportunity for non-AJC Members to be able to enjoy the facilities of the Members Stand. Our special day at Randwick includes lunch in the Doncaster Room and guest of honour will be famous Gunsynd jockey Kevin Langby. Tickets are \$35.00 each.

Dialogue

by Carole Long, Membership Manager

As I'm writing this column at the beginning of August we're all reeling from one of the busiest months on record. It's great to have so much activity but it's brought membership staff to their knees and our devoted volunteers are about to walk out *en masse*! So what's happening? Mailings to Art Gallery subscribers and Sydney Theatre Company subscribers to encourage them to join the Trust brought an amazing response. Our average intake of new Members per month rose from about 150 to nearly 500! A big welcome to these new Members. We hope you will make the most of all the services we offer and that we'll have the chance to meet you in the next couple of months at one of our new Members receptions (an invitation will be mailed to you shortly).

Whose law is it that says if things can clash they will? July turned

out to be one of the most difficult months on record for our ticketing service. The opening of RASPUTIN was delayed twice, we had problems with BOLSHOI BALLET tickets and the Australia Day performance of LES MISERABLES was cancelled. It all added up to hundreds of phone calls to Members, which just added to the pressures. Still, we've all lived to see another day, but the unusually large amount of personal contact with Members this month brought home to me that many Members don't fully appreciate how our booking service works, so a word of explanation won't go amiss. We are not a ticketing agency in the accepted sense of the word. We don't have stocks of tickets on hand, but when we receive your ticket order we arrange to obtain tickets from the appropriate theatre on your behalf. This means that instead of having a choice of a limited number of tickets

allocated to an agency we have a much wider choice of tickets *provided that we receive your booking early*. If the seats available are not what we consider to be good seats we ring you to ask if you want to accept the seats, change to another night or have a refund. So although we can't guarantee you good seats when you place an order you can be assured that if good seats aren't available you won't just be sent poor seats, but will be offered alternatives. It's a personal service that is highly valued by the many Members who use our booking service regularly. You can help us to help you by booking as soon as possible after receiving *Trust News*.

Carole Long

THE LIGHTHORSEMEN

directed by Simon Wincer

Produced by Ian Jones and Simon Wincer

Screenplay by Ian Jones

Starring Peter Phelps, John Walton, Tim McKenzie, Jon Blake, Gary Sweet, Anthony Andrews, Sigrid Thornton
Opening September 10 at Hoyts

The glamour of the Light Horse with the emu plumes fluttering on their slouch hats is a proud memory for older Australians. Now their historic feats in World War I are celebrated again in a new film — **THE LIGHTHORSEMEN**.

The logistics of the film make formidable reading. A complete Middle East desert was built in outback South Australia, complete with 20 metre palm trees, minarets, substantial buildings, tunnels and dugouts, tanks, 300 riders and horses, as well as the contructions necessary for film crews. All the uniforms had to be specially manufactured and emu plumes obtained from Western Australia. A rare storm hit after weeks of building and demolished most of the set. Worse still, the desert turned green — nice for the local graziers but not for the crew.



Sigrid Thornton in **THE LIGHTHORSEMEN**

The screenplay covers the lead-up to and the 1917 charge at Beersheba in Palestine, which followed the formation of the Light Horse in 1914, its service in Egypt and at Gallipoli for which the regiment volunteered to leave their horses behind and fight as infantry.

The story centres on a tight-knit four-man section. When Frank (Gary Sweet) rides into a Bedouin ambush he is replaced by a raw young recruit, Dave (Peter Phelps) who gets hard treatment from the others to prove his worth.

THE WITCHES OF EASTWICK

directed by George Miller

Screenplay by Michael Cristofer
from the novel of the same name by John Updike

Produced by Jon Peters and Peter Guber

Starring Jack Nicholson, Cher, Susan Sarandon and Michelle Pfeiffer
At Village Cinema City and suburbs

Real-life witches, religious groups and critics all sniped at John Updike's **THE WITCHES OF EASTWICK** when it was released in the early 'eighties. What they failed to understand was that it was a parable, about one's dreams coming true.

