

Australian Puppeteer



NUMBER 30 2006

UNION INTERNATIONALE DE LA MARIONNETTE

Australian Puppeteer Number 30 Photo Credits

Front cover

From *Sad Bird Boy* by Robert Reid, Theatre in Decay, as featured in Short and Sweet 2005, the Arts Centre, Melbourne, Photography Peter Casamento.

pg 2 Richard Bradshaw, taken from "One Van Festival Program"

pg5 Dreamer from "Dreamer in the Deep", permission, Richard Hart

pg 6 Lorrie Gardner at "The One Van Festival" photo taken by Gary Freidman

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p11 Terrapin Puppet Theatre, re-printed from National Puppetry Summit Website

p12 "The Dream Mason's" Redmoon & Jessica Wilson

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p25 "The Forman Brothers" re-produced with permission by the Forman Brother's Theatre

p30 marquette of Richard Bradshaw photo by Julia Davis

p32 - 33 "Photographic essay by Bryan Woltjen "How to make giant hairy snails"



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AUSTRALIAN PUPPETEER MAGAZINE

EDITORIAL

Dear Members,
I sincerely hope you enjoy this quarter's edition. As usual people's contributions are deeply appreciated.

This edition was due out well before the National Puppet Summit however, I was asked to hold off on publication to include the Wombat Puppet Festival which took place during May. Time has been limited but I have worked very hard to try and get it out to you before you head south to Tassie. I sincerely hope it reaches you in time.

Being late at night as I finish this mag and on the eve of my show "Me and My Shadow" for Polyglot Puppet Theatre, I have little more to say as puppets need mending! (I'm sure you all understand)

Hope to share a wine with many of you at the up coming Puppet Summit (good on ya Terrapin!) or perhaps the International Puppet Carnival in late June or even something completely un-puppet related like the pub.

Cheers, Sarah

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Richard Bradshaw

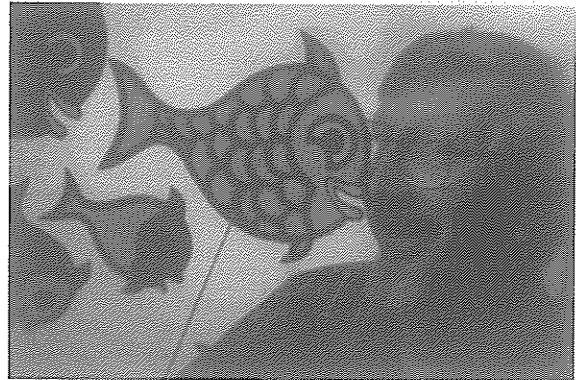
UNIMA Australia President

Because I write regularly on puppet history, and have items in my show that date back forty years, you may understandably imagine that I go through life looking regretfully backwards. On the contrary, I look optimistically to the future.

The truth is that the shows of the past belong in the past, and little from them would work today without considerable changes. Punch and Judy and some of the trick marionettes might still have appeal, and perhaps some of the transformation scenes, but a lot would bore and frustrate a modern audience. I have to admit that much of my fascination in doing the historic research is finding out about the forgotten people who did these shows.

Of course modern puppetry must be different. In the nineteenth century there were no films, cartoons or computer-generated images to compete with.

We live in an increasingly technological world where even entertainment is globalised. Puppetry can be part of the globalised world, as with "The Muppets", "The Lion King", the film "Team America", T.V. commercials and one-off spectacular events such as for the opening and closing of international games. However, most of us work on a smaller scale to a lesser audience and we need to capitalise on what at first seem limitations. We need to exploit the advantages of being small in scale.



One obvious advantage is that our name appears on a short list of credits instead of being lost with a hundred others. That's rewarding for us as performers, but not to audiences unless they like what we do. We need to give our audiences something they want and don't get from the global experience.

Some of you may know the inspirational book "Small is Beautiful" (1973) by the late Dr Ernst F. Schumacher, C.B.E. It is subtitled: "A Study of Economics as if People Mattered". I'm suggesting we should have more "Puppetry as if People Mattered".

At the UNIMA Festival in Magdeburg in 2000 Russian puppeteers presented a show which was a tribute to the great Sergei Obraztsov. He was famous for his one-man show and also for the big rod-puppet productions created by his Central State Puppet Theatre in Moscow.

One item performed was The Tango from the hilarious "Unusual Concert", a tremendous success in its time. This Tango was a stylishly executed item, with bodies flying through the air, but it seemed to me that the act had dated a bit. However the item was immediately repeated without the screening and we marvelled at the contorted entanglements

Our modern world is becoming increasingly dehumanised and we humans risk becoming more like puppets to be manipulated. I suspect that now, more than ever before, we should be putting emphasis on what is human in puppetry.

One enduring charm of some famous puppets has been their ability to assume



of the puppeteers below. It was brilliant and fascinating to watch!

In the nineteenth century marionettists like the great Thomas Holden hid their methods of working even from other puppeteers, to the surprise of the equally great American puppeteer, Tony Sarg when he called by. Nowadays many marionettists perform in full view and audiences like it that way.

human-like character. Think of Wayland Flowers' "Madame", Albrecht Roser's "Gustav" and "Granny", Norman Hetherington's "Mr.Squiggle", and a host of Muppet characters. While these characters are usually extensions or exaggerations of something in their creators' personalities they grow to be independent of them. Kermit did not die with Jim Henson.

I think that audiences today want to get more from the people behind the puppets, want to appreciate their skill, their artistry, their inventiveness. The humans don't need to be in view, but when they are they have to be able to justify their intrusion. I have seen too many shows where performers of minimal appeal have manipulated puppets or objects with minimal skill, in plays of minimal content. It is not enough for humans to simply take over the puppet stage.

The humanity in a show can be in its content. Puppet theatre can act as a mirror to the world of humans, evoking humour, sadness and compassion. An audience can experience all three at the same time watching Gyula Molnar's "Little Suicides". In one an Alka-Selzer tablet, which has been rejected by a group of sweets, ends it all by jumping into a glass of water and dissolving; in another a match, which discovers its beloved coffee bean has been used to make coffee, ends it all by striking its head against a matchbox and burns up. It is superb puppetry.

The acronym "UNIMA" comes from the French for "the international association of the puppet", but UNIMA is a group of humans, not a group of puppets. When we meet in Perth in 2008 the humans will have a much better time than the puppets!

It may be a bit kitsch to say, but in "HUMANITY" you can find "THY UNIMA".

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Special edition of
Australasian Drama Studies,
October 2007.

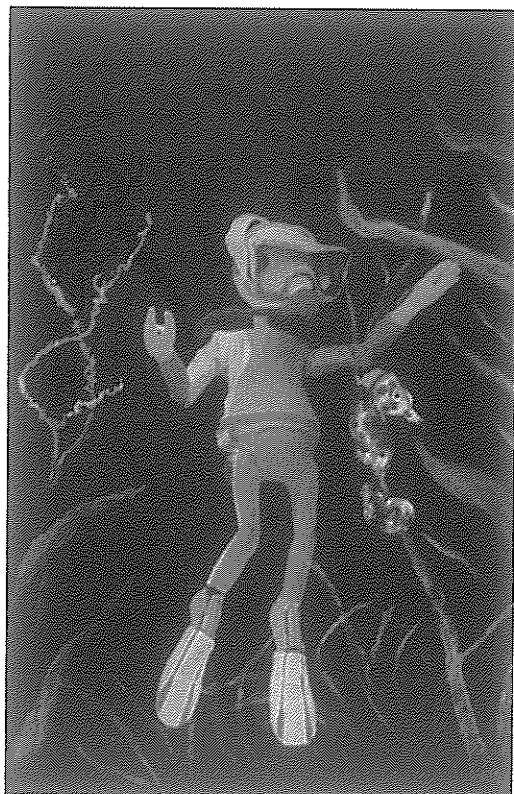
Australasian Drama Studies is a leading scholarly journal for the studies of Australasian drama, theatre and performance of all kinds. ADS publishes two issues annually: an April issue collecting articles of general interest across a wide variety of topics and an October issue with a special focus on a particular topic or field of theatrical interest. October 2007 (edited by Geoffrey Milne and Peter Wilson) will be devoted to Puppetry and Visual Theatre in Australia and New Zealand.

This focus issue will explore the range and diversity of puppetry and visual theatre in our countries. Articles on all aspects of puppetry (historical and contemporary) and newer forms like animatronics are invited, including case studies of companies and productions, aspects of training and education, festivals, infrastructure organisations like UNIMA, puppetry as educational tool, puppetry as central or peripheral concern as well as theorising about 'animating the inanimate' and multi-disciplinary art.

Final Date for submission of articles of up to 6,000 words: December 2006

Please submit ideas for articles, case studies, interviews and anything else you have an idea about to:

Email: G.Milne@latrobe.edu.au or
p.wilson@vca.unimelb.edu.au



RICHARD HART

UNIMA Australia Secretary's

This year has gone very quickly and deadlines have been popping up very suddenly, when not long ago, they seemed far away. 2008 will be upon us before we know it.

I apologies to Sarah for the lateness of this report as I was totally absorbed in the inaugural Wombat Puppet Festival over the last weekend. The festival was a great success. The quality of the performances was very good and well chosen to appeal to a broad community . It is clear the Woodend community are very supportive of this event and audience numbers were extremely good. Congratulations to Sue Blakey, the

festival creator / director and to Steve Scott, her partner in Festive Factory. I think we can mark this festival down as a regular and growing event in the future.

It was also good to catch up with Sue Wallace and Steve Coupe from Sydney Puppet Theatre not long after their overseas adventure researching puppet centres in various parts of the World. They have some very interesting and useful information to impart to us all.

Art Play in Melbourne are joining forces with the Puppet Carnival, Melbourne, in late June this year. Art Play are doing wonderful work with children and are running excellent puppetry workshop/programmes. The overall concept is very inspiring and you will hear more of it later.

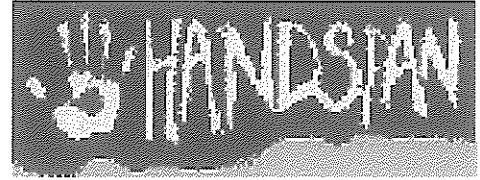
Around 120 of 140 of our members have e-mail communication and they have already received a lot of up to date information via me, including a test run E-Newsletter. The plan is to have frequent issues of this E-Newsletter based on the time importance of the material . I will be printing out copies of this newsletter to post to those without e-mail addresses. Included with this issue is an insert explaining a proposal to produce three bigger and better quality issues of our magazine a year with the fourth replaced by this up to date newsletter. Please read it carefully and consider your response.

