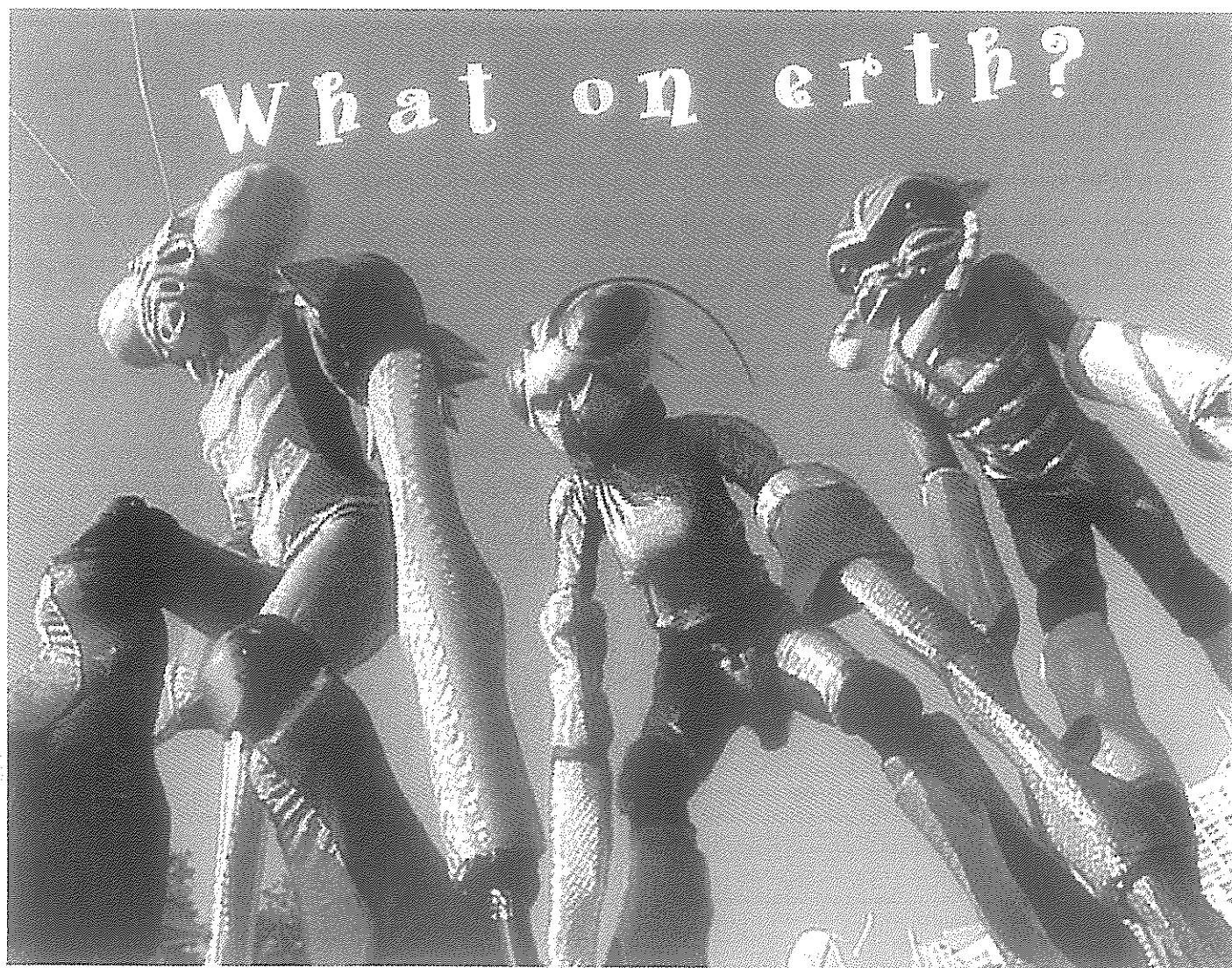

AUSTRALIAN PUPPETEER

Autumn/Winter 2000

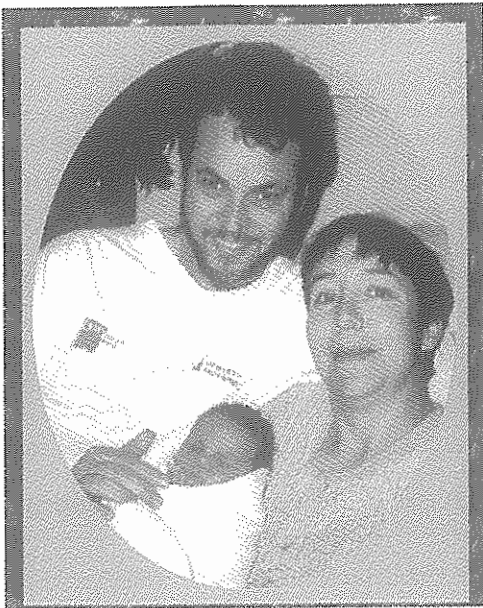


**UNIMA
2000:**

Where to now?

***What's on
*Reviews
*Building a curlew
(Part Three)
*Travel reports
and of course
much more!**

**WIN!
Big
fluffy prize!**



It's a girl!

Jessica Anne Sutherland
Born 30th April 2000
(In lieu of Mary's Secretary's
report I suppose.)



Children's author, puppetry writer and
ex-Polyglot Artistic Director
Helen Lunn with new hubby Michael.

It's a boy!

Ian Tregonning and Jane Barwell
 are astounded at the birth of a
 baby boy -
 Thomas (working title), one minute
 past 7pm, 16 March 2k.
 He was...9.5lb or 4230g!
 Mother and baby are fine and
 beautiful.
 Father is astounded!
 Updaters latter...
 Ian.



STOP PRESS

Sue Giles celebrates her new job
as Polyglot's Artistic Director.
Details and interview next issue



Murray Raine has just won another Mo award
for Best Visual Act in Australia!
Congratulations Muzza!

A U S T R A L I A N P U P P E T E E R

The Magazine of UNIMA Australia ♦ AUTUMN/WINTER 2000

Editorial

Good evening fellow puppetry types,

First up, the next Victorian UNIMA get-together will be at Polyglot's Cromwell Road Theatre in South Yarra at 2pm on Saturday the 12th of August. Let's welcome new members, catch up and ask the question "Where to now?" A bit of a look into the future of UNIMA. Perhaps members in other states might try the same?

I've just finished work on another twenty-six fun and frenetic episodes of Pig's Breakfast. The show has been a great opportunity to develop a few characters over an extended series and also belt out numerous guest aliens and creatures. Visitors to the workshop commented on the gleeful mayhem recently as we built two new alien makeups, three ape prosthetics, one full ape suit and three new puppets over a frantic couple of weeks. Obviously it's madness but great fun nevertheless.

Late breaking news suggests that PAN might be winding up rather prematurely. This is very sad for all concerned. Details next issue.

The unstoppably supportive Victoria and I will be stuffing envelopes with a combination of magazines, receipts and subscription reminders over the next couple of days (26th June as I write this). In return, please put pen to paper, fingers to keyboard, modem to email, light source to photographic paper and tell us what your puppets are up to. Thanks to all the contributors to this issue, keep up the inspiring work.

I'll just go and check the mailbox.

Philip Miller

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L e t t e r s

HOT GOSSIP!

from Paul Sladdin @ Polyglot

So - What's the news?

Well, Gilly McInnes and Paul Sladdin are BOTH leaving Polyglot!!

What! Together?? pphwoaarrrr!

No, you salacious gossipmonger. It's just a weird coincidence.

But why??

Well, Gilly and her husband are adopting, so she's leaving.

And...

And Paul's family is unexpectedly expanding too and he needs to work geographically close to them.

You mean in the same suburb?

No, dear - Mansfield in North East Victoria.

Oh.

Bummer, eh?

Yeah. You know, there's got to be more to it than that. Now, do you suppose that...

Well there isn't.

No?

No.

They'd be great jobs to have. I'll let a few people know.

Well - at least they're generating new audiences.

Dear Australian Puppeteer,
I have read an article about **Karagoz** in UNIMA Australia magazine (winter 1999) written by Janet Macalister. It is written that only Show Theatre is the only regular puppet theater in Istanbul. That must be a mistake, misunderstanding or something like that. Show theater is a festival theater, only in festivals make modern karagoz performances (makes animal skin but dyes using ecoline, or ink. Macalister says vegetable dyes?) I never heard that Show theater (CEngiz Ozek) regularly makes performances.

Regular puppet theaters in Istanbul are Akbank puppet and karagoz theatre (in Sabanci lycee, Saturday mornings) and Orhan Kurt Karagoz theatre (who is the general secretary of Turkish UNIMA - in Ataturk Library, Saturday at 12:00 AM) and my Theatre (Uskudar Karagoz theatre in Caddeboostan Cultural Center, Sundays at 12:00 AM). Janet Macalister giving information from her last trip to Turkey, but the show that she mentioned is just like Akbank puppet and Karagz theater show, not Show Theater. And also says Karagoz and Howza but it must be Karagoz and Hacivat (hadjywat). I wonder something mistaken but i don't know what...o) One who interested in can make contact with UNIMA Turkey, if it's important for themselves...o)

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best regards

Alpay Ekler

Uskudar Karagoz Theater
<http://welcome.to/karagoz>
karagoz@unima.every1.net
karagoz@karagoz.every1.net

From: timothy kaulen

[SMTP:tkaulen@hotmail.com]

Sent: Thursday, 8 June 2000 6:49

Subject: Re: Black Sheep

Puppet Festival 2000

ATTENTION BLACK SHEEP!

If you have not submitted, now is the time. (Deadline for submittals is July 1, 2000). The Industrial Arts Co-op is proud to announce that the second annual BLACK SHEEP PUPPET FESTIVAL is under construction.

~to be held again in Pittsburgh, PA in September 2000.

~we are looking for outrageous programs for any and all ages.

Interested artists should respond by sending proposals, description of work and budget requirements to:

Black Sheep Puppet Fest 2000
c/o Occupant
1113 E. Carson Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15203

We are anticipating another exciting festival this year!

Dear Philip,

Firstly:

Calling all Punch & Judy people including his cousins from around the world, performers, makers, collectors and enthusiasts. The Adelaide International Festival of Puppetry and Visual Theatre to be held in 2001 is looking for expressions of interest from you to be part of the first ever Australian gathering of Punch people!!

Being the Centenary of Federation year, 2001 will be a great opportunity to gather and celebrate as I am sure that Mr. Punch would have been performing and whooping it up 100 years ago to celebrate Federation. Probably one of the few theatrical acts to still be going strong one hundred years later. So come and join the fun, meet other interested people and mix with lots of other Punch people in Adelaide in 2001.

If you are interested then please contact Sean Manners on 02 6334 4994 or smanners@ix.net.au before end of July 2000

Secondly:

Still to do with Punch and Judy, I am still looking for people who would like to form a loose association affiliated to The World Wide Friends of Punch and Judy to enable people with an interest to communicate and network with each other. I know that we all lead very busy lives but other professions have professional networks and are run very successfully with many benefits to the profession so why shouldn't Mr Punch have his very own, down under in Australia and New Zealand. The success of The World Wide Friends of Punch and Judy in bringing Punch people together from around the globe is an indication of what can be achieved here.

Thirdly:

Please find enclosed my resume to put on file as suggested in the last edition. Basically I am involved in Punch and Judy, puppet making workshops in schools and the general community and large scale image making in community arts projects. regards
Sean Manners

PS If anyone is travelling through or performing in Bathurst NSW and needs a place to stay or repairs on puppets, stages etc then please call me and drop in.

News from the Gardner Puppet Theatre is that our new show "The Fairy Ring" is being very well received by both teachers and children. However we are still getting more work from our old shows such as "Road Safety", "Blast Off", and "The Beach and Ocean". This is probably because these fit more easily into ESF levels! Also we have much more work in Kinders and up to grade 2 than the older grades.

We are closing for four weeks in September. Ralph is going overseas and Harry and I may travel a bit in Australia. I have three grandchildren now and so I am performing a four day week only in order to have more time with them. I wish I could say we are turning down clients but in reality we are not - just filling up nicely the four days. I wonder how the GST will hit?

Cheers,
Lorrie Gardner

DREAMS FOR UNIMA

Dear UNIMA Friends:

The General Secretary asked for individual members and centers to share their dreams for UNIMA. Here is mine:

My Dream for UNIMA 2000

My dream is that leaders and members of UNIMA communicate their news to each other in a timely manner. Correspondence must receive prompt replies.

There can be no progress without good communication. This is the era of instantaneous global communication. There must be a comprehensive web site for the General Secretariat with links to the web sites already created for UNIMA 2000 and several UNIMA Centers. This web site should include all official information such

as in the brochure "What is UNIMA," the directory of officers, representatives and centers, the calendar of events and UNIMA meetings, and continuously updated news including the texts of editions of "The Courier." The web site must exist in the official UNIMA languages, not just French.