In a quaint New England village live three unmarried women, one widowed and two divorced. Alex is earthy and sculpts curious little dolls; Jane is a quiet music teacher; Sukie is the fertile mother of six little daughters and writes for the local paper. All are frustrated with the monotony of their manless lives, and fantasise about a man who could fulfil their deepest desires. Then a new, eccentric and fascinating man arrives in town. Daryl Van Horne (Jack Nicholson) is also the Devil and no one is safe from his charms, even the prim and proper woman publisher of the local paper. Pop star Cher follows up her success and Academy Award nomination for "Silkwood" by playing Alex, the most adventurous and outspoken of the three women.

JEAN DE FLORETTE

directed and produced by Claude Berri

Screenplay by Claude Berri and Gerard Brach from the novel *L'Eau des Collines* by Marcel Pagnol

Starring Yves Montand, Gerard Depardieu, Daniel Auteuil and Elisabeth Depardieu

Opening mid-September at Mosman Cinema Complex

In various forms, the plot of **JEAN DE FLORETTE** has been around since 1952. It was first seen as the film

MANON DES SOURCES, written and directed by Pagnol. Five hours long in its original version, it was hailed by an influential French critic as the "universal epic" of Provence, but condensed for commercial release it proved a flop.

In the late 'seventies, Claude Berri entered the scene after reading the book and seeing it as a "grand fresco" of village life in the south. It was six years before Pagnol's widow, actress Jacqueline Bouvier, finally gave permission, and this was followed by problems of financing a film that cost nearly \$17 million and nine months' shooting.

It is a dark and devious tale of Provencal country life. A young man returns from military service to his only relative, a childless uncle, doyen of a powerful and wealthy family (Yves Montand). The young man has plans to increase the family wealth by growing flowers for the market, and his uncle supports him with a plan to acquire a neighbouring farm. There is almost no limit to the dirty lengths to which the pair will go to achieve their ends, giving the film a sinister and almost medieval feeling. Gerard Depardieu plays the title role of Jean de Florette while his wife, Elisabeth Depardieu, plays his film wife, a former opera singer.



A scene from **JEAN DE FLORETTE**

BOOKING INFORMATION

Concessional vouchers can be purchased from the AETT for \$6.00 (Village, Hoyts), \$5.00 (G.U.) and exchanged at cinemas for tickets. The vouchers are open dated but some Saturday/Public Holiday restrictions apply to their use. See vouchers for details.

No handling fee applies to film vouchers and

members may purchase as many as they wish. Please specify which cinema chain you require.

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.

Opening Soon

The Club

The ever-popular David Williamson play **THE CLUB** has transferred, following its sell-out performances at Phillip Street Theatre. The new venue is the recently opened Glen Street Theatre at Frenchs Forest. Set in a football club, **THE CLUB** is about the behind-the-scenes politics and the overriding will to win at any price. There is a special Trust Member night on Thursday, September 10, when Members may purchase as many tickets as they wish at a \$6.00 discount.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Glen Street Theatre
Wed Sep 9 to Sat Sep 19
AETT \$19.90, \$16.90 (Sep 10)
G.P. \$22.90
Pens/Stud \$14.90
Two AETT tickets per Member (except Sep 10)

Don Quixote

Ernie Grey's version of **DON QUIXOTE** has been specially adapted for The Theatre of the Deaf and is the company's most visual production yet. It has vigorous clowning, miming and verbal slapstick, bringing the adventures of the hero magically alive. The play deals with dreams and ambitions, hope and despair and a vision of a better world. This is not a play just for kids, it is in fact a family production, and not to be missed by anyone seriously interested in the theatre.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Belvoir Street Theatre Upstairs
Mon Sep 7 to Sat Oct 3
Mon to Fri at 10.30 a.m. and 1.30 p.m.
Sat mats at 2 p.m. (Sep 26 and Oct 3)
AETT \$5.00
G.P./Stud/Pens \$6.00
Four AETT tickets per Member

Rivers of China

Written by Alma de Groen, author of the play **VOCATIONS**, performed earlier this year, **RIVERS OF CHINA** is an STC world premiere and stars Helen Morse as the poet, Katherine Mansfield. The play poses some startling questions about how we order our lives and fashion our futures.

