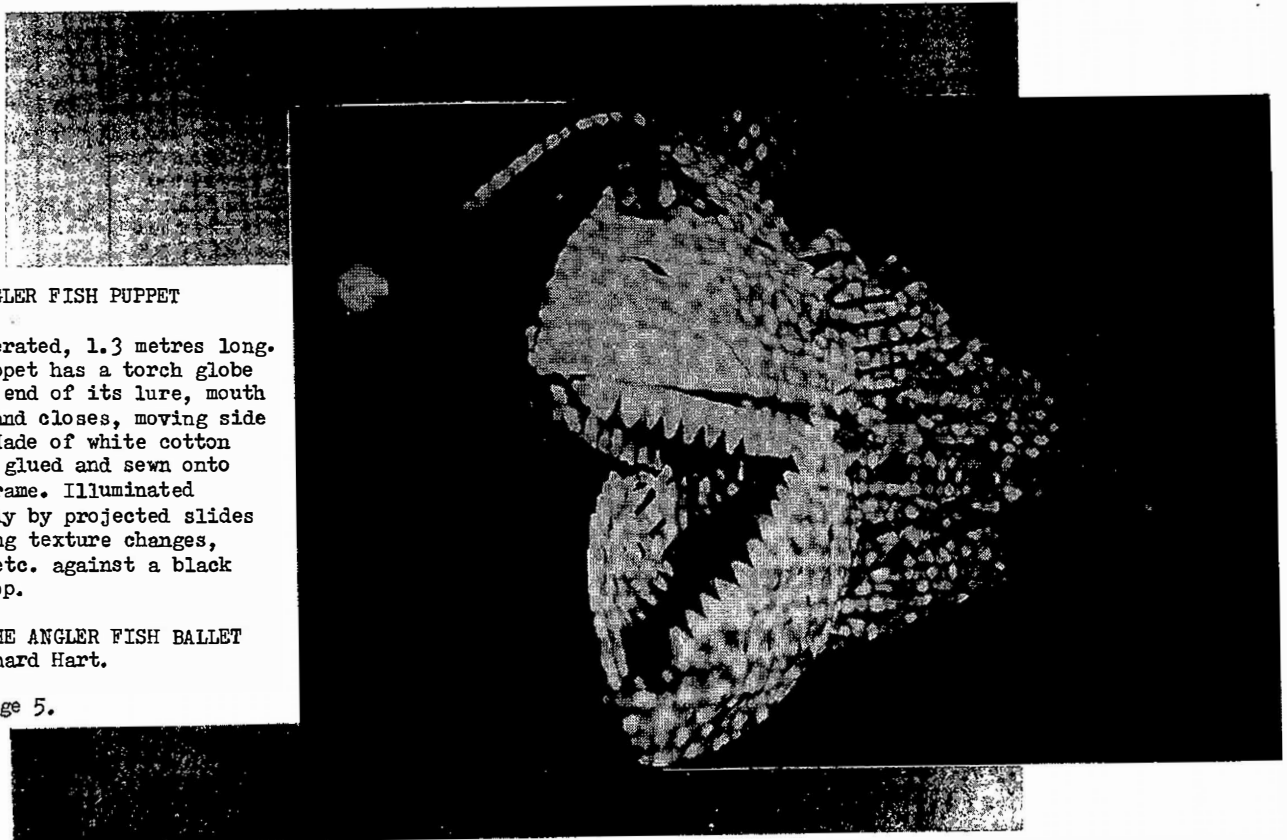


# manipulation

A MAGAZINE FOR PUPPETEERS



## THE ANGLER FISH PUPPET

Rod operated, 1.3 metres long. The puppet has a torch globe in the end of its lure, mouth opens and closes, moving side fins. Made of white cotton strips glued and sewn onto wire frame. Illuminated entirely by projected slides creating texture changes, moods etc. against a black backdrop.

from THE ANGLER FISH BALLET  
by Richard Hart.

See page 5.



A Word from the Workshop

KIM ROYLE

SELLEYS AQUADHERE

A strong wood-gluing specialist, and reasonably priced at \$5.10 for 500 mls, it's adequate for gluing fabrics, string, wool and paper products to one another. It will not glue to anything shiny or non-porous. It goes colourless when dry, is a good fabric, string and wool stiffener, and can create a paintable surface on felt. It can be mixed with plaster to make a filler for giving papier mache and polystyrene a smoother surface.

A trick with Aquadhere ...

To decorate fabrics with a raised textured motif:- Draw design onto a piece of paper, and slide paper under a pane of glass or other shiny see-through surface. Tape tulle (cotton or nylon net) the same colour as the surface you want to decorate on top of the glass. You can add water-colour pigment to the glue, or paint it when dry. Squeeze aquadhere over net, following your design - the glue will begin to spread so if you want a linear effect, blow dry with a hairdryer to quickly form a skin. For larger, thicker areas build up gradually. Peel net off glass when dry (usually overnight) and hand-sew to fabric. It works well for imitating badges, braid and other embroidered effects.

Say your project involves making finger or glove puppets. Sizes are invariably tiny and sewing becomes almost impossible. So the faithful glue is called upon; but which one to use?

The most common materials used in puppetry are polystyrene, foam rubber, latex rubber, fabrics, wood, wire, string and paper products. How to join them to one another quickly and efficiently you wonder?

A handful of types of glue can be unearthed from the hardware departments, so we are looking for the ones that can join such diverse materials as wire and fabric, rubber and paper: in short - tough and versatile.

Once upon a time it was easy. Bostick used to make a range of all types of glue, numbered 1 to 8. Armed with the entire collection you could nearly rule the puppet-making world. Now there are so many brands from which to choose. All have their good points, as long as directions are followed, but beware that a lot are neither heat resistant nor water resistant.

SELLEYS KWIK-GRIP

It's brown, sticky and a good contact adhesive. Excellent for gluing foam rubber (if you cannot get block foam, stick slabs together). It costs slightly less than Aquadhere, at \$4.90 for 500 mls, and will glue wood, string, fabrics and latex rubber to one another, plus shiny and non-porous materials, e.g. Leather and silver paper. However, it dissolves polystyrene foam, though this can create some very interesting textures if spread thinly (but CAUTION the fumes from this technique can be highly dangerous - use only in a well-ventilated place) and some thick fabrics will absorb it and render it ineffective. It tends to stain light-coloured materials, but produces a strong bond.

