



# Manipulation

A MAGAZINE FOR PUPPETEERS

MAY 1982

# Letters

## EGOTISM ----

Recently I saw the Black Theatre of Prague, and a delightful show it was too! Many of the puppetry tricks are well-known and nothing new to those "in the know". However, there was one aspect of the art that is not much used in puppetry in this Eastern side of the country, and that is body movement and dancing. This aspect was well covered in the Tasmanian Festival, but was rejected by large numbers of mainland puppeteers as being not necessary or anything to do with puppetry. I think the Black Theatre of Prague proved otherwise. It was quite forward thinking of the organizers considering the "climate" in this part of the world.

If people are funding festivals and trips away, they are entitled to think that a spirit of learning will prevail and therefore we will all benefit from such things. Nevertheless, the learning aspect does not just occur in a week's or fortnight's seminar. Anyone who knows their art/craft realizes that the pursuit of excellence will more than likely take a lifetime.

This brings me to the point: I recently read in "The Australian" an article entitled "Oz Puppeteers are Pulling the Right Strings" by Jayne Binet from Paris. This was a factual article about the ("Mamma's") tour - not a critique of the show, although glowing bits were quoted from French newspapers. The sting was in the tail of the article and to quote a member of the Australian Puppet Theatre: "Europe doesn't have much to teach us", seems to me to be the result of either inexperience or a closed mind. If we don't have anything to learn from Europe, I'm amazed. After all, there is quite a tradition there, and they have been working at their traditions for some time. There may be aspects at which Australian puppeteers are quite good, but there are many things to learn and improve. If we wish to progress we cannot exist with a "closed mind" attitude. As Nigel Triffitt stated during my class at the Tasmanian Festival, "Puppeteers have a strange ego". Let us not let either our personal or our national ego get in the way of progress.

Those who are presenting and backing the Adelaide Puppet Festival will be looking for a positive response and results to justify such a venture in the future, as we would all like these festivals to be an on-going event.

MARIE DONALD  
Secretary, Vic. Puppetry Guild

## DREAMS ----

A puppet exhibition opened last night at the Sydney Opera House, opened by "Mr. Squiggle". There are some nice puppets on display: although it is not all-encompassing, there is a reasonable variety. A huge area was taken up by a "tidy" simulation of the MTA's puppet-making workshop. From what I remember, previous exhibitions had more puppets in them than this one.

When we last met, Maeve, you asked about the philosophy behind my own approach to puppetry. I realized how dangerous it is to categorize oneself into a particular philosophy as an approach to life and one's work - because it's rare to get a complete enough picture of things to tell if you are really living to that philosophy, and sometimes people could hold you to it and expose your hypocrisy. Also, it could be limiting. Then, I suppose a philosophy can be useful as a tool towards further development as long as it doesn't become the end in itself. I cannot put my own approach to puppetry into words except to say that it is like making dreams into 3D, physical reality for other people to experience (with their help).

Dreams communicate one part of ourselves to the other - the deeper parts to the surface parts of us, using a symbolic language of images, senses and feelings to perfection - though often confusing the intellect. We may not know intellectually what an image says, but a dream experience can stay with us for years with a deep sense of meaning that's intangible - enigmatic might be the word.

Anyway, don't hold me to what I have written as being what I'll always think. The more I look into it, the more it expands and I see I've only touched a part of what I'm doing. Creativity also works with emotional communication that can be understood as well as intellectual communication that can often end up being misunderstood - or at least requiring thought.

RICHARD HART

## PERTH ----

Last year I received "Manipulation" and enjoyed it very much, so I would like another subscription please. I have my own stage, which I made, three Pelpup puppets, and the rest of my puppets I made. I notice that hardly any puppet shows come to Perth, except when the Perth Festival is on, and the local shows. I would like to go to a puppet workshop regularly so I can learn more about making puppets, and would like to know where I can go in Perth. I am 12.

DEAN TWIST  
3 Inverary Cres, Hamersley WA 6022

## UNIMA BLUES 2 ---

I would like to second your comments in "Unima Blues" last issue. I joined Aust. Unima in 1975. At that time I was given a membership card and a little badge to put into it, all the way from the Unima Centre in Poland. At that time Unima Aust. was in Edith Murray's capable hands. At present, I think I'm still a member of Aust. Unima - I'm still on the mailing list, anyway. I'm the victim of at least one unanswered letter addressed to the Interim secretary. I choose to remain a member of British Unima (transferred, at Edith's suggestion, when I left for overseas intending to stay a couple of years. She also gave me a list of Festivals and several very worthwhile contacts) because I have a record of my membership in the form of the official stamp (renewed annually), and a membership card - it does help to feel acknowledged. But more importantly, I receive good information on the world puppetry scene Unima publications and festivals. How many Australian Unima members, I wonder, know of the existence of the Unima Calendar, for example, and where to obtain a copy? (At least "Manipulation" readers do, I guess!) Australian Unima would receive my total support if it offered the services I receive presently elsewhere. And, yes, I did vote in the elections last year.

ANNIE HEITMAN

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## Morna Jones

1924 - 1982

Died 19th March, after a long illness. Actress, director, entrepreneur, children's TV producer and compere. In 1972, founded a permanent children's theatre venue and ensemble, the Little Patch Theatre, in Adelaide. Inspired by Marjorie Bromilow to use puppetry techniques in the company's work, she explored various combinations of actors with puppets, particularly shadow and black theatre styles.



## UNIMA Replies

Maeve Vella's criticism of UNIMA Australia (MANIPULATION, February '82) is a fair one in most respects.

We certainly have had communication problems, both in getting information and in passing it on to members. Our information from overseas has tended to come when the events announced are well and truly over - and because of our difficulties in filling Edith Murray's place as secretary, when she resigned, we have also had immense problems in passing on to members what information we did get. We are trying to overcome these problems. We hope we can do so.

