

manipulation

DOUBLE ISSUE



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in Box Hill p.6**



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Johns Anonymous?»
p.5**

a magazine for puppeteers

november '82

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LETTERS

In the Australian UNIMA newsletter for August I was interested to read that the Japanese puppeteer, Ms Noriko Nishimoto, had been brought here on a grant from the Australia-Japan foundation to work with Spare Parts in Perth, and that she gave a workshop in Sydney.

In a country like Australia which has no foundation in puppetry, the visit of a puppeteer from a country with a great tradition in puppetry should have been circulated among the puppet guilds so that arrangements could have been made for workshops in other places, beside faraway Perth and Sydney where puppeteers in the inner circle, or "in the know" could arrange a workshop.

This is a typical example of the non-cooperation of puppeteers in Australia, which does not help to further the art of puppetry in this country.

At least when the Victorian Puppet Guild

At least the Victorian Puppet Guild lets other puppet groups know when it receives something of interest, such as the video tape, "Here Come the Puppets!", and is willing to share.

AXEL AXEIRAD

May I say what a great ego booster being a victim of media overkill can be. I must say that seeing the news in the August Manipulation that the Edith Murray film was already in the National Archive made me feel a little less daunted by the amount of work left on the project. Sad to say we are not quite up to these heady heights of completion, but rest assured the film will be screened at the Puppet Festival or I'll publicly eat my Punch and Judy set!

Thanks again Manipulation for cheering up yet another puppeteer. May you continue in your own sensational way to influence whoever's out there.

Yours in most grateful outrage,

CHRISTINE WOODCOCK

WHAT'S ON

SYDNEY

MELBOURNE

SHOWS

FORBIDDEN FRUIT

Aurore Puppet Theatre

Recording Hall, Sydney Opera House. Nightly from Nov. 26th to Dec. 11th.

Performed with actors and puppets, this play compares the life of 19th century poet Christina Rossetti with events in her poem "Goblin Market". Sexual symbolism of the dark, Victorian kind and an examination of a woman's search for identity and the balance between freedom and security.

TRANSFIGURE 8

Thursday nights at The Venue, St. Kilda (next to San Moritz on the Upper Esplanade.) At around 11 (after reggae band Randy and the Roots).

Pattie d'Foie and Katy Bowman take their bag and hoop body... puppets-cum-costumes (someday someone will invent a word for the body puppet-cum-costume) through a dance and mime sequence of living sculptures. Exploratory, cross-disciplinary stuff; serene and beautiful. With didgeridoo, sax and percussion accompaniment. \$3 the night.

EXHIBITIONS

THE GREAT MUPPET EXHIBITION

Myers Sydney, 6th floor.

This is the one that has been touring the world recently. Richard Bradshaw reports that the dollar you'll pay to see it is good value because you are able to get a good close look at the textures and materials used. His only criticism is that the exhibition is somewhat guilty of overkill with Miss Piggy. (Remember when good ol' Kermit was the star? Life was simpler then.)

The figures are animated, as are more Muppets in the ground floor windows. (Melbourne Myers by the way, have managed to make their Christmas windows even more boring than last year, with their very twee and awfully stiff (for animated figures) display of scenes from Gilbert and Sullivan favourites (not G and S's fault). Ever gone to sleep standing up in Bourke Street Mall?

PENNY PLAIN, TUPPENCE COLOURED Toy Theatre 1800 - 1980

Along with a Nellie Melba display, the Performing Arts Museum in Melbourne have opened their new premises in the Arts Centre with an exhibition of Toy Theatres from England and Europe, entitled "PENNY PLAIN, TUPPENCE COLOURED".

Designed by Virginia Mort, it contains original 19th century examples and a modern version of "Dracula". There is also an old model of St. James Theatre in Sydney, in the absence of an indigenous tradition of Toy Theatre in Australia. Available free is an excellent history of toy theatre written by Myrna Deverall, No. 6 in the Museum's "Passing Show" series of information sheets.

AUSTRALIAN INTERNATIONAL

ADELAIDE

PUPPET FESTIVAL

PUBLIC PROGRAMME

21-30 January '83

SPACE THEATRE

	Fri 21	Sat 22	Sun 23	Mon 24	Tues 25	Wed 26	Thurs 27	Fri 28	Sat 29	Sun 30
Clowns		○		□	□	□				
Story of Storytelling							□	□	□	□
Secrets	■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■	▲

ROYALTY THEATRE

Sleeping Beauty	○	○		□	□	□	□	□	□	□
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SCOTT THEATRE

Magic Blue Flower						○			○	
Golden Scales					■	■	■	■	■	

ARTS THEATRE

Bottersnikes and Gumbles		○		□	□	□	□	□	□	▲
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TROUPE THEATRE

Autumn Portraits	■	■				■	■	■	■	
Studies in Fantasy	●	●			●	●	●	●	●	

UNION THEATRE

Forbidden Fruit							■	■	■	
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THEATRE 62

Grateful Dragon		○								
Tree That Wanted to See				□						
Dream Gobbler					□					
Gold or Gumnuts						□	□			
Il Mondo Marionetta							□	□		
Gingerbread Man								□	□	
Walking The Goldfish									○	
Angler Fish Ballet					■	■				

ELDER PARK STAGE

Yakshagana	■	○	■							
Punch and Judy				○	○	■				
Panut Darmoko						■	■	●	●	
Singers Company							■	■		
How Petruschka Got Married	○									
watch press for more details										

LITTLE PATCH THEATRE

Bowser Bill	□	○		□	□	□	□	□	□	○
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GLENELG FORESHORE

Puppets by the Pier										○
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□ Morning Perf. ○ Afternoon Perf. ■ Evening Perf. ● Late-night Perf.

This is just the public programme - in addition there will be performances (scheduled and impromptu) at the Stables Theatre at Carclew and in the Festival Club in the Adelaide Festival Centre, plus seminars and workshops; details yet to be announced. Full Festival Membership costs \$40, and entitles members to discounts on public performances and one free ticket to see Drak. Limited accommodation at a range of prices is available, but bookings must be made early.

Further information on the Australian International Puppet Festival is available from CARCLEW YOUTH PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE, 11 Jeffcott St. North Adelaide SA 5006. Phone (08)267 5111



FROM THE
EDITOR'S
HEART ...

Dear Readers -

This is a double issue of Manipulation. It's overdue and overweight, and I hope the latter compensates for the former.

I've been overseas for two months (a birthday present from my mother; for the record that was my 31st birthday) and so this issue is low on local content and high on foreign. I have lots more OS material which will appear in future issues.

Speaking of which, next year Manipulation will be published every four months. Subscription price will remain the same, to absorb rises in printing costs, but content will increase. Expect the next issue in mid-January, in time for the Puppet Festival.

Best wishes for Christmas, New Year and everything else

Maeve

manipulation

28 Macarthur Pl.
Carlton VIC 3053

PRODUCTION:
Maeve Vella
ODD ARTISTIC JOBS:
Jon Murray
OS TOUR MANAGER:
Thelma Vella

FoamFame

Our Sydney correspondent noted the following items in the Sydney Morning Herald some weeks ago and deduces from the clues that the foam snipper in question could only be Oliver Sublette, who has also snipped a lot of the stuff in Papua New Guinea and at the Creative Leisure Centre in Redfern.

JOB VACANT: Even in the recession, this one will demand the full skills and resources of the successful applicant. The Elizabethan Theatre Trust is looking for a specialist to assist the Aurore Puppet Theatre in its preparations for its coming Opera House production. Forbidden Fruit. They desperately need a foam fruit snipper, to fashion fruit from foam.

THE Aurore Puppet Theatre got more than two dozen calls yesterday from people who want to try their hand as a foam fruit snipper for the theatre's forthcoming production, Forbidden Fruit (Column 8, Saturday). One of the applicants, an American, has near-perfect qualifications: he fashioned foam hamburgers in California.

We would be interested to see Mr. Sublette pit his talents against Melbourne's Ms Michelle Spooner, known locally as the fastest foam flayer in the South. How about a play-off at the Puppet Festival with, say, a nice gleaming set of Sheffield steel shears as the stakes - or are electric knives more in favour these days?

NANCY JOHNSTON

Obituary

Puppeteer, UNIMA treasurer, established, with Bill Johnston, Perth's NUTHELL THEATRE.

Died in
September

melbourne fringe FESTIVAL

The newly-established FRINGE NETWORK is a support organization for non-mainstream artists of all kinds - especially the non-funded ones.

Organization is now underway for an Arts Festival, to be held in February '83 (just before Moomba)

If you'd like to be in the Festival, and if you'd like to receive the Network's fortnightly newsletter, contact:

FRINGE NETWORK
17 Grattan St.
Carlton 3053
Phone: 347 0465

Federal Funding November '82

ORGANIZATIONS

Marionette Theatre of Australia	\$124,000
Spare Parts	40,000
Terrapin	26,000

PROJECTS

Straight Left	8,000
Handspan	up to 21,000
Marionette Theatre of Australia	31,000
Joy Economical	3,900
Marionette Theatre of Australia	3,100
The Singers Company.	2,000
" " " "	2,610

Subscriptions
\$6 per year in Aust.
\$13 " " overseas

Assisted by the Theatre Board of the Australia Council, a statutory body of the Aust. Govt.