SELLEYS ASCO SPRAY ADHESIVE

Expensive at \$5.00 a small can, and not good for the atmosphere, it will stick polystyrene slabs together, and light fabric and paper, but isn't strong enough for heavy or thick fabric or cardboard. It solves the problems of gluing awkward spots quickly, and covering large areas.

450

This is a clear, synthetic resin jeweller's glue, which has become popular, though sometimes difficult to obtain. (Try specialized craft shops as well as the big hardware stores.) Expensive, it sells for about \$2.00 for 100 gms. It will glue latex rubber, fabrics, wood, thin wire, string and paper products, and is stainless when dry. Like KWIK-GRIP it tends to dissolve polystyrene foam, but is very useful for attaching those tiny things like buttons and eyeballs.

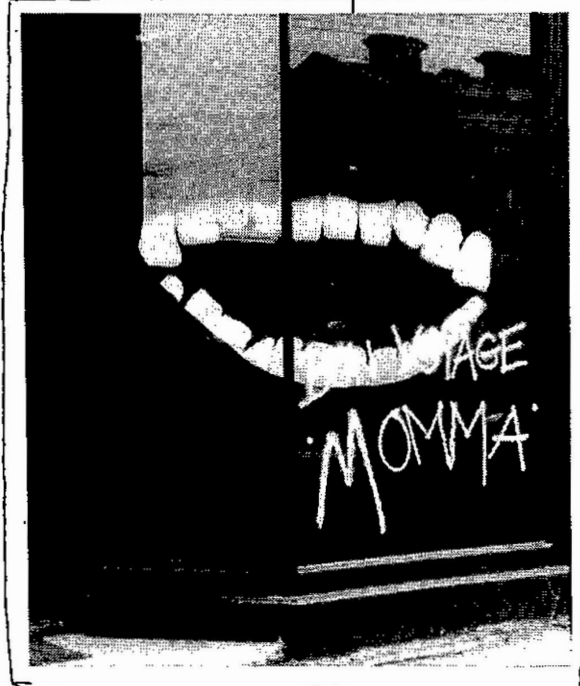
More glues news later.

# STOP PRESS

## JOB VACANCIES

5 weeks' work in the MAGIC PUDDING - prod. by Victorian Arts Council dir. by Michael Creighton. Alexander Theatre, AUGUST HOLS. ring: - DON MACKAY, VEARTS COUNCIL, 5294355

MOMMA'S LITTLE HORROR SHOW LEFT FOR EUROPE THIS WEEK. KEN EVANS & HELEN RICKARDS GOT UP A FAREWELL WINDOW DISPLAY FOR THEM - PHOTO BY KEN.



## WANTED TO BUY

Ventriloquist's Dummy, in working order.

Henry Hudson, 38 Elliott St.  
Campbell, ACT 2601

## INFORMATION REQUIRED

.. On Black Theatre - recommended books, etc.

Henry Hudson, 38 Elliott St.  
Campbell, ACT 2601

... on puppets in THERAPY, preferably someone in Sydney so I can see how it works; also articles in Manipulation from puppeteers experienced in PRE-SCHOOLS AND NURSERIES - I find that these kids live in a world difficult for me to penetrate to understand how they will react to my puppets - I'm sure there are other puppeteers with the same problem.

Dennis Murphy, 4/93 Heighway Ave  
Croydon NSW 2132



This month WENDI BOEREMA starts work in Port Lincoln as Puppetry Consultant to the Eyre Region office of the S.A. Education Dept. This position, newly-created by the Eyre office (& advertised in April MANIPULATION) has been funded by the Schools Commission. Wendi will be advising teachers on the use of puppetry as a teaching medium, conducting workshops in all the major towns of the region.

Wendi has worked as a puppeteer for Pilgrim Puppet Theatre and Philip Edmiston's Theatrestrings.

## HANDICAPPED PUPPETS

THE KIDS ON THE BLOCK, a group from the USA who use life-size puppets of children with various handicaps, are touring Australia this month. Their work aims to increase children's understanding of disablement through contact with the puppets. As well as performing, they produce a kit of puppets, scripts and instructions with which teachers and welfare workers can continue the work themselves. Dates and venues:

- JULY SYDNEY**
- 2 - Bankstown Town Hall 10.30/ 1.30
  - 3 - Willoughby " " " "
  - 4 - Mortdale Church of Latter Day Saints 2.00/ 7.00
  - 7,8,9 - CANBERRA (venue unknown)
  - MELBOURNE
  - 12 - Caulfield Town Hall 1.30/ 4.00
  - 13 - Northcote " " " "
  - 14 - Melbourne Town Hall 10.00/4.00
  - ADELAIDE
  - 17 - contact Adelaide Theatre
  - 18 - Trust for info.
  - PERTH
  - 20 - 24 - venues unknown
  - 27 - ALICE SPRINGS
  - 29 - DARWIN
  - 31 - SYDNEY, Sutherland Civic Centre 10.30/ 1.30
- AUG**
- 1 - Masonic Centre, Sydney city, 3.00/ 7.00

Further information from  
Cumberland College of Health  
Sciences, P.O. Box 170 Lidcombe NSW

Norman Hetherington's BILL STEAMSHOVEL comes to the Alexander Theatre, Monash on Saturday 4th July.

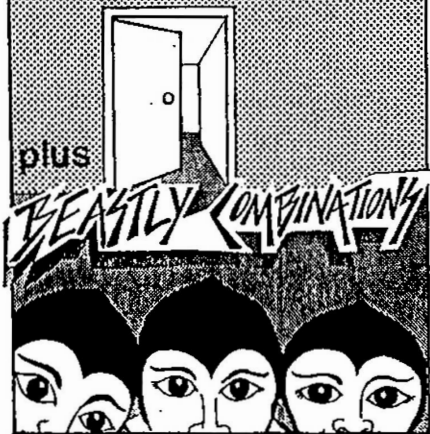


PETER OLDHAM'S new show, CLOWNS, is touring the Northern Territory this month. .... It's a one-man/many clown ramble through the history of clowning presented with rod and glove puppets and puppeteer in view.

CLOWNS can be seen in Sydney in August.



## JANDY MALONE & 9 O'CLOCK TIGER



HANDSPAN'S newest production, "Jandy Malone and the Nine O'Clock Tiger", is based on Barbara Bolton's recently published children's book of the same name (Angus & Robertson, 1980). It is set in Richmond, Victoria, and it explores our fears about 'things that go bump in the night'.