Since funding is always an issue, I propose a fundraising committee. Any volunteer General Secretary will have projects besides UNIMA, so UNIMA must try to find funds independent of any individual's vested interests. In order to qualify for funding, there must be a four year projected budget plan, with detailed annual budgets and reports.

This dream is only the minimum. We may also hope for publication of at least an annual newsletter, UNIMA History from time to time as is in progress for 2000, and the long

term project of WEPA (The World Encyclopedia of Puppetry Arts). All of these might be posted on the proposed UNIMA website, which I understand is still in progress.

Nancy Lohman Staub

President's Report

UNIMA 2000

Puppetry's own Olympics (UNIMA 2000) is almost upon us. Every four years this event is hosted by a member country of UNIMA. In June/July 2000, Magdeburg, Germany will host the XVIIIth UNIMA World Congress and Festival. This is a major opportunity to connect with puppeteers from around the world, to see wonderful performances and exhibitions and to participate in the Congress which defines UNIMA's current and future activities.

Unfortunately, there are no Australian shows on the main Festival program and there will be no formal UNIMA Australia representation at the Congress. I applied to the Australia Council for a grant to attend the festival and to give a paper on Australian puppetry in order to continue to create an international awareness of contemporary Australian performance. My application was unsuccessful and it is not possible for me attend without financial assistance. HOWEVER, the good news is that **Richard Bradshaw** will be attending the Festival and has volunteered to deliver a paper on my (and your) behalf. I will be compiling this paper during May and early June.

If anyone is considering going to UNIMA 2000 check out their web site at

Work for Puppeteers

From my vantage point, there has been a lot of work for puppeteers of late. *The Hobbit* has just finished its Australian tour. *Pan* has just opened in Sydney. There is television work happening in Sydney and Melbourne and puppeteers are continually taking the initiative to create new live shows for performance in theatres, schools and pre-schools, shopping centres, at festivals and private functions.

The Scholarship Fund

No-one has applied for the UNIMA scholarship of \$500. If you aren't sure whether your project meets the scholarship requirements contact a member of the executive for help. Remember that you need to have been a continuous UNIMA member for at least the last 2 years.

Treasurer

The position of Treasurer is **still vacant**. There must be a member out there who is ready to make their contribution to UNIMA Australia by volunteering to be Treasurer. You don't need to be a financial wizard, just organised and conscientious and willing to participate in the executive decision making of the organisation.

Involvement

Remember how useful UNIMA can be. Use your membership to contact other members, form support groups in your area, get help with

technical problems, find out about useful publications and to generally enjoy and become more knowledgeable about puppetry here and in other countries.

"One Van" International Puppet Festival

There has been GOOD NEWS and more good news about the Festival. All the figures and statistics have been collated from the January festival. It made a profit which will remain in the account as seeding money for the next festival. The public obviously loves to come to puppet shows because we recorded a **113% attendance**. The audience was happy to squeeze into every available space!

In April at the Blue Mountains Tourism Awards night, the "One Van" Puppet Festival was presented with the **1999 Regional NSW Tourism Award for Excellence** in a significant Regional Festival or Special Event. This award relates to the 1999 festival and the successful preparations for the 2000 festival.

The 2001 festival will be a mini-fest as we make preparations for a much bigger festival in 2002. The fund raising has already started happening so we can bring some international artists to join our Australian artists in workshops and performances. Watch this magazine for updates.

The Sydney Puppet Theatre

In January this year (after months of work) we presented our beautiful new show "Z for Giraffe" based on a true story from the early 19th century about a young giraffe's extraordinary journey from the plains of Africa to the heart of Paris. The show uses a variety of puppetry forms including shadow, marionette and hand puppets with the puppeteers acting as narrators to move the story along. This is the 7th show in our current repertoire.

During March/April we were commissioned by **Sydney Water** to create a short one person show for presentation at the Royal Easter Show. The show highlighted in an entertaining way things that kids can do (or not do) to keep our waterways clean. This show was performed, on different days, by Larissa Deak and Andrew McDougall and was a very popular feature of Sydney Water's award winning stand.

Thanks to funding from the NSW Ministry for the Arts we are currently in creative development for a new modular work, *In-sensed*, for an adult audience. Our collaborators are puppeteers Larissa Deak and Jillian Waters and designer Russell Emerson.

The Rock's Puppet Cottage (where the Sydney Puppet Theatre is company-in-residence) is growing in popularity with shows every weekend and most school holidays. Sponsored by the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority, the Puppet Cottage is quite a challenging venue for performers because the audience is SO close but at the same time we have the opportunity to develop a wonderful rapport with the adults and children alike. Many Sydney families come regularly and now we even have regular visitors from other states and countries who visit Sydney once every year or two and make the "puppets" a priority on their itineraries.

The Puppet Cottage is in Kendall Lane in The Rocks, Sydney with shows every Saturday and Sunday 11am, 12:30pm and 2pm. If you are visiting Sydney come and see a show (they're free) and say hello.

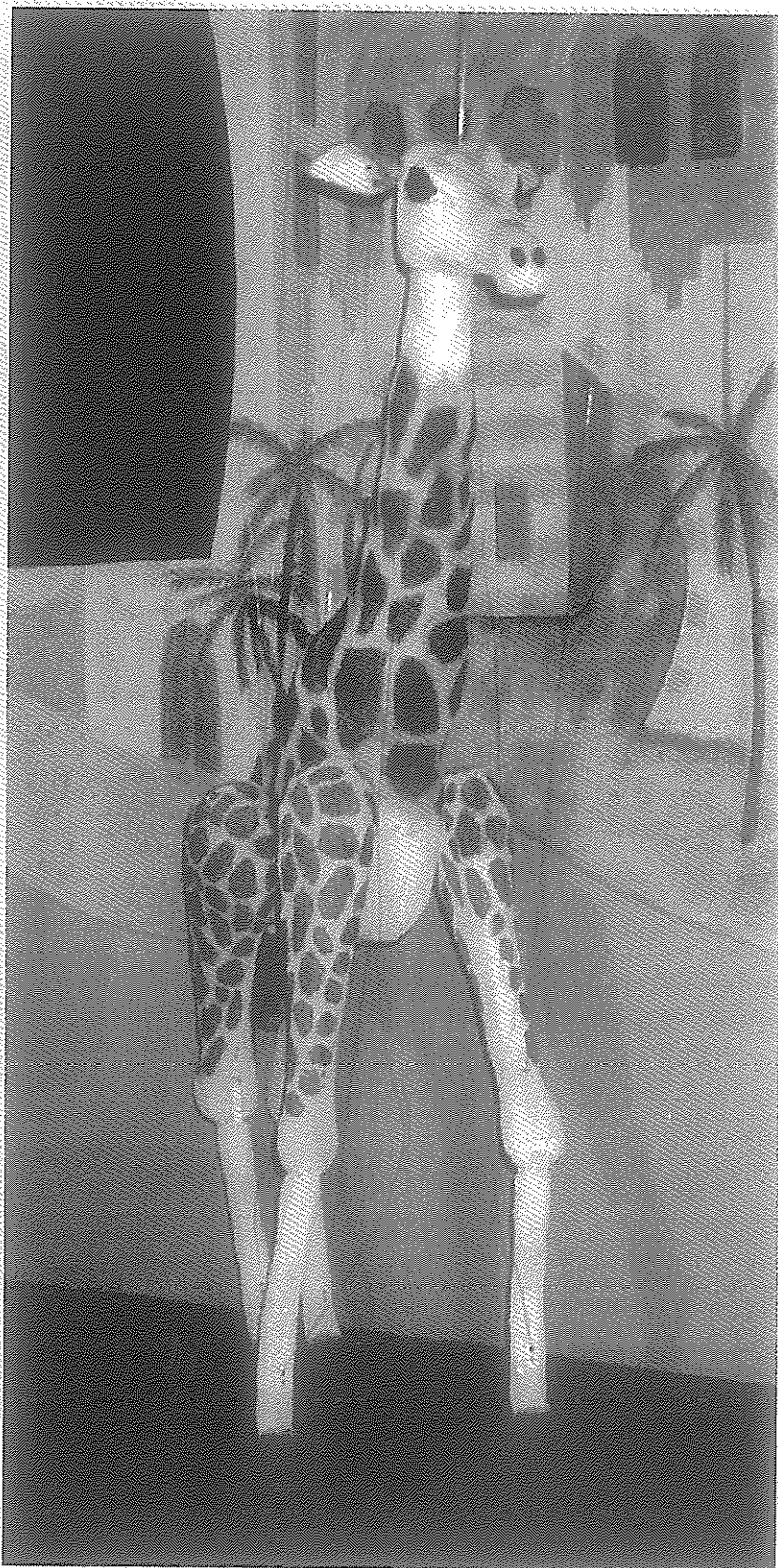
Sue Wallace & Steve Coupe

Z

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Company Profile: erth

2000 has already been a pretty full on year for us. We produced a new show for the Adelaide Fringe festival called "Incubator". The feature of this show is a huge inflatable salamander puppet which eats and then shits people out. Peter J. Wilson was the puppet coach and came in for a week during the rehearsal process.

At the same time Steve (core member of erth) was working on Nigel Jamiesons new epic "The Theft Of Sita" also with Peter J. Wilson. On return from Adelaide the company commenced work on 4 stilted insect creatures (which will feature as part of erth's new work "Garden" at this years Melbourne Festival) and a four metre high Shearer and Sheep.

These completed, we are now working on the plants for the "Garden", with the advice of Mary E White, Australia's leading authority on prehistoric flora of the Gondwana era. So the "Garden" is based on Prehistoric Australian plants and the insects will follow later in the process.



Shearer and sheep



Gargoyles



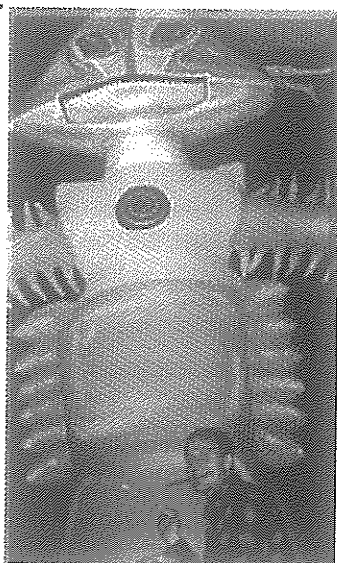
Incubator

Before the Olympics we will also go to Galway and Stockton to perform our "Gargoyles" (featured at last years Melbourne Festival) and continue building and rehearsing for the opening ceremony.

Scott Wright

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41 Gerard Street
Alexandria, Sydney 2015
Australia
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www.erth.comcen.com.au

Inflatable



The Neds

Gargoyles



D E V I S I N G

On the first Monday of the NSW September school holidays 75 Drama teachers, 20ish Charles Sturt University(CSU) Theatre Media Students, a handful of community artists, a support crew of ten first year CSU Theatre Media Students, and lecturers of Theatre Media at CSU gathered together in the drafty pavilions of Bathurst's historical show-grounds to embark on a week of incredible experiences. At the helm were John Fox and Sue Gill, founders of Welfare State International, UK, one of the world's leading spectacle and celebratory theatre companies.

"Devising Celebration" was a course devised by the Theatre Media Section of Charles Sturt University, Bathurst to teach teachers about celebratory theatre, now an elective of the Hsc.

The one week residential course was the practical aspect of the course and consisted of devising, building and participating in a street parade and culminated in a large scale theatrical event and celebration in the guise of a masked ball.

There were community artists from the fields of lantern making, music and instrument making, pyrotechnics, large scale image making, and puppetry. Their job was to assist the participants in realising their dreams and aspirations. To pass on skills and suggest many ways of using the many different materials and basic tools that had been supplied.

Since I worked part time in the Theatre Media workshop I was offered the chance to attend the week in a dual role, as part of the support crew and as a participant. The crew part lasted all week. The bump in, the week of the course, the masked ball and finally the bump out. The participant part lasted the first day.

This day was filled with various exercises. Building images from newspaper and masking tape, creat-

ing painted wall hangings, devising small scale theatrical pieces using a race bookies stand as the only prop. All these exercises were aimed at getting people to think quickly and along the themes of cars, motorsport and millennium bugs and the such-like. Cars and motor racing because of Mount Panorama and the Bathurst 1000 and bugs because, well just because.

The second day was a learning day. Learning about whichever skills on offer that interested you. It was at this point that I was asked whether I would like to demonstrate easy

The show went off with very little going wrong. Giant Stag Beetles formed Mount Panorama from their droppings and car parts spewed from the mountain.

shadow puppet making. As a puppeteer it was hard to say no and so found myself leading a three hour workshop. The participants in the workshop were encouraged to make a puppet out of cardboard, sticky tape and bamboo that incorporated a transformation and some type of moving parts.

The outcome was astounding. We had the Owl and Pussycat in their pea green boat that transformed into them sitting on an island with a tree, Clams that changed to beautiful mermaids, Caterpillars into exquisite butterflies and lots more. The culmination was to put the puppets into random groups of three and come up with a short performance piece which was performed to the rest of the group behind a fairly large screen.