ISSN 0725 - 3532

patch funds axed

by Tony Strutton,
Education Officer of
Little Patch Theatre.

The Little Patch Theatre for children, a unique fully-professional resource for South Australian schools and community, may be forced to close its doors very early in 1983.

The company was founded by Morna Jones in 1972 at an old farmhouse in Brighton. Since that time, some 30,000 schoolchildren each year have enjoyed the magic of Little Patch performances. Since 1976 Little Patch has been a general grant company of the Australia Council, whose funding has enabled the company to function on a fully professional basis. In 1979 Little Patch found a new, larger home in the Brighton-Seaforth Community Centre.

The Australia Council has told the company that funding has been withdrawn completely for 1983, arguing that other companies have a greater claim on the limited funds available.

In the light of the Australia Council decision the Board of Little Patch is carefully considering Little Patch's ongoing programme and will resubmit an application for funding in 1983. The company is also seeking support from donors and private sponsors, although teachers will appreciate that many potential sponsors such as cigarette companies are unacceptable for a children's theatre.

In resubmitting an Australia Council application the Board of the Little Patch Theatre Company is also seeking written support from any individuals or groups who have experienced the quality of Little Patch's work. This may include letters of support from school principals, school councils, teachers, community groups or individuals. These letters can be addressed to either Little Patch or the Australia Council, and they will be forwarded together with a reapplication for funding to the Australia Council as soon as possible. Individuals and groups prepared to collect signatures to send to Parliament and the Australia Council can obtain petition forms from the Administrator at the Theatre.

If the company is to survive it is essential that community members indicate their support in writing for Little Patch's ongoing work.

Address Letters to:

The Administrator,
Little Patch Theatre,
20 Tarlton Road,
Somerton Park SA 5044.

DRC threatened

by Maeve Vella

Teachers and students in Victorian schools and the performers who play to them will suffer a serious loss if the Victorian Education Department is allowed to go ahead with its proposed massive staff cuts at the Drama Resource Centre in Melbourne.

The Department has informed the DRC that from the end of November its staff of 14 will be reduced to 3 and that its services will be limited to the production of curriculum development material.

The cutbacks will not only reduce services to drama teachers, but will totally eliminate much-needed support services to the other half of drama education - the performers who tour Victorian schools.

Without the annual WE'RE ON Children's Theatre Festival, without the preview seasons held each term at the DRC's theatre, and without publications like the "Theatre in Schools" directory, how are teachers going to be able to survey what the companies are offering and make informed judgements about what shows to book for their schools? How are performers going to be able to see each others' work and develop their own through comparison and discussion? And how effectively will they be able to publicize their work and generate work?

For eight years the DRC has been the single most effective stimulation to the growth of theatre in education in Victoria, and has provided a model for the establishment of similar centres in other states. It is a lifeline connecting performers to their audiences - one neither can do without.

Protest against the dismantling of the Drama Resource Centre - write expressing your dismay, alarm, annoyance or disgust to the following:-

Lenton Parr, chairman of the Interministerial Working Party on Arts and Education;

Hon. Race Mathews, MP, Minister for the Arts;

Dr. N. Curry, Director-General of Education;

- all at Treasury Place,
Melbourne 3000.

equity news

from "Equity" magazine, November

Co-ops

Performers thinking of setting up their own cooperatives can now find information about the legal responsibilities of such a venture in a booklet available from Equity offices in each state. It contains information on:

- public liability insurance
- workers compensation
- payroll tax
- pay-as-you-earn taxation
- the Business Names Act
- a standard contract for members of the co-op
- a standard contract for performers other than members employed by the co-op.

Reading this booklet may help solve some problems before they happen!

Overseas contracts

If you are accepting an engagement to perform overseas you would be well advised to use the Standard Contract for overseas engagements. It is the one that will afford you the best protection overseas, in that it makes the terms and conditions of the Australian Actors Theatrical Award applicable regardless of what country you perform in. Copies available from all state Equity offices.

TIE beware

Equity and the Educational Performing Arts Companies association in NSW have received reports that some schools in NSW are charging a 10% booking fee for performances in schools. The Director General of Education in NSW has stated that this is illegal. Contact Lyn Tuit of Toe Truck Theatre on (02) 692-0711 or Equity if this has happened to you.

ACTORS EQUITY OFFICES:

NSW: 32 Orwell St. Potts Point
Phone (02) 357 3022

VIC: 147 Wellington Parade,
Jolimont
Phone (03) 636 689
634 876

SA: 108 Drayton St, Bowden
(08) 468 024

QLD: Room 28, Trades Hall,
Edwards St. Brisbane
Phone (07) 221 3940

WA: 2nd Floor, London House,
214 George St., Perth
Phone (09) 322 4236

I was in London, on holiday, flipping through Time Out's theatre listings looking for a show with puppets in it. There were lots of kids' shows, but I wanted something adult, something sharp & cool & sophisticated, and preferably very funny. I found it in "A Prelude to Death in Venice", presented by a New York company called Mabou Mines.

The sole character was a medium cool, pushing-30 bohemian in a leather jacket, named John. He was operated in view of the audience by an actor, Bill Raymond. John was a film-maker (his occasional references to wanting to "shoot in Venice" were the link with the title) but that was incidental. What he was primarily was a phone freak. He spent the entire performance sandwiched between two phone boxes, dialling numbers and raving compulsively into the handsets (sometimes both at once) about himself, his aspirations, his preoccupations and his problems.

It was a talking show, with little action and no plot development, but it was good theatre. John's conversations with business associates, girlfriends, random callers and "Johns Anonymous" ran on in a torrent of loose, crazy New York slang. The text smacked of Allen Ginsberg and Lenny Bruce. It had the rhythms and wide sweep of a monumental beat poem, and the ironic, sharp-edged humour of a cabaret routine. But it wasn't poetry-reading, it wasn't stand-up comedy: being presented by a puppet turned it into theatre. Watching the puppet and watching how he was made to live by the actor gave the audience an extra visual kick. If it had been played by an actor alone, the production would have been intellectually interesting, but rather flat.

Bill Raymond's thoughtful manipulation made the use of the puppet more than mere gimmickry. Occasionally he played it for laughs, like having John hitch up his balls when preparing to talk to a girlfriend, or weight-lifting the phone handsets like dumb-bells. But what impressed me was that he endowed the puppet with a vocabulary of casual gestures that, repeated frequently, became mannerisms that rounded out the character. For instance, his finger stroked his upper lip as he talked, or he would lean forward and run his hand up and down the side of the phone booth. Creating a character with a puppet involves more than just giving it generally life-like movement; it must also have its own identifiable movements - then it really lives.

... Maeve Vella.

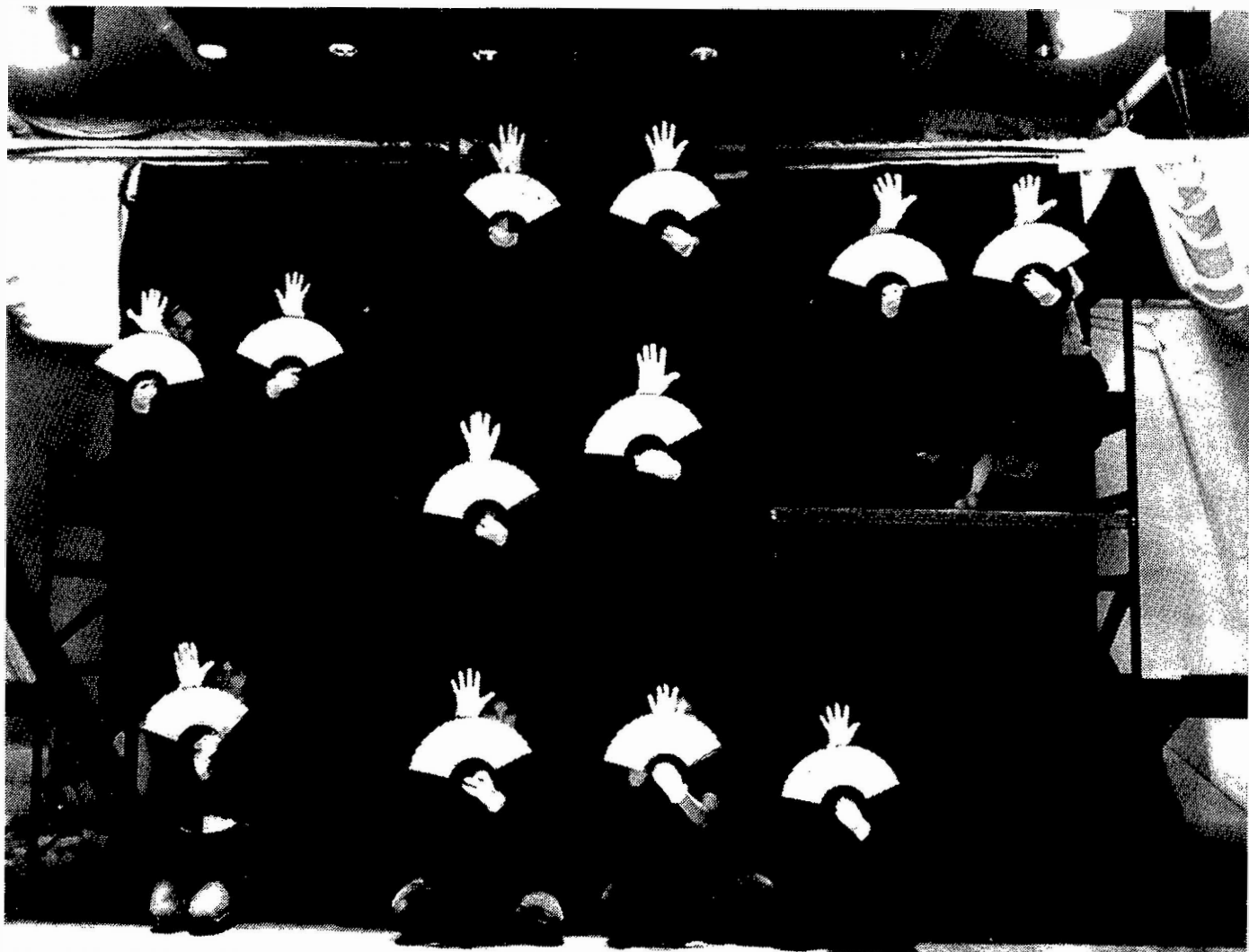
TALKIN' NEW YORK:

"A PRELUDE TO DEATH IN VENICE"

Mabou Mines company, N.Y.
written/directed by Lee Breuer

Riverside Studios, London, Sept. '82





A LEARNING EXPERIENCE

"BLACK THEATRE WONDERLAND"

Drama Students of Box Hill T.A.F.E. College

Phoenix Theatre, Melbourne, October '82

I've worked with several companies and in a lot of ways it's a very easy way to work, in that there is often no need to take responsibility unless you really want to.

That is it's possible to get away with doing what is immediately expected of you without pushing yourself beyond that.

Recently Pat Woollacott and myself became involved in a production at Box Hill TAFE which is a community oriented technical college.

"BLACK THEATRE WONDERLAND" was an exercise for everyone to use their initiative and take responsibility, and I've learnt a lot.

Pat and I got involved after being asked to give a talk about puppetry styles, manipulation and mechanisms.

It was obvious when we arrived that the project was huge and with three weeks to go before it opened, in need of much more than just an hour's talk on puppetry. So we became involved.

... by Katy Bowman
photos: Cathy Koning....

Izzy Gabriel, drama teacher at Box Hill TAFE had seen "MOMMA" and had been inspired to do a piece of visual theatre with her drama students, to give them experience in other styles of theatre.

An idea to use "ALICE IN WONDERLAND" had been decided upon and a rough outline of how it should work had been mapped out, but she'd come to a stand still when it came to the point of actually creating the images and animating them.

Izzy had tried to contact people with expertise in puppetry and

Organizing the soundtrack meant listening to lots of music, proposing my choices and then, due to lack of time, putting down virtually what I thought would be best. Inevitably the music I chose was based on the way I visualised a particular scene, but because I was not in control of the visuals that sometimes became frustrating for those who were.

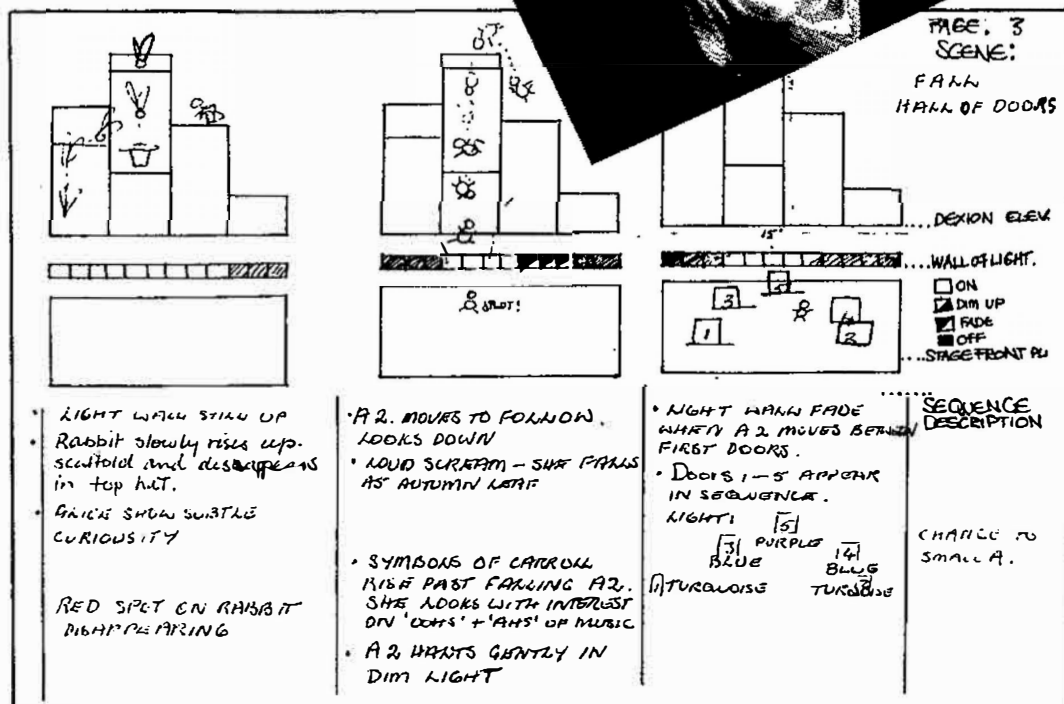
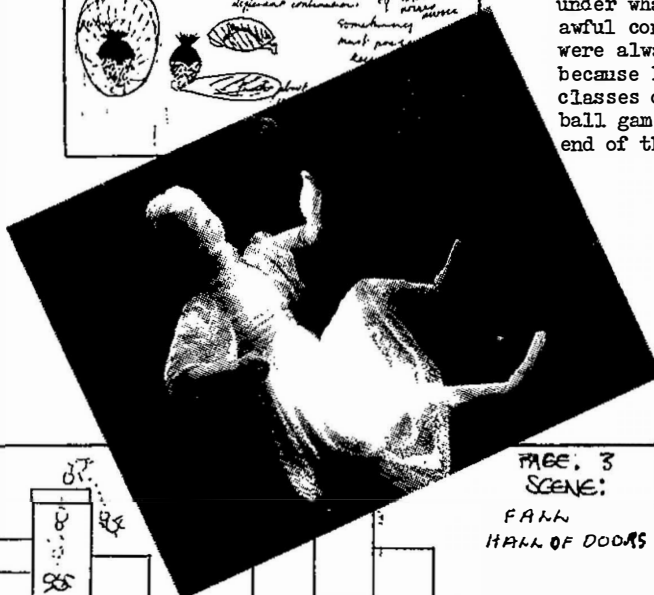


Working with a group of seventeen 16-year-olds was definitely interesting.

Initially they were rather bored and confused. They had been used to performing in musicals and traditional drama, and found it difficult to adjust to a situation where they had to co-ordinate objects to create an overall picture. It was hard for them to visualise the total effect their combined actions would create on stage.



But they worked hard and long under what were often pretty awful conditions. Rehearsals were always disrupted, either because kids had to go off to classes or there was a volleyball game going on at the other end of the hall.

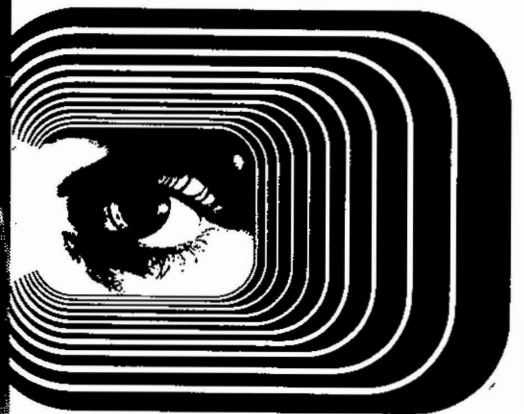


PAT & KATY provided source material (TOP) idea sketches (middle) and showed the group how to create a Story Board (BOTTOM).
PHOTO: Alice on the way down.

PHOTO TOP RIGHT:
Alice grows.



I can't praise them enough - and the staff - for their openness to accept our ideas and judgement. It was a bit daunting at times to be constantly introduced as experts and professionals. We were in the midst of sorting out our own ideas and didn't feel we knew all that much more than them. All in all it was a successful project. Everyone was pushed to their limit and everyone learnt something. Personally, the experience has given me more confidence in my ideas and my ability to work them through - which, although at times a bit frightening, I have committed myself to do.



Black Theatre Wonderland

PROGRAMME NOTES

In Grandma's day, the bulk of knowledge was encapsulated within the school (private houses had no libraries and teachers were the custodians of knowledge). Technology has changed all that. All knowledge is outside the schools and teachers should be catalysts for directing students to resources and industries. Exposing yourselves to industrial expertise takes courage. You can't afford to feel threatened, but rather, opening your mind and becoming a student with your students, then co-ordinating and facilitating means great things can happen. They did for us!

.... Issy Gabriel

Where there is a social pressure to conform, there is a psychological necessity to escape. We did!.....into the fascinating world of Alice's dream with its bizarre trappings and suggestive, often frightening images of weird environments and picturesque cruelty.