The premiere performance, along with "The Bunyip of Berkeley's Creek" (part of the "Beastly Combinations" series) will take place as part of Children's Book Week at Carringbush Library, 415 Church Street, Richmond Vic. on 12th July (Sunday) at 3.00 pm.

Further performances:- 15th - 17th July at 7.30pm  
and Saturday 18 July at 5.00pm

Bookings: 429 3644 Enquiries: 41 5978  
Children: \$1.50 Adults: \$1.00



PERHAPS you've wondered what became of Pilgrim's beautiful theatre in Hawthorn, Victoria, after they folded last year .. well, it's been taken over by RUSDEN TEACHERS' COLLEGE Drama Dept., and is now being renovated as a venue for their experimental projects, which they say will include a puppetry performance later this year... PERHAPS Rusden might also consider hiring out the theatre to visiting and local puppet companies .....

## GUILD Vic.

No more meetings till the end of winter. Members will be kept up to date with a newsletter compiled by Marie Donald, Sec. 50 Albert St. MT. WAVERLEY 3149.





New Delhi one afternoon before one of my performances, the Indian Council for Cultural Relations engaged an old Rajasthani puppeteer to perform just for me. He arrived with two women, perhaps wife and daughter, and a little girl in traditional brightly coloured dress. They carried bundles with them which turned out to be the marionettes draped in what would be the theatre drapes. These curtains were pinned up to make a theatre and in the photo you can just glimpse my shadow theatre on the left, supporting the curtains. The old man worked all the puppets, speaking with a squeaker, while the women provided singing and music and aided him the puppets. This photo shows one of the five Moghul rulers suspended on the backcloth at the beginning of the show which is a series of short "variety" acts done for their entertainment.



Mrs. Contractor, well-known to foreign puppeteers because of her position in CIMA, directs the puppetry section at the Darpana Academy in Ahmedabad. The initial invitation to me to perform came through Mrs. Contractor, who devotes much of her energy to keeping puppetry alive in India. Above, she and her colleague show a peacock made from basketry; below, she shows glove puppets made and used by her group.



In Udaipur I performed at the Lok Kal Mandal Institute, which is directed by Mr. Samar, seen here with his adopted son. The Institute is a museum of the traditional arts of Rajasthan, and gives special importance to the marionettes, which are the oldest known traditional marionettes. The shows we saw here were a fable about a wicked elephant, a traditional "variety" show and a modern circus - all with marionettes. I had not seen Mr. Samar since we performed at the Festival in Bochum, Germany, in 1965.



# India

BY RICHARD BRADSHAW

In December 1980 Richard Bradshaw toured India with his shadow show. He also saw a lot of Indian puppetry, and here provides a selection of photos from his album.



In Mangalore we were introduced to the spectacular "Yakshagana" marionettes of Kogga Komath, from Karnataka State, who is carrying on a family tradition. They gave a performance after mine in the Town Hall, where the audience numbered 1300. The photos left and above show puppets from a version of the Ramayana, in which Hanuman's tail is set alight and he in turn sets fire to the villain's palace. (Real Flames!) Each of the puppets is worked by six strings: two to the head, two to the hands and two to the knees.

Here we see characters from a traditional fable worked by a group under the direction of Dadi Padumjee, a young man I first met when he was working with Mrs. Contractor at the Charleville Festival in '72, and a couple of months later when we were both performing in Stockholm. Since then he has studied with Michael Meschke in Sweden, and started his own group. Their approach is very modern, the puppeteers speak for the puppets, and the manipulation is excellent.



FAUST - Hayman Theatre, Perth Festival '81.

FAUST was spectacular theatre, a successful fusion of contemporary dramatic technique and classic Elizabethan text.

Marlowe's DR. FAUSTUS was heavily adapted to create FAUST. Much of the imagery of the play was translated from the verbal to the visual and musical.

The only speaking part was Faust the masked actor's, ably played by Tony Nicholls.

Scriptwriter Cathryn Robinson created the speeches from chunks of the original text, compressions of other parts, and a few passages of blank verse that she composed herself - a very delicate synthesis, skilfully achieved.

All other sound was from a taped musical soundtrack - mainly classical - except for the moment of Faust's first communication with the devil, which was accompanied by loud mutterings and thunder.

For the rest (and this was to me the greatest strength of the production), dance, mime and puppetry were combined with magician's illusions and stage devices like dry ice, trapdoors, ropes and pulleys, to tell the story and expound the ideas in pure powerful visuals.

Masked actors, bunraku puppets and body puppets were assigned to roles with an aptness that showed thorough understanding of the abilities of each medium. On stage the mix was smooth, fluid, justified - it never jarred.

Using Faust puppets made visual the conflict in Faust as he considered selling his soul. As masked actor, Faust could stand outside himself and watch himself as bunraku rod puppet. The audience was given a simultaneous view of a person out of his own control, yet watching and analysing his own behaviour. Faust's conflict realises its climax in a tug-of-war between the masked actor characters, Mother Earth and Evil Tempter, in which the Faust puppet is split in two and hurled aside, to be mourned over and unsuccessfully pieced together by the masked Faust.



Every possible means was explored to create the unattainable Helen of Troy. When first seen she is a two-dimensional black theatre puppet, whisked about by the puppeteers the moment Faust tries to touch her, her black velvetted back rendering her invisible. Later she is a bunraku rod puppet, her manipulators moving her in slow, stately motion punctuated by sudden flinches at Faust's approach, yielding momentarily, then snatched away and revealed high above the stage spin-in space on a long rod with rotating control, the same ingenious device as spun Dolly in MOMMA'S. In the final moments of the show Helen is a masked actress, but separated yet from Faust by a panel of prison bars.

Finally, I can think of no more powerful image of the abuse of power than the spectacle of the wolf puppets devouring sheep. In a production abundant with visual metaphors, this remains for me the most succinct and the most memorable.