Happy puppeteering,
Richard Hart

UNIMA AUSTRALIA SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION

HANDSPAN VISUAL THEATRE INTERNATIONAL STUDY AND TRAVEL GRANT

This is a \$2,000 grant, awarded annually to an Australian artist who works in puppetry and visual theatre, specifically for international study and travel



Handspan Visual Theatre was a Melbourne based Theatre Company which created and produced puppetry and visual theatre performance from its inception in 1977 through to 2002.

Artists who worked with Handspan Visual Theatre shared a creative spirit and passion for puppetry and visual theatre. It is this unique form of 'expression' that Handspan wishes to support in the form of an international study & travel grant. The grant is available to all practitioners of puppet arts, including puppeteers, directors, designers, writers and makers to undertake international travel or study.

The grant will be awarded annually in the amount of \$2000 for each of six years beginning in 2003 and concluding in 2008.

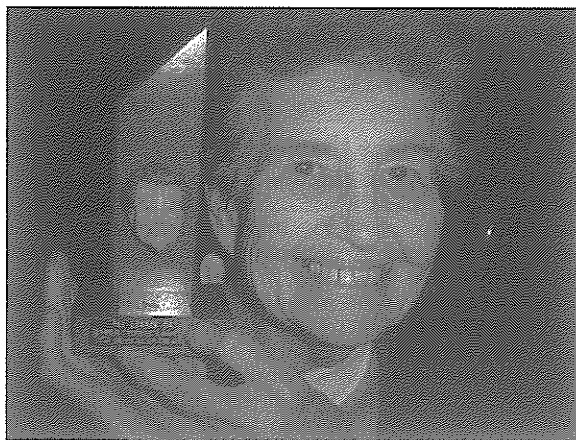
Eligibility: No age restrictions but applicants must be current Unima members

Annual Closing Date: 30th September

Annual Decisions Advised: 30th November

Travel May Commence: January thereafter

Enquiries: secretary@unima.org.au



LORRIE GARDNER UNIMA AUSTRALIA SCHOLARSHIP

Lorrie Gardner of Gardner Puppet Theatre was a long standing and active member of UNIMA Australia. She was president for 3 years until illness forced her to retire in 2004. In 2005 Lorrie Gardner bequeathed a substantial contribution the UNIMA Australia scholarship fund

Amount: \$800

Purpose: To help younger or newer artists to further their training and knowledge by such things as attendance at workshops, study under a specialist teacher, or other activities that the panel deem to be worthy and which help their knowledge of puppetry arts.

Eligibility: The applicant must have been a member of UNIMA Australia for the past two years.

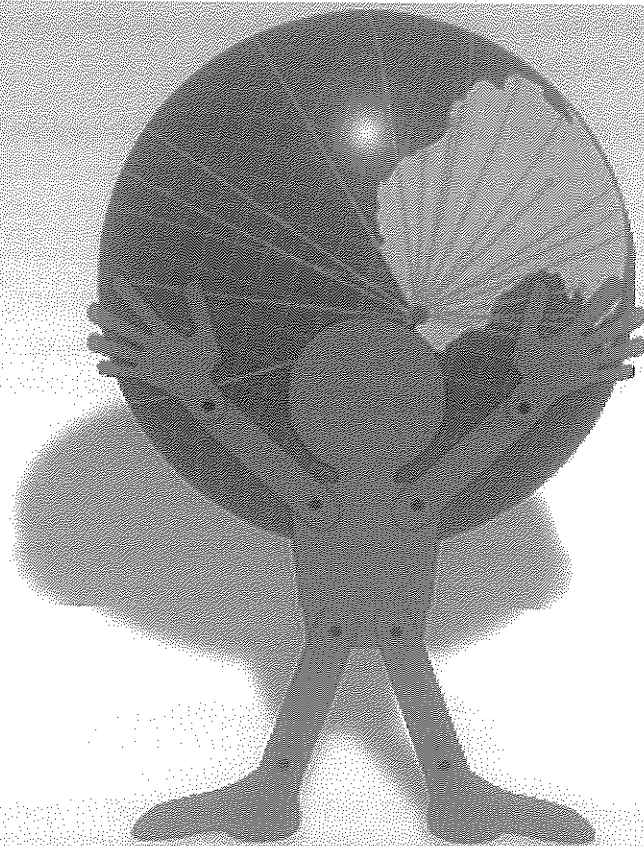
Requirements: Please supply a CV, a short outline of how you intend to use the scholarship and information about any courses or mentorships that relate to the scholarship.

Send to: UNIMA PO Box 3124, Victoria Gardens Shopping Centre, Richmond. VIC, 3121

Enquiries: secretary@unima.org.au

UNIMA 2008

20TH WORLD PUPPETRY FESTIVAL & CONFERENCE



PERTH :: WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Expressions of Interest are now being called for from people and organisations who may wish to perform their puppetry works at the Festival or conduct a Masterclass or Lecture at the Conference

Contact; www.unima2008.com



presents...

2nd National Puppetry Summit

9 - 12 JUNE 2006

HOBART TASMANIA

Clear out your diary on the Queens Birthday long weekend because if there is one industry event you must attend this year, this is it!

Terrapin Puppet Theatre is proud to host the 2nd National Puppetry Summit from 9 - 12 June 2006, in the historic Salamanca Arts Centre in Hobart, Tasmania.

This is a rare and exciting opportunity to meet and work with colleagues from around Australia, Asia and the Pacific. Have your say in the future directions of our industry, including the UNIMA 2008 Congress in Perth!

We promise you a vibrant weekend of workshops, forums and performances with something for everyone as our industry comes together to celebrate the Art of Puppetry.

On behalf of the Summit Steering Committee I look forward to welcoming you to Hobart.

Annie Forbes
Summit Director

Friday 9/6/2006

Welcome Function • Guest Speaker John Xintavelonis (Pumbaa from The Lion King)
Film Showcase - "Strings" puppet feature film by Anders Klarlund (Sweden)

Saturday 10/06/2006

Welcome and Opening Address •

The Honourable Paula Wriedt MHA Minister for the Arts Tasmania -
TBC Anne Forbes (Summit Director, AD of Terrapin Puppet Theatre - Tas)

Festival Forum - International Festivals - How Important Are They?

Peter Manscher (ASSITEJ Denmark and Teatercentrum - Denmark)
Cate Fowler (Creative Producer Windmill Performing Arts Co. - South Australia)
Cathcart Weatherly (GM, Spare Parts Puppet Theatre - WA)

Workshop- Black Light Puppetry

Richard Hart (Dream Puppets - Victoria)

Workshop - Advanced Manipulation part 1 & 2

David Collins (Master Puppeteer - NSW)

Asia Pacific Forum - Past and Futures: The Traditions and Developments

Dadi Pudumjee (UNIMA & Ishara Puppet Theatre - India)

Simon Wong (UNIMA & Ming Ri Institute for Arts Education - China)

Nyoman Sedana (HOD Balinese Theatre & Culture, Denpasar University - Indonesia)

Jennifer Pfeiffer (International Executive of UNIMA - Victoria)

Workshop - The Art of Lighting for Puppetry

Tim Munro (Lighting Designer & CEO Theatre Royal - Tasmania)

Workshop - Digital Puppetry using Real-time Animation

Wojciech Pisarek, (Digital Puppets and Sets, South Australia)

Workshop - Mechanisms for the Mechanically Challenged

Phillip Millar (Puppetvision - Victoria)

Workshop - Performance Techniques

Peter J. Wilson (Victorian College of the Arts - Victoria)

Workshop - Design Process for Interpreting Visual Theatre

Richard Jeziorny (Designer - Victoria)

Workshop - Community and Collaboration - A perfect place for puppets

Sue Giles (AD, Polyglot Puppet Theatre - Victoria)

Workshop - International Touring - Funding, Practical Export Issues and Agents

Martin Turmine (Export Advisor, Dept. Economic Development - TAS)

John Baylis (Director of Theatre, Australia Council for the Arts - NSW)

Richard Bradshaw (President UNIMA Australia - NSW)

Soup's On! (Substantial Supper)

Puppet Palaver Performances @ Summit Club

Performance - The Sultan of the 'Swazzle', Keith Preston & Sue Harris

Sunday 11/06/2006

Keynote Address - Puppets and the Mind •

Neil Cameron (Director of Celebratory Theatre Events - Tasmania)

**Australian Voice Forum - What is the Voice? What can we Say?
What are our Stories to Tell?**

Indigenous View. Audience View. Australia Council View.

Sandy McKendrick (Spare Parts Puppet Theatre - Western Australia)

Dr Margaret Williams (Living Dodo Puppets - NSW)

John Baylis (Director of Theatre, Australia Council for the Arts - NSW)

Workshop - Animating Outdoor Spaces with Giant Puppetry

• Tim Denton (AboutFace Productions- New Zealand/Tasmania)

Workshop - Nurturing the Survival Instincts

• Scott Wright (AD, Erth Physical Visual Inc - NSW) TBC

Legacy Forum - History, Influences and Directions

• Richard Bradshaw (President UNIMA Australia - NSW)

• L. Peter Wilson (National Theatre for Children - New Zealand)

Milne (La Trobe University - Victoria)

Workshop - Designing for Puppetry

• Zoe Atkinson (Designer - Western Australia)

• Jiri Zmitko (Designer - Western Australia)

Workshop - Can any piece of writing be interpreted via puppetry?

• Gilly McInnes (Victorian College of the Arts - Victoria)

Workshop - Exploring the Darker Side of Puppetry: the Psychology and the Physicality

• Rod Primrose (Black Hole Theatre - Victoria)



Workshop - An Approach to 3D Digital Animation

Adam Walker (Adam Walker Films - Tasmania)

Workshop - A Centre for Puppetry in Australia

Sue Wallace (Sydney Puppet Theatre - NSW)

Peter J. Wilson (Victorian College of the Arts - Victoria)

Simon Spain (Creative Producer, Artplay - Victoria)

Pie Night (Substantial Supper)

Puppet Palaver performances @ Summit Club

Showcase - Krinkl Theatre



Monday 12/06/2006

Showcase of 3D and Puppet Animated Australian shorts - Ward 13, Birthday Boy, Harvey Krumpet, The Mysterious Geographic Explorations of Jasper Morello

Keynote Address - surprise tba!