But some of Maeve's criticisms I do not agree with. Most organizations have peaks and troughs of membership. With us the peaks occur when there is an occasion such as Hobart '79 or at a time when many puppeteers are planning to go overseas (e.g. for Washington '80) and briefly join. The troughs represent the faithful members who join, and remain, because they believe in what UNIMA stands for, the necessity for internationalism.

The fact that few bother to vote is not only a UNIMA problem. Local government elections in NSW when voting was voluntary had a much worse percentage vote than we did!

I don't think too many members have been omitted from the mailing list lately - but we know this can happen, especially with the more mobile puppeteer. We're planning to include a change-of-address form in each newsletter from now on, especially for the fast movers.

Newsletters, from now on, are to be issued three times a year, with supplementary letters if and when necessary; and we hope that some, at least, of the puppeteers who join when they are planning overseas trips will continue as members when they return.

Finally, please don't forget that overseas UNIMA organizations have government support or are able to afford paid staff. What we do here (sometimes adequately, sometimes not) is done for love of puppetry and because we believe that Australia must continue to be part of the international world of puppetry.

NORMAN HETHERINGTON

Victoria has its Drama Resource Centre, and South Australia has the Youth performing Arts Council at Carclew. NSW, however, has no such support organization to serve youth theatre and represent its interests, and the NSW government lags well behind other states in the level of its funding to youth theatre. This year its grant allocations in this area total \$120,050 - less than half the Victorian government's contribution of \$267,000. This situation has prompted the formation of TIECO, an association of NSW companies with a strong commitment to theatre-in-education. The MTA, Side-track, Musica Viva, NSW Theatre of the Deaf and Freewheels are among the members so far. They will be working towards better funding and greater recognition of the value of theatre in education, and putting pressure on the NSW government to improve its dismal record in this vital area of its responsibility.

The Marionette Theatre of Australia has put out some rather clumsy feelers for the name Australian Puppet Theatre. Co-APT founder Frank Italiano feels that the MTA wants to cash in on the APT's success with "Mamma's", and his perhaps uncharitable reaction may be partly caused by the MTA's blunder (?) in attempting to negotiate the purchase with Last Laugh proprietor John Pinder, whose holding in the company is zero. At this date the name is not for sale.

America's PUPPETRY JOURNAL recently published the minutes of Puppeteers of America's annual board meeting, held in August last year. Amongst all the business there was this motion:

"That the Board make an official protest to UNIMA Publishing with regard to the late arrival of the 1981 Calendars."

..... seems we're not the only ones the Old World forgets.

The Good News from Britain is that the PUPPET CENTRE in London will NOT have to close - the Arts Council of Great Britain has responded to the protests of British (and foreign) puppeteers and reversed its decision to wipe the Centre's funding. The grant, which pays the wages of administrative staff, will continue for the next financial year, at least. Says the Puppet Centre: "We are grateful to the many individuals and organizations who interceded with the Arts Council on our behalf. We send them all our warmest good wishes and deep obeisances." No worries.

"RUBBISH", Michael Creighton's second movie as Special Projects Person at the MTA (the first was "A Puppet Pudding"), is nearing completion and should be ready for release by mid-year. It stars Jude Kuring and Emil Minty (Emil was also The Feral Kid in "Mad Max 2"). It was shot in the darkest, nastiest, most unrenovated corners of the Old Sailors Home building, and up and down some eccentric Sydney back lanes. There's no dialogue, just music and sound FX. It's about a kid who makes puppets from junk, but don't expect paper plates and tips on mache modelling - this movie is Weird, and the puppets (by Ross Hill) are Monstrous. "A cross between 'Alice in Wonderland' and 'Eraserhead'" is Michael's description.

HIGHFIELD'S HIGHLY-STRUNG PUPPETS are on the loose again. Our Sydney correspondent reports that Alan Highfield has retired from the MTA to work on his own for a while. He's giving workshops and hanging out with mime artist Jean-Paul Bell. Replacing Alan is Paul Blackwell, NIDA graduate and dancer with the One Extra Dance Company. He joins the MTA for their production of "Smiles Away".

**MORE MTA NEWS:** At a general meeting of MTA personnel on April 30th the notion of creating a permanent core company was greeted favourably by puppeteers present. Subject to funding, the new scheme could be in operation by next year. Ideas were discussed for night-time adult shows at the Old Sailors Home when it becomes the company's permanent theatre venue, and the possibility of inviting overseas directors to work on large puppet performances was also raised. Training workshops for company members will continue to run, with programs in voice, improvisation, mask work and movement, and on the technical side, in lighting and stop-motion animation. Members wanting to develop their own shows can now obtain assistance from the company in terms of money for director and designer services.

A public meeting of the THEATRE BOARD of the Australia Council at the Opera House on 19th April aired a few grievances, particularly as to the future of "Theatre Australia" magazine. TA is in imminent danger of collapse if its funding cannot be increased. As the Board was due to go into "retreat" for 4 days of intensive strategy evaluation and future planning, nothing definite was said. In fact, the meeting was little more than a public relations exercise. Nevertheless, for a bit of factual graffiti this is not bad:- What the government spends in 3 days on defence it allocates as its total arts budget. So there - which means, and this was stressed at the meeting, there is a big need for people involved in the arts to start lobbying our politicians for a better deal.

**GUILD ANNUAL REPORT :** The 1981 Edition is currently being prepared by the QLD branch, and will soon be available. Contact - Jocelyn Clarkson,  
51 Magee St. Graceville 4075

**NEW COMMITTEE & NEW VENUE FOR NSW GUILD :** At the annual general meeting of the NSW branch of the Puppetry Guild in March, the following officers were elected -

President - Dennis Murphy  
Vice presidents - Ann Davis & Rob French  
Secretary - Richard Hart  
Treasurer - Una Vincent

Meetings will now be held at the OUTLANDYSHE Puppet Theatre, in the Wayside Chapel building, 29 Hughes st., Potts Point (Kings Cross).