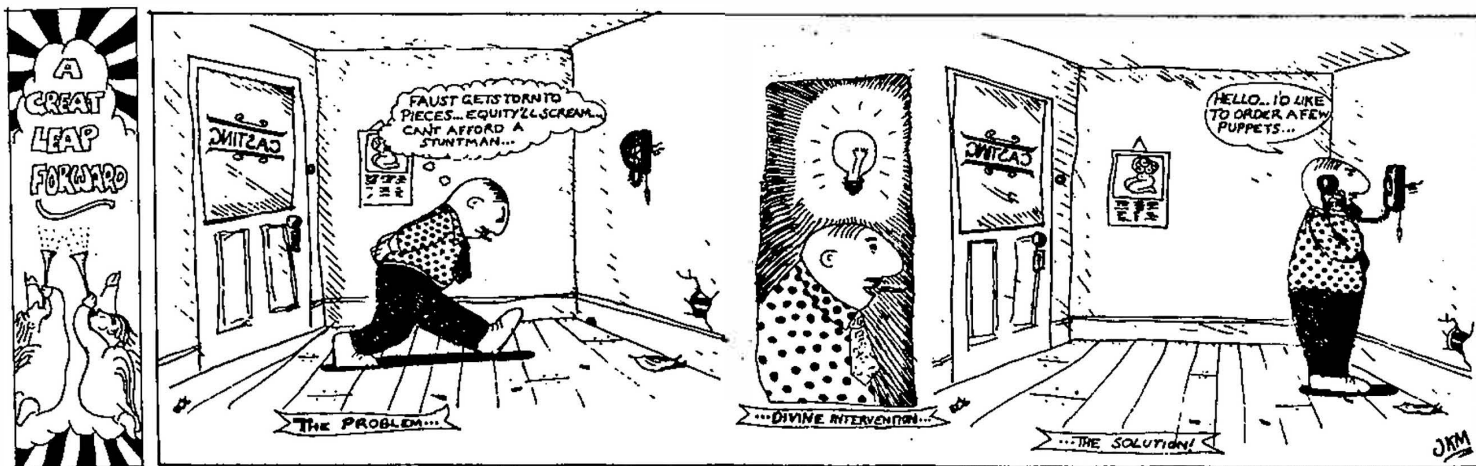
The SPARE PARTS team - director Peter Wilson, writer Cathryn Robinson and designer/puppet maker Beverley Campbell-Jackson; the guest puppeteers - Takeshi Hoshino and Noriko Nishimoto; and the Theatre Arts students of the Western Australia Institute of Technology generated in FAUST a sense of team effort, a cohesion of skills that made the production greater than the sum of its parts.

There were technical flaws - voices that weren't always perfectly modulated; people dancing who were obviously not trained dancers, fluctuations in the quality of the manipulation. But none of this mattered. The power of the production as a whole transcended the inexperience of the performers.

For the students, working with acknowledged experts in the art of bunraku manipulation, and the exposure to Peter Wilson's philosophy of puppetry as "the theatre of the impossible" have provided a learning experience that will doubtless expand the horizons of puppet theatre in Western Australia.

From where I stand, FAUST is a milestone in the development of serious puppet theatre.

HELEN RICKARDS





It was the best puppet show I've seen in quite a while.

The approach was very stylized and very simple, and consisted of objects moving in environments created by slides - hundreds of slides of simple line images scratched into the celluloid and covered with watercolours.

To the right of the stage a series of 4 scrims, set one behind the other at 2 foot intervals, went back to a rear-projection screen. To the left, blackness, what I'd call a light trough, where the light disappears into a black background, with a sliding white scrim in front of that.

The show began with two dancers in white. Slides were projected onto their bodies and to the scrims beyond. They were a linking of the human element to the puppet show that was to come. I believe this was originally conceived as a separate item, but the use of the slides and the sculpted movements of the dancers effectively fused the two parts together.

After the dancers left the stage there was a series of slides suggesting a deep-sea feeling: stylized underwater scenes and a few that looked like electron-microscope photos. Then came the puppets, worked by operators in black. There were 3 fish shapes on rods, made of fabric and plastic, with lights inside them. They moved through the darkness and the slide projections, sometimes gently touching members of the audience. They were pursued by a fish skeleton puppet, just ribbing and the skull of a fish with huge teeth, which came up and devoured them one by one. It had a green light hanging in front of it, like a deep-sea fish would have, so that when it first appeared you saw only the light until it turned sideways.

There was another fish, a motherly fish made in pinkish muslin with lights inside, and it served as an idealised form of the way to live. You began to see that fish were being used as an allegory for human society. Then came two fish made of foam, on rods, with human faces from the gills forward, and arms. One was a John F. Citizen character, a white-collar worker with a briefcase, the other was his antithesis, a young trendy avant-garde devil-may-care fish. These two were in constant dispute against a series of slides showing repetitious images - rows and rows of apartments, office blocks, all the same, streets crowded with fish, groups of fish at cocktail parties throwing down drinks and smoking - masses all doing the same thing - and more sinister slides of sharp-toothed fish mouths crowding the edges of the picture.

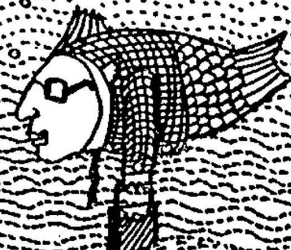
There was something larger than these two that dominated them - the larger fish, which consumed smaller fish in its path. The message came across clearly - that people/fish had surrendered their own power to the corporate power of society, and that these small parts of that greater whole had no ability to criticize what they were in the middle of. I thought that was really appropriate - I feel that too, sometimes.

There wasn't one piece of dialogue in the whole show. There was constant unobtrusive accompaniment from an electronic group - two men - giving a signature theme underneath each scene and creating the atmosphere for whatever was happening. They weren't playing melodic

FEATHERED OCTOPUS  
multimedia puppet theatre  
PERFORMS

# THE ANGLER FISH BALLET

By Richard Hart



St Johns Hall, Paddington, N.S.W.  
May: 1st at 8:30pm. 2nd at 8:00pm  
3rd at 7:30pm. \$3 and \$2 con.  
with  
THE UNTAMED JUNGLE by Dennis Murphy  
and Live music provided by C.E.T.I

REVIEWED BY PETER SEABORN

music, but they were always present, and the audio side was so satisfying, you never felt the need for dialogue.

At the climax there was war. We had all been given instruments - cardboard tubes and sticks - before the show, and told that with these we could join in the last part of the show, and determine when it would end. The cue was a loud noise from the band, and when the conflict was coming to a peak they hit this noise, a loud ongoing crunching noise, and a great clutter of junk was released from the ceiling. Hunks of styrene and foam and cardboard, sticks, bits of aeroplane (B52 !!) dropped all over the stage and the heads of the audience. And with that happening, and the noise going, we were all shocked into being involved, so we joined in with our instruments. We had the power to say something!