The next day was taken up with a show and tell session by all the community artists so that all participants could get a taste and take

notes on each area of expertise and then a start was made on the costumes and music making for the street parade that was to take place the next morning.

Meanwhile it seemed that I had become one of the "makers" as Welfare State called the community artists. Discussions were taking place about the masked ball and the performances that were to take place as part of it. My role was to gather a team and put together a three minute shadow performance.....on a screen eight metres wide and two and a half metres high.....which had to be built first, outside and take account of possible strong winds. The theme was bugs and motorsport.

The ideas flowed thick and fast on late Wednesday afternoon between the ten or so teachers that had decided that creating giant shadow images were for them. The eventual story was one of Adam and Eve, or in this case Ford and Holden and a large stag beetle. All to be built in time for a technical run through early Friday afternoon. Large fridge boxes, cellophane, large bamboo poles, gaffer tape by the kilometre and metres of fabric were collected. The team was divided into puppet builders and shadow screen devisers. Amongst all this action was the street parade in which all the participants took part on the Thursday morning.

It's amazing the kind of skills which come in use. Two of the team were experts in rope lashing, one from the Scouting movement and one from making his own fishing rods. Very useful for fixing large bamboo poles to race bookie stands to form the frame of the shadow screen. Another was interested in music and so became the liaison between shadow performers and orchestra, another a stage manager in amateur dramatics. All skills were put to use.

Logistically the screen was a headache. Where it was to be placed was on bitumen so no pegs

CELEBRATION

or stakes could be used and the screen was to be burned at the end of the performance to reveal some spectacular pyrotechnics behind. Forty four gallon drums were filled with water as were any wheelie bins that could be snaffled for the purpose of guying the screen down. Meanwhile giant shadow puppets were being built and tested, musicians were being briefed on the kind of sounds and music that would be required. No dialogue in this performance.

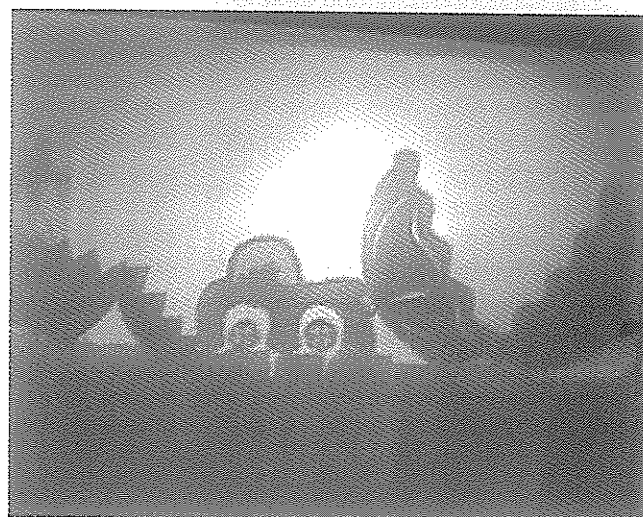
Friday evening arrived with all participants tired but with a sense of great anticipation. All were dressed up in their evening finery with their masks. As the evening rolled on different groups would disappear, get changed into their relevant costumes or blacks, perform their piece and then get changed into their finery again. There were bands playing, individual performance pieces in nooks and crannies of the pavilions, installation pieces made from multitudes of paper lanterns, large beetle and weird motorcar costumes, and finally the audience were led out through the rear doors of the pavilion by the orchestra to be greeted with the sight of the gigantic shadow screen. The performance went off with very little going wrong. Giant stag beetles formed Mount Panorama from their droppings and car parts spewed from the mountain. Ford was born and then from Ford came Holden and strings of baby cars. Happiness did not last very long, the race was on with gnashing, snarling cars racing back and forth, boots and bonnets opening to reveal razor sharp teeth, to end up crashing together to form a symbolic Mount Panorama. A stag beetle flew over and beat its giant wings over head.

Meanwhile another giant stag beetle puppet manipulated by nine people was coming towards the front of the screen and rearing up, a pest controller walked up to the front of the screen and started to spray the bugs with insecticide (in reality kerosene) the giant puppet lumbered off and

the screen was set alight in the centre so that it parted to reveal the pyrotechnics and fire sculptures behind. Our part was finished bar the clearing up so back off to the ball for the rest of the evening and a well earned drink.

The next day I wore my crew hat and helped to bump out. All in all a fantastic experience. Everybody had learned a lot about themselves and their skill levels in different areas, how to make spectacle from very little and above all how to make their imagination fly.

Sean Manners



Kirsty Boyle's Travels

Over the past year I have been researching and developing a concept I call telepuppetry as an artist in residence at the Interactive Information Institute at RMIT. During 1999 I spent 2 months in the U.S.A and Japan researching and studying puppetry and robotics. Here are a few notes on some of the people I visited and performances that I saw.

SAN FRANCISCO

Basil Twist is a third generation puppeteer, and the only American to be accepted and graduate from the Ecole Supérieure Nationale de Arts de la Marionnette in Charleville-Mezieres, France. "Symphonie Fantastique" is an abstract underwater puppetry performance set to Berlioz's symphony of the same name. The puppetry was performed within a 5 x 3 foot tank with the 5 puppeteers suspended by harnesses, manipulating some 300 puppets. The puppets provided a form of 'text' or visualisation of Berlioz's work, a surreal kaleidoscope of tinsel, plastic, fabric, glitter, projections and light. This puppetry performance is the finest I have ever had the pleasure of seeing.

I spent some time with Basil and the other puppeteers involved in the production, and was invited back to see the performance from the catwalk above the tank, which was a real highlight of my trip.

LOS ANGELES

Visual Effects Seminar - Academy of Television Arts & Sciences

The Visual Effects Seminar was the first of its kind, and was such a success that it will now be an annual event. The main features at the seminar for me were:

Jim Henson's Creature Shop - David Barrington Holt DBH presented an overview of the 20 years of puppetry, animatronics and computer technology, all inspired by Jim Henson's vision and emphasis upon

character, quality and performance. DBH is the Creative Supervisor of Jim Henson's Creature Workshop in Los Angeles. He began working with the London Creature Shop on the Jean-Jacques Annaud film 'The Bear' in 1986. In 1991 he travelled to LA to supervise on the Disney/Henson show 'The Dinosaurs' and helped establish the Los Angeles Creature Shop. He has since been responsible for characters and effects pictures Walt Disney's 'George of the Jungle', Fox's 'Dr Doolittle', and Warner Bros 'Jack Frost'.

Industrial Light & Magic - Star Wars Episode 1 'The Phantom Menace'

Rob Coleman, Animation Director of ILM, alongside Scott Squires and John Knoll, were visual effects supervisors on Lucasfilm's Star Wars Phantom Menace. Each gave a separate talk on their work on 'The Phantom Menace' which included screenings of rough animatics, showing how different scenes developed and were thus composited. It was great hearing John Knoll speak. He and his brother are the authors of the image manipulation program 'Photoshop'.

NASA Jet Propulsion Lab - Dr Dan McCleese. Dr Dan McCleese is the Chief Scientist for Mars Exploration at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory. In his role, he established the strategy for the robotic exploration of Mars. He spoke of the influence art has on the sciences.

Ray Harryhausen with Phil Tippet

Ray Harryhausen's presentation consisted of screenings of his early puppet films, The Mother Goose Stories and excerpts from his later films from 'Mighty Joe Young' to 'Clash of the Titans'. Ray began his career working on George Pal's Puppetoons series, before having to go to war. After returning he produced his own first feature 'The Mother Goose Stories' and shortly after in 1949 began working with his mentor Willis O'Brien (King Kong) as his assistant on 'Mighty Joe Young'. Later O'Brien won an with

Harryhausen's help. In 1951 Harryhausen began developing his own technique 'dynamation' whilst creating visual effects for 'The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms'. Harryhausen even had some of the skeleton armatures he had made and used in 'Jason and the Argonauts'.

LA Puppetry Guild

I had dinner with the LA Puppetry Guild and spent time with many of its members.

Maria Bodmann, President of the LA Puppetry Guild and master shadow puppeteer, has studied the art of shadow play in Bali. Her show 'Alice' is a modern interpretation of Alice in Wonderland, using traditional Balinese Wayang Kulit techniques, with live accompaniment by 3 rock musicians. The Woodstock inspired renditions of 'I am the Walrus', 'White Rabbit' and 'Lucy in the Sky', accompanied by the movements of delicately carved leather puppets magically projected by natural oil lamp was truly special. I was fortunate to spend quite a lot of time with Maria, and am hopeful in helping her bring out her show to Australia.

Puppet Studio - Greg Williams became a puppeteer at the age of 15 when he began working for Bob Baker and Alton Wood for their marionette troupe. Greg has run the Puppet Studio with his partner Steve Sherman for many years in Hollywood. The Puppet Studio's appearances include 'Man on the Moon', 'Men in Black', 'Pee-wee's Playhouse', 'Child's Play', and 'DC Follies' among many others.

Rene has been a puppeteer for many years, also working with Bob Baker. He has worked on films such as 'Man on the Moon', created and built puppets for Sid and Marty Krofft, Disney, and has even built Howdy Doody. While I was there Doug Seymour was working on 'Diego' (the Spanish version of 'Barney') which was quite a compli-

cated puppet, the suit was fitted with a monitor inside, along with other rc components.

Stan Winston Studio - Richard Landon, puppeteer and r/d coordinator of the mechanical department, has worked on movies such as 'Inspector Gadget', 'Terminator 1 + 2 + 3', 'Jurassic Park', 'Congo', 'Edward Scissorhands', 'Batman', 'Aliens 2', 'Predator 1 + 2'. He showed me the Terminator robot - a rod and cable puppet, and many other great puppets and animatronic creatures. I was inspired to see someone working with mechanics/animatronics and also still having the opportunity to puppeteer.

We spent time in the workshops and also looking at different production sketches and designs. I think Richard's job is the best ever!

Bob Baker began an extensive career in animation at the George Pal Studios. He founded the Bob Baker Marionette Theatre in 1963 with Alton Wood, making it the first party theatre and only year-round marionette theatre in the U.S. He currently is on the Board of Governors at the Television Academy of Arts & Sciences (as Governor of Animation) and a member of the Motion Picture Academy (Animation Branch - which means he votes each year for the Oscar awards!). He has worked extensively with many animation studios, predominately Disney. At his theatre I saw 'Something to Crow About', originally performed in 1947. The show was performed with the original puppets and soundtrack which was a real treat. It was a real privilege meeting Bob.

BOSTON

MIT

I spent time with many groups at the Media Lab, but mainly the Synthetic Characters Group. Rod Brooks, Director of the Artificial Intelligence Lab, took me on a tour of the Lab and talked about different developments within the field. I also talked with him about robotics with respect

to the entertainment/performance industries, and of my concept 'telepuppetry'.

The workshop I attended went for two weeks. It has changed me as a puppeteer and inspired and motivated me immeasurably.

NEW YORK CITY

In NYC I visited one of the sets of **Sesame Street**. I also visited Emre Yilmaz of the San Francisco based **Protozoa**. Emre is a computer programmer, working with magnetic motion capture systems, and is also a puppeteer. Again I was inspired seeing a puppeteer working with technical aspects of production, yet still being able to be quite active as a puppeteer.

TOKYO

Alternate & Puppet Theatre 2000

This started in Tokyo, Japan with a plan to invite Mr Petr Matasek of Theatre Drak, Czech, and his assistant Nori Sawa, to hold a series of workshops at Theatre X(cai) in the art of puppetry. Workshop creations were to be inspired by the works of Japanese writer Kenji Miyazawa. The workshop I attended went for 2 weeks. It has changed me as a puppeteer, and inspired and motivated me immeasurably. Each puppeteer developed their own piece drawing from one of Miyazawa's short stories, culminating in a performance during the Czech Arts Festival in Tokyo, Japan.

I would like to send special thanks to Tamaki Nobuko for all her help and support she gave me, making it possible for me to attend the workshop. It was a real honour for me, being so influenced by Czech puppetry and animation, to take audience with Mr. Matasek. I would like to also encourage everyone to go and read Miyazawa's work, if not for this workshop I may never have discovered this genius writer.

Children's Puppet Festival Ikebukuro

This is a regular event in Tokyo. The festival involves an afternoon of puppetry for children in a 5 floor building with different shows (and hence styles and puppet troupes) starting and finishing continuously. It was fantastic (and frantic!), I believe it's an event that Nihon Unima regularly coordinate. It made me wonder if something similar could be possible here? Despite being the largest child there, I had a fantastic time!

I was very inspired seeing 'Symphonie Fantastique', 'Alice' and also the work by the Alternate & Puppet Theatre 2000 in Tokyo. I am keen to hear from anyone out there who has had experience in bringing overseas puppet productions to Australia, or from booking agents who may be able to help these artists to tour their shows here. I am also interested in finding out more about grants that may be available to financially assist.