Plenary Session -

Australian Puppetry in the 21st Century

Geoffrey Milne (La Trobe University - Victoria)

Lunch and presentation of UNIMA Award "Recognition of Significant Contribution to Puppetry Arts in Australia".

**Sounds great doesn't it?
Have you booked your ticket?**

Full Registration \$525.00

Professional Practitioner/UNIMA Member \$415.00

Student / Concession \$260.00

Daily Rate \$220.00

Concession Daily Rate \$100.00

Additional ticket to Welcome Function \$30.00

Additional ticket Sat night Soups On! and Puppet Palaver \$40.00

Additional ticket Sun night Pie Night and Puppet Palaver \$40.00

Additional ticket Sat night Puppet Palaver only \$15.00

Additional ticket Sun night Puppet Palaver only \$15.00

Contact: www.terrapin.org.au



The Dream Masons

by Jessica Wilson

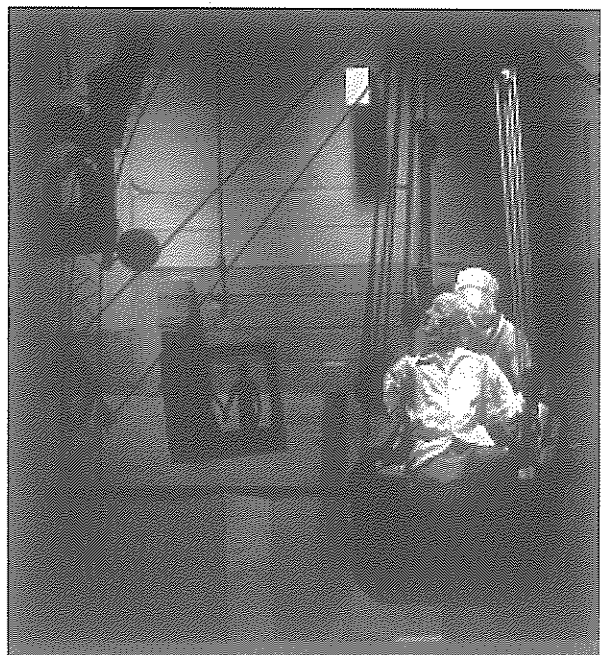
Jessica is an independent producer and director of non-text based theatre, specialising in puppetry and large scale performance. She was Artistic Director of Terrapin Puppet Theatre in Hobart from 1999 - 2004. She is co-Director and Creative Producer on Dream Masons.

In January this year I teamed up with theatrical engineer, Joey Ruigrok Van der Werven and Chicago writer / director, Jim Lasko to dream up a large spectacle work; DREAM MASONs. It is an exciting international collaboration that, with its core creative team, draws on three cultural perspectives; Australian, Dutch and North American. Here, I will try to share the beginnings of this project.

In a month long creative development the team visioned an exciting large scale work involving physical and gestural performance, theatrical contraptions, shadow puppetry and music. The work will be performed inside the windows and on the outside façade of the Salamanca Arts Centre in Hobart in 2007. 6 professional and 25 community performers will be joined by a community choir of 50. The work is being produced by the Salamanca Arts Centre to celebrate its 30th birthday.

The aesthetic of this ambitious work will be driven by exciting engineered

spectacle moments; a large plank enables sheep and characters to walk to the next floor. It swings around in a terrifying and comic physical performance sequence; water fills the windows level by level; a boat is winched up the face of the building, complete with a dangling and rotating marine scene; a balcony folds out of a window; a choir enters in a sheep truck; a huge false wall collapses in Kelly's Lane; water gushes from the top of the building through massive pipes; and a little boat paddles over the audience. During the creative development period, the complete



performance was storyboarded and logistically figured.

We were excited to be able to bring Jim Lasko to Australia for the project.

Jim is the director of Chicago based company REDMOON. Redmoon's mission is to create theatrical spectacles that transform streets, stages and architectural landmarks into places of public celebration. They use a very original visual performance language which involves puppetry, engineering and heightened character work. Redmoon also make intimate and beautiful puppet theatre works in theatres, which are often adaptations of classic texts.

I met Jim when I travelled to America on a professional development grant from the Australia Council and I visited the Company again last year to work on a piece they were creating on a lake. It has been fantastic to be able to extend this collaboration. It has also been wonderful to be able to involve Joey who has a unique approach to theatrical design and engineering. Since moving to Australia from Holland, where he worked with Dogtroep, Joey has been based in Sydney and has worked mainly with Stalker. Joey and Jim are two artists I have always wanted to collaborate with and I am very pleased that such a compelling vision has emerged from our time together.

I am excited about the language that is being explored in Dream Masons and the possibilities the work may open in terms of its influence on the Australian non-text based theatre. As a spectacle work, it will create dramatic tension through large visual gestures rather than detailed character based exposition.

Jim Lasko, in his presentation to the Hobart arts community in January, described the nature of spectacle.

"There is no *proof* in spectacle. While there may be conflict, it is not the heart, but a distant appendage. Narrative may be a part, conflict may enter, but its heart is transformation, and its food is poetry. Spectacle is not an inherently dramatic form. It is a poetic form. It is not a plot driven form. Though it may have plot elements it is a lyrically driven form. Spectacle is more like music or dance or painting.

At the heart of spectacle is transformation. It communicates the surprising act of something, changing its apparent essence from one thing to another. Transformation encourages us to look at the world with child-like eyes. That is to say, to look at the world with hope and a sense of possibility.

That's not to say that spectacle is relentlessly, intolerably positive. It can and should still traffic in the dark and the depressing, even the tragically political. In fact, because it is an imagistic form, it can explore themes that a lot of populist theatre needs to avoid."

Dream Masons will premiere in Hobart in 2007 and then will be redeveloped at Redmoon for a season in Chicago the following year.

I look forward to keeping the puppet community updated.

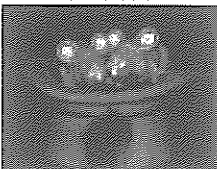
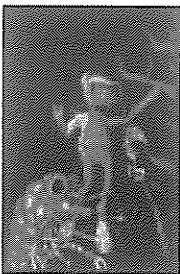
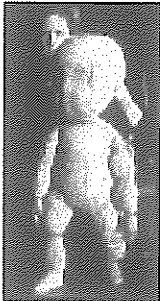
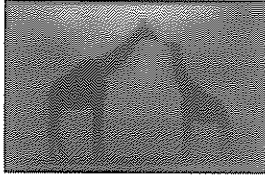
WOMBAT PUPPET FESTIVAL

FESTIVAL OVERVIEW May 5th – 7th 2006

The inaugural Woodend festival of Puppetry (The Wombat Festival) took place in Woodend in the heart of the Macedon Ranges Shire on May 5 to 7, 2006. This inspirational event was the brainchild of Sue Blakey and Steve Scott of Festive factory, a full-time puppetry company and business based in Woodend. They enjoyed the support of the Macedon Ranges Shire Council and Cultural Services Unit, the RSL, Rotary Club and numerous local businesses. According to all who braved the wintry weather and filled the houses with their enthusiasm and applause, the festival was a resounding success.

Sue Blakey had chosen as her theme for this first festival, "Celebrating the Diversity of Puppetry". The selection of performances, the range, the variations in style, aesthetics, scale, forms of puppetry employed, audience appeal and complexity of the presentations reflected her chosen theme most aptly. Audiences were treated to performances by elegant marionettes, (Little Fool's 'The Nightingale and the Rose'); traditional glove puppets, (Pinnacle Theatre's 'Three Little Pigs - with a twist'); finely sculpted rod puppets (Dream Puppets' 'Macbeth'); visually inspired black light theatre, (Dream Puppets' 'Dreamer in the Deep'); a creative mixture of shadow puppetry, glove and marionette puppets (Sydney Puppet Theatre's 'Z for Giraffe'); and puppets adroitly created on stage from newspaper and found objects, (Krinkl's 'Tightrope'). With a fare of well-loved children's classic stories, sheer hilarity ('Oh Rats'), improvisatory satire (Festive Factory's 'Rock and Roses Tour') to Shakespearean tragedy, audiences were offered a delectable feast of puppetry with a broad appeal. Yet all performers, well seasoned and fledgling companies alike, had one objective in common - to bring to life the inanimate object within their hands and create magic for the audience.

As an adjunct to each performance, short 'Meet the Artist' forums were conducted afterwards so that the audience could learn more about the process of creating a production and direct questions to the artist. A variety of workshops were available for the public to try their hand at creating puppets - a Professional Development Workshop by Krinkl, Origami Puppet workshops by Philip Millar and a Bunraku workshop facilitated by Sean Manners. In the weeks preceding the festival Sean Manners visited the local primary schools and conducted



numerous puppet making workshops. The fruits of this challenge were visible in colourful displays in many of the shop windows in Woodend. An exhibition of a range of Festive Factory puppets was mounted in the Woodend Uniting Church.

A Festival Club Event, consisting of short cabaret-style performances featuring Festive Factory, Krinkl Theatre, Philip Millar, Gabrielle Griffin, Anita Sinclair and Sue Wallace and Steve Coupe was hosted by the RSL club on the Friday and Saturday evenings. Performers and audiences mingled and shared their enthusiasm for the art of puppetry.

Congratulations to Festive Factory for the success of this challenging venture and many, many happy returns!

Julia Davis

(Anita Sinclair's extensive festival overview will be published in the next edition of 'Australian Puppeteer')

THE PROGRAM

Friday 5th May

Exhibition: Puppet Walk – School Exhibit in shop windows.

Exhibition: The Puppet Case – Professional Exhibit, Uniting Church.

Workshop – Professional Development, Woodend Primary School.

Show: 'Macbeth', Dream Puppets, Uniting Church Hall.

Dinner: The Festival Club, Official Opening, RSL Club Rooms.

Saturday 6th May

Exhibition: Puppet Walk.

Exhibition: The Puppet Case Exhibit, Uniting Church.

Show: 'The Three Little Pigs – With a Twist', Pinnacle Theatre, Scout Hall.

Show: 'Z For Giraffe', Sydney Puppet Theatre, Community Centre.

Workshop x 2: – Tsuru Origami Crane, Puppet Vision, Scout Log Cabin.

Show: 'Tightrope', Krinkl Theatre, Scout Hall.

Show: 'The Nightingale and the Rose', Little Fool Marionette Theatre, Community Centre.