Three spirit figures swept onto the stage at this point. They were simple string puppets, with solid heads and hands strung, bodies that were mostly drapery, rather like Rajasthani puppets, but huge, 10 feet tall, and worked from in the ceiling. They flew around, dominating the stage, until the end. This last part was brightly lit, as opposed to the black theatre of the rest, and by fluorescent lights. I like fluorescent light in performance, not many people do, but it had the distinct effect of making us all feel we were part of the event. The ending went on for a good five minutes at least, the whole audience was shouting and banging. When there was a lull in the noise the performers came out and took a bow, and that was the end. Then the band played a session straight after that, so some of the audience stayed to listen and the mood was sustained and gradually tapered off in this way.

Richard Hart produced this show as part of his art course at Alexander Mackie College, but it's no one-off project, I'm told he intends to continue to combine his interests in electronic media and puppetry in further shows. I feel that his work deserves support and encouragement - I know I'd like to see more. Anyone who can help, say, with free space or free equipment, should contact him.



# ANGLER FISH BALLET - SCREEN ARRANGEMENT.

1st, 2nd, 3rd. May 1981  
St. Johns Hall, Paddington. N.S.W.



## multimedia & puppetry

BY RICHARD HART  
(ALSO DIAGRAMS)

There are virtually no limits to what puppetry is or what it can do. It is a boundless sea, one can take many different directions and still be on that sea, hence anyone working in puppetry is in a vast field of possibilities to explore. This is the challenge of puppetry as in any other art form and it is this that generates great interest and vitality.

To ignore other possibilities is to be dogmatic, which is effectively like stopping a plant from growing. Dogma results from a fear of freedom and true creativity results from allowing oneself to be free of judgement, categorization and other limitations on spontaneity.

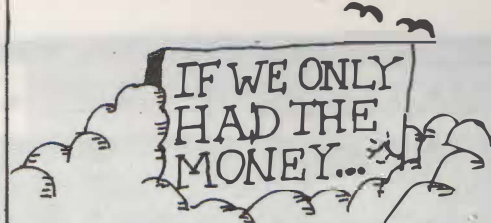
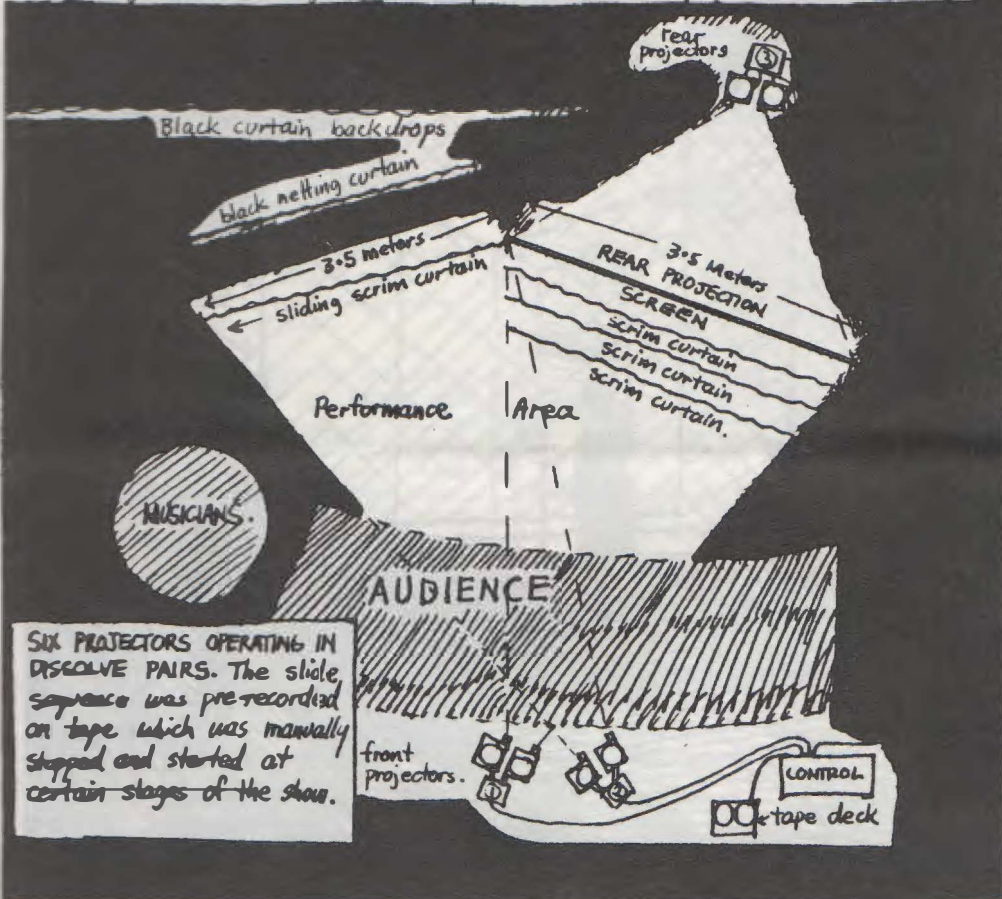
I entered puppetry (or that is how it seemed) after spending some years as a painter (art) and three years of an art course at Alexander Mackie C.A.E. in Sydney. While at Mackie I developed skills and ideas in the uses of multiscreen slide audio/visual production, experimenting with different kinds of projection surfaces, slide making and so on. My interests in puppetry and slide projection existed in parallel until 1980, when I combined these two forms as one show: "The Angler Fish Ballet".

Multimedia, or multimediu to be more correct, has been used to describe a number of recent art events or happenings which explore the medium of artificial light in darkness using dancers, smoke, outdoor environments, screens, live/recorded/amplified sound, lasers, movies, slides and so on. Exploring light in blacked-out spaces (or night) is the essence of my multimediu work.

(Cont.) 6



**"ANGLER FISH BALLET"** Layout plan, designed by Richard Hart, 1980.  
 Plan as for performances on May 1st, 2nd, 3rd. 1981 at St. Johns Hall, Paddington.  
 This arrangement will change for future performances. (NOT TO SCALE)



I recently played in Bundaberg for two days and met local puppeteer, David Hamilton. Following that meeting I couldn't help thinking that we all, as puppeteers, rely too heavily on the phrase, 'If we only had the money'.

In Bundaberg David has mounted a full scale marionette production with six puppeteers at the local Playhouse Theatre. I went with David to see the bridge and it was certainly as large as the bridge I worked on in the old 'Tintookie' days. It was, in fact, similar to the one Philip Edmiston tours with 'The Grande Adventure' with revolving stage and all.