I have some videos of some of the puppetry/puppeteers that are mentioned above for those interested. I would love to get together some footage of what everyone is currently doing here, to send overseas to promote Australian puppetry. I will be publishing more detailed information and pictures on the internet over the coming weeks. Please email me at kirsty@iii.rmit.edu.au and I will be happy to let you know when this has been posted on my site.

Kirsty Boyle

What it means to me to be a puppeteer

by Lorrie Gardner



I define a puppeteer by the simple definition as someone who gives life to the inanimate for the benefit of an audience. Since an audience is needed, I of course, see the puppeteer as a performer.

I have always thought of myself as a performer with my own rather simple style of glove and rod puppetry. Puppetry has been my life for over thirty years. Puppetry has made it possible for me to have a unique job where I can say I have brought much enjoyment to the young audiences that I perform for and they in turn have given me back much love and pleasure. It has been that audience that has brought me to the performance when I would much rather stay in bed and recover from an illness or when I have had to miss special events because I had an audience waiting.

For those who do not know me - some background information. I started my own glove puppet theatre in 1966. I made my own puppets and theatre and scripted my own stories. In 1967 I decided I would like to perform in schools but soon decided I would like a second pair of hands and so from the early 1970's I have always worked with another puppeteer, although I have kept responsibility for scripting and the direction of the theatre. Ralph Baker joined me 21 years ago and together we have made puppets, workshopped ideas, and performed non stop to Kindergarten and Primary school children. We now

see the advantage to have more skilled people help us - an artist for sets and, when we can afford it, a puppet maker to make some puppets that we are not really skilled enough to make ourselves.

One of my aims has always been to encourage children to "have a go" themselves. I always like to use some simply made puppets myself to show children that puppets need not be something so complicated they could never make one. Any object can be endowed with life. I have found over the years that sometimes the most simple works the best - the life that the puppeteer gives to the object is all important. The puppeteer must really believe in the puppet completely - it must be alive and real for the puppeteer and then it will be alive and real for the audience.

Since I come from the old school of puppeteer where I tend to do everything I have the advantage in seeing things from many angles. So often I have rewritten scripts to get things just right - I have the advantage of being the performer too and I know when something isn't quite right or is not understandable or not getting the reaction I desire. I encourage interaction. My audience will soon tell me when something is not liked or understood. I find especially with young children the object used (the puppet) is seldom disliked. It is what the puppet does and how it relates to the audience that is all important.

I have made marionettes. I have had great fun trying to make them do some very complicated things with this or that extra string only to realize that I was only slowing down the performance of the puppet by trying to be too clever. The imagination of

the audience can fill in more than we realise and, after all, imagination is the backbone of puppetry! But a puppet still must do what the puppeteer wants. It is all too often that I have had to remake a puppet because my first effort does not do what I want. Yes - a good puppet maker is what I do need! Unless a puppeteer spends a lot more time making than performing he will never develop the necessary skills. I like performing - any building and making that I do is a means to an end - the performance.

We all have different skills, likes and abilities. I was asked to comment on whether a puppet builder was a puppeteer or can a puppet be operated by one of the TV crew. A good master puppet builder must be a puppeteer as well - he/she must have experienced performance or at least must be able to make his creation perform to his satisfaction. Have you ever found a violin maker who cannot play the violin? A TV crewmember can certainly operate a puppet - the question is how well. The very fact he has operated the puppet means he has performed with it and in my mind becomes a performer in the literal sense of the word although he may not have put any effort whatsoever in learning how to perform properly. Possibly, if he were- paid as a performer, it would encourage him to improve the performance.

As we are going into a new century and seeing life becoming more specialized and complicated, I have the feeling that the "do it all your self" puppeteer is almost a dying race. I do hope I am wrong so, please, all you one and two person theatres out there prove me wrong!

Workshop Spread #10

CURLEW

a practical guide - part three by Ian Cuming

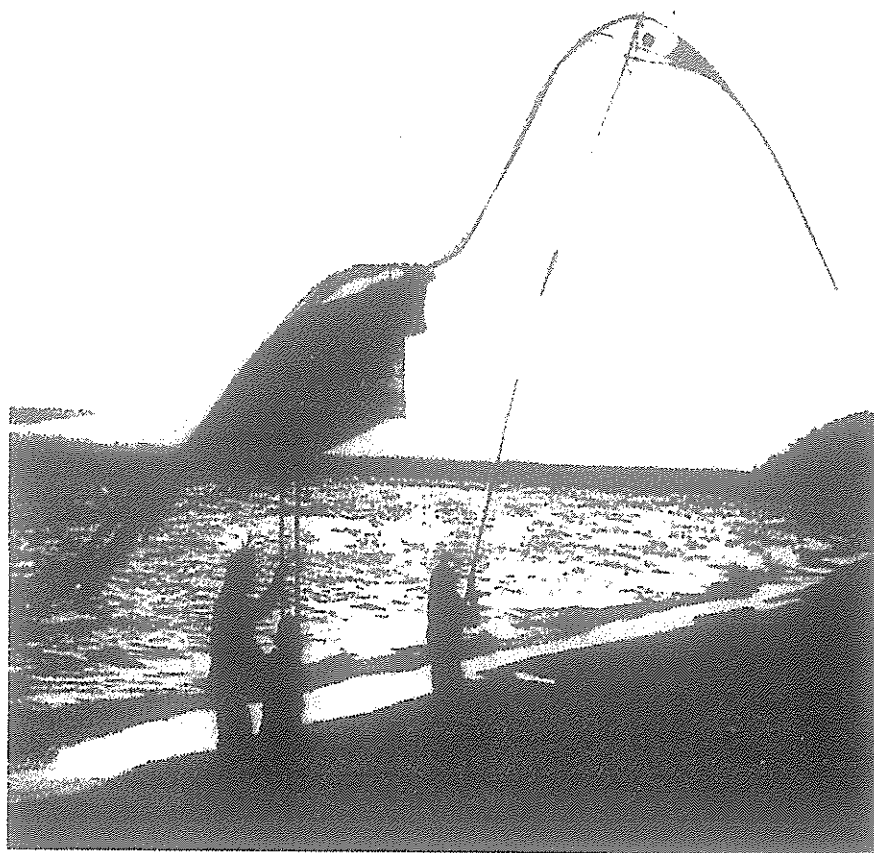
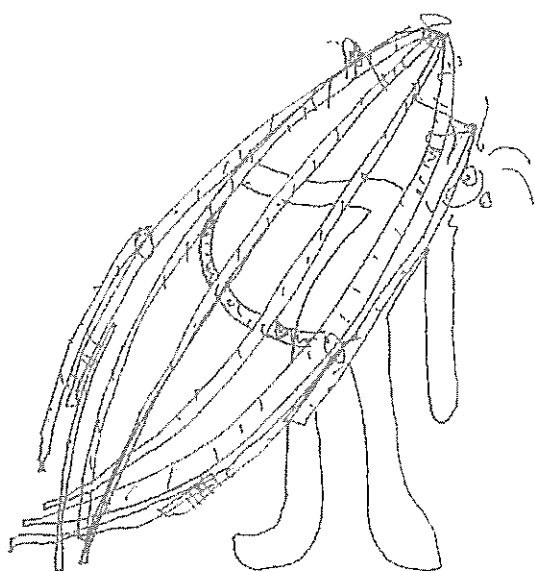
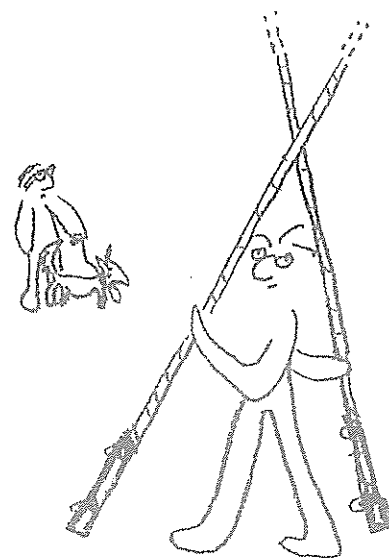


photo by Cookie courtesy J. Blagg
1994

CONNECT

Approach the front end of the body frame as it rests upright before you. Hold the shoulder end of the wing with the wire in both hands. Wrap 400mm of one wire prong around the middle bamboo ribbon 300mm from the front of the body. Wrap the second wire prong 200mm behind this on the base bamboo ribbon of the body frame.

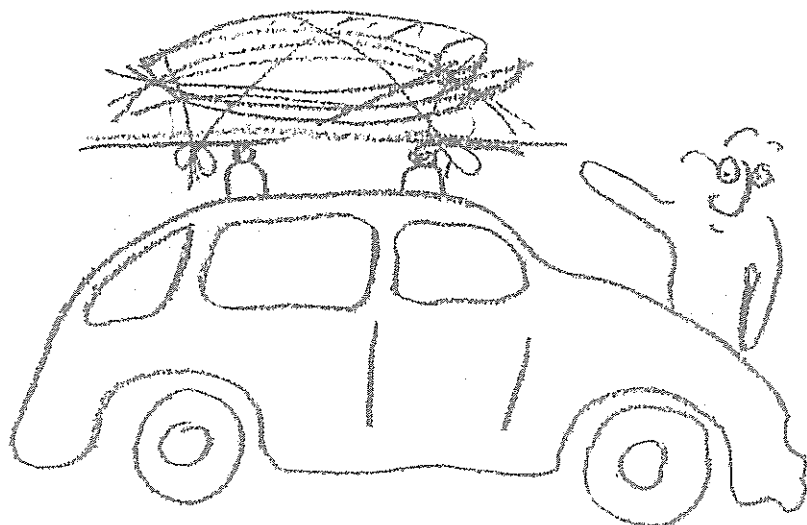


TIE

The front one spirals forward along the bamboo. The rear one spirals back along the bamboo. Repeat this on the other side and even them up. The shoulder itself protrudes about 200mm from the body. The flexible wire enables the wing to fold back along the body to the tail. Tie the wing with a piece of cord for when the bird is walking.

SYMMETRY

Perfect the shape as you play and fix it all together. Tape or remove any sharp bits. Ensure that symmetries are observed only as far as the materials permit. Relinquish control over random and anarchic curves and splits. Incorporate these as you go into the new life before you. Embrace the character as it emerges.

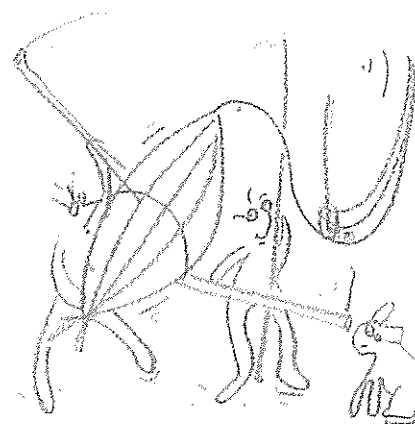


PELVIS

Pick the frame up by the spine. With both wings tied back find the point of balance as you support the entire weight of the bird on one finger. Mark this point on each of the split bamboo ribbons.

BALANCE

Cut a 1m length of 18mm diameter cane. Insert this as an inverted "U" shape at the point of balance fixing each body frame ribbon evenly spaced to the pelvis. The resulting body length will be a little less than 3m while the diameter or breadth of the body will be somewhere between 400mm - 600mm.



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LEG

Extend a 3m pole of 30mm - 40mm diameter with a 800mm pole of greater diameter by drilling and tying with wire. Tape over this join with heavy duty packing tape or calico ties. Repeat this to form a pair of legs with thick ankles.

FOOT

Make a solid base for the leg. Shape a 2 x 1 pine stump of 200mm - 300mm length with a saw, hammer and chisel to fit snugly into the thick open base of the leg.

FOOTPATH

Drill and wire. Bind with tape or calico. The pine protects the bamboo particularly when the bird walks on concrete, asphalt or gravel. Footpaths, roads and carparks can be appropriate venues for play at busy times when people will be able to enjoy the spectacle.





SEW

Set the puppet frame out on the floor or ground with the wings perpendicular to the body. Break out the needle and thread. Sew 'A' to the middle ribbon of the body and along the wing to the tip.

Sew 'B' over 'A' on the wing. That leaves two more 'B's to attach along the body's middle longitude.

Sew 'C' over 'B' and 'A' on the wing. Sew five 'C's to the body along each of the five bamboo longitudes, two of which will already have 'B' on them. Sew the final 'C' to the neck cane with the thin end running up to the top of the head.

OPERATION

Join it all together. There are four parts requiring three connections. Start with the legs. Wrap the 12 gauge wire of the hips to the pelvis either side of the spine. Tie the cane neck to the front end of the body along the spine. Secure it for a length of at least 300mm and tightly. Be critical now. Assess. Test. Stretch the puppet. Swing it about. Rock'n'roll. Repair. Refine.