There will be two Trust performances — Thursday October 8 and Saturday October 10 (matinee) at \$18.00 per ticket. Members may purchase as many tickets as they wish.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Wharf Theatre
Wed Sep 9 to Sat Oct 10
Mon to Sat at 8 p.m.
Sat mats at 2 p.m.
AETT \$20.00 (except Fri and Sat),
\$18.00 (Oct 8 and 10 (mat))
G.P. \$22.00
Pens/Stud \$17.00 (except Fri/Sat evg)
Two AETT tickets per Member (except Thu Oct 8 and Sat Oct 10)

Shakers

Written by two north of England writers, Jane Thornton and John Godber, **SHAKERS** is a showcase for its actors with very strong comic and movement skills. The cast plays innumerable characters from cocktail waitresses, drunken lads on a night out and a host of inanimate objects including clocks, 'phones and cocktails — mind boggling!

BOOKING INFORMATION

Belvoir Street Theatre
Thu Sep 3 to Sun Oct 4
Tue to Sat 8.00 p.m.
Sat and Sun 5.00 p.m.
AETT \$13.00, G.P. \$16.00
Pens/Stud \$8.00
Bookings on 699 3257

Rocky Horror Show

Back with a vengeance yet again is the **ROCKY HORROR SHOW** which made such a tremendous impact



Daniel Abineri as Frank-N-Furter

when first produced in Melbourne in 1974. The show is a camped-up spoof of the '50s genre of horror movies and rock 'n' roll. Daniel Abineri and Stuart Wagstaff recreate their original roles as Frank-N-Furter and the Narrator. Fun for young and old! Two special Trust Nights on September 21 and 22 at \$16.00 per ticket.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Sat Sep 19 to Sat Oct 24
Mon to Thu at 8.30 p.m.
Fri 9.00 p.m. and midnight
Sat 6.00 p.m. and 9.00 p.m.
AETT \$25.00 (\$16.00 Sep 21 and 22)
G.P. \$28.50
Pens/Stud \$18.50
Two AETT tickets per Member (except Sep 21 and 22)

Les Liaisons

Adapted from Laclos' original, by Christopher Hampton, this is set in 1780s in decadent France. It deals with the crime of sexual corruption, deceit and betrayal as devised by the Marquise de Merteuil and the Vicomte de Valmont, who plan to seduce a virtuous wife and a friend's young daughter. It stars Angela Punch McGregor and Hugo Weaving.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Seymour Centre Downstairs
Sat Sep 12 to Sat Oct 3
Mon to Sat at 8 p.m.
Sat mat at 2 p.m.
AETT \$23.00 (except Fri/Sat evg)
G.P. \$26.00
Pens/Stud \$20.00 (except Fri/Sat evg)
Two AETT tickets per Member

Rowan Atkinson

Known as "the funniest man in Britain" is an accolade well-deserved by **ROWAN ATKINSON** (of "Not the Nine O'Clock News" fame). His show is a series of unrelated sketches — a vicar telling an appalling Australian joke at a wedding; a swimmer miming changing into his trunks in public; an actor, conductor, singer, even a dancer.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Her Majesty's Theatre
Mon Sep 21 to Sat Sep 26 at 8 p.m.
AETT discount \$2.00 (except Fri/Sat)
Bookings on 212 3411



Billed as the "greatest laser, light and pyrotechnics show ever seen in the Southern Hemisphere", **LAS VEGAS ON ICE** also includes \$1 million worth of sets and costumes, more than 1200 square feet of ice and an imported cast of over 30 international skaters and ice dancers. It is an AETT presentation and is at Her Majesty's Theatre until September 19. AETT discount \$3.00 (all performances) Bookings on 212 3411

Jon English stars as the evil Russian monk, **RASPUTIN**, in the Australian production of the same name at the State Theatre. With 24 original songs, it traces Rasputin's life from his humble beginnings to his violent death. AETT discount \$9.00 (except Fri/Sat evg) Bookings on 266 4800