We all know the problems associated with a venture on such a large scale and that few people would tackle a task so big, yet here in Bundaberg, an out of the way place by any standards, a young, part-time puppeteer could mount a production to challenge the Tintookies in their heyday without any financial assistance what-so-ever.

Perhaps we, the professional puppeteers, are relying too heavily on subsidy? How many times in the past have I heard "We can't do that - there's no money"? After what I saw in Bundaberg I ask the question: Do we all hide behind the mask of 'no subsidy' or 'not enough subsidy' in order to hide our own inadequacies?

It is always easier to blame something other than ourselves for lack of productivity and creativity.

Full marks to David Hamilton for his forward thinking and work to produce this size of production which only played nine performances and is now packed away whilst another large scale production is being prepared.

Let us, the so-called professional puppeteers take a lesson from this and may we never hear or use the phrase 'If we only had the money' again.

PETER OLDHAM

Puppetry, as in "The Angler Fish Ballet", becomes an integral part of exploring light. Puppetry is much more than this, of course, and the puppets in "The Angler Fish Ballet" were characters with life and expression, but their visual context is important to the idea behind the show, there being no dialogue.

#### THE ANGLER FISH BALLET

This show is an allegory, but it is non-literal like dance. It is aimed at everyone, but is most likely to be understood on a symbolic level by thinking adults - it is slow, at times serene, and it is environmental - more so in its next production.

The performance takes place in a large environment created by a series of fine netting screens (see diagrams), a rear projection screen (3.2 metres square) and an area with black backdrops behind a sliding scrim screen. All lighting and scenes are created by projected slides (which were hand-scratched and coloured on Kodalith) on the screens and on some puppets. This allowed a convincing metamorphosis of setting, space and even the puppets, the only physical change being the sliding scrim curtain. Thus, a large rod Angler Fish puppet operated in Bunraku style could move against a black background whilst being illuminated by slides of different colours and textures, and at other times, when the screen is in the projection beam, for the same space to become a large image or part of the underwater environment. Blackness was also used as an environment - a good one too, as it has no dimensions and can suggest anything in the imagination. Three colourful fish puppets were made with their own battery-powered illumination inside. They were rod puppets operated by puppeteers in black, and were totally free to go anywhere in the otherwise unlit hall - this meant that they swam into the audience.

The possibilities of battery light and self-illuminated puppets are, I believe, enormous, and much of my future work will be along these lines. No stage is needed, only a blackened room - they can appear and vanish in front of your eyes and be anywhere.

For those sparked with some interest: I would like to be contacted - Richard Hart, 210 Hereford St., GLEBE NSW 2037, phone (02) 660 7342

RICHARD HART is working with OLIVER SUBLETTE and his "hundreds of co-workers" at the Redfern Creative Leisure Centre on a production entitled "CINDEZELLA", to be performed at the Centre on July 10th and 11th.



KOOKA PUPPET CO. HELD A PREVIEW OF  
THEIR NEW SHOW, "SWITCH OVER" AT THE  
DRAMA RESOURCE CENTRE, CARLTON, ON JUNE 3RD

REVIEW BY ANITA SINCLAIR

"Switch Over" is aimed at children between 8 and 14 years. Its purpose is to heighten their awareness of the effect of television on their lives.

It's a difficult project to design a show that will effectively hit 8 year-olds and 14 year-olds; the sort of thing that gets a rise out of the little ones can be a yawn to the adolescents, while snippets such as the icypole jingle with its bawdy overtones will no doubt leave the 8 year-olds wondering why the rest of the audience is hooting.

This is not to say that you can't have a performance that appeals to all ages, but to achieve this a more universal symbolism must be reached. Such a universal might in this case have been: "Life is change, monotony is death", with endless possibilities for theatrical interpretation. In this case, Kooka clearly intended to aim a specific point at a specific group: "It's ok to watch TV, but not all the time".

This is where difficulty arises in didactic theatre, since children grow in both knowledge and taste at a head-spinning rate - at least until 16. Add to this that, in our society at least, children are quite critical of material they consider "too young" or "too old" for them, and your writer/director has a job on his or her hands. A conflict arises for Kooka with the choice of language and content. The language chosen most suits the children over 10, whereas the repetition of points to be emphasised is more appropriate for 8 year-olds, and is a bit much for the older children, who are more able to draw their own conclusions. Ideally then, school shows would need to be created for groups with no more than a two-year age span.

But, it's a fact of the business lives of Theatre-in-Education Teams and Children's Theatre groups that they must appeal to a reasonably wide audience in order to have enough bums on seats, and I expect that Kooka feel that the 8 - 14 range is a good one to contact with this particular message. Allowing that I haven't seen the show performed to a child audience, I think that Kooka have achieved a workable compromise.

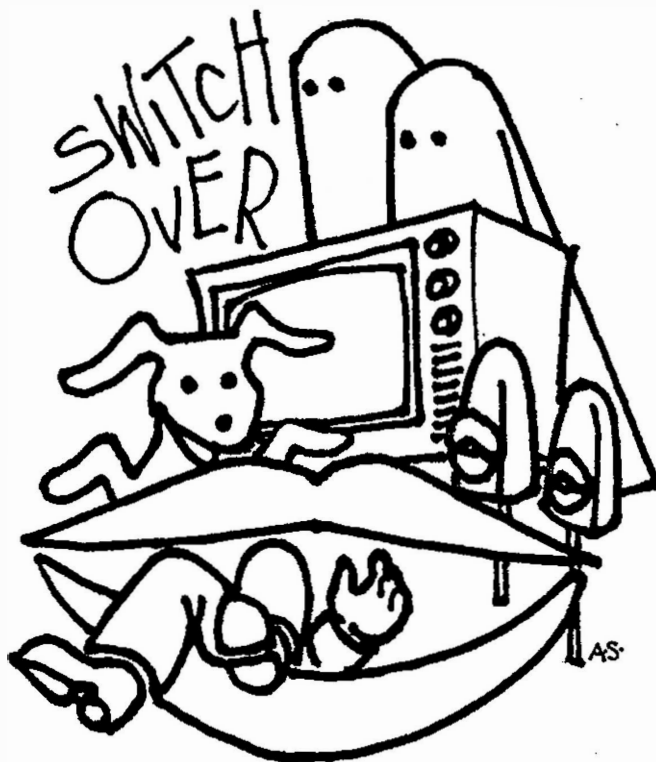
The preview I attended benefitted from the presence of a few small children in the front row, one of whom was quite vocal, and showed that the puppet/audience dialogue should work with a young audience. The rest of this audience comprised other performers and informed adults - a challenging audience.