Our performance is an illumination of the seduction of Alice and visual images throw some light on the extension of Lewis Carroll's weird preoccupations and obsessions through his animistic characters.

His own identity infiltrates the white rabbit who bustles ineffectively and is obsessed, like Carroll, with white gloves. He is beleaguered with the constraints of real time which is murdered by the mad hatter in favour of ghost time.

The dormouse, poor thing, is constantly persecuted for his physical inadequacies.

And what of Alice? - the prim Victorian child conditioned to moral discourse and rationality?

Her constant presence in Carroll's fantasy is vital as was the presence of little Alice Liddell, the Dean's daughter during a part of Carroll's life where he was pre-occupied with pre-adolescent girls.

Alice became the foundation of his fantasy, the innocent subject of his questionable photography and the focus of his own identity in the dream or was it a nightmare?

* * * *

LE PLUS GRAND FESTIVAL 1982

Festival
Mondial
des
Théâtres
de Marionnettes



6th



CHARLEVILLE -
MEZIERES
FRANCE



Anita Sinclair

Thelma Vella

Every three years during the last week of summer the city of Charleville-Mezieres in the Ardennes region of northern France is host to the Festival Mondial des Theatres de Marionnettes, an international festival of puppet theatre which has grown over twenty-one years into the largest regular puppet festival in the world.

This year the official programme featured 95 companies and the fringe programme, 48 companies. Roughly half of these were French, the rest came from all parts of the world - including Australia (Neville Tranter's STUFFED PUPPET THEATRE).

An estimated 2,000 visitors attended, among them several more Australians: Lorrie and Harry Gardner, Helen Rickards, Peter James Wilson, Andrew Bleby, Sue Wallace, my mother Thelma Vella, and myself, plus Anita Sinclair, who was invited by UNIMA as a member of the UNIMA Statutes committee.

As well as hundreds of performances, the programme included symposiums on Shadow Theatre, Puppetry and Therapy and Puppetry and Children; a general meeting of French puppeteers and a brief UNIMA delegates meeting; three different community productions created in the weeks preceding the Festival; and 10 different exhibitions of puppets, posters, theatre architecture, stamps and cartoons.

There were performances in community centres, youth clubs and halls as well as theatres, and in the streets. Many shows were also programmed in the outlying suburbs and other towns of the region, to decentralise the festival and make it accessible to the regional communities.

Financial assistance and general support is provided mainly by the town council, the Chamber of Commerce and the regional and state cultural authorities. The budget for this year's Festival was approximately 1½ million francs or A\$200,000. This relatively low budget is possible for several reasons: the administrative staff is entirely voluntary - 30 people spend two years preparing the festival; theatre venues do not charge a hiring fee; and most companies on the official programme perform for a nominal fee, often rather less than their expenses.

The local people are involved to a remarkable degree. Most of the visitors are accommodated in their homes, because the town has only 400 hotel rooms. Most shop windows have displays of puppets, homemade or borrowed from companies; the regional newspaper, "L'ARDEENNAISE", carried a daily eight-page supplement during the festival, with reviews, theoretical articles, interviews, photos and programmes; and news and interviews were broadcast on the radio from a studio set up in the Institute.

All performances were open to the public, and well-patronized by local people. At the last Festival in '79 some shows were so popular people almost came to blows trying to crowd in to the overflowing theatres (imagine people fighting to get in to a puppet show in Australia) - this year more venues were acquired and ½ the seats in each reserved for the public to alleviate the problem; even so, crowds were turned away from almost every indoor performance.

.... Maeve Vella



IMPRESSIONS

— *Korrie Gardner*

This was my first overseas puppet festival, from what others have said, this festival may not represent all festivals. However, let me give a few first impressions.

Firstly people ... crowds everywhere ... most shows playing to full houses ... crowds waiting for doors to open and then pushing in to get seats ... albeit in a cheerful, rather friendly manner. Crowds in the streets ... the square and mall always full of crowds stopped to watch one of the many street buskers. Shop window displays full of puppets ... puppets seemed to be everywhere!

The whole town turned out to welcome the puppet festival and many local people including many school groups attended the performances. For this reason most groups tried to perform in French. As a non-French speaker I had a disadvantage; it would have been very helpful if some companies had printed short story summaries in other languages. Other shows had enough mime and visual effects not to rely on language.

Performances were held in about 10 venues around the city - some a good half-hour busride apart. Even with our free bus ticket and map it was not always possible to move quickly enough to see shows in venues too far apart. Many programmes were scheduled, often two and three at the same time.

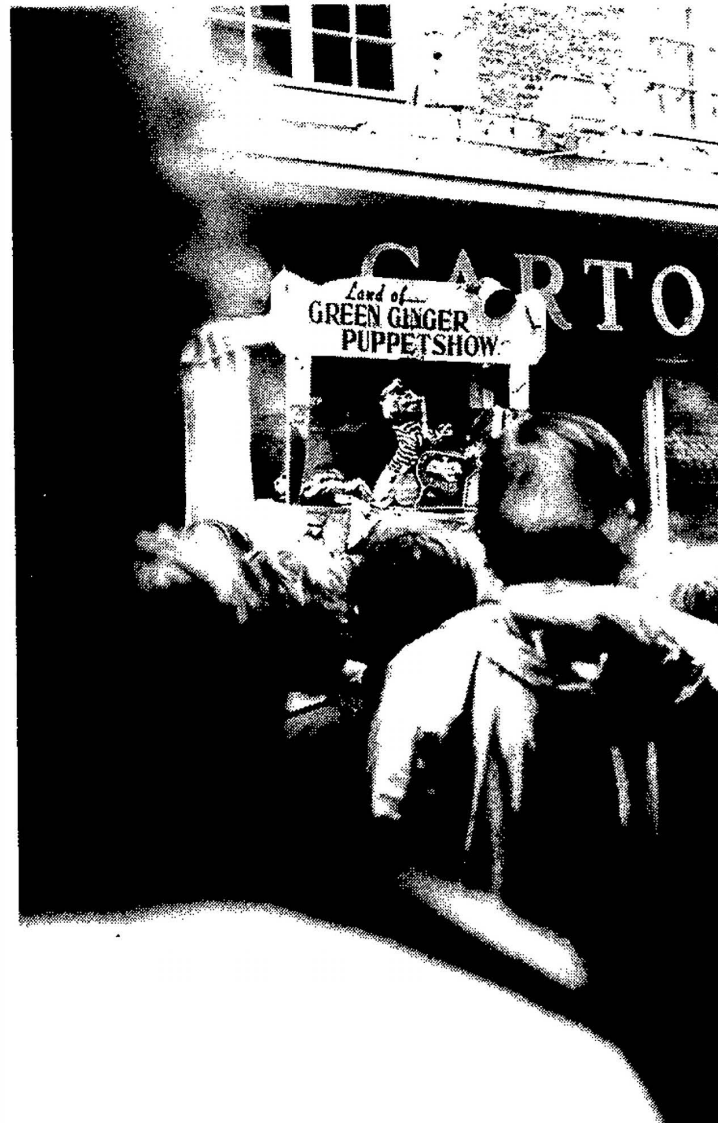
A number of shows I saw at first relied on actors ... puppets were almost second place. As the week went on, and I saw more and more variety, this balance seemed to right itself. To be specific: a Canadian group, THEATRE DE L'OEIL, did a play about children learning how to make a puppet play ... a nice T.I.E. piece, but we didn't see a puppet for 20 minutes. A French team, MARIONNETTES DE BOURGOGNE, did "Peter and the Wolf" ... a team of two actors moved about a rather cluttered stage and moved around some puppets while they told the story ... at no time did the puppets live to me, although some were made with imagination ... the puppeteers dominated. The Russian troupe THEATRE DE MAGNITORSK disappointed me for the same reason. They had a troupe of nine puppeteers (beautifully dressed, in red and white) who opened the programme with a folk dance, then a bit more fun among themselves around a long table. Onto this table little doll like puppets were moved around while the actors spoke for them. I did not stay until the end of this and I could not understand the language, so maybe I do this team an injustice, but they did not captivate me. My French hostess who took her children to the same show loved it - her main reason seemed to be because the Russians were such "beautiful people", to quote her phrase.

