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INTERNATIONAL PUPPETRY ORGANISATION

UNIMA CENTRE AUSTRALIA

SEPT '93

Ed: Jennie Pfeiffer
17 Miller Street
West Melbourne 3003
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Dear Members

Brisbane Puppet Festival. Work continues, with June '95 being the proposed date. The Committee organising the Festival have asked for a grant to help cover some of the costs involved and will be continuing with their planning over the next months. They would like to receive your ideas and suggestions for the content of the Festival. Contact:- Pat Zuber, 104 Walnut St, Wynnum, Brisbane. Queensland 4178.

Lowdown. The youth theatre magazine will be producing the next issue with the focus on puppetry. If you have information about your work you would like to contribute to Lowdown contact them. They will be glad to hear from you. Address :-

Polly O'Neil, Lowdown. Carclew, 11 Jeffcott St, N. Adelaide, 5006

Figeuro'94 Festival. Focuses on European Puppet & Figuretheatre. From the 17 to 24 of July 1994 the European Figurenteatercentrum in Gent Belgium will organise the third edition of it's international festival figeuro. Figeuro is an open air festival held in the beautiful 17 century court of a monastery in the centre of Gent. It is part of the Gentse Feesten, a city festival a with thousands of visitors. Artists can send their information and material (photos, press cuttings, videos) to the festival programmer :-

Freek Neiryneck, Europees Figurenteatercentrum, Trommelstraat 1, B-9000. Belgie. or fax it to 32 / 09 /223 . 12 . 15.

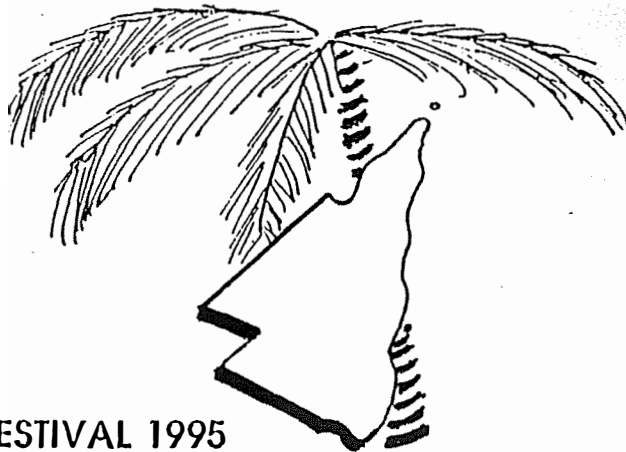
Wishing you all the best in puppetry.



UNION INTERNATIONALE DE LA MARIONNETTE

FOUNDED IN 1929. MEMBER OF ITI. (UNESCO)

News from the North



NATIONAL PUPPETRY CONFERENCE/FESTIVAL 1995

Notice to all interested parties and more specifically to the nominated working party of the National Puppetry Festival and Conference.

Following the Telephone meeting with the working party in Brisbane. It has been decided that the timelines for the proposed conference and festival should change to May/June 1995.

A number of reasons have lead to this decision, but mainly the funding deadlines for assistance with the Conference and the need to attract organisational support through a major venue.

This timeline also gives more time for industry members to respond to notices regarding the conference presently being distributed.

It is felt that whilst the change of dates represents a new year, it would not be too far into the future for people to remember. 1995 is also a Come Out Festival year and with early notification, Companies and individuals should be able to schedule both events into their programme.

Due to the dual focus of the event, it is suggested that initial tasks be divide into FESTIVAL and CONFERENCE, and that the Steering Committee (Brisbane) continue to liaise and inform details on the FESTIVAL and that Jennifer Davidson(Pres. UNIMA Aust.) remain reponsible for CONFERENCE details. Andrea Taman will be available to liaise with both areas and provide support where necessary.

It is recommended to the Brisbane FESTIVAL Steering Committee

- That the steering committee decide on the location of the Festival/Conference by no later than Sept 1993.
- Organisational details continue to work toward this 1995 timeframe.

- That the Steering Committee provide a comprehensive list of venues within the central business district of the chosen location.
- Continue to liaise with Jennifer Davidson and Andrea Taman on outcome of meetings etc.

Jennifer Davidson and Andrea Taman will

- liaise with UNIMA members to determine a schedule of guests and performance which make up the CONFERENCE program.
- Seek participation from Australian industry members, both as performers and as Conference delegates.
- Continue to liaise with the Festival Steering Committee through Patricia Zuber

Notes on Brisbane Phone Meeting May 26th between Andrea Taman and the Steering Committee as listed below.