I really enjoyed the language used by the puppet characters, and found the comments they made to each other refreshingly believable - "One of these days I'm going to lay him out!" (no it isn't a sex education show, she meant "strike him unconscious"), though I think the occasional supervising teacher might cringe at phrases like "go out for a leak".

I was delighted to see the whole TV doctor/romance/sex scene exposed and ridiculed. I like "exposure" as a teaching method - "let's look at this and this aspect, this known fact, this fantasy". With such an approach teachers (can we agree that these performers are taking the position of teachers?) can play down the role of "one who knows" and encourage students to make up their own minds.

The puppets were highly effective in terms of scale, type of puppet chosen (hand & rod), colour scheme, materials and mechanisms, with the lead puppets human enough for the child audience to identify with them, and puppet enough to be appealing as such.

I was worried about sight lines in the performance



space. I was seated to the side, and the flats that concealed clutter sometimes concealed the action as well. I found the flatness of the faces of the puppet children inconsistent with the otherwise three-dimensional treatment given them, and was distracted by the unreliability of the sound equipment. The fantasy mouth sequence was too slow, but would be transformed by improvement in the sound.

Yes, the puppetry push has seen large red mouths in shows before, but the children at whom the show is aimed most probably have not. The mouth image fitted well the intention of the sequence - "TV devours little boy", and the design of the puppets in the space looked great. Again the liberal use of black velvet triumphs!

To sum up: a light-hearted and clear communication with lots of visual stimulus, which should draw attention not only to the message, but to the skill of the puppeteers and the versatility of puppetry in general.

\* \* \*

Some questions:

I believe that we, both children and adults, learn more from what we experience than from what we are told.

Is it not an irony that a show asking us not to be passive spectators should be presented in such a way as to oblige us to watch it more or less passively?

How many people have already said to the kids, "You watch too much television"?

As long as Dad and Mum sit propped in front of the telly, is Junior likely to do otherwise? Should the message be directed at the parents?

What does one do about indoctrination from undesirable sources?



BOOGIE & MIMI in peasant costume for  
A FABLE OF FOREIGN AID.



Murphy's Jungle Puppets was formed in 1980 by Dennis and Jan Murphy.

The original intention was to use puppets in three areas: children's entertainment, adult education and Theatre of the Absurd. But since formation a fourth objective has arisen - to blend the three objectives so that each production can be appreciated at several levels at once.

Children enjoy the colour and movement of the puppets as well as some of the more obvious social comment. Older kids enjoy the absurd plots, the realistic manipulation and the satire relevant to them. Adults enjoy the subtler social comment as well as the characterizations.

THE JUNGLE SHOW is a musical variety for general audiences. It is based largely on audience participation. The resident pop star, Boogie, invites song requests. The audience decides who should go up in the rocket and when the rocket misfires, the audience suggests how to rescue the victims. During the show, Pharebow, from the planet of the same name, actually leaves the stage and goes into the audience to "investigate" earthlings.

In his SUITCASE SHOWS Dennis works with small audiences, allowing even more audience participation.

"Lady Hortense begins to tell a story but can't remember most of it so the kids fill in with their own ideas."

## RELAX MTA ... Someone liked Lazar!

John from Wodonga was round the other night, and he started talking about "Captain Lazar". Luckily, someone turned the tape recorder on .....

... Huge hand of God appearing - like it's about 10 feet long - this finger pointing at poor little Captain Lazar lost in the desert in search of, y'know, true happiness - it was really obvious I suppose, but it was a joke because it was such an obvious metaphor, sending up whatever - Patrick White I suppose - Voss - it seemed to be basically PATRICK COOK TAKES ON PATRICK WHITE'S 'VOSS'. But it didn't end up like that.

I felt like it was a good laugh, but the second half ... the plot didn't advance much after interval ... it was the sort of thing that ... um - I thought it was a good... parody I suppose - a good HOOT! A good hoot, yes. And I loved seeing all these Characters ... a lot of characters in the town of Outskirts were just great ... like these two women who ran the cake shop or 2nd hand clothing store or something - they were just brilliant characterizations - one of them must have been Jude Kuring - and they were just so funny - cause they were so true to life and yet they were these puppets.

The rest of the audience didn't seem to like it - I dunno why. It was an Arts Festival audience - it was one of the Official Shows which tended to attract people who could pay for it - although it wasn't that expensive - \$5 - \$6. There was a cabaret type atmosphere - grog and people smoking and stuff - but they weren't moving around and feeling like they could have a good time and let go. I think they'd come along expecting a Theatre Performance - but everyone was sitting around the little tables and chairs and they weren't getting into it. I don't know if it was because their expectations weren't met .. um ...

Oh! That's why I liked it! Yeah! Of course! IT REALLY TOOK THE PISS OUT OF MALCOLM FRASER! I knew there was a good reason!

It's all coming back - he was this absolute sadist, Morton Barmann (although I didn't pick up on the name at the time) A real vicious MEANIE - he was a koala trainer - poor little helpless koalas who were just cute little lovable characters who got so SCARED because the meanie was coming along - and he trained them to jump through a hoop of knives.



The whole thing was Captain Lazar finding all these acts, like a whale, and an eskimo with huskie dogs, and giraffes, wandering through the Australian Outback - he just collected them all together and they arrived at this town called Outskirts and put on this show, which was Captain Lazar's Earthbound Circus.

I liked the bizarreness of it - this thing of Malcolm Fraser as this meanie ... one of the Koalas was impaled on a dagger while trying to jump through the hoop of knives, and the other koalas were finally inspired to do something - get up and expose him - I can't remember - they sang a song or something - and anyway it came out that Malcolm Fraser ... tucked his shirt into his undies ... and there was something else, like picking his nose ...

(John from Wodonga works with the Murray River Performing Group, and if you live in Melbourne you can see him and them in August, Performing at Le Joke, upstairs at the Last Laugh in Smith Street, Collingwood.)

usually end up with a pretty wild story". Even fairly threatening characters are enjoyed by the kids provided they are prepared for it first. "I tell them I've brought the jungle wizard, but he's pretty scary - maybe I'd better not bring him out. This usually brings stern assurances from the kids that they won't be scared. It works extremely well. They go in to it determined not to be scared, and they aren't!"