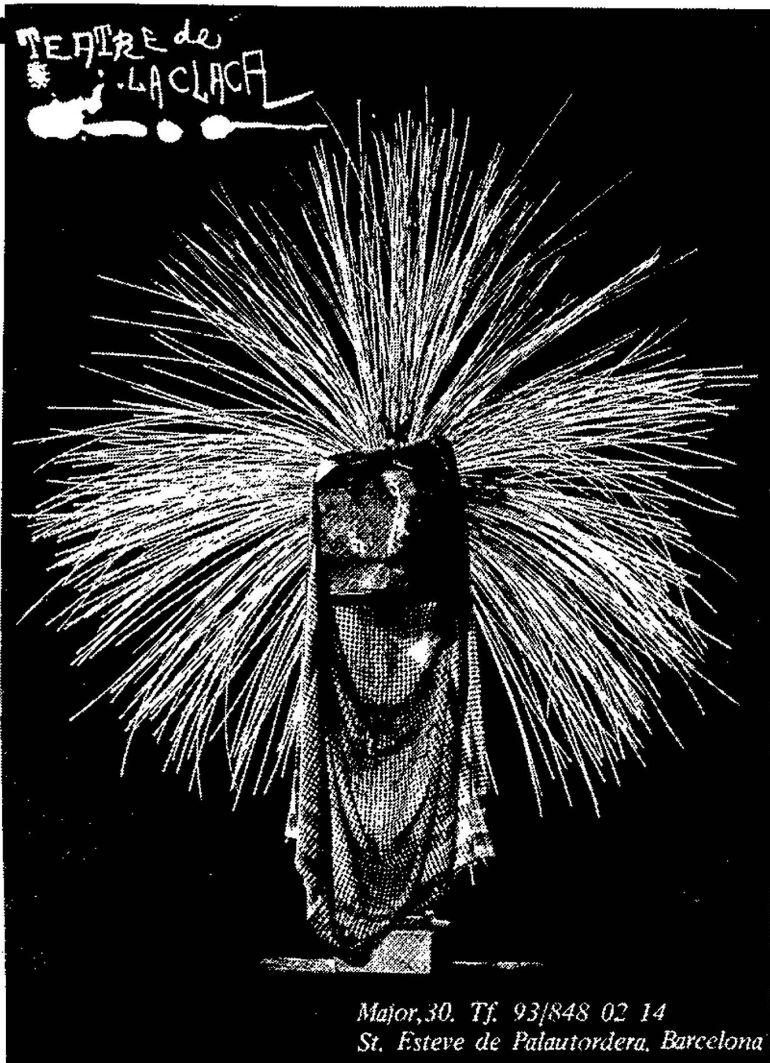
The CANNON HILL PUPPET THEATRE used actors and puppets, actors turning into puppets, etc., but with charm and skill ... the puppets lived as puppets should.

I was also impressed by THEATRE NAIF DE LIBEREC from Czechoslovakia. I did not see their adult programme unfortunately, but I thought their show for very young children was charming. Here colour was important ... two actors related to

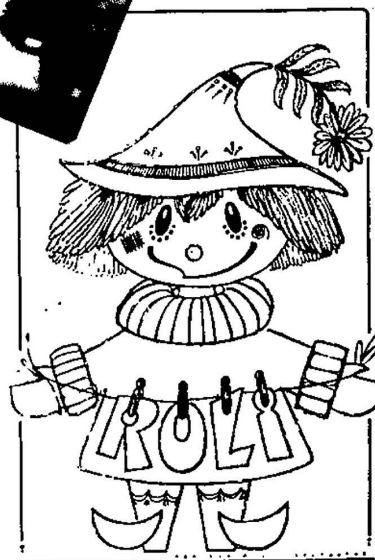


— *Attracting attention at Charleville—*





LA CLACA - Spain
"Antologia"



the children, sang songs, played tricks on each other, operated some puppets ... a third person was a puppeteer who gave life to other puppets and kept a lovely "magic" quality going (this person was unseen until the bow at the end). The puppet "screen" was made up of lengths of red and white heavy rope hanging vertically ... puppets could be put anywhere between the ropes. The front curtain of the theatre was also lowered at times for a more conventional type of stage.

ERIC BASS, a young American, did a brilliant one-man show with rod puppets. He worked in a small black booth with the puppets held at head level ... he also used controls on the hands so the puppets could pick up and put things down. His manipulation was superb - the puppets really lived.

There was one performance that was a very lavish fully-staged puppet performance with only puppets (manipulators hidden) apart from one actor as a town crier figure ... staging took the whole stage ... side windows for hand or rod puppets ... at first, a centre marionette stage, but after the first act this was converted into a many-tiered rod puppet stage. This spectacle was done by the NATIONAL THEATRE OF CHAILLOT under the direction of Alain Recoing ... the play was "The Temptation of St. Anthony". I found the production rather exciting and this is one time I would have liked a translation of story into English. I have the feeling that others may have thought the format rather old-fashioned just because more conventional staging was used. I felt that I was watching conventional staging extended to the limit in most imaginative ways.

Other companies that I enjoyed were LA CIACA from Spain, LAMPOON from Canada with very simple mime with two clowns (hand puppets) and Australia's NEVILLE TRANTER with his one-man Stuffed Puppet Theatre. Neville was hailed as the discovery of the festival. His adult cabaret-type show was done with skill and style. His taste for black comedy was without equal elsewhere ... he explored the relationship between puppet and puppeteer very well.

I did not see many of the shadow puppet shows, but the one I did see was superb ... a French company, THEATRE EN CIEL, with "Le Jeu du Feu". The puppets were fine, almost surrealistic cut-outs and very colourful. From the side where I was standing I could watch a backstage musician rush from violin to flute to chimes to drums as he kept up the musical background to the performance. Other groups used live music - in fact the musical standard of the festival was very high.

In fact the Australian "delegation" made its contribution .. we all mustered what puppets we had brought with us and, following Harry Gardner and his violin, we went around the streets. Neville Tranter joined us dressed in a large colourful Jester costume and quite stole the show ... he and Harry had them dancing in the streets!

I must also mention the NATIONAL THEATRE OF BUDAPEST. They did a very sound black theatre presentation with a lively hand puppet dance as encore. Other puppeteers said that this very good company had done better things, but I had no comparison.

The Swiss COMPAGNIE ARTAUD did a long and complicated show on the final night. I could not make head nor tail of it all and at interval (1½ hours later) we left ... I fancy I was not the only one.

The local French company LES PETITS COMEDIENS DE CHIFFON did a rather interesting show although I felt that they had no idea what age group they were aiming the production to. The plot was very simple .. the invention of colours, red, yellow and blue, to bring colour to the world ... then they went about it in the most complicated way possible with very inventive, fantastic puppets ... I kept watch to see what would happen next, but the young children grew restless.

Part of any festival is meeting people and making new friends and chatting with old ones. There were meeting places and somehow we did manage to get together ... we did find the English-speaking ones at any rate! ■



NEVILLE TRANTER -
Australia via Holland -
"Studies in Fantasy"



ANTI-NUCLEAR ARMS DEMONSTRATION outside Theatre Municipal by local people.



Window-shopping?



INSTITUT INTERNATIONAL DE LA MARIONETTE - Charleville-Mézières

NOTES - Anita Sinclair

PUPPETRY & THERAPY SEMINAR

Individuals from different countries made statements reiterating the possible uses for puppetry in therapy, physical and psychological, and some detailed specific techniques.

My main handicap was an inability to contribute much due to a lack of FLUENT French. This activity and others at the Festival favoured fluent French speakers. There were no interpreters for most speakers. Non-French speakers attempting to use French were not able to perform at best, so though I could understand them, depth was lost.

How easily the content of a statement is undermined by ineffective language, and how quickly an audience "dedicated to compassion" can find a speaker "cute" in the event of simple use of French or English. I now realise how sensible Mr. Kawajiri of FUK, Japan, was - he speaks English, but used an interpreter at all official times.

The two best communicators (above and beyond language) in the seminar were MME. INGRID LAGERQUIST of Sweden and MME. BARBARA SCHEEL of Germany. I was helped enormously by their use of visual aids and ability to demonstrate a point.

Ms Lagerquist has obtained good mileage from various applications of horse puppets - hand, rod and cardboard cutouts. She explores voice, movement, construction skills, the development of fantasy. She pointed out the virtues of varying colour, size, shape, materials and the puppetry technique involved for different benefits in the therapeutic situation. She appears to work within a long-term course. No, it would not have occurred to me to use only horses, so her demonstration was food for thought.

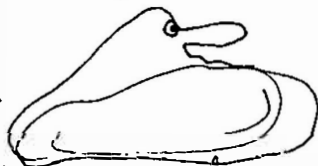
Ms. Scheel showed us some of her actual tools of trade:-

1 A wonderful large shaggy dog marionette on a single rod. Easy for her students to identify with. Some importance given to doggy urination - perhaps compared to human.



2 Hand puppet (muppet) shaggy dog: cuddly, easy to manipulate. Universally recognisable symbol.

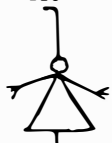
3 "Cushion", becomes a creature with a nose. Non-specific; good to touch, very shy personality. Simple, approachable.



4 Tiny bear hand puppet, 4 limbs and head fitting onto each of 5 fingers.



5 Sicilian style rod puppet with simple head, floppy arms, clothes. Easy handling.



6 More sophisticated version.



'Voice' which manifested at the UNIMA meeting. I wish I knew how we looked to her, all sitting importantly at the conference table. Interesting (or garish) enough to capture her attention!

UNIMA MEETING

The meeting was chaired by Michael Meschke. It was an informal affair, called mainly to decide whether invitation to hold the next UNIMA conference in Brazil could be accepted. Financing travel was cited as the problem. For those of us who travel from countries like Australia and Africa it's an ever-present issue. There was also an invitation from Togo in Africa. The meeting gave permission to M. Jacques Felix, General Secretary, to make the decision.

The old problem of communication within UNIMA was discussed and not resolved.

Otherwise, the meeting was used as a means of exchanging courtesies and greetings.