The Guild will meet on the third Monday of every 2nd month - next meeting: June 21st - at 7.30pm.

In the alternate months, May, July, etc., puppet-making workshops will be organized. The May workshop will be in making simple glove puppets, with Ann Davis.

For more information, ring Dennis Murphy on 358 1010 or Richard Hart on 560 2367.

**SAME PEOPLE, SAME PLACE, NEW NIGHT FOR VIC. GUILD :** At the Vic. annual general meeting, Axel Axelrad was returned as president, as were Marie Donald as secretary and Lorrie Gardner as treasurer.

Meetings are held at the Drama Resource Centre, 115 Bouverie St., Carlton.

Meeting time has been changed to accommodate new members - it's now the last THURSDAY of every month. Next meeting: May 27th, at 7.45 pm.

(Note: after May, the Vic.Guild goes into recess for the winter months, to resume again in September.)

Enquiries to Marie Donald on 277 4409.

# Puppet Stars

AT SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE

This exhibition was designed by Bill Passmore (resident designer at the Opera House and known for his designs for large casino productions) and co-ordinated by Beverly Campbell-Jackson, who's been working with the MTA since January. It was officially opened by Mr. Squiggle, alias Norman Hetherington.

Well-known characters from The TINTOOKIES, SHIRL'S NEIGHBOURHOOD and OSSIE OSTRICH are displayed under the banner of "Puppet Stars", and there are many other main characters from the productions of Australian and international puppet companies.

Overall there are fewer puppets than in the last exhibition I saw at the MTA's Old Sailors Home. Nevertheless, viewing is easier and more absorbable this time around. Owing to the start of renovation manoeuvres at the Old Sailors Home, it was decided to move the MTA's workshop across to the Opera House and incorporate it into the exhibition. A workshop area visible and accessible adds a new and interesting dimension for visitors to the exhibition.

Resident puppet-maker Ross Hill finds himself with the dual responsibilities of refurbishing puppets for the Opera House seasons of "Smiles Away" and "General Macarthur in Australia" and coping with the barrage of questions and anecdotes from interested people. "It's like being in the bath and having to answer the phone every five minutes" says Ross. He rationalizes his situation further by stating "I am the only live puppet in a dead exhibition". Still, he's pleased with the positive reaction shown by people to puppets from his own cabaret show, "BALLS".

The other big plus for the exhibition in my opinion is having a TV monitor playing Michael Creighton's "A Puppet Pudding" continuously. The film gives good contextual information, as well as atmospheric soundtrack and entertainment value.

..... SUE WINTER

In America, the MacNider Museum in Mason City, Iowa, has opened a BIL BAIRD wing, to house a permanent exhibition of this veteran puppeteer's work, spanning fifty years. "I've been digging out old puppets," says Bil in the Puppetry Journal, "and weeding out the bad stuff. A lot of stuff I look at and say 'For God's sake, did I do that?' And then I take it out and smash it." Onya Bil - death to mediocrity!

The VIC. GUILD is seeking material for an exhibition of the work of Melbourne puppeteer and teacher, BILL NICHOL, for display at the 1983 Puppet Festival.

Written material, films and photographs required as well as puppets and sets.

Anyone with access to these, please contact the secretary, Marie Donald, 50 Albert St. Mt. Waverley 3149.

# Working the Adelaide Festival

Maeve: This was your first experience of performing at the Adelaide Festival - what was it like?

Peter: We had a terrific time. We took "JANDY MALONE & THE 9 O'CLOCK TIGER" to the AMP Theatre in the city, and did nine performances to about 85% capacity houses.

M: What was the capacity?

P: 100%

M: Cagey, aren't you?

P: 230. 85% of that means .. 195. We played to over 1500 people all told. That was for the Fringe Program. We also did "THE BUNYIP OF BERKELEY'S CREEK" in schools as part of the Education Program - thirteen performances, and two more in Elder Park for the official Festival program.

M: So there were three layers to the Festival - Festival proper, Fringe, and Education program?

P: Yes, that's correct.

M: How did you feel about the Festival administration? Did it keep things running smoothly for you?

P: Yes, it was a very straightforward operation. There was a central booking office for the Fringe and the Education Programs. We could just contact them to see how bookings were going. I got a bit confused collecting the money, though. It was coming in from left, right and centre and I had to do a lot of running backwards and forwards. I had to collect from the Festival's Bass booking office, the Fringe's Bass booking office, the Fringe office itself, plus there were cheques given to me on the spot at the AMP and the schools (and some of those were made out to the Fringe instead of to Handspan) - I was a little confused with all that happening. But otherwise it was a well-administered event. The only thing that annoyed me a little was that it was laid on us at the opening night of the Fringe that each company was asked to give 5% of its takings to help cover an impending deficit in the Fringe's budget.

M: How much did that amount to for you?

P: For us it was approximately \$100 - which could have been our whole profit margin had we had a less successful season. Fortunately we did extremely well.

M: Who were your audiences for "Jandy Malone" - general public or schools groups?

P: They were about 80% school bookings. One particular group was 110 high-school kids from Melbourne. Their teachers were friends of Ian and Steve in the cast, so we were able to find out their responses after the show. A lot of them had seen it in Melbourne, and they said it was much clearer this time - they understood it better.

M: Is this because they were familiar with it, or because you'd made changes?

P: Well, we've changed the order of two or three of the five sections of "Jandy" in order to make it clearer. For example, one segment at the end, where Jandy climbs out of bed and goes down the hallway - she now delivers a section of dialogue there which she used to say in the opening scene. It works much better, it builds on the tension that was mounting prior to the passageway opening and her heading down it.