TRANSPORT

Put your tools down. Clear the workshop. Dismantle the puppet. Bundle it together in preparation for travel. Roof racks and rope will get you almost anywhere. A trailer will also do the job. A van makes it easy.

MEDITATION

Empty your pockets. Attune to the day. Assemble the puppet. Drift into moving it. Divine the life of the bird just as it is.

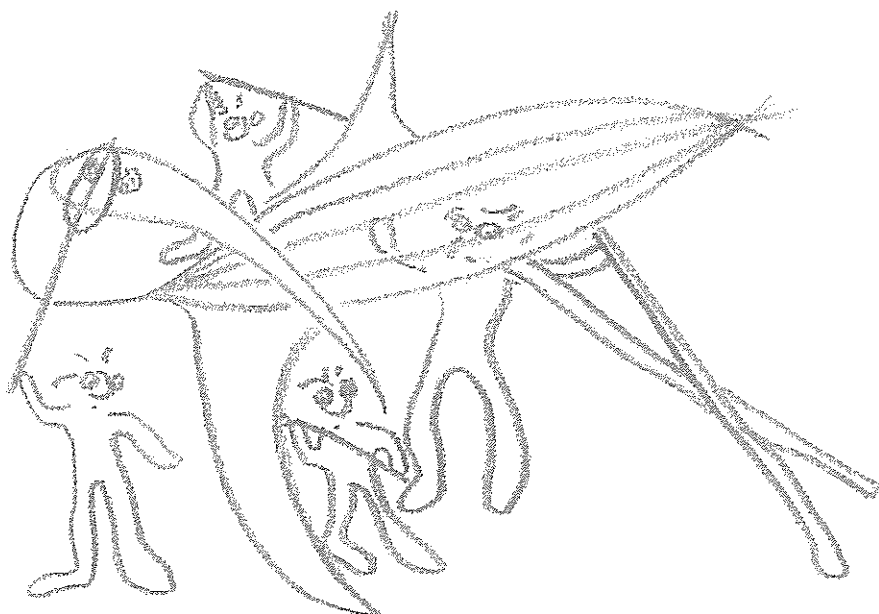
HIP

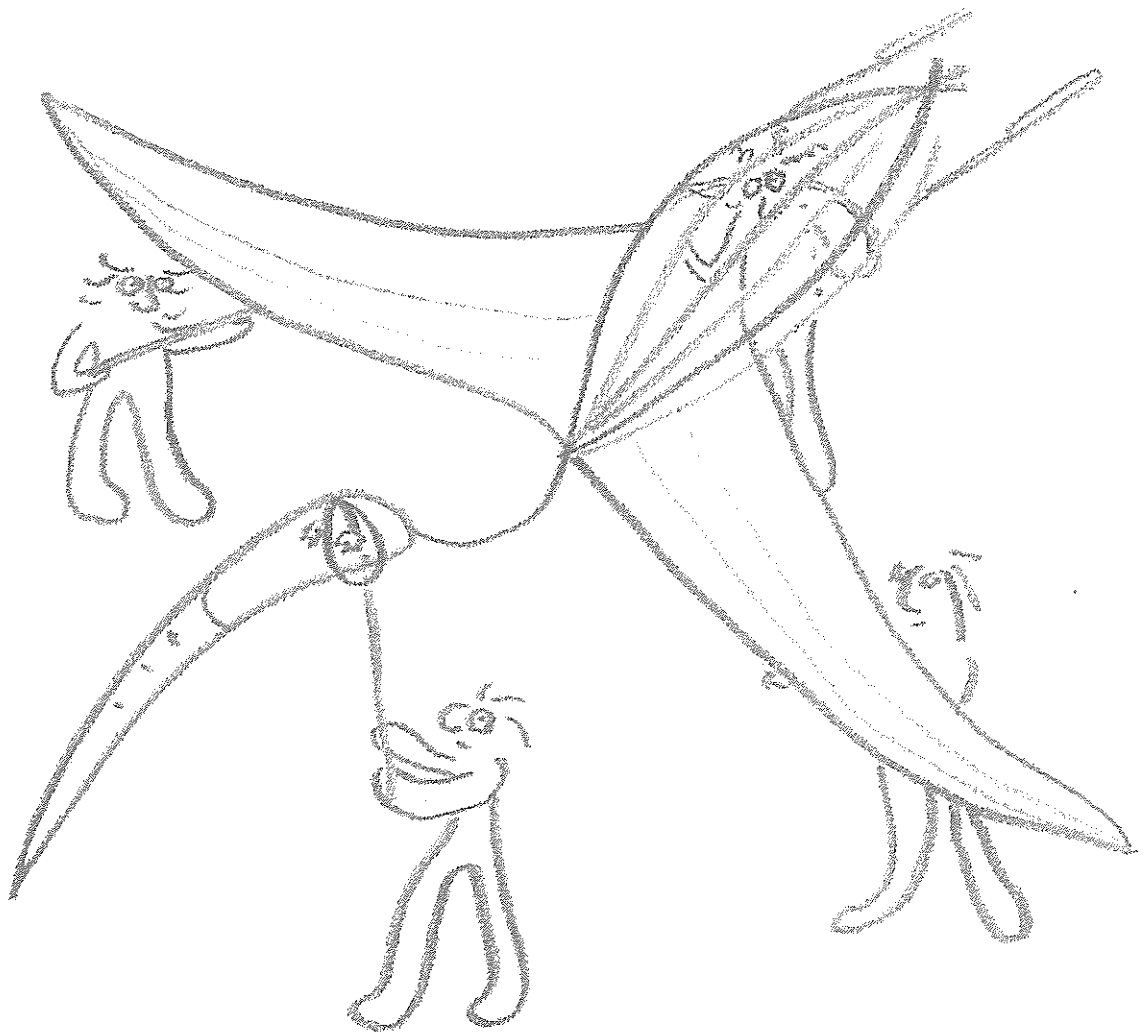
Drill a 3mm hole through a knot in the top of the leg. Cut a 600mm length of soft 12 gauge wire to thread through the hole. Bend it to be perpendicular to the hole. Bend the ends over for safety.

FABRIC

Clad the frame with natural fabric that is grown without chemicals. Buy 3m of 'A', 3m of 'B' and 3m of

'C' of 90mm - 120mm width. Cut 'A' diagonally in half to become the wings (x2). Cut 'B' first lengthways straight down the middle then halve each piece diagonally to become wings (x2) and body (x2). Finally cut 'C' into quarters lengthways before halving each of these diagonally to become wings (x2), body (x5) and neck (x1).





WALKING

Walk the bird. Keep one leg grounded always. Maintain the balance on this leg. Lean into the wind. Let the full weight of the puppet be taken by the legs as it walks. Lead with the head. Follow with the body. Follow with the head. Allow yourself space to wonder and enjoy. Open parkland on a sunny day is ideal and yet there is certain exhilaration to be found on a windy day at the beach. Shopping malls, car parks and markets are great value especially when they are busy. Effortless attention is drawn to this puppet affording you a sensitivity to the balance and flow of the bamboo and the cane. You don't need to 'do' a lot to bring it to life. It is an experience not unlike flying a kite. Stay with the creature. Abandon yourself to play. Struggle only to serve the occasion. Let yourself go. Be wild.

FLYING

Call in two people to become the wings of the bird. Prepare for take-off by sitting the bird back.

RELEASE

Untie the wings and release the wing operating poles. Fly the bird by lowering the head and dropping the head extension pole. Move forward, extend the wings and fold the legs back under the body. One person carries the body in balance on their shoulders with the legs trailing horizontally. One person carries the head keeping the beak forward. Two people take a wing each synchronizing flapping, gliding and banking.

PRACTICE

The head extension pole can be carried with the legs or just left on the ground at the point of take off. Talk to each other as much as you need to at first. You will find in a short time the bird will take care of itself. Practice. Play.

PLAY

Ground yourself. Contact your playing partner. Engage the senses. Share this. Find an elemental understanding of the practice of play. Identify yourself. Recognize other people. Acknowledge the animals and the flora of the planet. Honour the movement of life on earth and the discrete elements of it's being. Allow yourself to be. Allow other people to be. Allow all else to just be.

Puppet History

THIODON'S WONDERS
by Prof Richard Bradshaw

"Out of date and behind the times as that kind of show is now, it is doubtful if mechanism has ever been produced to equal it. The natural movements of the figures, including taking out and putting back a handkerchief, firing a gun, and setting down and picking up a wheelbarrow, were all obtained without the use of a single wire or thread. No mere marionettes ever could approach them."

So said The Bulletin in 1897 following the death in Sydney of the showman "Mons. Aspinall Thiodon" whose mechanical theatre first appeared in Australia in 1870.

Thiodon's Theatre of Arts was a very well-known mechanical theatre, of the kind the Europeans call a *Theatrum Mundi*. It was seen in London in 1819 by the actor Edmund Kean who was so impressed by its storm scene that he decided to have a similar storm for his *King Lear* at Drury Lane. This was not a great success!

Mechanical theatres presented a sequence of scenes, often of famous places, animated using small figures. These figures were usually flat, sometimes cardboard, and worked in various hidden ways; by slides from the side, or on little wheeled trolleys, or with rods from underneath, or even on moving belts. (People who attended the 1984 UNIMA festival in Dresden were able to see excellent examples in the Museum für Volkskunst.)

Design played an important part in such shows. In fact, one of the most famous and influential mechanical theatres was that of de Louthembourg

who was engaged as a set designer by Garrick at Drury Lane. After Garrick's death he quit the theatre and developed the "Eidophusikon", a mechanical theatre capable of wonderful lighting effects.

When Thiodon's Theatre of Arts first appeared someone described it as "the remains of Louthembourg's Eidophusikon."

Not long after I had prepared a draft for this article I received a letter from Mrs Robyn Lake of Launceston who has been investigating a certain George Peck in connection with the history of Tasmanian furniture. She had learned that I was writing on Thiodon and had found a reference by Peck to the original Thiodon show.

Peck arrived in Tasmania in 1833 and exhibited a mechanical theatre in Launceston on 13-20 October, 1833 in J.P. Fawkner's Cornwall Hotel. This had an animate scene of events at Lake Maggiore and concluded with "phantasmagorical representations". Music accompanied the show.

In 1835 he was exhibiting his Theatre of Arts in Hobart, in the Large Room of Messrs Russell and Ray in Elizabeth Street. The stage opening had an elaborate "classical" surround, complete with caryatids.

The show of 17 February, 1835 began with a drop scene of the Swiss Alps which was raised to reveal Lake Como, with an island in the foreground, a bridge, Italian cottages etc. Over the bridge passed a "Catholic procession" with flower girls, banners, the Host, musicians, monks, nuns, priests, friars, soldiers, and various others. Then came a

regiment of foot-soldiers, pioneers, musicians, baggage wagons, cavalry, peasants in folk-dress etc.

Various boats passed to and fro and finally a large barge arrived bearing a greasy pole with a gold "prize" on top. After several futile attempts a figure climbed the pole and took the prize.

Music was used to cover the break while the next scene was set up, and this included some piano by a talented 12-year-old girl.

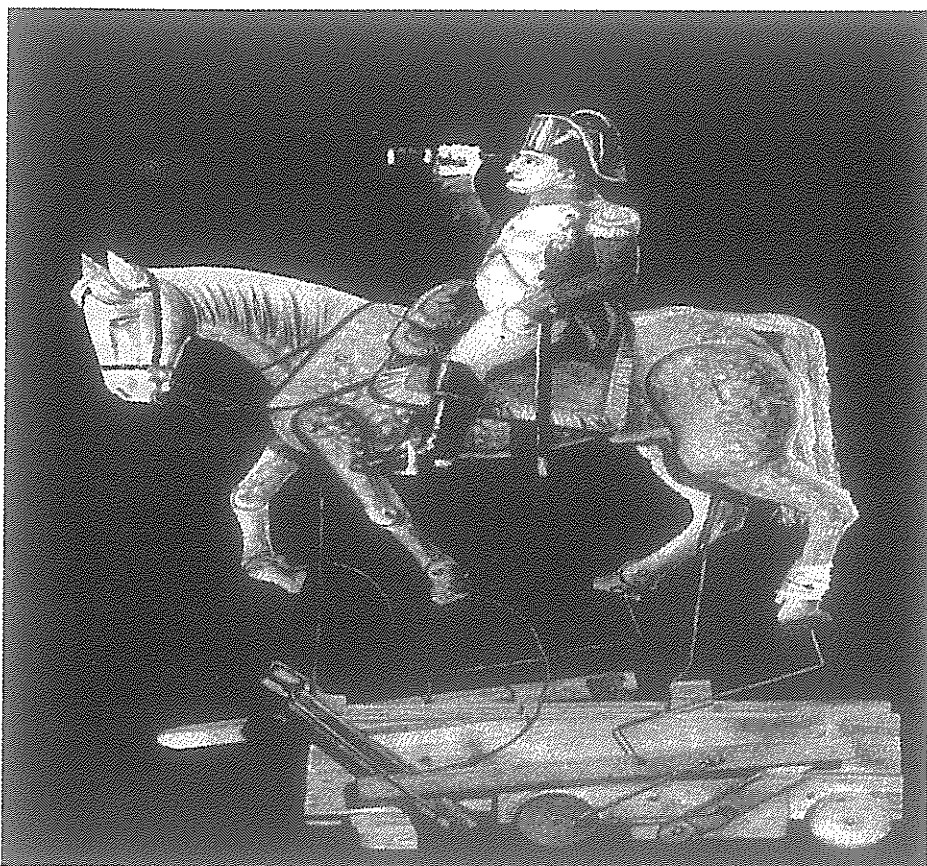
The audience then saw a drop scene of Amsterdam which rose to reveal the island of Elba (on which Napoleon had been exiled) with boats passing by, some saluting the fortifications with guns, and having the salutes returned. Figures moving in the foreground included boys trying to deal with a donkey.