Dinner: The Festival Club, RSL.

Sunday 7th May

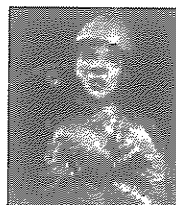
Exhibition: Puppet Walk.

Exhibition: The Puppet Case Exhibit.

'Oh Rats', Sydney Puppet Theatre, Uniting Church Hall.

Show: 'Dreamer in the Deep', Dream Puppets, Scout Hall.

Show: 'Rocks-n-Roses Tour', Festive Factory, Community Centre.



WOMBAT PUPPET FESTIVAL REVIEWS

Tightrope Krinkl Theatre

Review by Jennie Pfeiffer

Production values – cheap, cheap, cheap. Newspaper, sticky tape and not much else. However, what they manage to do with these materials is impressive.

Metonymy

It seemed that the performance was of two distinct parts, the introduction of the material, predominantly newspaper, which littered the floor of the hall, both seating and stage area. At times, it seemed as though witnessing a workshop, as the cast played with, creating creatures and things, out of this detritus. The second stage geared more exclusively to a performance, as we witnessed a possible outcome of these experiments with material.

The performance engaged the audience, especially the participatory nature of it. A challenging segue between the two was bold, allowing brief minutes of anarchy when the audience was incited to throw the set, newspaper, around the room at each other. With a considerable number of youngsters in the audience, this seriously risked getting out of control, but Krinkl handled the situation beautifully, grabbing the focus back and introducing the following sequence.

Krinkl constructed a tightrope before the audience with poise, incorporating building mishaps into the scene, the rope formed by a fragile strip of sticking tape. Puppeteers released a bunraku-style puppet, constructed of newspaper, from a briefcase where it had been hostage, this interaction between 'puppet character' and puppeteer effectively conveyed. The puppeteers, be-suited as corporate white-collar workers, forced the 'puppet man' to walk the tightrope, and then compelled him under threat to perform a series of tricks. I'm not sure what those of an overly determined political-correctness would make of this, but it created a scenario wherein, through some articulate manipulation, the pathos of the character was expressed convincingly. For me, there also exists a certain metonymy with the choice of

newspaper as material. I thought it assisted in giving the character vulnerability, transience, a disposability.

I don't know whether I'm becoming too old and cranky, but I found the children playing with newspaper in the front rows somewhat distracting at times. Perhaps there is something to be said for teaching children some kind of etiquette about giving the performers their attention. Perhaps it needs to be won. However, on the whole I was entertained, and impressed by the articulate manipulation of the puppet characters and set constructions. As before, I look forward to the next step in Krinkl's evolution. I sense, rather than by any process of analysis, that they have more plateaus ahead of them, new heights to reach.

The Three Little Pigs *With a Twist:*

Pinnacle Puppet Theatre
Review by Christopher Gale

This production by Pinnacle Puppet Theatre was performed before a standing room only, enthusiastic crowd. It was a simply staged, engaging glove puppet show that had lots of fun in reinventing the well known fairy tale. Veteran performer Ralph Baker warmed up the audience with a slick routine involving a monkey glove puppet. He walked right up to the front and took control immediately. This showcased his skills well, setting the atmosphere. The routine encouraged children to vocalize and participate in the show, which they certainly did! The aforementioned monkey puppet appeared again at the end of proceedings, tying the show together well.

The stage was well lit and situated high, ensuring everyone could see clearly, and the backdrop set a bucolic mood, with trees and rolling hills. We were introduced to the pigs and, of course, the Big, Bad Wolf at breakneck speed. The combination of familiarity and breaking of conventions ensured the younger audience members were enthralled. They particularly enjoyed helping the Wolf along his

way. The glove puppets all had limited hand movement only, but they were used to great effect. In particular, the Big Bad Wolf was a comically menacing creation, with a manic grin and gravelly delivery. The voices of the Three Pigs were all very similar, and (being related) they looked alike, with only their costumes delineating them.

There was a 'Punch and Judy' flavour as the characters encountered many slapstick situations, which the children loved. It facilitated a great 'live' feel as the characters asked the audience questions, resulting in some very funny dialogue – when asked what it meant when the father pig was taken to market a child exclaimed "bacon!"). Sometimes the crowd interaction drowned out the character's voices, and I feel that the show would have benefited from greater amplification and the inclusion of some sound effects and music. These are minor grievances in a show that provided clean, old fashioned entertainment, very well executed. The Three Little Pigs With a Twist is not so much about 'great puppetry' as pure art, and more about great fun!

Z for Giraffe
Sydney Puppet Theatre
Review by Christopher Gale

This dynamic, beautifully crafted work by Sydney Puppet Theatre showcased the skills of its creators Sue Wallace and Steve Coupe to great effect. A short, educational audience warm up introduced the performers and set the mood. It was not condescending, and very involved valuable clapping practise! The show that followed employed rod, glove, marionette and shadow puppets. It also married together elements as diverse as storytelling, song, and of course, puppetry.

The puppets and simple, ingenious stage were very well made; the Giraffe was a real show stopper with a gentle, elegant manner and big, dark eyes. The puppets were all superbly manipulated, and it is mind boggling how seemingly effortlessly the performers switched from character to character! The stage included several windows through which characters interacted: a rod puppet may chat to a marionette out the front, or a glove puppet may narrate a shadow piece unfolding in another window. The shadow puppetry was

particularly good, with a plethora of convincing, entertaining characters.

This show was an aural feast, too. Exotic music accompanied some scenes, and Steve played some instruments live. It helped to create a great sense of place, setting the scene and allowing moments of contemplation. We saw a giraffe cross a hot, red desert to the sound of a lute. There were also moments of great vibrancy and energy, as beautiful dancing girls mesmerized us with joyous music and movement. The character's voices were excellent, with a huge range of inflections and accents, bringing them further to life.

We joined the giraffe on a fantastic journey, and the audience of all ages was utterly spellbound. It worked on many levels – from the pathos of a forgotten hero, to the belly laugh of a scatological joke. The performers clearly love their craft, and it showed. They have created a satisfying, rewarding and thoroughly engaging show.

Dreamer in The Deep
Dream Puppets
Reviewed by Karm Gillespie

After having seen the previous experiences of "Dreamer" I was looking forward with great anticipation to the opportunity to see what Richard Hart had created with his latest instalment in the "Dreamer Series" with "Dreamer in the Deep" being performed at the Wombat Puppetry Festival in Woodend. My two year old Archie was there to help me and Benjamin at 5 months was bound to have an opinion as well.

"Dreamer" is a picture that paints a thousand words in the hearts of the audience. Entering the scout hall at Woodend was a delight as we were entranced by a beautiful seaside cottage and the waves of the ocean poetically holding our gaze.

Once the performance was underway Dreamer was enticed into his journey by Sea horses (dragons?) who emerge from his bed posts and before our eyes his bed becomes a boat; a fitting vehicle for a dreamer who sails off into the unknown. The imagery was powerful and it was impossible not to think of Maurice Sendak's sensational "Where The Wild Things Are". But Dreamer has a mission to retrieve a

key and unlock one of the sea dragons who has been imprisoned by the nasty glow fish in a cage at the bottom of the ocean.

As Dreamer approached the dark depths the music spooked up and Archie turned for a comforting cuddle, he was so in tune with the adventure of Dreamer he could feel the danger in the music. One of the highlights of the whole production was the way the music combined with the imagery and then, like Jaws emerging from the depths the Nasty Glow Fish flashed his terrible teeth. The show is worthwhile for this scene alone. This one puppet took hundreds of hours to create and the results are astounding with a built in lighting system and what must be hundreds of moving parts.

Richard has shown his commitment to the Puppetry World by offering us literally thousands of hours of pre-production in building an amazing world that captures the imagination of all those who see it.

Another highlight cleverly offering some light relief from the deep drama that was unfolding was the opera singing and cleaning Shrimp. The audience reaction to this moment clearly indicated its success.

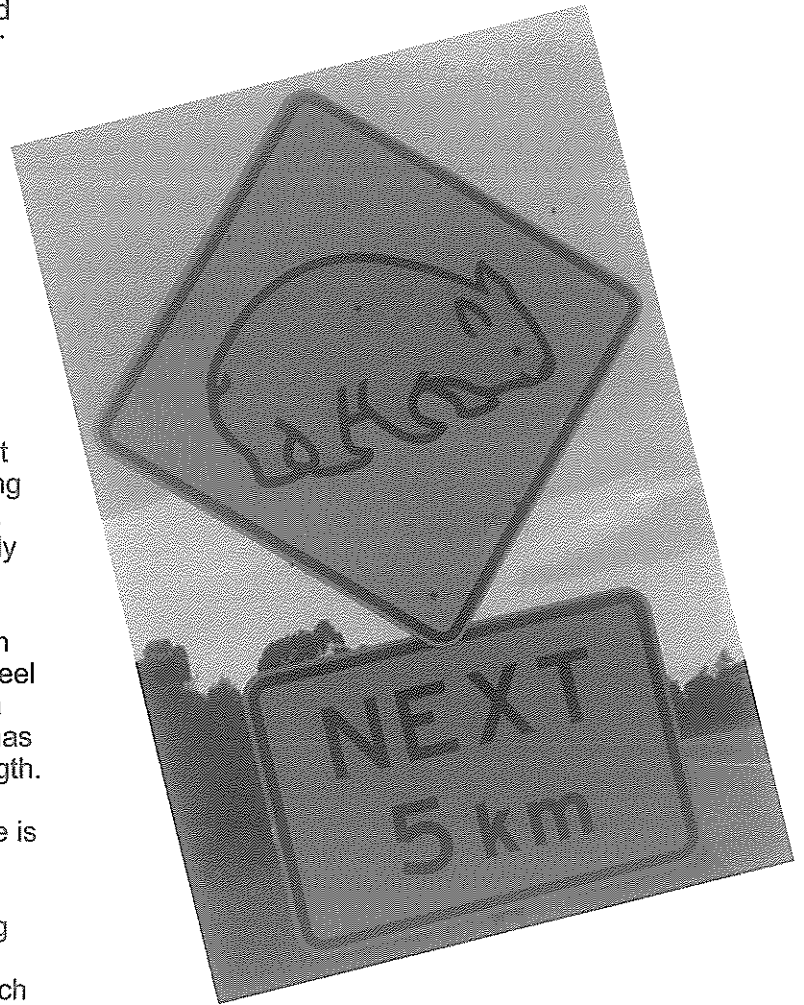
Richard's greatest strength has always been his design and craftsmanship. If anything I feel the puppets in this production possibly even exceed his previous work. Indeed Richard has forged a career by exploiting this very strength.