M: When you first put the show together, events followed the same sequence as in Barbara Bolton's book?

P: Yes. Now it bears no resemblance to the book! Well no, it does, but it has changed considerably since the opening. We never should have opened then, I suppose. We should've ... but that's the problem -

M: When DO you open? When you have to.

P: Anyway, the show was working well in Adelaide.

M: How was it received by other theatre people? Did many come to see it?

P: Yes, quite a lot did, and most said they were pleased - largely because of all the different elements in the show. Michael Fitzgerald from the Australia Council came backstage - he was quite prepared to say what he thought needed improving, and his criticism was very constructive. Peter Charlton from Arena Theatre in Melbourne saw it and liked it a lot. We had invited him so he could tell us, as a director, what he thought needed fixing, but he felt there wasn't a great deal needed it.

M: How did you like the AMP Theatre as a venue?

P: The difficulty was that there were three other companies working there, so we all had to make compromises on lights and space. We had to share up the lighting channels and we lost a couple of specials that lessened the show's impact somewhat. But that's just one of the things you have to accept, working on the Fringe means sharing venues. The AMP's not particularly wonderful to work in: It's long and narrow like a picture theatre. There are no wings - well, there was one, that every company was using, and it was difficult getting things in and out. The other wing didn't exist. The lighting was minimal, but adequate. We were pleased with the sound.

M: And the "Bunyip" performances?

P: Well, I've been doing that show for over 2 years, and I do get tired of it, but I enjoyed this season, because it was a four-man show instead of the usual two. We had two guitars working instead of just one - and so the show was fuller and had much more guts.

M: I've always felt it was too sparse.

P: Yeah, the music gave it the solidity it needed.

M: And what did you see at the Festival?

P: The thing that impressed me most was the Pina Bausch company. There was such conviction from the performers. And things that happened onstage, emotional things, made you go "Oh - oh yes, that sort of trip happens with me!"

M: What did you see of puppetry?

P: Nothing. I was quite disappointed. I thought there would be lots of local and interstate companies. The only interstate ones were from Melbourne - Jika Jika, B'Spell and ourselves. And the only local show was Little Patch's - which was on after the Festival, not during. In view of the fact that nine months hence we have the International Puppet Festival in Adelaide, it would have been a good opportunity for companies to become known in Adelaide so that when they returned in '83 they would have some following among the people here.

M: You saw no theatre companies using elements of puppetry?

P: Yes, I did. Circus Oz. Their puppetry things were great. There was one image - an army. A group of eight life-size soldiers, with one guy operating the whole lot. He stood in the middle. He had a brace that went across his shoulders and down his back, and attachments to his arms and legs, so that each time he walked, three characters in front of him, three behind and one each side, would all walk too! Everything he did, they did - lift an arm, and all these guys lifted theirs. Lovely image!

... a conversation with Peter (James) Wilson of Handspan - The ...



# What's ON

## AUSTRALIA

"MR. SQUIGGLE AND FRIENDS"  
is now back on television,  
Monday afternoons, 4.30 pm,  
repeated Sundays, 10.00 am.  
ABC TV

## SYDNEY

### "THE STRUGGLE OF THE NAGA TRIBE"

A satire on bureaucratic corruption by Indonesian playwright, Rendra, adapting traditional Javanese shadow play for actors.  
Wed. 19 May — Sun. 27 May,  
NIMROD UPSTAIRS  
Bookings: 699 5003, 699 6031.

### "BUY BUY BABY"

Musical comedy about influence of TV commercials on children, by Dennis Murphy.  
Saturdays, 2.00pm, May 8 - 22nd,  
OUTLANDYSHE Puppet Theatre,  
Wayside Chapel, 29 Hughes St.,  
Kings Cross. Phone 358 6148

DOUBLE BILL ..... MTA presents  
RICHARD BRADSHAW'S SHADOW PUPPETS  
and  
"GENERAL MACARTHUR IN AUSTRALIA"  
8.00pm, May 11 - 22 (no Sundays)  
SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE.  
Bookings: 20588

### "SMILES AWAY"

.. an outback fairytale, and  
the MTA's first collectively-  
written show since HANDS.  
11. am and 2 pm MAY 10 - 22  
SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE  
Bookings: Opera House, 20588

### "CIRCUS PUNCH"

Norman Hetherington Puppets,  
MYER SYDNEY, City Store,  
11.30 am, 12.30 pm, 1.30 pm,  
May 10 - 14  
Enquiries: 969 5361

## ADELAIDE

### "COME FLY WITH ME"

A caterpillar's urge to fly,  
done with black theatre and  
actors in LITTLE PATCH'S new  
puppet production.  
May 17 - 28,  
10am, 11.30am and 1.30pm  
LITTLE PATCH THEATRE,  
20 Tarlton St., Somerton Park  
Enquiries: 294 3287

## MELBOURNE (and environs)

### "BOMBORA"

.. the secrets of the sea, and  
a combined Handspan / Mushroom  
production.  
May 10 - 22, two perfs. daily,  
BLAKISTON THEATRE, Geelong  
Performing arts Centre.  
Bookings: Mushroom, 376 7364

### "FLOTSAM AND JETSAM"

B'SPELL'S variety cabaret with mime,  
masks, puppetry and all that. "Puts  
the 'GO' back in 'DRONGO'"  
May 7 -8, 14 - 15, and 21, at 8pm  
VICTORIA THEATRE, Sovereign Hill,  
Ballarat. (Dinner and show)  
Bookings: Pearl May, Sovereign Hill,  
(053) 31 1944

### "YASSASSIN" (Working title)

Nigel Triffitt's new production with  
Handspan Theatre.  
PREVIEW performances in early June,  
dates to be announced, at Handspan's  
studio, Gertrude Street, Fitzroy.  
Enquiries: 41 5978