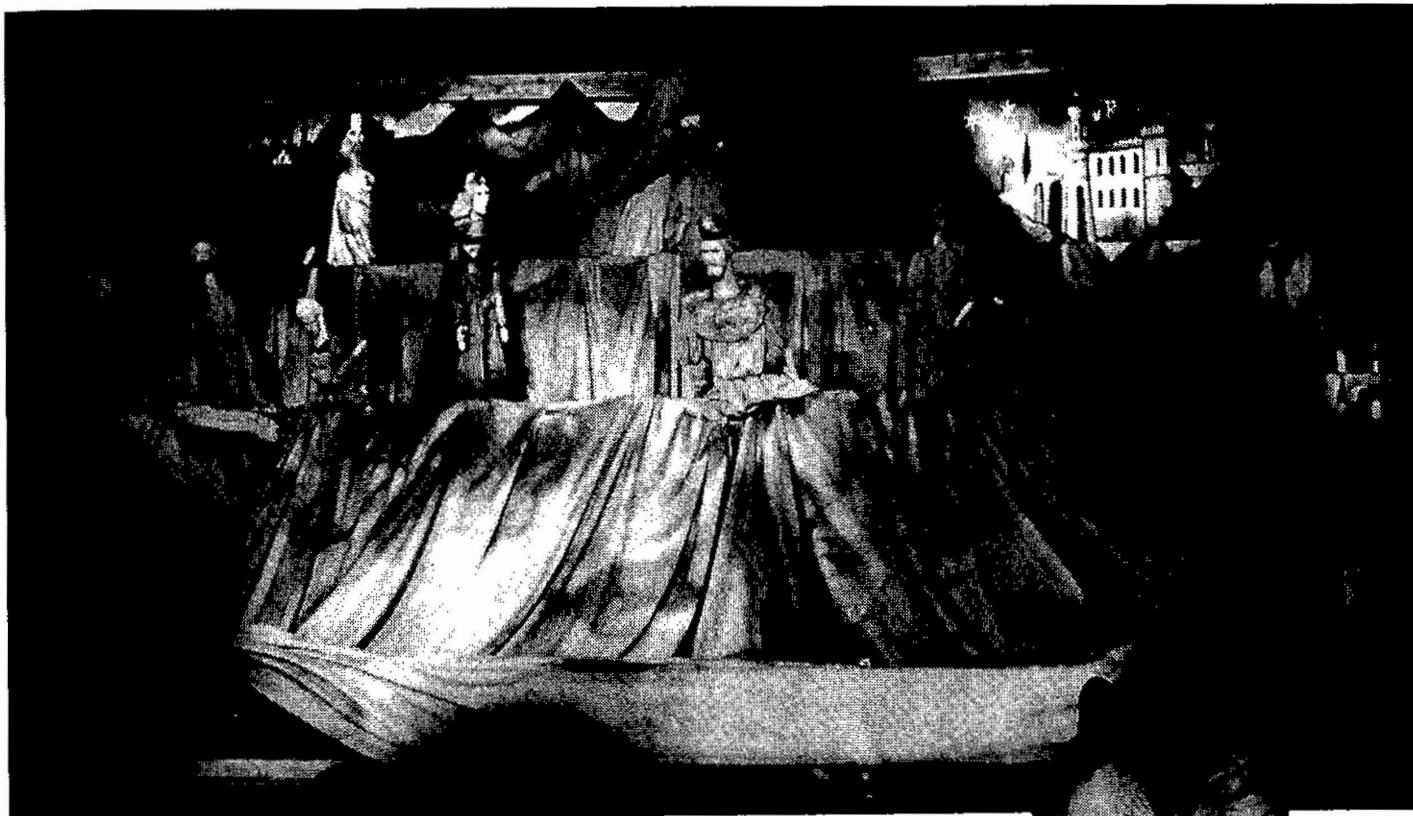
SHOW NOTES

THEATRE NAIF DE LIBEREC: "Aucassin and Nicolette" "Village-group" style

storytelling. Exhibited a most impressive range of skills and an excellent use of a large simple set. Energy levels maintained at high throughout. Live performers in costume, musical instruments live on-stage, live voice, choral work, stage fighting, acrobatics - AND puppetry. Unusual puppets - rods, with long necks: restrained, beautiful, effective.

ERIC BASS: The "human condition" explored with sensitivity, humour, compassion. Eric reveals his love of his fellow. Simple, clear, well-rehearsed; superb, non-indulgent technique. Plenty of variety and stimulus within the limits of small hand puppets - partly due to choice of different racial/cultural types and also to clever use of props, mask and the puppet/puppeteer relationship. Occasionally slow.

MARIONETTES DE METZ: "Don Quixote". Unrelentingly pointed visually, colours all bone and brown with no relief, pace slow and pretentious (perhaps meant to create importance for the material) - resulted in a production just too demanding of patience for many of the audience. Poor lighting, pedestrian manipulation and technical problems onstage contributed to a poor performance from a group with a good reputation.

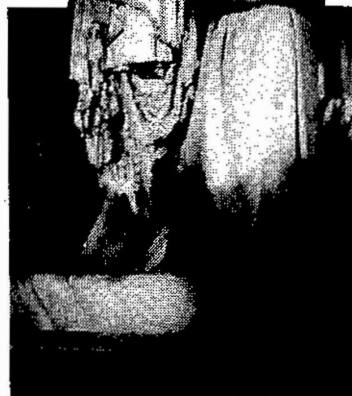


THEATRE NAIF DE LIBEREC - Czechoslovakia "Aucassin and Nicolette"

PHILIPPE GENTY: Absence of vanity and presence of statement led to clarity and elegance of performance. Genty takes starkly clear and simple images and places them in a framework. Nothing intrudes upon the central communication. Construction itself was not remarkable, but the artist's clarity, direction, humour and manipulation were.

A thought or two.....

Festivals need an obvious, and large, Notice Board to which people can refer for programme changes or personal messages - or for that matter complaints, e.g. a request/demand that fellow audience members NOT use flash photography during performances ; that participants in seminars NOT chain smoke around non-smokers - 3 hours of that is enough to exclude N.S.'s from these functions.

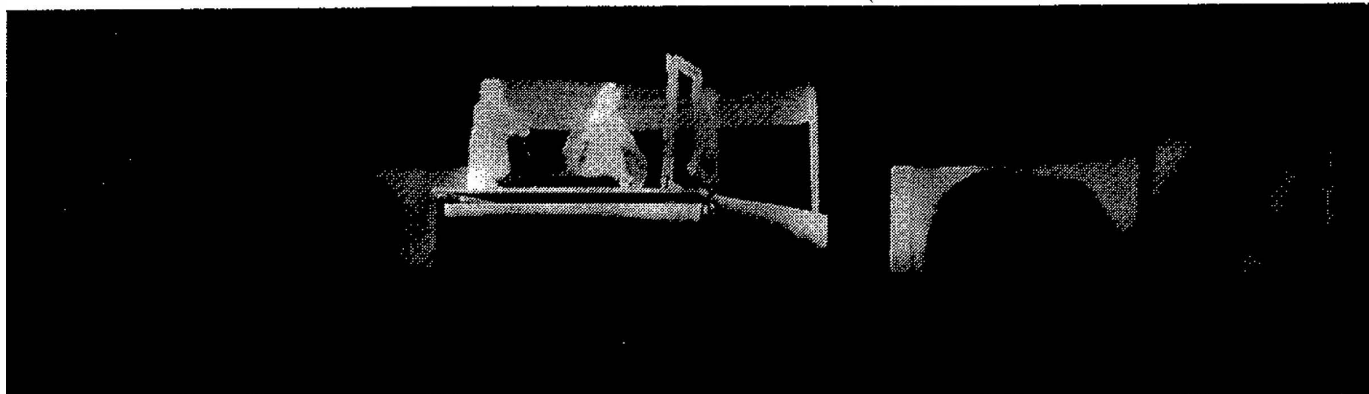


PHILIPPE GENTY'S menacing head/cloth nightmare confronts the audience at the Theatre Municipal.

LITTLE THINGS

— Maeve Vella

I thought tiny puppets were passé till I saw so many imaginative staging methods & so many mad ideas at C'ville...



THEATRE FOR THE BIRDS - U.S.A.