The show concluded with a "Grand Allegorical Tableau" with Gods and Goddesses.

The first scene in Peck's Theatre of Arts on Monday, 30 March, 1835 was of the St Bernard Pass with Napoleon and an army of 30,000 men in the distance. A monk with his St Bernard dog was seen and then came The Grand Entry of Bonaparte.

This was followed by New London Bridge [the one that is now in the U.S.A.!] with St. Paul's and some of the City in the distance. There was the Lord Mayor's Show, with boats on the Thames. Then; "A STAG will appear with all its Natural Movements - THIODON'S Celebrated Figure of the SPORTSMAN AND HIS DOG in pursuit of a HARE, &c. &c."

This was then closed with a drop



A figure of Napoleon on horseback from a German mechanical theatre of the second half of the nineteenth century. (Puppet-theatre collection, Dresden)

scene of the burning of the Houses of Parliament in the previous October.

Finally the show concluded with *The Storm at Sea*, a great favourite of the Thiodon show which I will return to in a later article. [Thiodon's "storm" was in turn based on de Louthenberg's.] Music accompanied the show, including some by that 12-year-old pianist, Miss Pettingell.

Robyn Peck has drawn my attention to the new animated scene which was added on 1 May 1835, before *The Storm at Sea*. It is of special interest to us because it may be the first example of a local theme in a puppet show in Australia. The ad reads,

PART III MOUNT WELLINGTON

As seen from Sandy Bay, with the upper part of Davey-street. In this Scene, in addition to a variety of

Local Figures, "The Death of the Kangaroo."

A splendid effect of *Cloud* and *Sunshine* will be presented.

(Before this scene Mr. Peck had performed "his admired Imitations of the Celebrated Paganini" on the violin.)

You can find out more about this astonishing man, who ended up in Sydney, by visiting Robyn Lake's "Peck Page" at the following internet site.

<http://www.cinemedia.net/RMIT/rnaughton/PECK BIO.html>

Henry Beaufoy Merlin, under the name of Henry Murlin, whose Royal Marionette Theatre was in Sydney and Maitland in 1853 was also responsible for mechanical theatre scenes. They first appeared at the Royal Hotel in Sydney for one night only, Tuesday, 14th September,

1852.

Although on this occasion he does not seem to have used true marionettes, the show was advertised as THE ROYAL MARIONETTE THEATRE or THEATRE OF ARTS. The first name he had "borrowed" from a marionette company that had appeared in London earlier that year, and the second was the name generally used by Thiodon and others. The show boasted over 200 mechanical figures.

Scene 1 was of the Irish port of Waterford with various boats, including the S.S. "City of Dublin", a whaler whose approach was announced by a signal station, a man driving cattle, sportsmen, labourers, a man with a wheelbarrow etc.

A drop of "The Castle of Europe" covered the 10-minute scene change and then Scene 2 was of Rome with St Peter's in the distance, a mendicant friar, a peasant girl, a swan in the water, a girl rowing a Padre, various peasants etc.

After a drop of "Zion" Scene 3 was of The Alps, with the monastery of St Bernard, a snow storm, monks clearing the snow from the door, St Bernard dogs seeking lost travellers etc.

Scene 4 followed a drop of "Constantinople" and was of The Great Temple of Tartary, with a caravan of travellers, camels, ways of carrying the post etc.

A "Looking-glass Curtain" covered preparations for Scene 5. This was a model of the interior of the Great Exhibition (Crystal Palace, London, 1851) "looking north, as it appeared before nine in the morning, the hour for admitting visitors."

Similar scenes were included with the marionette plays Merlin presented in 1853 when he claimed to be the

genuine Royal Marionette Theatre from London. One was of the search for Sir John Franklin in the Arctic.

In May 1857 Henry Beaufoy Merlin, this time as Henry Muriel, had a Theatre of Arts near the corner of Bathurst and Sussex, but I have no details of the show. (Later that year he was appearing as an actor at Our Lyceum Theatre.)

In February 1860 two Sydney photographers, Messrs Morris and Taylor, had a similar display in their saloon in Pitt Street.

The show lasted about two weeks and was advertised as "Theodon's Mechanical Theatre" (sometimes as "Theodeon's"!). This display was in two parts. The first scene had the crew of the "Fox" searching in the ice of the "Polar regions" for the remains of the Franklin expedition. There were miniature "Polar bears and other animals peculiar to that region" passing by and the scene concluded with a lighting effect to suggest the Aurora Borealis.

The other scene was of the sea in motion, with boats and sea-birds etc. The whole display was accompanied by music from a lady at the piano and songs by Mr Taylor. It is tempting to whether Merlin or Peck was involved.

By coincidence, this last show was very near the site of Thiodon's Royal Polytechnic in 1880-81. But this Thiodon was the genuine article, Aspinall Thiodon, who had been engaged by P.T. Barnum to present his show in New York in 1858. He will be the subject of the next article.

Illustrations

De Louthembourg's Eidophusikoon, with a scene of Pandemonium. (From a watercolour by E.F.Burnley)



Genty: dreaming of

REVIEW BY KELLEEE FRITH

The work of Compagnie Phillippe Genty has been variously described as 'visual theatre' and 'magic illusion'. More recently it has attracted the description 'dream theatre'. This latest attempt to define Genty's unique blend of dance, puppetry, illusion and mime seems to sit most comfortably with the company's latest production - *Dedale*.

The show opens on a suspended net, raked above the stage. The space is fluid, at once both sea and sky. Puppet fish leap from beneath the waves to gobble slices of a woman's breast which she lovingly feeds them. Hands emerge from the night sky to extinguish each and every star. Bodies, puppet and performer, writhe and struggle, travelling until instantly the net is released and the travellers arrive. The audience has travelled with them into a collective subconscious, where reality is only a fleeting memory. And so another journey begins as *Dedale* explores what is it to be human, the pull of desire and the impulse to journey.

A master of the tension between the animate and inanimate, Genty explores the relationship between puppet and performer. Only the slightest movements give us relief from our struggle to understand who is the manipulator and who is manipulated? Back-to-front bodies with masks worn on the back of the head present the human body from a new perspective. The performers' movements and poses played to the audience, while the performer actually faces up-stage are so convincing that they tempt us to believe the illusion even though we realise it is false. Exposed from a different angle somehow throws the body into sharp focus. This technique is disarming in its simplicity as we are forced to look again at the familiar and realise it is not



Genty uses the familiar to create many other striking images. Subtle references to other art genres and forms, such as film noir and his own earlier works set up narrative structures which the ensemble of eight performers subvert and in doing so create new meaning and images made more powerful by the delight of our recognition and our surprise when that recognition is arrested.

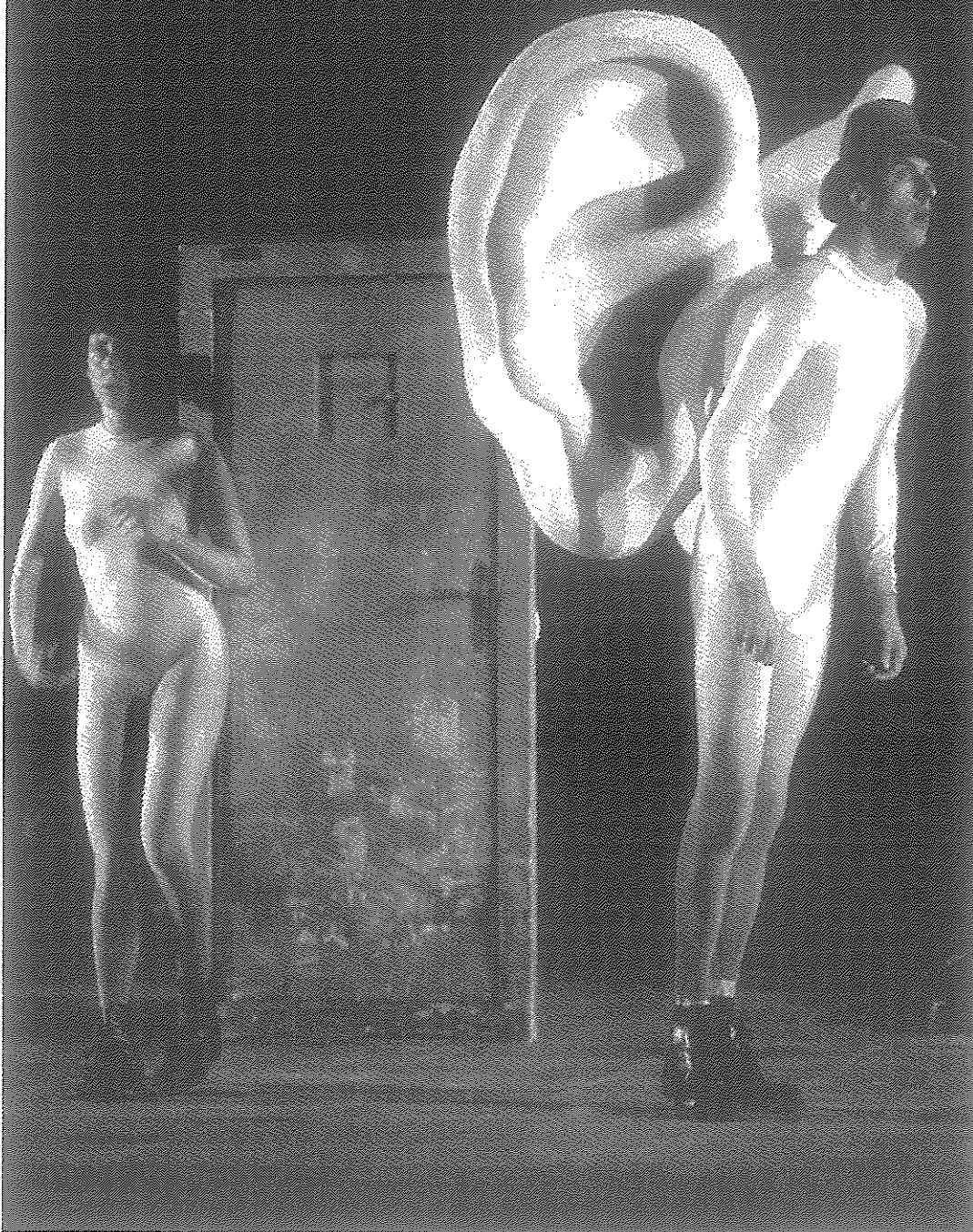
Anything is possible in this state of suspended disbelief. Brightly coloured blow-up beach belles in delightful bathing costumes recline beside telephones which create a symphony of ringing. The performers busy themselves attempting to attend to all the calls only to find the beach belles have deflated. A baby is caressed and cajoled only to be savagely devoured as handfuls of its dough body are shoved into curious and dangerous mouths. Performers are released into the space, as if born from a huge inflated rock structure which fills the upstage area gently billowing with the air which gives it form.

Dedale takes inspiration from Greek mythology. The story of Daedalus, who during exile from Athens in

Crete was commissioned to build the labyrinth which would later house the Minotaur and see many young men and women sent to wander its winding hallways to their deaths. Having betrayed the secret of the labyrinth to aid the escape of Theseus, Daedalus was condemned, along with his son Icarus, to the labyrinth. By way of escape, he fashioned wings for them both. Daedalus successfully escaped to Sicily. But despite his father's warnings not to fly too high to the sun, nor too low to the sea, Icarus soared so high that the rays of the sun melted the glue which bound the wings and he fell into the sea and perished.

Genty explores the notion of a labyrinth through a spectacular choreography of free standing doors which are opened and closed by performers who shift and regroup them seamlessly. The doors are muted green in colour and the performers wear coats and hats of similar drab hue as if colour is not in focus, but somehow operating on a purely emotive level. Their clothes are familiar and bring with them references to a city of bustling human activity.

Daedale



In contrast a femme fatal clad in sharp black leans in doorways tempting a wanderer who seeks her, but finds her gone whenever a new door is opened. The sequence reveals human longing, like a dream which promises our greatest desire, but keeps it always just out of reach. Anticipation followed by the disappointment of an unattainable desire. Daedalus' wings are a pair of enormous ears which have grown seamlessly

from his shoulders and through Genty's extraordinary juxtaposition of scale, carry him soaring above the subconscious below.