Unfortunately the quality of this performance is undermined by a prologue presented by Richard, as himself in front of his puppet booth, that has a sole purpose of explaining the key narrative points in the play. He explains to us that Dreamer is going in search of the key to help release the sea dragon who in turn finds his mate by recognizing the way they dance. It seemed to me that Richard didn't feel comfortable in this role.

As a theatre practitioner I was disappointed with there being no credit given to other key artistic personnel who have helped in the creation of the show. The Composer is an obvious one, the voice of the Shrimp is another and the burning question for us all, how much did Julia really help? Was Richard's perspiration level an indication that he actually did do it all on this day?

Benjamin at 5 month old was entranced and quiet and awake for the whole show, Archie loved it and stayed focused through his sleep time and as a finally ode to the success of Richards creation I'll finish by saying: This show is a juicy worm dancing on the line as Dreamer has the audience totally hooked.

Thanks to all for making the Festival Happen.



On behalf of UNIMA Australia,
thank you to Sue Blakey for her
vision and work that resulted in such
an excellent festival.

Well done!

Australian Venue at the World Festival of Puppet Theatres, Charleville-Mezieres, France

The 14th edition of the triennial World Festival of Puppet Theatres, Charleville-Mezieres, France, will take place this year from 15 – 24 September.

In December 2004, a proposal to highlight Australian puppetry and to promote UNIMA Australia's hosting of the 20th UNIMA Congress, Festival and Conference in 2008 was sent to the Festival. The original dossier proposed a project comprising 8 Australian companies, an interactive exhibition and the promotion of the UNIMA 2008 event. The idea being to have a significant Australian presence at the Festival, funded as a single, global project. As time went on, and the Festival requested individual applications from the 8 companies, the project was reduced to those companies interested in pursuing individual contracts and the continued pursuit of a dedicated venue for the exhibition/UNIMA 2008 component of the project.

I am pleased to announce that a dedicated Australian venue for the exhibition and UNIMA 2008 promotion has been programmed for the duration of the Festival. The venue is the Preau du Centre d'audiophonologie, a centrally located, covered and enclosed indoor courtyard. A time is also being booked for a UNIMA 2008 presentation at L'Espace Professionnel, which will be included in the Festival programme.

The exhibition is a project of West Australian artists Jane Davies and Ashley Smith. Along with W.A. artist Cecile Williams, Jane and Ashley will create and display animated forms and puppets made from a collection of natural, indigenous materials and found objects sourced from W.A.'s Goldfields region. Ashley will also present examples of his paintings, as well as paintings and cultural material from the area's indigenous Wongutha people. He will also demonstrate certain techniques of indigenous art and will tell ghost stories, tall tales and true from his prospecting days.

Philip Mitchell, Artistic Director of Spare Parts Puppet Theatre (W.A.), who are hosting UNIMA 2008, is organising the promotion of this event at the Australian venue during the Festival. The promotion will include DVDs of Australian puppetry, a small selection of Australian puppets, signage, banners and other promotional material for UNIMA 2008.

Australian companies and shows from the original proposal who individually applied and have been programmed at the Festival are The Cary Grant Players, "Snark" (W.A.) and La Pension du Gai Hasard (France) in association with Foley Bergere (W.A.), "The Swedish Cavalier".

Fingers crossed that everyone finds the funding!

Joanne Foley

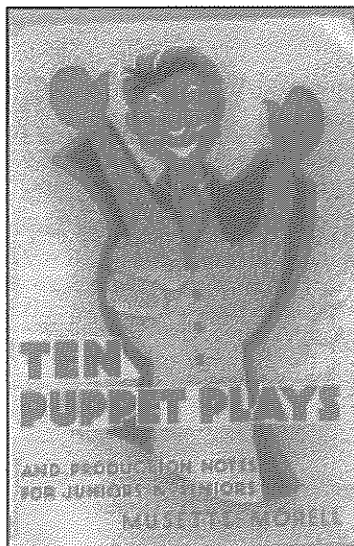
Puppet History

Australian Puppet Plays

By Ricahrd Bradshaw

Writing for puppets is not easy, especially since most puppeteers would agree that the script for a show, if it must have words, should usually be dealt with last rather than first. It helps if published scriptshave been used for performances and that is the case for the books I'm looking at here. Even so, times change.

"Ten Puppet Plays" [116 pages] was written by Musette Morell, and published by Currawong Press in Sydney just as news arrived of its author's death. Musette Morell was the pen-name of Moyra Martin



(1898-1950) who wrote many radio plays, for adults and for children, which were broadcast on the A.B.C. Her children's book "Bush Cobbers" was Highly Commended in the Book of the Year selection in 1948.

John Lewis has kindly sent me a copy of a warm tribute to her written for

a Sydney newspaper by the writer Leslie Rees who was Federal Editor for ABC Radio Drama for many years. He wrote how she raised social issues in her writing for adults and children, and spoke out strongly against war.

John and I have memories of one of the puppet plays from her book, "Xmas for Sneezer", which Edith Murray first directed for marionettes at Clovelly Puppet Theatre in about 1951. Unfortunately my copy of the book is missing pages 17-48, which means I have only the title of this play. [It is "Xmas" in the title, not "Christmas".] However some of the script still sticks in my mind over fifty years later.

Peter's little dog Sneezer gets lost in a storm, and is rescued by Santa Claus who takes him to his workshop. When Santa later sneaks into Peter's bedroom to deliver presents Peter surprises him by being awake. When Santa says: "It's good manners to be asleep when I make a call!"

Peter snaps back:
Peter: Then to make it square, Don't leave me a toy!

Santa: Don't leave you a toy? I never met such a boy!

Peter: Yes, I said don't!

Santa: Well for that I just won't!

Peter: I'm sorry to offend, But you see I've lost a friend and nothing seems to matter now.

Santa: Lost a friend? That's bad.

Peter: Yes, he was the best friend I ever had.

If you'd seen him wag his tail and bark.

Santa: Tail? Bark?

(coming forward to audience) Girls and boys, what has a tail and barks? Do you think the little lost dog could be his?

Santa calls in Sneezer. [I've forgotten that bit of script!]

Peter: Sneezer, my friend, my little dog!

Sneezer: Bow, wow, wog!

Who could ever forget that line? Most of these plays are in rhyming couplets, which at least makes them easier to remember after more than 50 years!

There are production notes at the end of the book which show that all the plays had been done either with glove puppet or marionettes. We used some of the suggestions: a piece of tin-sheet for thunder, flicking the light switch for lightning, and rolling dried peas in a tin for rain.

The first play, "The Three Bears", is in rhyming couplets too, but fairly races along in a way which would most likely still succeed today, covering only three pages. "Cinderella" at the end is a bit longer.

The other plays are "Xmas Eve", "Bush Cobbers", "Peter and the MedicineMan", "Feeding Wins" [based on horse-racing!], "The Doings of a Doowee"[about an Aboriginal boy and his spirit], "Orange Blossom and the Tartar", and "Bralgah the Beautiful". The latter is based on an Aboriginal story in which a girl who likes to dance is turned into a brolga by a spirit in the form of a willy-willy.

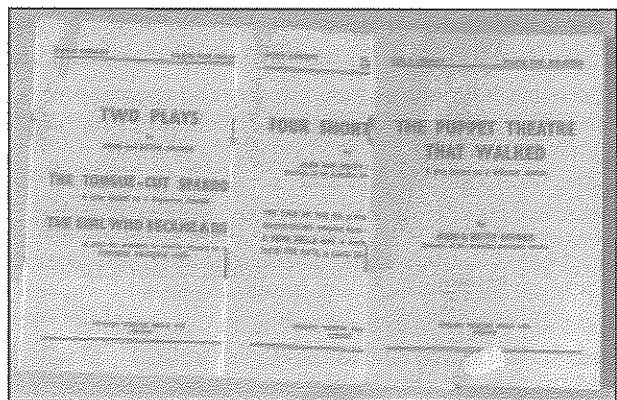
The book of plays is introduced by L.F.Keller, who was a NSW Inspector of Schools specialising in drama and puppetry. He was a foundation

member of the Australian Puppet Guild (Melbourne, 1945) and the Puppetry Guild of N.S.W. (Sydney, 1948) of which he became patron.

Musette Morell's was a talented writer of dialogue, and could easily have written puppet plays for adults. A book of three of her radio plays for adults published in 1948 includes her witty hour-long play Webs of our Weaving which is set in a spider-web in an Australian garden. It is about a young male spider who refuses to be eaten after mating with the glamorous Arachne, upsetting the rules of the spider world. The deeper intention is to encourage us all to resist being pawns, especially at a time of war.

[There are shades here of the Capek brothers Insect Play of 1921 which was performed in Bill Nicol's "Littlest Theatre " in Melbourne about half a century ago. A live actor played the tramp, while marionettes were used for the insect groups he meets...and learns from.]

That story of "Bralgah the Beautiful" appears again in the published plays of Joan and Betty Rayner, (1900?-1999 and 1907-1981 respectively), this



time as "The Girl Who Became a Bird". Morell's script had used a Narrator, and a Chorus in the form of the Tribe .

Puppet history continues pg 29

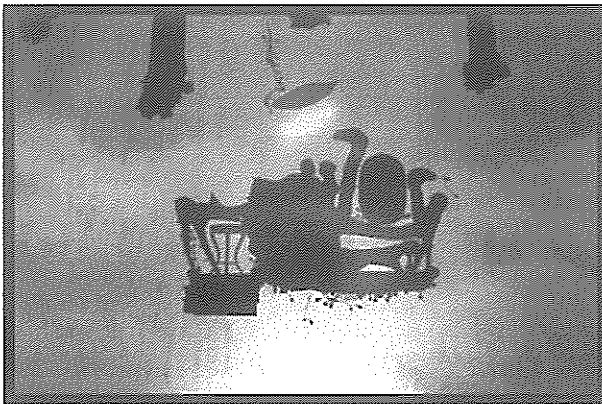
THEATRE FORMAN BROTHERS PRAGUE

By Ulla Dengsoe

A small step towards the sea...

Petr and Matej Forman have always loved the sea. Although they live in Prague, far from the coast, the sea means a lot for their work.