### "THE DREAM GOBBLER"

Jika Jika's gentle spook  
tale for small kids.  
May 10th, 3 pm, Rosanna Library.  
Enquiries: 489 0088

### "FOUR CHINESE BROTHERS"

A search for the Bush-fire Dragon  
and a very participatory show for  
kids from JIKA JIKA.  
Doncaster, Atheneum Hall, 10th May, 11am  
Melton Library, 11th May, 2pm  
Meadow Fair Shopping Centre,  
12th - 14th May, 11am and 2pm  
Carringbush Library, 17th May, 2pm  
St. Albans Library, 18th - 20th May, 10pm  
Footscray Library, 20th May, 2pm  
Sunshine Library, 21st May, 1pm  
Highpoint West Library, 21st May, 2.30pm  
Enquiries: 489 0088

*Exhibition* "PUPPET STARS"  
Exhibition Hall, Sydney Opera  
House, till the end of May.



"A WEEK OF DREAMS" - Black Theatre of  
Prague. Toured Australia in February.



Kids paraded their puppets to celebrate the Sydney Harbour  
Bridge's 50th birthday in March - this Seagull headed the procession.



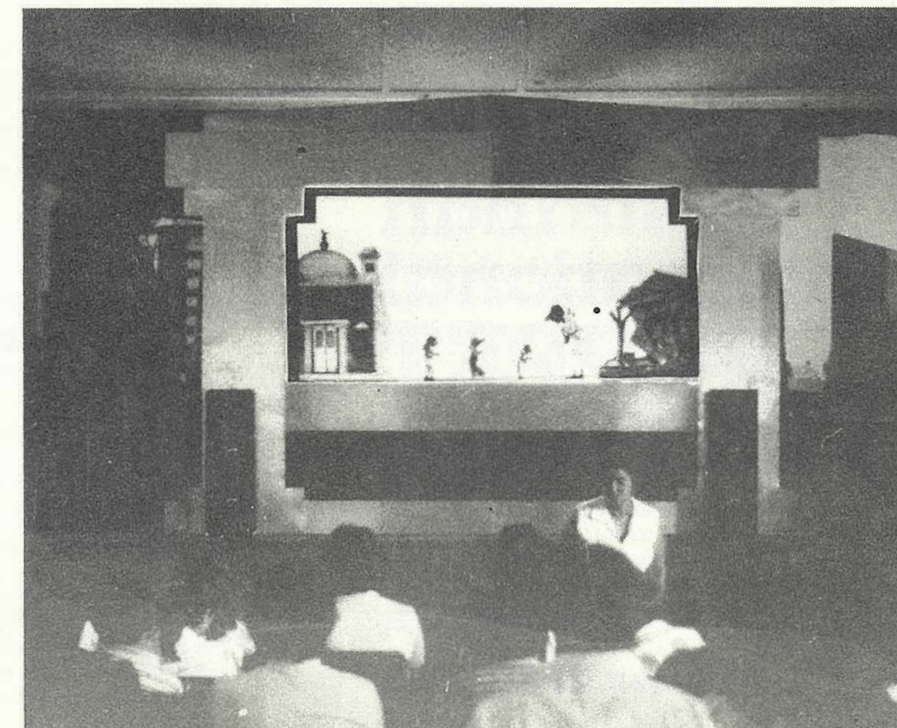
Mending the Swimmer  
after "THE ANGLER  
FISH BALET" at the  
Outlandyshe Puppet  
Theatre in March.



"Who wants to help work  
the Dragon?" - "THE  
DREAM GOBBLER", Jika Jika  
Puppet Company at the  
Drama Resource Centre in  
April.

WHAT'S  
been ON

Kostas Zouganelis'  
KARAGOZ, Greek trad-  
itional shadow play  
at Marrickville  
Uniting Church Hall  
in March.







# Australian International PUPPET FESTIVAL

**Adelaide, South Australia,  
January 21-30, 1983**

In a festival of opera, it would probably be acceptable to produce a number of lavish works which would show the art-form at its peak - with good singing, good design, all the stage-craft skills brought together in a finely-coordinated example of a well-established tradition.

A festival of puppetry in Australia cannot indulge in a self-congratulating celebration, however. In spite of puppetry's ancient roots in both the East and West, the art form in Australia is still only beginning to develop. We are only beginning to see the extraordinary potential of this medium, and it will be some time before this potential is realised. That is why the 1983 Australian International Puppet Festival has as its over-riding aim the development of puppetry in Australia.

What counts in this festival is that puppeteers all over the country gain some measure of inspiration, information or whatever they each need to stretch their work a little further, polish it up, or send it on entirely new directions altogether. New developments in Australian puppetry are influencing each other, and companies are trying new ideas and developing ideas from elsewhere. Theatre of any kind cannot develop in isolation, so the Puppet Festival will have a modicum of international content to bring to Australia some of the skills and ideas which may contribute to the growth of puppetry here.

The festival's budget is quite small, so only one or two major international companies can be brought to Australia, unless other countries contribute by paying for a company to come here. It is most likely we will have one or two companies and individuals from Europe, and one or two from Asia. Obviously, Australia's roots are in Europe more than in Asia, but the different attitudes and skills of our near neighbours could and probably should have an influence on our future.

The overseas companies coming to the festival will be presented in public seasons to the people of Adelaide, and we also intend to present seasons by several Australian companies, hopefully for both adults and children. These companies will be chosen for the standard of their work and their ability to present a show which is viable at the box-office. It may be that one venue is taken over by a changing program of different shows by different companies, offering the general public a variety of performances over the week of the festival. The festival is not only for the general public, however, but is also a learning conference for puppeteers, and so there will also be opportunities for companies to present performances for other puppeteers in more private showings. In an effort to assist Australian puppeteers to get to the festival, it is hoped to encourage shopping centres and local councils to employ visiting companies in their own programs before, during or after the festival.