A FABLE OF FOREIGN AID was produced and written for Community Aid Abroad's education programme for adults, using satire to teach about Third World Development. It is set in the mythical developing country Jungleland, populated by puppet characters. Lady Hortense has European values that leave her out of touch with her own country. The foreign expert brings his solutions to development, but they are more a reflection of his own background and training than a reaction to what he finds in Jungleland. Local authorities are represented by Sgt. Major Baboon, who recites press releases

by rote. The peasants, who are working all through the show, are mainly interested in getting enough to eat.

"I think it is very important to have puppets with well-defined characters to show attitudes. Once the attitudes are shown it's easy to see why development has been so slow. It also makes the issues come alive. That's vital (sorry) because in Australia Third World development can only be read about, not experienced."

All of Dennis's adult productions are based on showing attitudes. THE UNTAMED JUNGLE SHOW begins as a romantic nature study, but is soon taken over by a scientist and his computer to become a scientific look at how to improve nature.

PROF TECHNOCRAT'S TECHNOLOGY SHOW looks at attitudes behind technology and at diverting attention from the real issues onto Royal Visits and rocket launchings. "It's the best piece of new technology to hit Australia since Skylab!" says Lady Hortense.



LADY HORTENSE, OBE, TBA  
....born to rule

Dennis's current project is to produce a puppet show for the Wayside Chapel's Life Education programme. "I am still doing the research, but it will be about television and its promotion of unhealthy lifestyles, and will be called TV COMES TO THE JUNGLE."

"While I recognise the need for entertainment, I think television fills the need for mindless entertainment many times over. A good puppet show can be so powerful that it should have a higher purpose."

Peter Seaborn saw THE UNTAMED JUNGLE SHOW and makes this comment: "The first thing that came onstage was this commercial puppet, the kind you'd buy in a toyshop, plasticity and non-descript, and I thought, 'Oh no, this is what the show is gonna be like!' - but I was wrong. It turned out that these puppets were being used to criticize the sort of corporation mind that produced them. As far as the kids were concerned, they were seeing the kind of dolls and puppets that they could be given come to life and tell these consciousness-raising environmentalist stories. It was like seeing Mickey Mouse doing a program about Disneyland's real business affairs. Great."

Hello readers,

Manipulation now has a new (second-hand) typewriter to squeeze in a lot more of the news that fits, and still keep the printing costs down.

You'll note on the cover that it is now registered for transmission by post as a periodical - this greatly reduces the postage bill, but quashes the personal side of things a bit, as I'm not allowed to include any notes cosier in content than WITH THE COMPLIMENTS OF: or DO NOT OPEN TILL CHRISTMAS. So, to all who sent articles, letters and money - thank you very much, see what a wonderful issue you've created; to all who are thinking of doing so - please do; and to Christine Woodcock, sorry I didn't get to see you in Sydney, you live so far out of town and I don't have your phone number.

Special thanks to Jon Murray for unerring judgement and cartoons; to John Conti for demystifying the process of bromiding photos for printing; and to all at Handspan Theatre for tireless canvassing of subscribers.

*Maev*

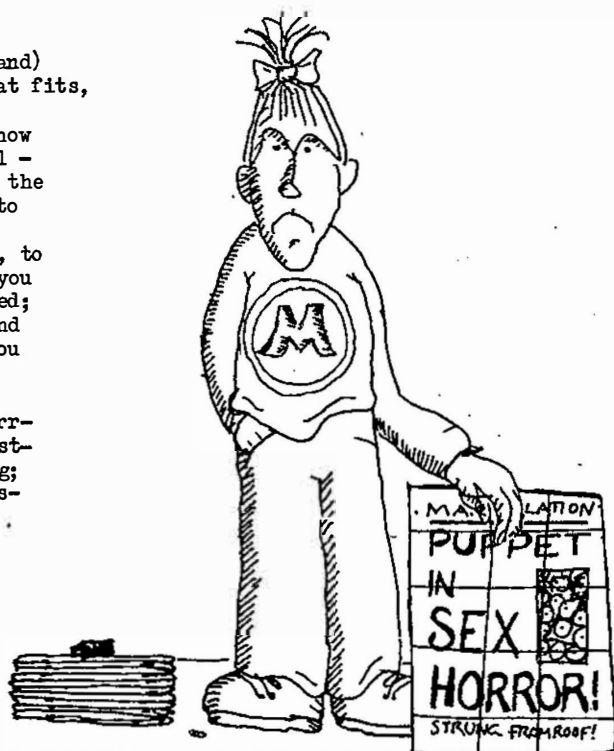
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LOTTE

REINIGER



## REMEMBERED

The death of Lotte Reiniger, at the age of 82, was reported in the Sydney Morning Herald of 22 June, 1981. She will be remembered principally as a pioneer in the cinema, being credited with the first full-length animated film, "The Adventures of Prince Achmed", which was made in 1923-26. This was a stop-action film using silhouette figures but during her lifetime she also worked with more conventional shadow puppets.

I first met her in 1964 when I was working with the Hogarth Puppets in London. She was a close friend of Jan Bussell and his wife Ann Hogarth and had made shadow puppets for them. When the Hogarth Puppets toured Australia in 1952, they brought with them her shadow puppets for "The Happy Prince".

Later that year I visited her in her home in North London where she showed me the "trick-table" she used for making her silhouette films and some of the figures she was using for short interludes for English pantomimes. By then she was using colour both in the puppets with top-lighting and in the sets using back-lighting. (On that occasion she invited me to a supper she cooked herself of veal with caper sauce followed by apple pie).

I met her again in December 1972 when she was giving a talk on her art at the V. and A. museum. When question-time came up, one small child asked if she enjoyed her work. Lotte paused, drew a deep breath, then with all the energy she could muster replied "Yes".

I had invited her to see a performance I was to give in London the following month but she got the date wrong and later wrote a very apologetic note. With the note came a small silhouette picture with two exquisitely cut figures. This I treasure along with puppets of an aboriginal and a kangaroo which she had made for the Bussells who gave them to me, framed, as a Christmas present.

Eventually she did see my show at the Wigmore Hall in London in 1979 and it is hard to describe how honoured I felt when she came backstage with a beaming smile at the end of the show. In later years Lotte gave several workshops for puppeteers in England, Europe, the USA and Canada, where she also supervised the making of a stop-action film for the National Film Board.



All who knew Lotte loved her and her enthusiasm was contagious. It is wonderful to have known such an original creative artist, and her art will live on in her many films.

Good-bye Lotte -  
and thank you.

RICHARD BRADSHAW