Compagnie Phillippe Genty succeeds in creating a work which is fast moving and astonishingly creative in its inventiveness and skill. Its strength is embedded in the ensemble's ability to surprise its audience by subversion of the familiar.

The depth of observation takes us from reality, transcending our disbelief through illusion and imagination into a dreamlike state where we are free to question what it is to be human and most of all what is real.

REVIEWS

PAN

The second public preview.

There is no question that it is visually stunning, magnificently produced and that the entire cast deliver good strong performances. We can't say that the show worked for us in the preview that we saw, but we can say that we could see it was coming together. It was far too long. At least half an hour needed it go, and we are told it has.

Visually the puppets, sets, costumes, lighting, effects and staging are all truly amazing, as you would expect from a budget of that size. For the story, it's a classic, and has all the classic elements of flying, getting lost in wonderous locations, dangerous situations, good guys, bad guys, and this translation, cut by half an hour, should work just fine.

But from a puppeteer's point of view, the use of the puppets is disappointing. They are used as decoration, wonderful decoration, and to good effect as decoration, but we would have loved more interaction between them and the actors. No fault of the puppeteers (creature actors as they are called in the show's publicity), it just has not been written for them.

Personally we like our puppets to have attitude, chutzpah or at least personality, wants and goals.

We believe these puppets were produced by the creature shop, an organization founded by the late Jim Henson, but missing from these creatures is that magic dynamic that existed between Kermit and Miss Piggy. Nanna (the Dog), the Smurtle and the Crocodile are the only three that are in anyway connected to the plot and for Nanna and Smurtle this is more contrived than pivotal.

As a piece of children's theatre with adult appeal, Pan certainly works, we hissed the villains and identified with the goodies as we are sure any kid or kid at heart would do. We wish it the long and successful run it deserves.

By Greg Howard & Peter Pezzutti

Check out the very snazzy website at www.pan.com.au

SEAN KENAN

"At the National Folk Festival in Canberra this Easter I met a self taught busker - puppeteer, Sean Kenan. He performed outdoors, after dark, in a simple puppet booth and his shadow puppet vignette was most magical. It was a delightful comic little playlet about a fisherman and Sean used a combination of hands and puppets very cleverly in his shadow work.

However shadow puppetry is quite a recent interest of Sean's. He invented a clever violin playing marionette that bows and plays its violin in time as Sean himself plays the violin. Sean has used this widely as a busking piece.

Sean told me he has all the old Whanslaw books about marionettes! I am sure he would welcome more contact with the wider puppetry community. He especially would like material about hand shadows or shadowgraphy since as a busker he travels light!

His address is Sean Kenan,
91 Wakefield Garden
SYDNEY 2692

Lorrie Gardner

In Memorium

Haim Navarro, a talented puppeteer and a good friend died on 11th November 1999 after living with variety of illness for some years. Haim was a superb marionettist who started his work in puppetry in Israel after migrating from Chile. He moved to Australia in the 1980's. Because of ill health, Haim could not perform often but he was always busy in his workshop with what he termed "forensic puppetry", taking old puppets that were in disrepair and figuring out how they were supposed to work. His fine tuning often resulted in a much improved puppet. His finesse and attention to detail were an inspiration to his associates.

Many long lunches were shared at Haim's table with Sydney puppeteers and those visiting from interstate or overseas. To Haim, friends were the greatest assets you could have. He was a talented, funny, mischievous and good friend.

The Sydney Puppeteers' Support Group



PAUL MEMORIES

I met Paul somewhere in the mid seventies when we were putting the Terania creek saga together. He was a mixture of Clint Eastwood, Baba Ram Das, and Gandalf. I recall being intimidated by his use of the words "Head" and "Freak".

Later, as the Hobbit in his life, I invited him on an adventure with Handspan's Nigel Triffitt show, to Paris, London, New York, Mildura Scone, Newcastle, where his convivial candidness and knowledge of all things anthropological, theatrical and smokeable came to the fore.

He had a good nose for opening nights... our last one in '97 with the Picasso show FOUR LITTLE GIRLS in Caracas, Venezuela, was spent riding antique tricycles on the terrazzo floor at the villa of the belle of the ball (Segniorita Mercedes).

Back at the hotel later that night Paul confided his terminal illness. It was a Blade Runner Taoist kind of night, which marked the beginning of the last wonderful couple of years of knowing Paul.

At the end of that tour, as he departed for a Caribbean soiree. Paul borrowed my battery beard trimmer so that Annie could do topiary on his ornate hair do... beads and stuff. Whilst he lit up a Lucky Strike... I asked him why be overt?, when keeping one's head down might be a better tack to take in Tobago and his line was that by being out there it gave others the licence to emerge from their bushell. "Being human is being bold and shining to your full brilliance," said Paul, quoting Mandella "... as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same."

Paul's clarity of spirit, no doubt the result of years of navigating through psychedelic worlds, left him with a very solid core.

Paul's strength and licence to shine is in all of us here.

It is the gift of knowing him. Paul's spirit is very much alive. The last thing he said to me with a joyous look in his eye was to look after the normal things, the details... and love.

Thank you to Annie for her strength and licence to grieve.

Philip Lethlean

W h a t ' s O n

"EAT THE MOON"

In the tradition of Tim Winton's *The Bugalugs Bum Thief* and Paul Morgan's *Cat Balloon*, Spare Parts Puppet Theatre presents a great new West Australian production *Eat the Moon* in June and July. Stuck in the suburbs, 8 year old Zac and little sister Jess, dream of exploring the big exciting city. With Mum tied up with work and Dad tied up on the mobile phone, their imagination takes over. Suddenly a crack in the living room wall opens leading them into the middle of a fairy tale and the most exciting journey of their lives. Inspired by *Hämel & Gretel*, *Eat the Moon* was developed through a partnership between award-winning playwright, Heather Nimmo, acclaimed Spare Parts' Artistic Director, Noriko Nishimoto and designer, Zoe Atkinson, winner of the 1999 Young Australian of the Year - Arts Award.

On stage Simon Clarke, Peter Jagger, Janet Lee and Sanjiva Margio perform to a new music by Lee Buddle (who composed for *Bugalugs* and *Cat Balloon*). You will also be amongst the first to experience the work of Czech Republic designer, Marek Zakostelecky from the internationally renowned Drak Theatre, Prague, who has collaborated with Zoe Atkinson on the design of the colourful and intricate set. "*Eat the Moon* is an uplifting story about children on a journey which teaches them courage and co-operation," said the director, Noriko Nishimoto. "It's in the tradition of the classic fairy tales," added writer, Heather Nimmo, "offering exciting adventure, quests and trials and above all, a happy ending. Along with some scary bits, it's also very funny!" Find out what it is like to be in the middle of a fairy tale - don't miss *Eat the Moon*.

Bookings: 08 9335 5044

School Holidays (1 to 15 July):

Monday to Saturday 1 1.00am &

2.00pm Ticket Prices:

Children & Adults to 30 June: \$12pp

Groups 4+: \$10pp Groups 10+: \$8pp

Children & Adults from 30 June:

\$13.20pp Groups 4+: \$11pp

Groups 10+ \$8.80pp (inc GST) PUPPET MAKING WORKSHOPS FOR ADULTS

If you are between 14 and 99 years old and have always wanted to make your own puppet, don't miss this workshop opportunity. Jane Davies and Cecile Williams will teach you how to make your own articulated table top puppet using materials such as polystyrene, foam and papier mache.

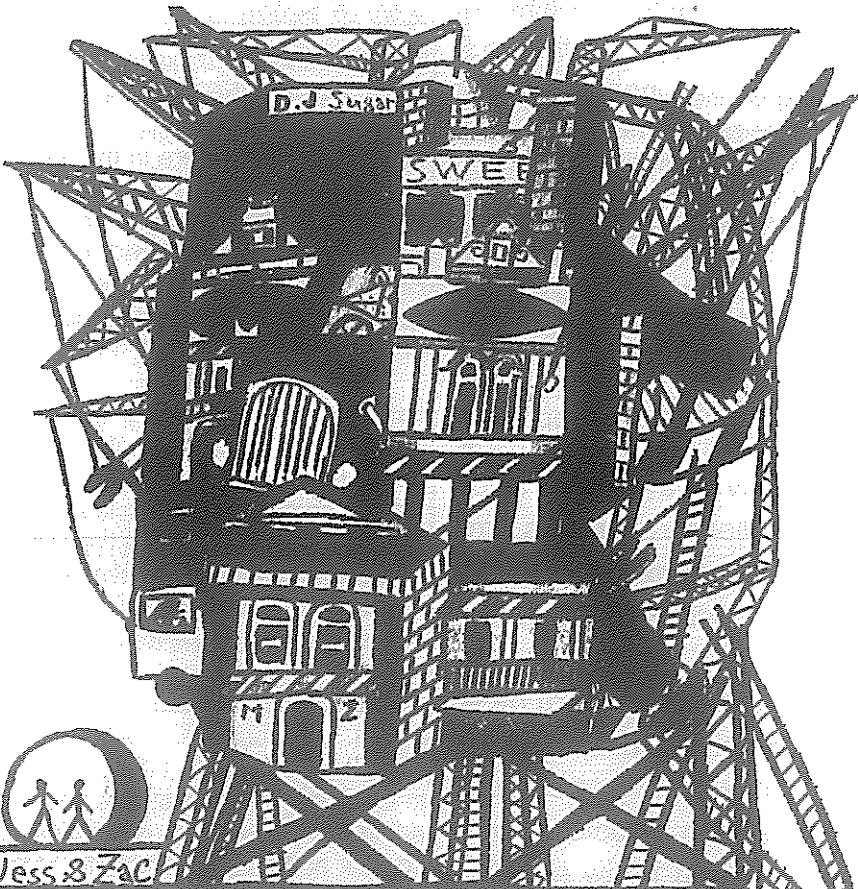
Dates.. Saturday afternoons NUY

27- JULY 1 - 6 weeks. Times:

1.00pm - 5.00pm

Venue: Spare Parts Puppet Theatre
Workshop and Rehearsal Room

Total Cost: \$120 per person
(\$100 Members)



SPARE PARTS PUPPET THEATRE
and SAFETY RULES OK!

presents the WORLD PREMIERE of

Eat the Moon

Monday 12 June - Saturday 15 July 2000

Spare Parts Puppet Theatre, 1 Short Street Fremantle Bookings: 08 9335 5044

W i n n e r !

CONGRATULATIONS; JONQUIL TEMPLE!

ARE YOU SURE THIS IS A SHORTCUT?

After circling around endless Canberra streets, I finally got out onto the open (straight) road. Heading along the Monaro Highway I thought I'd better just pull over to check that I was going in the right direction. Sure enough - I was not. So I backed up a bit to get ready to make a U-turn when suddenly the front end of my van rose into the air and I could see nothing but sky.

I gingerly got out out of the van and discovered one of my rear wheels was suspended over a deep hole and the other was just on the edge of the excavation. (A completely unmarked excavation, by the way.)

I flagged down a truck hoping the driver could call for help over his CB radio. He was so astonished at the sight that he flagged down the next passing truck. As they discussed the problem another truck stopped. Then another. Soon we had half a dozen trucks lined up with their drivers gawking at my predicament.

A heated debate ensued about how to get my van out and who the hell had left such a bloody great hole unmarked.

Finally one of the more burly truck-driver said, "What have you got in the van?" I explained it was only puppets. "Why don't we just lift it out?", he said. So they did.

I said, "If I was 20 years younger I'd give each of you a big kiss!

Just then a crane arrived carrying the cover for the hole.

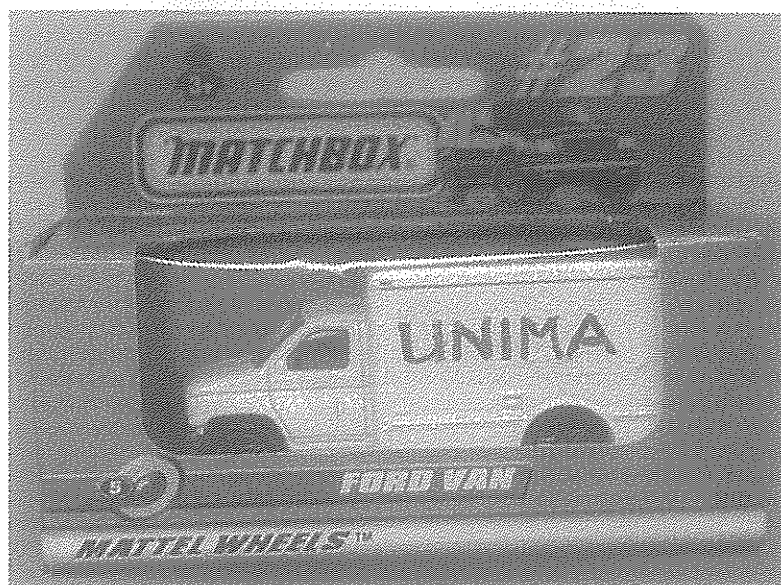
The truck drivers tore strips off the crane driver. I couldn't understand everything they said as they spoke in a sort of Driver's dialect where every second word started with the letter F.