Several magazines have asked me to write about Petr and Matej, which is why I am now sitting in their cozy house outside of Prague with the tape recorder on and ready with lots of questions. I have known Petr and Matej Forman since the beginning of the 1990s, when I met them in Prague, in my capacity as artistic coordinator of Festival of Wonder, to discuss the first of many visits they



have made to our international Danish puppetry festival in Silkeborg.

The twins have almost always worked together in the theatre world. Petr trained in acting in Prague with a focus and interest in puppetry and film. Matej trained at Prague's Art Academy and has also studied in New York, but they always intended to work together.

They live on the outskirts of Prague, Matej together with Bela and 4 dogs upstairs, Petr with Klara, 3 children, 2 dogs and cats below. On the ground floor is their common workshop where many ideas and models for set designs are created.

There is constant activity in the house of children, dogs and all kinds of artists. Sometimes it can compare to a busy train-station, but many large projects are planned in this creative atmosphere.

I asked them which of their theatre projects were their favourites. Petr answered that all of their projects during the last 20 years or so are special to them. They always use the word 'we'. Apparently twins often speak that way, but here the 'we' covers many other partners through the years, designers, actors, visual artists, film makers, etc.

The work with puppets began in the late 1980s at an annual street theatre festival on one of the islands in the middle of the Vltava River, which runs through the beautiful city of Prague. That river is the first step to the sea. A large group of young artists put together this festival of theatre and music, and laid the foundations for future collective endeavours.

Their first well-known performance was created by chance. 'The Baroque Opera' is played in a little theatre which can be set up in one hour. The charming performance is a fantastic mixture of puppetry, masks and fast-paced live theatre, 3 people on stage, manipulating 3 small uncontrollable puppets, which are constantly on the verge of destroying their 'home'. The puppeteers are often distancing themselves from the story, as when they stop to argue about how a certain scene should be played. After several minutes of discussion, they agree to continue performing, in slow motion.

'The Baroque Opera' opened doors around the world and began many close personal and professional friendships.

The meeting and cooperation with Igor from the French theatre Voliere Dromesko was especially innovative for Petr and Matej Forman's theatre work. They were on tour in France when they saw the performance, 'La Baraque', where the audience was a part of the show, and for a moment they forgot time and place in a wonderful theatre experience. A love of this form of theatre has been an essential part of their own work since.

Petr and Matej later set their own mark on 'La Baraque', and they have been a part of the performance for several years. The company who works together, lives together. The cabaret show with song, live music and various acts takes place in a barrack app. 10x20 meters and it lasts 4-5 hours, including an intermission, when soup is served. There is no barrier between the audience and the actors. The show is played at the tables, in the windows, at the bar and in small portable one-person puppet theatres. The action is inside the barrack while a live sized marionette is animated with the help of a fantastic system of strings manipulated by 3 people outside.

Later they came one step closer to the sea. In the years leading up to 2000, when Prague was the cultural capital of Europe, Petr and Matej and their crew formed the idea of making theatre on a river barge which would be moving on the Vltava during the performance.

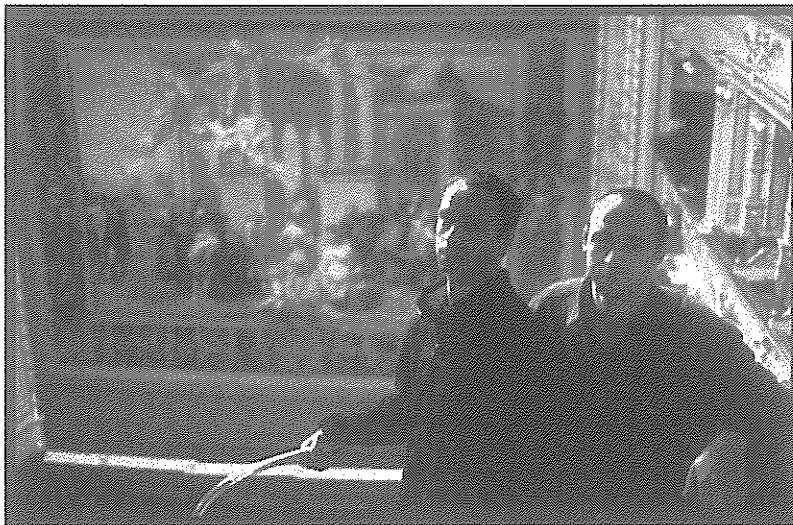
It was a huge undertaking. The funding and a boat had to be found, and the boat had to be rebuilt to accommodate their plans.

This took over a year and, once again, many professionals were hired for the rebuilding, but a large number of volunteers were working constantly on the project. Once I visited the worksite south of Prague. 40 people were congregated; a small army of set designers, visual artists, film people, puppeteers, etc. who were working around the clock. Matej told me that a group of volunteers was working to create the illusion of a sailboat, decorating the boat, sewing sails, painting inside and out; he was quite overwhelmed that he didn't even know all of the volunteers, who were friends of friends.

is puppet theatre performed under the 6 tables at a time.

Unfortunately the 72 meter long barge may not sail out on the sea. On the other hand Theatre Forman Brothers has often performed in a 'dry' version, where the maritime equipment is removed from the barge, and played somewhere else in Europe in a huge tent.

'The Purple Sails' was Theatre Forman Brothers first large theatre project, a project in which images, pictures, and music are important ingredients and audience participation is part of the show. Both Petr and Matej agree that their work in theatre is successful if for just a moment, the audience can



Both Petr and Matej have great respect for each individual team member's qualifications and ideas when working as a group. It should be a free and happy experience to create theatre. The entire project, from the first idea until the premiere, was filmed by Czech TV, which is why there is such a fantastic film about the process.

The first performance was called 'The ship with the purple sails' from a novel of Alexander Grin. The audience waits on the dock as the ship with the crew on deck moves slowly toward the dock. The audience is greeted and taken to their places at small tables with leaded glass tops, where they can sit throughout the performance, and enjoy drinks and snacks bought at the ship's bar. The boat leaves dock and after a humorous introduction by Petr and Matej about the safety features of the barge, the show begins, using silhouettes of trees and houses along the river banks as sets. It is an unusual show, in which one is constantly surprised at the humorous, thought-provoking and imaginative segments, for example when sails are raised above the stage and a dancer then dances with her own shadow behind the sails. Theatre is performed throughout the boat, among the audience, up from the floor, etc. At one point there

forget the outside world and become a part of the performance.

The barge is also used for other theatre forms, such as summer festivals and guest performances.

The boat performance was the first of other large theatre projects. In 2002 Petr and Matej Forman were asked to stage 'Beauty and the Beast' at the national theatre in Prague, an opera with music by Philip Glass. Would they be able to use their normal production methods in this kind of setting? The national theatre gave the brothers free reign, and led by Matej Forman they were able to hire their own crew and construct the fantastic set design.

Matej has always been the set designer for their shows and when I asked him how he chooses his scenic collaborators, he answered that it was necessary to have respect and consideration for each other's work. The helpers should always be enthusiastic and are encouraged to have their own ideas for details in the work, though the final word is Matej's if necessary to decide between options. The sets were constructed and the first rehearsals took place in the country outside Prague. It was new for the established opera singers and the theatre crew to live out in the country during the

rehearsals of a show. Petr directed the singers, and felt that they were very positive about the experience, especially because they could follow the progress in the set building.

The final days before the opening were on the large stage at the National Theatre. It was time to see if all of the elements they had constructed and worked with out in the country could be used in Prague. Everything was in place. All movement had been coordinated to the smallest detail; a large orchestra, many talented singers, the whole crew of Forman's helpers to animate the characters, with even a live horse on stage. And their unmistakable humour was also in place, as the Beast was brought to the theatre every evening in an armoured car, just as the audience was arriving.

It was a very beautiful and poetic performance on the largest stage yet, just a stone throw away from the island on the Vltava River where it all began 20 years before.

Another large project has been produced since 'Beauty and the Beast', the show 'Klapzubova 11' for The Minortheatre in Prague. Petr, Matej and the crew have once again directed, designed and choreographed a wonderful play about a family in which the father trains his 11 children in the noble art of playing football. Once again the show is full of imaginative pictures, perfect choreography and humour, for example in the scene where the 'team' goes to Australia to represent the Czech Republic.

During the last 5 years Theatre Forman Brothers has worked with Theatre Anpu in Prague, most recently producing 'The Hunchback of Notre Dame', a beautiful show with a unique and impressive set design, and performed in a circus tent.

Read more at www.formanstheatre.cz and www.anpu.cz

Ulla Dengsoe
Artistic director
Festival of Wonder
Silkeborg International Puppetfestival
Denmark
www.dukketheaterfestival.dk

George Speaight (1914-2005)

The English puppeteer and writer, George Speaight, died in London on 22 December, 2005, aged 91. His wife, Mary, had predeceased him by a matter of weeks.

George was an authority on toy theatre and gave wonderfully exuberant performances of melodramas such as "The Miller and his Men" and "The Corsican Brothers". [The director Peter Brook has said he was inspired to a life in theatre by one of George's performances.] His well researched reference books include "Juvenile Drama: the History of the English Toy Theatre" (1945, 1969), "The History of the English Puppet Theatre" (1955, 1990), "Punch and Judy: a History" (1970), "A History of the Circus" (1980) and "The Book of Clowns" (1980). He also edited a book "Bawdy Songs of the Early Music Hall" (1975)! George lived near Kew Gardens and visitors were often persuaded to join him for one of his vigorous walks there.

A colourful, eccentric character, learned but with a great sense of fun, he will be sadly missed by his friends in puppetry. Many warm tributes to him were posted on the website of Puppeteers UK.

Some years ago George and Mary's journalist daughter, Margaret Hebblethwaite, was visiting Fiji on her way to Australia when there was a coup led by George Speight, this one with no 'a'!

- Remembered by Richard Bradshaw

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Further information and program see; www.internationalpuppetcarnival.com.au

Puppet History

Australian Puppet Plays

continued from pg 23

The Rayners' version was published with other plays in a series of booklets by the English Theatre Guild Ltd., London in 1970. [I was working for the Joan and Betty at the time.] The Rayners had consulted the anthropologist A.P. Elkin to check their text for authenticity. He pointed out that the sound of "S" is not in Aboriginal languages. They aimed to reduce its use in the English text, but not with obvious success!

Ann Davis, the NSW puppeteer, was in the company that toured this play for Joan and Betty's Australian Childrens Theatre in 1961. The other members were a dancer, Vola Young, and Ann's sister, Jayne. Ann made very attractive marionettes for this show. [Ann (OAM) and Jayne now live at Toukley, N.S.W.]