"la Jeune lune" ↗

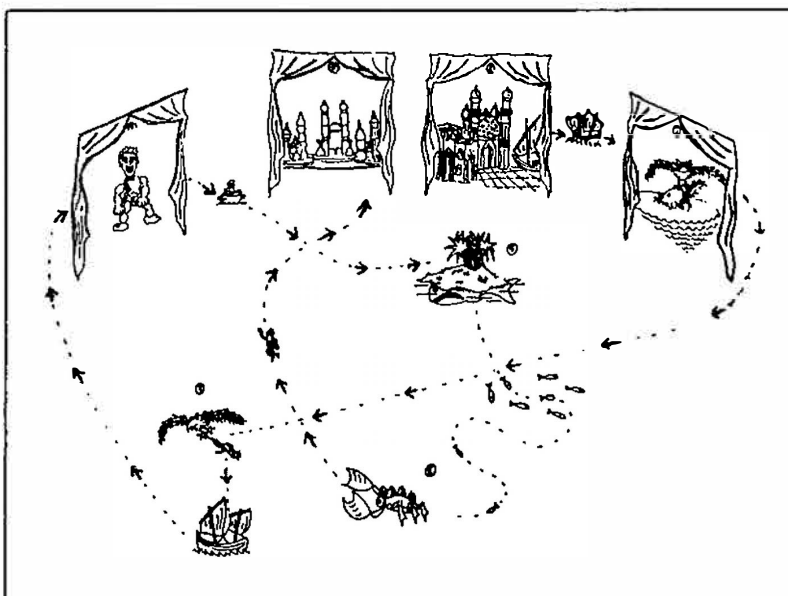
This was performed by one man in a stand-up booth with his head visible, but obscured by a straw hat with a mesh veil from the brim. His puppets - refined, smooth, elegant, white-faced - were about 20 cms. tall, worked with rods. There were 3 characters - a man, an angel and another man. The first man was in constant anguish about his identity and the purpose of his life; for example, he spent an age trying on a succession of tiny hats - unable to decide on anything. The angel was sexy, certain and comforting, but the other man, cocky and unscrupulous, got her in the end. Dialogue was spoken in French (so the finer points of the story may have eluded me) - this American performer's first show in that language. He operated his puppets with great precision and feeling for rhythm - their movements were stylized rather than naturalistic, with a staccato quality balanced by still points. When 3 puppets were onstage, one was fixed to the playboard and arranged in a pose - looking poised, not dead. The puppeteer accompanied himself on harmonica and whistle - in rhythms, not melodies.



COMPAGNIA DRAMMATICO VEGETALE - Italy

"The Voyages of Sinbad"

They used a large stage swathed in white curtains, opening a different section for each land that Sinbad visited. Simple, rough puppets in sugary colours, about 15cms. tall. The first scene was a Middle-eastern city square on a tabletop tipped slightly forward. Tiny figures emerged to engage in various tasks - prayer-singing from the mosque tower, displaying flying carpets for sale - then eventually Sinbad wandered onstage to look around and then to float off in a tiny ship.

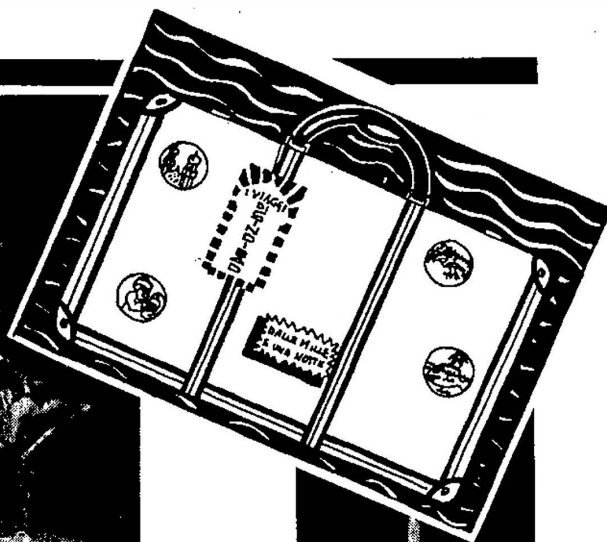




COMPAGNIA DRAMMATICO VEGETALE - Italy - "Sinbad"

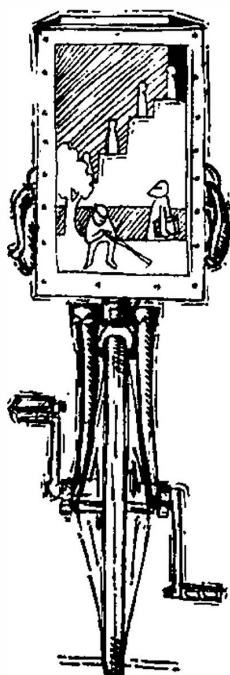
Movement was slow, the action understated, almost inconsequential, but this casualness was counterpointed by a musical soundtrack dense with complex rhythms. Together, the slow movements, hypnotic rhythms and tiny worlds created a strong sense of wonder and amounted to a full-bodied production. The audience, mostly children, got into the show with gusto. When the Giant, a puppet body slung beneath a human head, slammed two puppets between hunks of (real) bread and stuffed them into his mouth, the children yelled "Cochoni!" (pig). The sea was a big world - the whole front stage area was used by puppeteers in goggles bathed in sea-pattern slide projections. They carry Sinbad

on a tiny island attached to a piece of cloth, which was then slipped away to reveal beneath it a large inflatable whale. Like their elders at other performances in the festival, the children applauded clever bits of business or technique - a sophisticated audience of eight-year-olds. The final scene - another tabletop city, but this one all of glass, with coloured lights inside the delicate, glittering structures and Sinbad rising on two sparklers into the sky - brought gasps and applause from the audience - and from me!



LE MICROFESTIVAL

On Thursday, thirty people were sold tickets to a midnight performance. Mine cost 1 franc, my mother's $\frac{1}{2}$ a franc. The tickets were simply used tickets from the Theatre Municipal, and with 28 others we turned up there at midnight. The building was in darkness, and eventually the side door opened to admit those with tickets. The ticketless curious were kept out by tough-looking, suspicious ushers. Even after our tickets had been found to be valid and our hands stamped we were again checked for authenticity further into the dark foyer. One woman had to be ejected several times before she was convinced that a ticket was necessary. By torch and lamplight we were led conspiratorially up stairs, across a mezzanine, down stairs through the empty theatre, onto the stage past the sets left from the Russian company's evening performance, down the stairs at the rear of the stage and into the space beneath it. A small space had been cleared in the under-stage jumble, which was lit by a single bulb and filled with 30 rickety seats. With some banging of heads on beams we reached the seats; to be told that for the first performance we would have to stand on them. This accomplished we were welcomed to Le Microfestival. Among our number was the director of the real (macro?) festival, M. Jacques Felix - but this time as a spectator.



Veldre

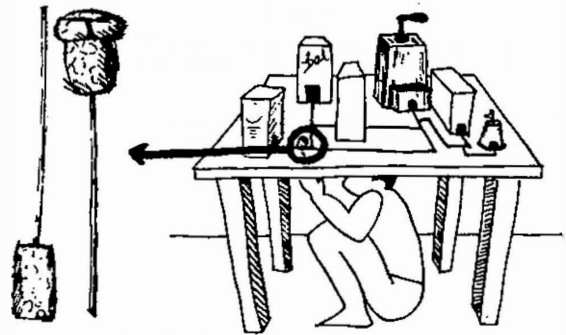
The first performance was from THEATRE DE CUISINE, and took place on a plain kitchen table covered in chequered oil-cloth. A city had been built on it, from food packets, a coffeegrinder, and other culinary paraphernalia. The Dramatis Personae were corks - big champagne ones, humble wine ones, and a few baby ones. They travelled about their town along grooves cut into the tabletop, manipulated by wire rods from under the table. A fascinating plot of comings and goings, burps, belches and mutterings unfolded. At one point a startling lighting effect revealed that one of the buildings was in fact a polaroid camera, and had just taken a flash photo of a gentleman in the front row. After the performance he was presented with the picture, and we were invited to learn more of this epic theatrical style - a book was passed amongst us, entitled "Theorie de Theatre de Cuisine". This substantial volume was found, on inspection, to contain a flask of fine cognac, and the audience willingly proceeded to educate itself. The performer thanked us for our attention and introduced the next act, LE VELOTHEATRE.

This performance was staged on a bicycle - or rather, in a box mounted on the handlebars of a bicycle. It required meticulous preparation - each element of the production was placed with great care into its proper position in the box. When all was ready the performer mounted the bicycle seat and the show began. A man is alarmed

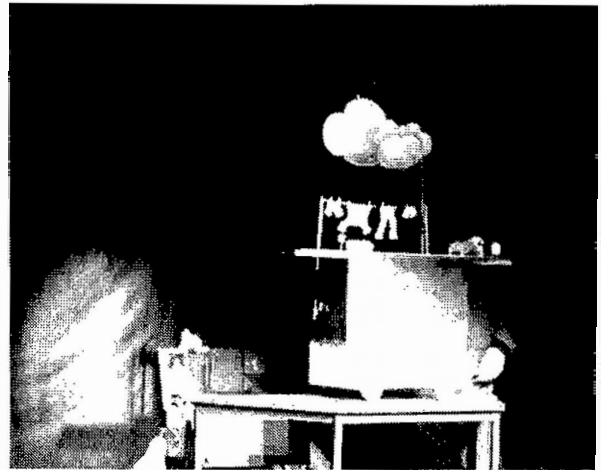
by the noise and bustle of the city, and in particular by the escalator laden with people that passes in perpetual motion behind him. He repairs to a quiet riverbank for a spot of fishing. Alas, his peace is shattered by a brash figure carrying a noisy-cassetteplayer. In the ensuing struggle, the fisherman emerges the victor - for the time being.