This issue's magnificent prize.

A new Van!



Happy Touring Jonquill!



What does it mean to be a puppeteer?

It means that all your toys are tax-deductible.

Dennis Murphy

The Snuff Puppets were going to feature a little more in this issue but sadly they've just been burgled and some helpful person made off with their computer.

There'll be more on the Snuffies next issue

The Hobbit: Snapshots from the tour



Gollum

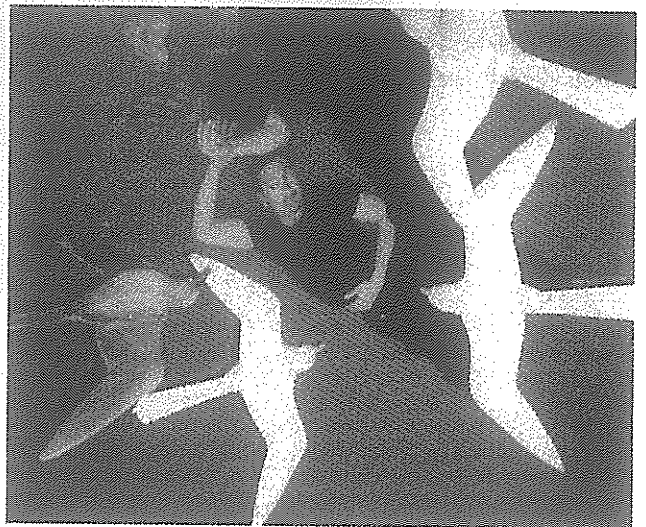
"It takes me an hour and a half to look this good."



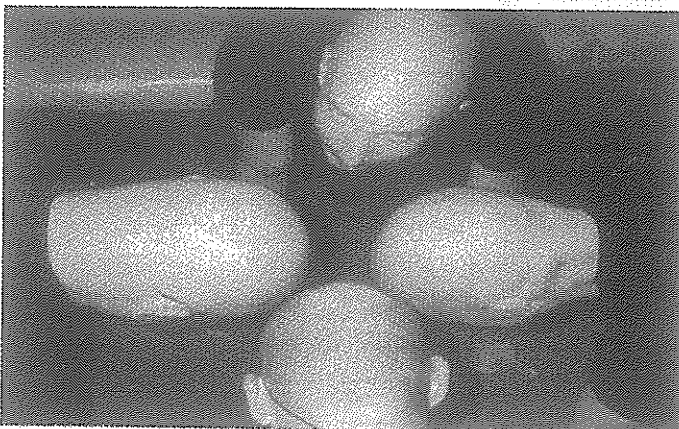
Adam Kronenburg suffers the ravages of Troll steroid abuse



Two hundred performances and feeling every second of it.



The Hobbit does Hitchcock's The Birds.



"OK Boys, let's go out there and shave every audience members head."

TV PUPPETRY

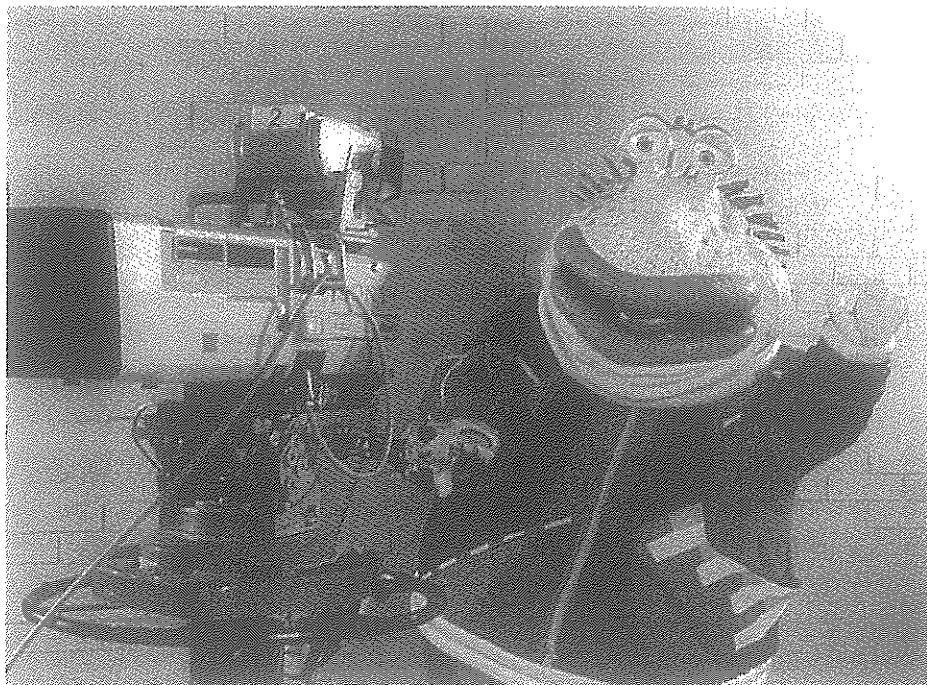
As the **Pig's Breakfast** second series shoot draws to a close, **Li'l Monsters** and **Horace and Tina** continue in Melbourne, while **Farscape** looks like going to Series Three in Sydney.

Perhaps some other puppet productions continue apace. What's the news from these sets? Take some snaps, make some notes, get permission and let us know the goss!

Pig's Breakfast is currently on Channel Nine Saturday mornings at 11.00.

Farscape is on Nine on Saturday night

Mixie is on the ABC every morning and The Bookroom and In The Box continue on Ten and Seven.



Grob waves farewell after seventy-eight episodes.
Photo courtesy Southern Star and Channel Nine

Advertising in Australian Puppeteer

Australian Puppeteer places your ad in the hands of performers and puppetmakers across Australia. The magazine is read by professionals in Film, Theatre and Television, by schools and companies, and by all active and enthusiastic supporters of puppetry.

Listed below are the current rates for advertisements in the magazine, based on size. Ads may be sent as finished artwork or we can construct an eye-catching and effective image for you.

Send all material ASAP to:
Australian Puppeteer
PO Box 208
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Full Page \$175
Half Page \$90
Two columns \$60
One column x half page high \$35
One column wide x one quarter page high = \$20

Rates are per Quarterly issue



Dancing Dragon Puppet Theatre presents EMU NOMADS

"Roving resplendently on their Giant Emu companions, this exotic duo will delight in a combination of elegant puppetry and buffoonery, subtlety and crassness."

Following an appearance at the Prague International Festival of Puppetry, Dancing Dragon will be touring the UK, Italy, The Netherlands and Spain.

Performers Emma Pryse and Stefanie Robinson will hopefully be providing more pictures and a report on their travels upon their return.



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Treasurer

Your name here?

!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

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Editor's Financial Report

UNIMA Centre of Australia has effectively been without a Treasurer since 23rd December 1999, when I was reimbursed for the Spring '99 expenses. Three months later I took delivery of all the financial paperwork and banked around \$1,500 of cheques.

Together with Mary Sutherland and Victoria Osborne, I am still sorting out the database and establishing everyone's current membership status. This has been time-consuming and difficult, as no receipts had been issued for many months and some subscribers have subsequently been waiting up to six months for the delivery of their magazine.

I can only offer my sincerest apologies for the delay in processing subscriptions. When I took on this position, it was with the understanding that I would be responsible for the magazine, not the entire financial operations of UNIMA. Perhaps another UNIMA member would accept the opportunity to restore the role of treasurer, maintain the database and ensure the ongoing financial health of the organization.

With all that in mind, here are the figures for the last two issues. I hope to have more details of our membership available next issue.

Balance @ 26th June 2000	\$1,935.10
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Expenses for Spring 1999 issue (includes PO Box rental)	\$750.00
Advertising revenue from Spring 1999 issue	\$405.00
Nett cost	\$345.00

Expenses for Summer 2000 issue	\$627.96
Advertising revenue for Summer 2000	\$235.00
Nett cost	\$392.96

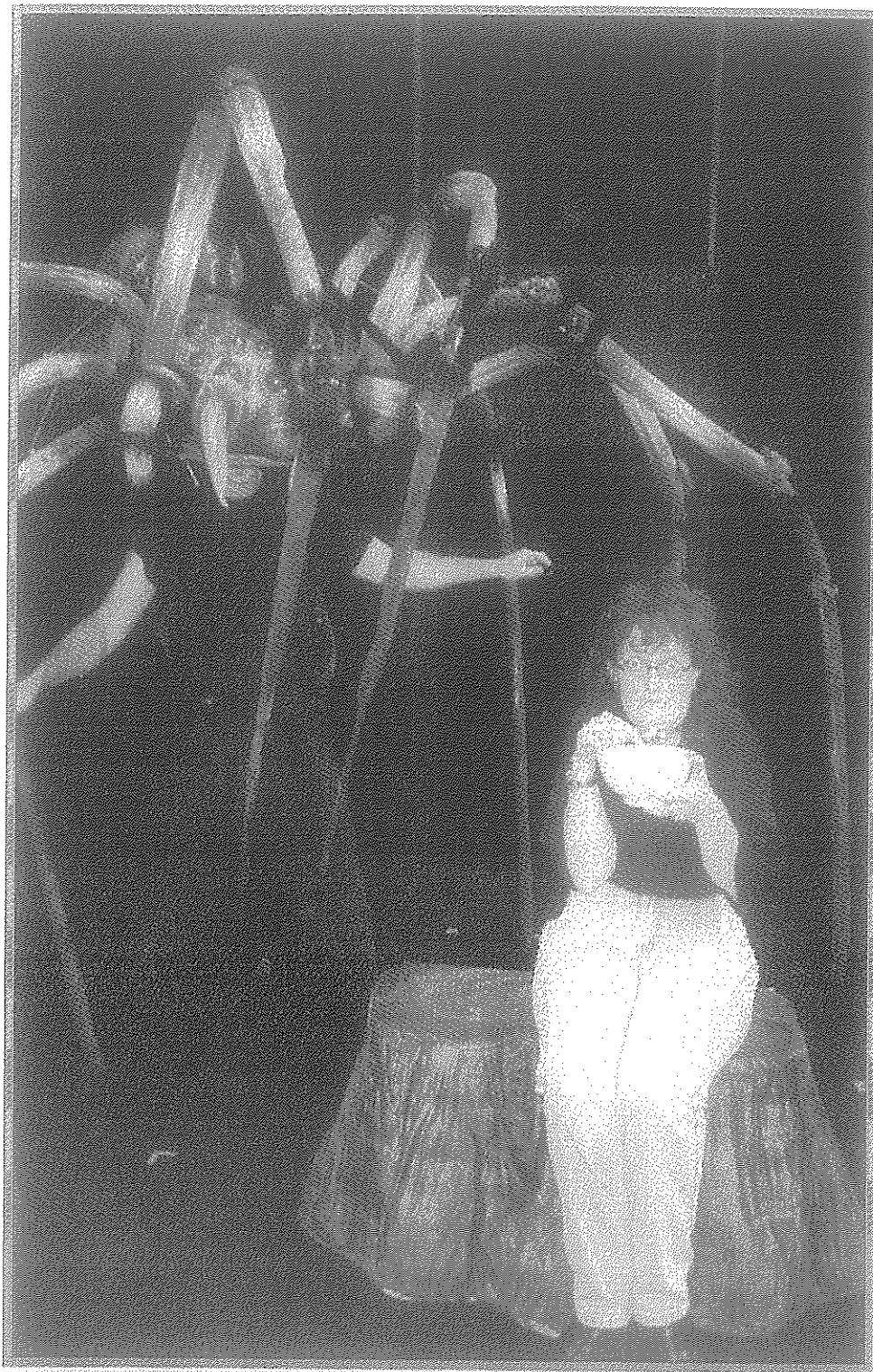
PS Does anyone have any idea how the GST will effect UNIMA Australia and Australian Puppeteer? I'd love to know. I must ask the treasurer.

**Please send
stuff in before
the next issue**

**(which is looking
like Spring at
this stage).**

**Photos, reviews,
articles, ads,
anecdotes
all welcome.**

DEADLINE



COMPETITION

Hair raising experiences!

Hobbit Stage Manager Linda "What's a tuffet anyway?" Aitkin eating her curds and whey during a break in a hectic tour schedule is terrified by the sudden appearance of a hair-raising spider! If you have had similar (or entirely different for that matter) hair-raising experiences whilst engaged in puppetry activities, please write and share your story with the readership.

This time the prize is a fantastic bag of furry offcuts (fake, don't worry) generously donated by Fred Bartfeld of Bartfeld's Fabrics in Elsternwick, Victoria.

This is a truly splendid and extremely useful collection of fluffy bits so jump to it and start writing.