Australian playwright and AWGIE winner, Ron Elisha, mixes a hotch-potch of odd characters in **THE LEVINE COMEDY**. They include a pessimistic playwright, an optimistic TV performer, a crochety anti-semitic father-in-law, a troublesome brother-in-law and a father full of nasty stories of the African jungle. It's playing at the Ensemble until September 5. AETT discount \$2.00 (except Sat evg) Bookings on 929 8877

Six actors play horses in **EQUUS**, a strange and exciting story of a boy obsessed by horses. It is by Peter Shaffer, who wrote **AMADEUS** and is a **Forest Theatre Company** production at the Glen Street Theatre, Belrose. **EQUUS** has been running almost consistently somewhere in the world for many years, without losing its impact. Closing date is September 5. AETT discount \$3.00 (all performances) Bookings on 452 5152

Also closing on September 5 is Louis Nowra's parable of the pros and cons of civilisation, **THE GOLDEN AGE**, being presented by **Nimrod** at the York Theatre, Seymour Centre. It tells of a group of people in Tasmania, isolated for over 100 years, who are found by a young man. He takes a young girl back to "civilisation" with him. AETT discount \$3.00 (except Fri/Sat evg) Bookings on 692 0555



LAS VEGAS ON ICE

September 12 is the last night for **Northside Theatre Company's** production of **THE WINSLOW BOY** at **Marian Street Theatre**. Noel Ferrier plays the barrister Sir Robert Morton, in the legal case about a Royal Navy cadet expelled for theft. Terrence Rattigan based the play on a similar real-life case in England. AETT discount \$1.00 (except Sat evg) Bookings on 498 3166

At **Kinselas** this month until the 26th, Glen Shorrock combines two of his earlier shows under the title of **ONE FOR THE MONEY**. The first is about the life of a rock 'n' roll star, and the second is a general look at pop music. The production has been devised by Graham Blundell and Bob Hudson and will tour after its Kinselas season. AETT discount \$2.00 (except show only Fri/Sat evg) Bookings on 331 3100

Bettina Welch plays the lead role of Amanda, the mother of the Wingfield family, in the **Phillip Street Theatre's** production of **THE GLASS MENAGERIE**. By Tennessee Williams, it draws on memories of his childhood and his early days as a ranch hand. It is set in a decaying Southern mansion, peopled by dreams and misfits. Directed by Peter Williams, it will close on September 19. AETT discount \$3.00 (all performances) Bookings on 232 4900

One of the classics of the Restoration comedies, **THE COUNTRY WIFE**, takes a satirical look at the mores of the time when manners meant more than morals and fashionable clothes were more important than truth. Kerry Walker is "the country wife" whose eyes are opened when she discovers life in the city. **THE COUNTRY WIFE** is a **Sydney Theatre Company** production and is at the S.O.H. Drama Theatre until September 12. AETT discount \$3.00 (except Fri/Sat evg) Bookings on 250 1777

LOHENGRIN, MEDEE, COUNT-LESS MARITZA, DON GIOVANNI and LA TRAVIATA are the **Australian Opera's** productions for September at the Sydney Opera House. For certain performances, a discount of \$5.00 per ticket is available to members, but please check for dates with the membership office on 357 1200.

NO ROOM FOR DREAMERS by George Hutchinson is based on the life of sex reformer and eccentric scientist William Chidley, who at the turn of the century was often to be seen dressed in a Greek tunic and preaching his theories on physical, mental and spiritual health. It was named the Best Fringe Play of the Edinburgh Festival in 1980. The play will be presented at the **New Theatre** in Newtown until September 20. AETT discount \$1.00 Bookings on 519 3403



Trust News

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THE AUSTRALIAN ELIZABETHAN THEATRE TRUST

(incorporated in the A.C.T.)

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Membership enquiries should be directed to the Membership Secretary on 357 1200, 153 Dowling St., Potts Point. Postal address: P.O. Box 137, Kings Cross 2011.

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