Besides Puppets in Theatres, two other areas will be tackled by the festival - Puppets Out-of-Doors and Puppets-in-the-Media. Outdoor performances will be presented and encouraged in Elder Park (between the Adelaide Festival Centre and the River Torrens) and at the beach, where the crowds will be. Seminars and workshops will be held relating to the use of puppets on television and film, and there will be showings of several films about puppetry and films using puppets. The possibilities are endless, constrained only by the limitations of imagination and budget. In May/June this year, invitations will be sent to as many puppeteers and companies as we can find, asking for proposals and submissions to participate in the festival. It will not be possible to pay companies to come to Adelaide unless they are coming for a full-scale professional season, but small payments will be made for professional work undertaken as part of the public festival program. I am hoping to visit most states of Australia over the next few months, so please contact me at Carclew if you would like to discuss any ideas.

As usual, there will be a fee for participation in the festival, which will guarantee entrance to some performances and to any workshop or seminar. A range of accommodation will be offered, but it is expected that most people will take advantage of a deal being set up with the University residential colleges which are near Carclew and the City centre, offering private room and shared facilities plus breakfast for about \$15 a night. More details of those arrangements when the festival program is announced in September/October.

Other ideas in the melting-pot include a street parade of processional puppets, a regular evening meal for festival participants, the production of an Australian calendar, a puppet cabaret club and the launching of a new book on puppetry in Australia which is currently in preparation.

Further details of costs and programs will not be available until later in the year, and many of these will depend on our ability to raise money for the festival. Although Carclew Youth Performing Arts Centre at North Adelaide is hosting the event, all the costs of the festival including administration salaries, venues, publicity and travel must be raised from various sources. The South Australian Government will be the major contributor, closely followed by the Theatre Board of the Australia Council. The Department of Foreign Affairs is also involved, and I hope that by the time you read this, we will have found a major commercial sponsor.

In spite of all these plans, however, a festival can only be as good as the groundswell of activity and enthusiasm in the art-form itself. Without puppeteers and puppet shows, there is no festival. We hope the festival will provide inspiration and stimulation to allow puppetry in Australia to develop rapidly in 1983 and beyond, but the festival itself needs a surge of new ideas and directions, energy and commitment to achieve those aims. Start thinking now about what you may be able to contribute, and chances are that January 21 - 30 1983 could be a powerful week for this most exciting of theatre arts.

ANDREW BLEBY  
Artistic co-ordinator

CARCLEW : 11 Jeffcott St. North Adelaide SA 5006  
Phone (08) 267 5111

# Thoughts on the **FESTIVAL**

By an ex-Adelaidian.

Firstly, groups I would recommend, based on travels in Europe: DRAK (Czechoslovakia) - of course ! TRIANGEL (Holland) - like watching a puppet version of a Dali painting ; YVES JOLY (France) - a very naked sort of puppet theatre, exquisite hand choreography, a paper puppet that sets fire to itself ; and, if the Goethe Institute wants to bring out someone from Germany, OPTICAL FIGURENBÜHNE (Stuttgart) - a black light show using very abstract figures, a theatre of images.

(OPTICAL, a two-person group, has been requested before, but the Goethe Institute brought the FRANKFURT PUPPENZENTRUM instead. When liaising with the Goethe Institute it may be helpful to contact Vera Tryst, of the Adelaide University Craft Studio, who helped organize the Puppenzentrum tour - she is also an admirer of the OPTICALS and wanted them, but got the others instead.)

I have personal motives for recommending the above companies, because I want to see them again, but I do feel that each of them is approaching puppetry in a way that demands attention.

Even though Andrew Bleby is not a puppeteer, I feel he will do an excellent job of organizing the festival, provided we let him know what we want, as puppeteers, and help him as much as possible. I was not in Australia for the festival in 1979, but I heard about it from John Blundall at the London festival a couple of months later. I was excited when I heard of the plans for a festival in Adelaide, and looked forward to being actively involved in the organization ; unfortunately, since then I have become an ex-patriot of my home town.

Puppetry looks like it's finding its ground again in Adelaide after a bit of a lapse - perhaps the festival will explode interest. In 1976 - 78 there was a growth of interest - morna Jones' LITTLE PATCH THEATRE was presenting predominantly puppet plays, Karel and Eva Rehorek were performing their unique PAPERBAG THEATRE, Greg Temple and myself (as POCKET PEOPLE PUPPET THEATRE) were doing Punch and Judy extravaganzas, POCKET PEOPLE did several shows with puppets and actors, John and Heather Grant were doing bits and pieces with their puppets, and the Colleges of Advanced Education were exploring puppetry under the expert guidance of Chris Burfield and Rosemary Nurse-Bray.

Then Greg and I deserted Adelaide, Little Patch began to favour live actors, and the group of people who gathered to form a S.A. branch of the Puppetry Guild disintegrated. Paperbag Theatre pressed on as the only professional puppet theatre in Adelaide, and acquired the cottage they have set up as the Puppet Centre. John and Heather Grant put their energies into building a puppet (marionette) film studio in their backyard. Rosemary and Chris carried on as before in the C.A.E.'s.