The third and concluding performance (well it WAS a microfestival) was given by THEATRE MANARF. It comprised a series of items. The performer entered the playing area dragging behind him a box on wheels, which he placed on a small table. A small drawer opens in the front of the box and a pair of tiny blue slippers step out and proceed up the side of the box to disappear over the top. A small bed is placed on the top of the box, followed by a tiny clock, preceded by very loud ticking. A board is placed behind them, on which hang stars on strings and a crescent moon. The performer brings out a large pair of scissors. He cuts off the stars one by one, with glee, and as each falls into the box a tone is heard from a xylophone within. But when the moon drops - CRASH of a china plate dropped onto the floor. Later, there's a cloud that rains on washing, and angel (tiny rod puppet) whipping itself into a militaristic frenzy. The final item involved several rough wet clay figures which were joyfully slammed together to cries of "I LOVE YOU SO MUCH! DO IT DO IT DO IT!" and then, a formless mass of clay, they're thrust into a full goldfish bowl. Finis le Microfestival.

We were lead by torchlight through the building and shown out into a back lane by the stage door. We all went home.



CUISINE: tasteful.



MANARF: madness



INTI (LE DIEU SOLEIL) RIZRIZ

ONE-MAN booth show by JORGE PERIERA. 15cm. rod puppets tell of imperialism past & present in Bolivia. The Incas conquer with a coke-bottle cannon.



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THÉÂTRE

MARIONNETTES AUSTRALIENNES A CHARLEVILLE-MÉZIÈRES

LE MONDE - Samedi 2 octobre 1982

Neville Tranter et ses doubles

L'Australie a encore frappé. Si un palmarès devait être proclamé à l'issue du sixième Festival mondial des théâtres de marionnettes qui s'achève ce vendredi 1^{er} octobre à Charleville-Mézières (Ardennes), Neville Tranter arriverait en tête. Theat. Neville Tranter Melbourne

une dame âgée donc, s'est mise sur son trente et un pour un rendez-vous avec l'ange qu'elle a cru voir dans le jardin : avec sa meilleure robe - bleue brodée - et ses d'oreilles, et son tilda

Et le voilà Pierrot de main entraînant l'ense

Australia has struck again. If a prize list were proclaimed at the end of the 6th World Festival of Puppetry which drew to a close this Friday 1st October at Charleville-Mézières (Ardennes), Neville Tranter would be at the top, far in front, with his STUFFED PUPPET THEATRE.

Neville Tranter, originally from Toowoomba, QLD, appeared on the scene in Europe at the time of the Festival of Fools in Amsterdam in 1978; and he has lived since then in that city. One wonders how and why we had to wait four years before we discovered him in France. One becomes even more impatient to get to the next Autumn Festival which promises a consistent serve of Australian performances: if they are all of that same kind, we'll have a good time in 1983. The country, or rather the continent of "Mad Max" has not ceased to surprise; certain people claim that it is deadly boring. In any case, the artists working over there, those that one knows, nicely play down its desolation.

Very sad but very beautiful is the sixth of some 12 brief stories which constitute the "one (super) man show" of Neville Tranter. Everything in it is suggested by the nostalgia of an old widow waiting for her final hour in one of those cosy retirement homes where conversations are reduced to repeated everyday considerations on the weather, the menu of the day, and that of the next day, and how one has slept, the pills distributed by the nurses and what the weather will be tomorrow

The puppet with the silver bun, the wrinkled neck, the surprisingly realistic face which has taken on a masculine look over the years, obviously an old lady, puts on her best clothes

for a rendezvous with the angel who she believed she saw in the garden. In her best dress - the blue embroidered one - and her earrings, and her fine handkerchief, Matilda - that's her name - addresses herself to John, the invisible angel, says to him: "It is so peaceful here - picking flowers and making love are prohibited", and thinks out loud of her husband, dead for 20 years. Little short simple sentences, and an ending worthy of the best novels.

Finally he moves on to another subject. Dives into black humour, then a poem, with or without words. Further on, fierce irony. Others would need hours to show as much.

"To show" is the word. However, Neville Tranter is not a puppet showman in the strict sense. Half of his "STUDIES IN FANTASY" is dependent on the traditional technique of hand puppets or rod puppets behind a screen. Otherwise, is he passes in front of the stage, it is as a dancer that he appears, in a closefitting white leotard, and not dressed in black as custom would have it and according to which he who animates must disappear for the benefit of the forms he is animating.

Tranter reverses the visual effect, turns illusion inside out; or rather, he combines his movements with those of his creations, to the point of sowing doubt. Sometimes he disguises himself in full view, making his own body that of a giant puppet. He detaches himself from his own being, and reduces himself to the state of an object, of a neutral structure, transformed by a simple cape, a mask, a blindfold over his eyes or the semblance of a dress.

And suddenly - there is Pierrot of human size leading his feminine double in an intense and

lewd tango, in order to pay his master puppeteer's tribute to a Pierrot on strings which is more normal than nature. Pauses here have the same necessity as silences in music. Not a single wasted moment, the items fade in, fade out, one from the other. Tranter has worked with an American film director, Robert Gist. How effective are his images, his mini-scenarios. And one feels that he is capable of inventing still further.

Just as three years ago at the preceding Festival of Charleville the Figuretheater Triangel of Holland stunned every one, this year Tranter has done it.

The troupe from Ljubljana (Yugoslavia) ably created a charming allegory set among rocks where a snail comes out of its shell and, under an umbrella, goes to court a dainty flower surrounded by sheep. The Hungarians from the National Theatre of Budapest drew attention to their craft and their talent as sculptors with their items inspired by Samuel Beckett and musically illustrated by both Bartok and Ravel. The troupe from Ecuador, in turn, tried hard to be funny and simplistic at will, with their brightly painted canvasses. And even if the French Martine Nicolas drew full houses performing only with glove puppets, nothing seemed to us to surpass the performance of the Australian.

MATHILDE LA BARDONNIE



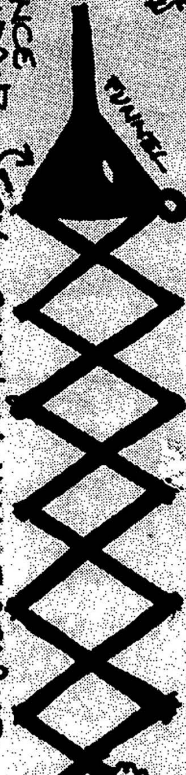
TRANSLATION kindly supplied by Carlewis Youth Performing Arts Centre.

VARIATIONS ON A THEME.



Puppet using MASK using ERIC BASS US

SEEN AROUND



FOOT

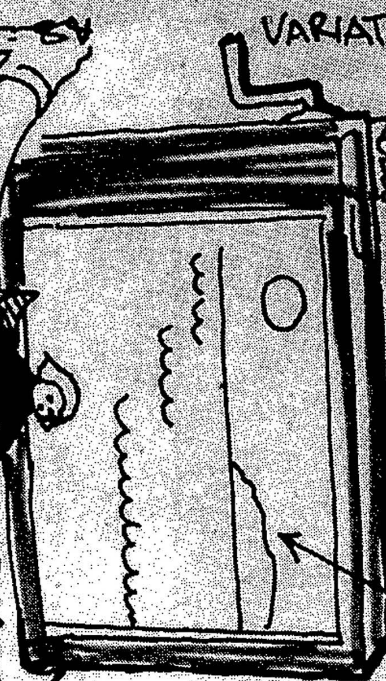
FOX. CANNON HILL. ENGLAND.



SPANISH HAND STRIP TEASE
LA CLACA



PHILIPPE
HAND PUPPETS
BLACK
THEATRE



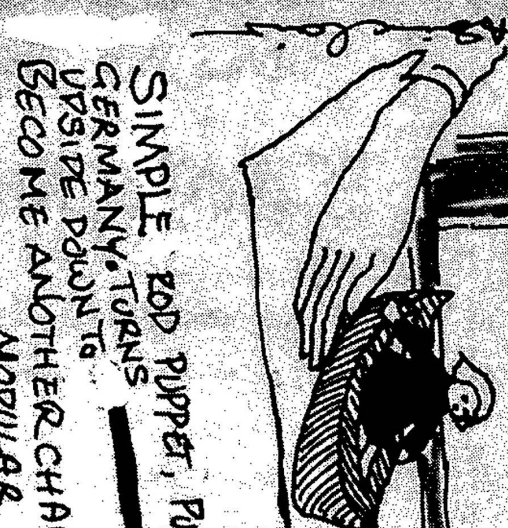
LIAR EN TERE. FRANCE
ROLLER SCREEN BACKDROP

STORY TELLING
NAIVE STYLE



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PAINTED METAL;
NOSEY!
STORY
TELLING.

METZ, FRANCE
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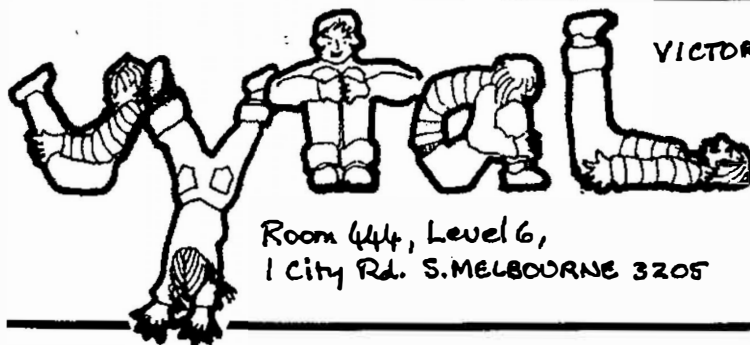
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