Another puppet play in that group's program was "Hats for Cats". The printed play is by Joan Rayner and is described as "A comic fantasy for puppets - or humans - based on a puppet mime by Ann Davis". Some years earlier I had seen the mime version of Ann's play, which she did to the Waltz and Tango from William Walton's "Façade Suite", and strongly doubt that this wordy version was an improvement. Ann certainly feels it wasn't.

I have checked with Ann, and her original mime had only two glove-puppets cats: a milliner and a fussy customer. The customer entered the freshly dusted shop and tried on several hats, none of which pleased her. She finally leaves wearing the hat of her choice, which happens to be the feather duster. I remember being delighted by this charming little sketch, which ended with a nice joke in the manner of a "blackout".

Joan added an assistant, a rent-collector and a second customer and made it into a little melodrama adding several lines of verse after the "gag" when the customer leaves wearing the feather duster. Those lines are necessary to resolve the new plot, but the play is no longer the light revue sketch it was, and the eight minutes of rhyming couplets weigh it down.

Two of the plays result from a visit to Asia in 1961 collecting stories, ideas and even props. "The Tongue-Cut Sparrow" from Japan has three speaking characters, a kind old man and his ill-tempered wife with a puppet bird. It is not obvious from the text that it was originally performed by two people (Joan and Betty) who took turns working the finger-puppet bird, either in their hands, or behind the bird's (puppet-stage) home. At one point the bird, who is able to speak after her tongue is slit by the annoyed wife, entertains the old man with a little puppet show using two dolls and a tiger.

In Taiwan they saw a street performance of a puppet show which was inspiration for "The Puppet Theatre that Walked", and they bought traditional hand-puppets to use in the final show. The wife of a man who has just made a glove-puppet theatre to fit over the top of his body is snatched away by a slave-trader. He manages to find where she is and, disguised by his puppet theatre, communicates with his wife to help her trip up the slave-trader and escape. She climbs up on to her husband's back so that when the slave-trader comes rushing out he is tricked into going off in the distance looking for her. [The stage directions tell how she can appear to climb in and out without actually doing so.]

The play was originally performed by two people, Joan and Betty, using clever doubling. Either of them was able to be the husband when he is inside the puppet theatre, and a "voice off" could come from inside it. No doubt audiences enjoyed the fact

that two people appeared as three, but the play text is published as if it is for three actors. When I questioned this Joan and Betty replied it would be too difficult for two ordinary actors.

Joan and Betty were very thorough and professional in their work. For all their plays they used a minimum of set and props, being faithful to the idea of "Strolling Players", the title of Mavis Thorpe Clarke's 1971 book about them. In their hey-day they were inspirational to many of their audience, some of whom went on to be involved in theatre. They would spend hours making changes to the dialogue until it was easy to say...and easy to understand. However the expectations of audiences have changed, and these plays probably would need "a lot more work" to be successful today.

We puppeteers are often quick to say puppet shows should not have too many words, but we should not forget that two of the most successful puppet shows seen here in recent times were by Ronnie Burkett who utters a steady stream of intensely written dialogue for as long as two hours straight. Proof that in puppet theatre "rules" are there to be broken.

POSTSCRIPT 1.

WALKING PUPPET THEATRES

Joan and Betty seem to have been ahead of their time in adapting the idea of a walking puppet-theatre. Such theatres were known through old illustrations, a couple of which appeared in French books of 1900 and 1947 and are reproduced here. Some years later the idea was "rediscovered" by a Frenchman, Jean-Paul Hubert (see photo), who used it to great advantage for a charming, modern and funny show which I first saw him perform at festivals in the U.S.A. and Charleville-Mézières in 1972. (We toured Japan together for PUK in 1976.)

Jean-Paul's show in Oakland, CA in 1972 inspired a young "hippy" Steve

Hansen who presented a rather wild and wonderful Punch and Judy at the same festival. [When the baby is thrown from the "window" and bounces up-and-down on an elastic crying "Wow, man! Free fall!" Judy enters and, in despair, cries: "My son, a drop out?!"] Steve then created his own walking puppet theatre which played in Australia a couple of times, including a season at Nimrod Theatre (now Belvoir St.) in 1978. Jean-Paul Hubert was not very pleased that Steve had borrowed the idea but the two shows were so different, and both so good, that it really didn't matter.

At a show in Sydney's Hyde Park one little boy was being a nuisance. Steve's theatre walked across and descended over him. The stunned boy was deposited some distance away, a bit like an egg laid by a hen.

Steve was back for the Australian International Puppetry Festival in Adelaide in January, 1983 which also featured Ross Brown, the American-born puppeteer who now lives in Newcastle, NSW. Ross had his own excellent version of "the walking puppet theatre", a "Sombrero Theatre", in which he performed strongly, with beautifully crafted puppets. Last year Ross was at the One Van Festival and it was great to see his wonderful thespian leopard overact once more. Unfortunately he didn't do a public show.

POSTSCRIPT 2.

AN OLD PUPPETEER REMINISCES.

As I write these pieces of history I think of the great film producer, Samuel Goldwyn's famous misquotation: "We've all passed a lot of water since those days."

In 1953 when Clovelly Puppet Theatre took "Xmas for Sneezer" to the Bradfield Park Centre, set in a migrant hostel in what is now East Lindfield, it was about 43°C and the air smelt of nearby bushfires. We worked the marionettes under a hot iron roof, and the small audience looked to be past caring. Sneezer,

the dog, was not a very attractive puppet. It had a rough-surfaced papier-mache head joined by linked screw-eyes to a smooth wooden body. Four flat legs without strings were attached to axles through the body, and the dog moved with a kind of gallop.

When Santa found him just after the storm one of his legs fell off. "Ho! Ho! Ho!" said Santa (Arthur Cantrill). "You'd better come to my workshop and we'll fix you up." The curtain was lowered and after a quick repair the show recommenced. This time the neck-joint failed and the dog's head swung forward on its strings, away from the body, looking like some disembodied spectre. Again "Ho! Ho! Ho! Back to the workshop!" and a second time the curtain was lowered. I don't know what the audience was thinking, but we puppeteers were so limp with laughter that our puppets sagged on their strings..

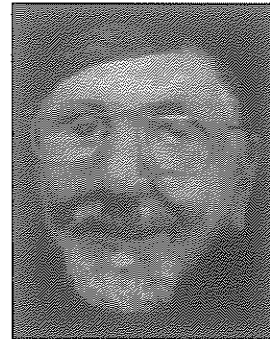
When Mr Keller [the Inspector who wrote the intro to "Ten PuppetPlays"] was about to go overseas on long service leave in 1953 he was farewelled with performances given by three state schools in the N.S.W. Conservatorium one of which comprised scenes from "The Taming of the Shrew", by Sydney Boys' High School. I played Bianca. [I remember being particularly uncomfortable because I had my bra on upside-down.] Ken Dutton, who later became a Professor of French at the University of Newcastle [and published a book on posing for bodybuilders] was my older sister, Katherina. [Ken's voice had broken, so his Kate was quite butch.] John Milson, the Perth-based theatre director, was our father, Baptista Minola, and Petruchio was played by the footballer Peter Crittle who was the man accompanying P.M. John Howard on to the field when he begrudgingly plonked medals on the winning English rugby-players a couple of years back.

In 1967, when I was still teaching maths, Edith Murray arranged for me to give an "auditioning" show for Joan and Betty Rayner and that was at

Mr Keller's house in Hunters Hill. Two years later I began touring for the Rayners as a "professional" puppeteer. [Meanwhile they arranged for my publicity photos to be taken Max Dupain!]

This bit of "Puppet History" was written by an insider!

Richard Bradshaw



Trophy of Richard Bradshaw
created and photographed and
sculpted by Julia Davis

CORRECTIONS

In Edition 29, Anita Sinclair's article *La Fontaine* was incorrectly discribed as a review. This article was intended to be a critical exploration into process, not a review of the final work. Appologises to Anita

In Edition 28, text supplied by Bryan Woltjen in his photographic essay "How to make giant snails" was left off due to a printing error. Byran's complete essay can be found in this edition on pg.32 & 33. Appologises to Bryan

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*DEADLINE FOR AUSTRALIAN PUPPETEER No. 29 is July1st **

**Subject to change, please check website for updates*

Readers may remember these pages from a previous issue. Due to a fault in the printing, Bryan's text was missing. Please enjoy it again, this time in it's complete form.