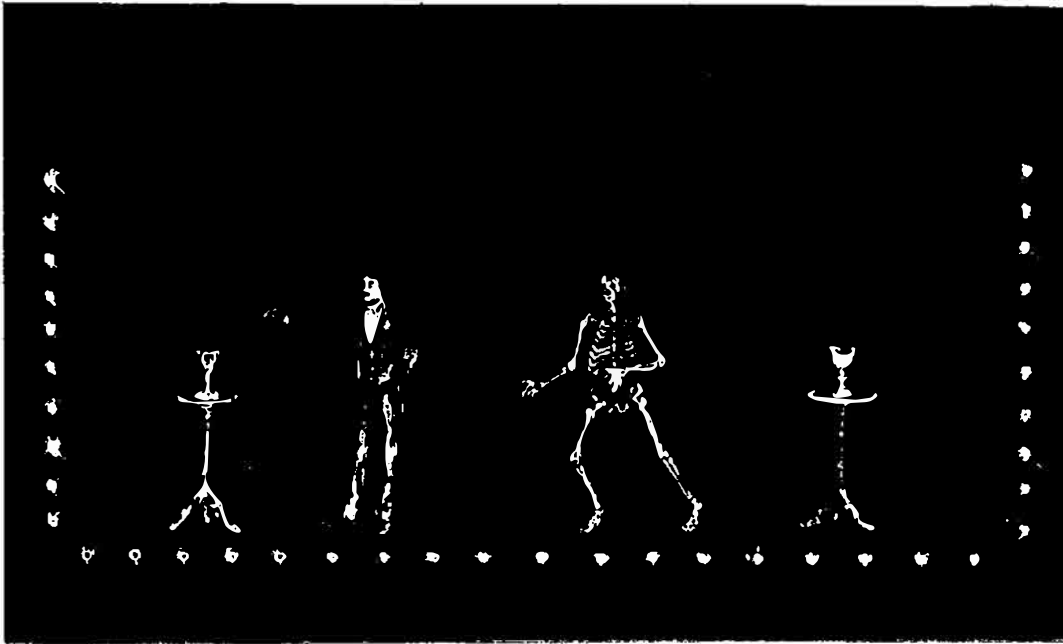
However, since my return from overseas, Karel and Eva and I put a lot of effort into gathering a group of "Friends of Puppetry" together again, through film evenings, etc. HANS KREINER, a former student of Chris Burfield's, has emerged with his beautiful shadow puppets. The interest seems to be kindling again - I hear from Karel and Eva that their puppet exhibition and fair in November attracted many people, some with puppets to sell and some with performances. And now PUNCHTUCKER, Joseph Newey's (ex-M.T.A. and living in Adelaide for some time) newly-formed group is working on its first show. Meanwhile, Lloyd Noble and Jenny Wydale, alias PUPPETFOLK, formerly of W.A., have now moved to Adelaide, and have been working there professionally for some months, in between tours of Queensland and the Melbourne Moomba festival.

Bravo Adelaide, I haven't deserted you - see you in '83.

P.S. I have some books and posters and postcards collected on my travels - they are available if there is going to be some sort of exhibition during the festival, but they are precious, so would need some sort of security.

ANNIE HEITMAN  
ANIMATE OBJECTS THEATRE  
Coffs Harbour NSW





Who invented Black Theatre ? It seems the idea has been around longer than a lot of us think. PUNCHTUCKER has unearthed this extract from an old magician's manual, "Magic: Stage Illusions and Scientific Diversions" that indicates black theatre was wowing 'em back in the Gaslight Era, and hints at an even more romantic past for what it calls:

# BLACK ART

PP To the Yogi and Mahatmas of India, the magicians and illusionists of Europe and America are indebted for the ideas of many of their best tricks and illusions. While the published reports of many of the alleged marvellous effects produced by the "wonder workers" of India must be taken with a very large amount of salt, yet we must give these people due credit for being the originators of many tricks from which the modern magician has taken principles on which he has founded and created several of the grandest and most successful illusions of modern times.

Take, for instance, the illusion known as "Black Art", or the "Midnight Mysteries of the Yogi", made famous by those master minds of magic, Harry Kellar and the late Alexander Hermann. The weird illusion is founded on an idea advanced by the Yogi of India.

In this illusion the entire stage from the first groove to the rear is hung with black velvet, the floor covered with black felt, and the top is covered with black velvet, thus forming a large room entirely lined in black. The regular footlights are turned out, and a special set are used, that consist of a row of open gas jets placed on a line with the boxes, and carried up the sides of the large room. The lights throughout the entire house are either turned very low or put out, with the exception of the special lights.

The curtain rises, disclosing the black chamber. In a moment the magician appears, dressed in a white suit; a wave of his hand, and a white wand appears floating in the air, which the magician secures. A wave of the wand, and a table appears on the right, then a second table appears on the left. A large vase appears on one of the tables, and a second vase appears on the magician's outstretched hand. Both of the vases are shown and proven empty, and in one is placed a few orange seeds, and the wand is passed over the vase, which instantly becomes filled with oranges. The oranges are poured into the second, then returned to the first vase, when they disappear as quickly and as mysteriously as they appeared, and the vases are again shown empty, and placed on the tables.

A life-size skeleton now appears and dances around the stage, becomes dismembered, the separated parts

floating about, but they finally rearticulate themselves, and the skeleton vanishes.

The number and style of tricks performed in the mysterious black chamber are almost unlimited, but an explanation of the ones mentioned above will suffice to show how "Black Art" is performed.

While the stage is draped in black, everything that appears is painted white, and the magician is dressed in white. There is an assistant on the stage all through the act, but as he is dressed in black, with gloves on his hands and a hood over his head, made of black velvet, he is not seen by the spectators, whose sight is somewhat dazzled by the open gas jets. The tables are on the stage, but covered with pieces of black velvet, rendering them invisible. The assistant removes the piece of velvet and causes a table to appear at the magician's command.

The vases are also sitting on the stage, but covered with black velvet. By picking up the covered vases the assistant can cause them to appear, by removing the velvet, one on the table and the other on the performer's hand. The oranges are in a black velvet bag, from which the assistant pours them into the vase. To cause the oranges to vanish, the magician, instead of pouring them into the vase, pours them into the open mouth of a large black bag held by the assistant just over the lower vase. The inside of the vases is painted black, to prevent the hand of the assistant being seen when he places it inside the vase.

The skeleton is made of paper mache, painted white, and fastened onto a thin board that is sawed to shape and covered with black velvet. One arm and one leg are jointed so as to be readily removed and replaced by the assistant.

The manipulation of rabbits is equally easy. In vanishing rabbits the performer merely tosses them up into a large open-mouthed black bag held by the assistant.

This is one of the most expensive of stage illusions, costing several hundreds of dollars to properly stage it with the best drapery and accessories, and unless such are used the proper illusory effect is lost. ”

# NEW BOOKS

**PUPPETRY FOR MENTALLY HANDICAPPED PEOPLE**  
by Caroline Astell-Burt  
Human Horizons Series: Souvenir Press  
£6.95 hardback, £4.94 softback, + postage.

"For teachers, parents, therapists and care staff, to help them use puppetry in their work.... illustrates the making of suitable puppets, aims and goals, and the development of appropriate material for particular client groups. It would be unfair, though, to see this book as merely a practical handbook. The author is to be congratulated on her discussion of the PROCESS involved in puppetry - both creative and therapeutic. I liked her realistic approach to puppetry. Her section 'The puppet is just a puppet' talks about de-mystifying so that the children themselves have control of the situation."

(From a review by Sue Jennings in ANIMATIONS, Feb/March '82)

Available from the Puppet Centre Trust,  
Battersea Arts Centre, Lavender Hill,  
London SW11 5TJ, UNITED KINGDOM

**GUSTAF UND SEIN ENSEMBLE**  
by Albrecht Roser

Though the text, the story of Roser and his creations, is in German, the book is liberally illustrated with photographs to give a good visual record of this outstanding puppeteer's work.

Price: 27 Deutschmark + postage  
Available from PUPPEN & MASKEN,  
Eppsteinerstrasse 22,  
D 6000 Frankfurt/M, W.Germany.

CANADA's Ontario Puppetry Association Publishing Company announces three - all priced at US\$ 7.95 each + postage

**BREAKING THROUGH THE BARRIER : Puppet Play with the Profoundly Handicapped**  
by Kae Oatman

"Kae Oatman has documented her experiences as a professional puppeteer working with profoundly handicapped, mentally retarded children and adults in Hamilton, Ontario. Working in close co-operation with teachers and administrators, she has developed a successful program of play and sensory stimulation with puppets. She describes the construction of unique manipulative puppets, and explains the role of play therapy in the program. Several case studies and follow-up suggestions are provided."

**PUPPETRY AND TELEVISION**  
by Robert Tilroe

"Tilroe introduces beginners to the intricacies of television and its special techniques, and deals with both the technical orientation and the philosophical base for present utilization and for future possible directions. Suggestions are given for various ways in which screen or stage performers might develop their art before the camera. A glossary and bibliography are included."

**THE ONE-PERSON PUPPET SHOW**  
by Frog Print Theatre

"The staff of Toronto's Frog Print Theatre have collaborated on this guide to those beginning or upgrading their expertise in solo performance. The book covers scripting, light and sound techniques, staging (with suggestions for portable, wearable and wheelchair stages), puppet manipulation, planning and rehearsing the show, and the business aspects of 'running your own show'."

Available from Ontario Puppetry Assoc Publishing Company, 10 Skyview Crescent, Willowdale, Ontario, CANADA M2J 1B8

## Classifieds

### SITUATIONS VACANT

JIKA JIKA PUPPET COMPANY is looking for a puppeteer - Phone (03) 489 0088 or Write to 75 Delbridge St. North Fitzroy 3068

ANIMATE OBJECTS THEATRE has moved from Adelaide to:

R.M.B. Glen's Creek Road, Nymboida NSW 2460 (near Coffs Harbour)  
Anyone interested in spending some time in the country working on a show to tour, please contact Annie Heitman at the address above, or phone (066) 494 129.  
Warning - no initial financial reward, but food and shelter provided.

(Annie would also like to meet anyone living in the vicinity who is interested in puppetry, mime, music, performance, etc.)

### SITUATIONS WANTED

John Shiells, experienced puppeteer, ex Polyglot, MTA. P.O. Box 335, Orbest VIC 3888.

### HAREBRAINED SCHEMES

B'SPELL is compiling a book of anecdotes & pics on clowning, tentatively titled "Diary of Harlequin" - send contributions to P.O. Box 155, Fitzroy VIC 3065.

### BECOME FAMOUS!

Stunning photos sought for book on Australian puppetry - send to:

28 Macarthur Pl. Carlton VIC 3053

### COLLECTORS

Dutch artist, Yack Sanders, would like to receive and exchange puppetry posters with Australian puppeteers.  
c/- Paraplu Poppentheater  
Cortingpoort 8  
9716 GX Groningen  
The Netherlands.



## Maxbond from the Workshop....

On the subject of glues .....

We have found that LIQUID NAILS didn't do what it said it did on the packet, and also, when we complained to Selley's they were very rude.

HOWEVER, "Maxbond" is fabulous.

It's available from Provan's Timber in Queens Parade, Clifton Hill, Melbourne.

It comes in a cartridge, so you have to buy a gun (costs around \$3) and it sticks to anything. Works very well on polystyrene, wood, foam and other plastics. It doesn't smell awful and it's reasonably un-toxic. Can be used as a contact cement or a straight glue. The best thing about it is it's clean and efficient to use. It washes off with Ajax and water. (One thing: DON'T GET IT ON YOUR BEST CLOTHES - it won't come out.) Flexible when dry, drying time around 20 mins. Sands easily.

DON ASHBY  
B'Spell Performance Troupe



STUDENTS FROM MELBOURNE STATE COLLEGE'S PUPPETRY COURSE AT LAST YEAR'S LYGON STREET FESTA, CARLTON