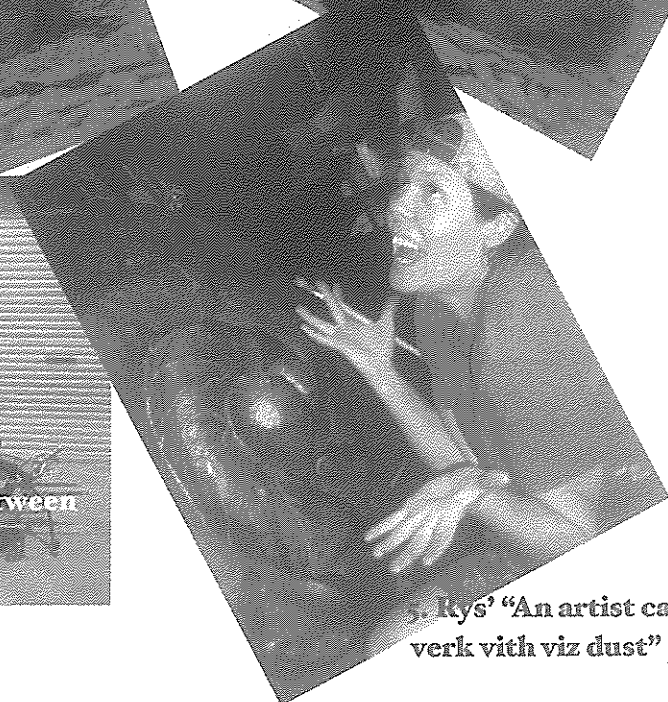
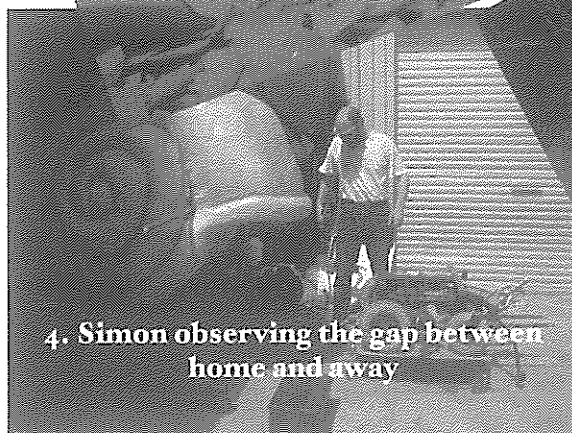
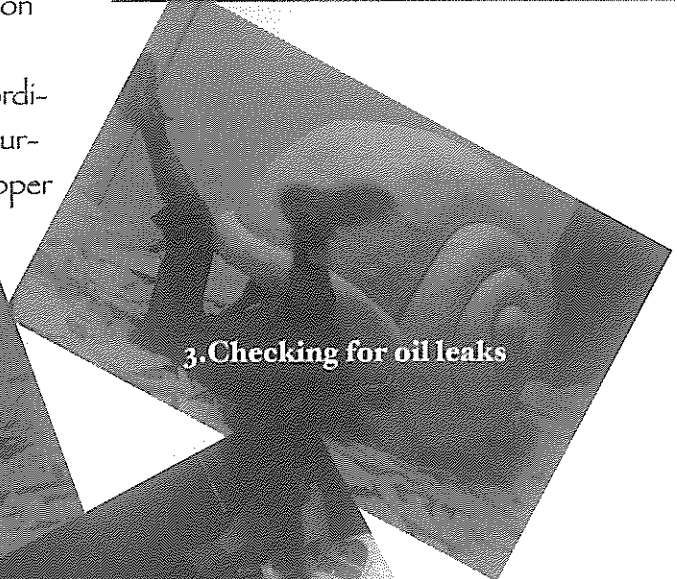
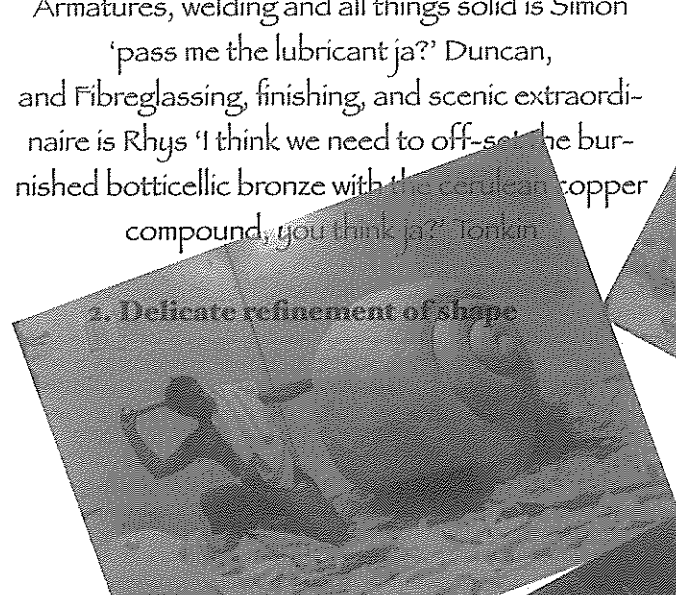
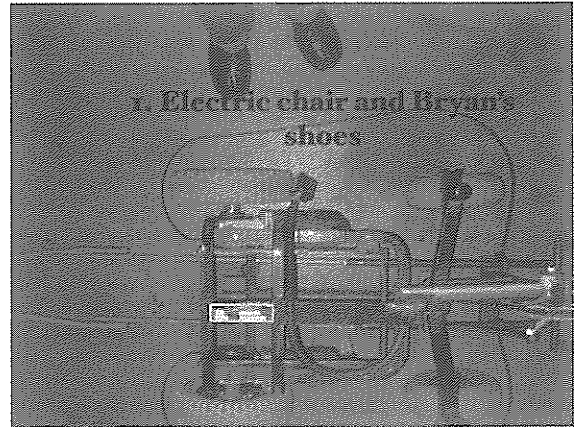
How to Make Gigantic Hairy Snails

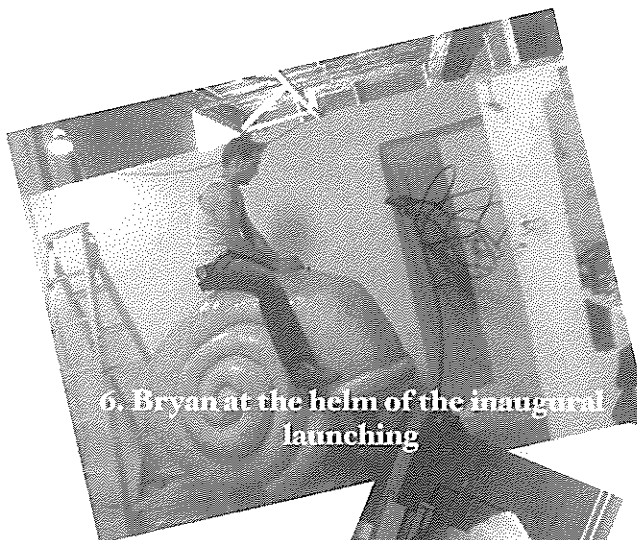
by Bryan Woltjen

In the true spirit of a photographic essay, this introduction will be short. Hm, that should do it ja. -

The mastermind and snail ranch owner is Kinetic Theatre's Miriam Ceh, (08)9335 9462.

Direction by Melbourne based Penny 'ja, but are those snails ready yet?!' Baron,
Design, sculpture and furrier is Bryan 'next week, I promise, next week, ja?' Woltjen,
Armatures, welding and all things solid is Simon 'pass me the lubricant ja?' Duncan,
and Fibreglassing, finishing, and scenic extraordinaire is Rhys 'I think we need to off-set the burnished botticellic bronze with the cerulean copper compound, you think ja?' Tonkin.





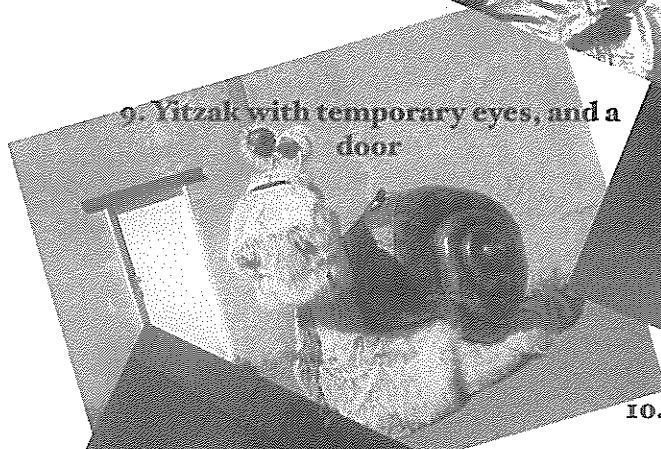
6. Bryan at the helm of the inaugural launching



7. Boris is eating his own flesh with Isaac



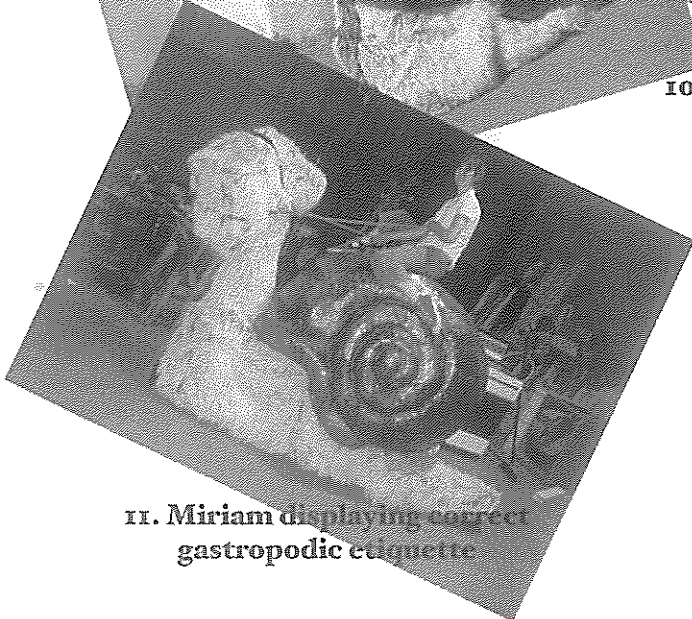
8. Pearlescent finish and mechanics



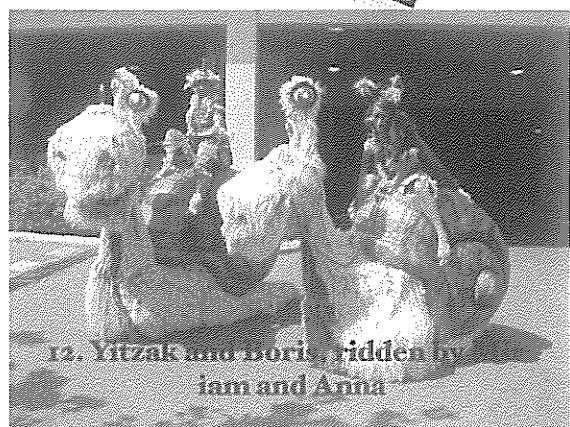
9. Yitzak with temporary eyes, and a door



10. Yitzak being reigned in

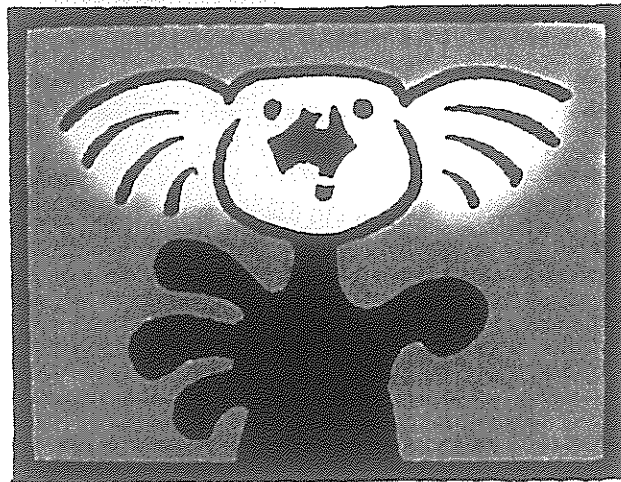


11. Miriam displaying correct gastropodic etiquette



12. Yitzak and Boris, ridden by Miriam and Anna

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