Those in attendance agreed to form the Steering Committee for the Proposed Puppet Festival and Conference 1994/5.

Steering Committee

PRESENT: Pat Zuber, (puppeteer/community artsworker), Alan Rogers (CAO, Brisbane City Council), John Kotsis (Education Officer, Qld Performing Arts), Florence Teillet (performer/trainee Brisbane Ethnic Music and Arts Centre), Bernie Ehmer (puppeteer/Enhmers Puppets), David Hamilton (puppeteer), Garry Fuhmeister (puppeteer/Treasurer, UNIMA) - telephone participant Andrea Tamen (puppeteer, community artsworker - W.A. Network).

Patricia Zuber has agreed to act as general contact person.

This meeting managed to clarify some points of question and on the basis of present timing for funding applications and other local concerns, the following decisions have been made:

- That the Festival/Conference be held between **May/June/July 1995.**
- That investigations be made as to exact location, either Brisbane Metro or the Gold Coast. (This will need to be determined bearing in mind venues, availability and transport along with local knowledge and advice.
- That investigations be made as to the possible linking with the Queensland Biennial Music Festival.(Also May June 1995)

- That funding applications be made to the Brisbane City Council under their Festival Grants Programme. It is envisage that assistance with venues etc for the performance programme be requested up to \$10.000

- That and application be made to the P.A.B. of the Australia Council for assistance with the Conference possibly for the closing date June 1994.

(This application will be made through Jennifer Davidson (President UNIMA Australia.)

Futher information:

Jennifer Davidson
President UNIMA Australia
62 York Street,
SANDY BAY TAS. 7005

Tel: (002) 236546

Andrea Tarnan
13 Samson Street
FREMANTLE W.A. 6160

Tel: (09) 3361004 /2200672

Pat Zuber
P.O. Box 460
SOUTH BRISBANE QLD 4101

Tel: (07) 8461218

P.S.

A grant application has been made to the Queensland Government to fund the appointment of an arts worker to carry out initial ground work and coordination. Results November '93.

Regards,

Garry

Notes supplied by Pat Zuber

NSW NEWS

We begin with bad news. There have been dishonest businesspeople operating in the Sydney area that have been exploiting people's interest in learning about Puppetry. The word is:

Be wary of any course in Puppetry that requires payment for the course AND offers you employment with the 'school' when you have finished doing the course.

Be wary of anyone offered an 'Apprenticeship in Puppetry' at a wage well below the Actors' Award "because you're still learning" and with no payment for rehearsal. Young women in particular seem to be the target of this one. Check with TAFE regarding the bona fides of the apprenticeship and with Actors Equity or the Department of Labour and Industry regarding minimum wages and conditions.

On to more positive things:

GRASSHOPPER brought "The Overcoat" up to Sydney for a preview in June. It has been approved by the NSW Dept of Education and Greg Howard at School Performance Tours has taken it on for touring high schools.

There is a chance for puppeteers to get together over Easter next year in Canberra. The National Folk Festival organises a Kid's Festival session. There is a marquee set aside for it and it could be a terrific four days of festival and natter. If there are some puppeteers interested in performing, I think we could easily get a mini 'Festival within a festival' organised. The money is minimal but you get free admission to an excellent festival as part of the deal. There is camping and caravanning on-site. Anyone interested? Please contact me on (02) 631-0613 by no later than the First of October.

The Puppetry Guild's Annual Puppeteers' Picnic is on for Monday 4 October at The Rocks Puppet Cottage. To volunteer your services, be it Puppetry or as dog's body, ring John Davis on (046) 25-3805 evenings.

The Rocks Puppet Cottage is still going strong with thousands of people traipsing through on weekends and school holidays. The hoardings across the laneway are down at last. Sue and Steve from Sydney Puppet Theatre have been doing a delightful show featuring trick marionettes from their Wonderland work. They leave in August for a long holiday in South Asia.

Jonquil Temple, Jan Paton and Richard Bradshaw all went to San Francisco for the Puppeteers of America's Festival in July. Richard performed but I don't know who else was on the bill. At the same time Darren Carr went to the Annual CONVENTion of American Ventriloquists (NAAV) in Cincinnati. They were having Valentine Vox, the English vent who wrote a history of Ventriloquism "I Can See Your Lips Moving."

Me, I only got as far as Tasmania.

Dennis

VENT DAY
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I was invited to Philippe's 'Puppetmaker's Workshop' in The Rocks to meet a friend of his, Guy Raguin. Guy is a French puppeteer from Noumea who has a regular children's programme on New Caledonian television.

A self-taught ventriloquist, Guy was keen to check out his skill with ventriloquists here as New Caledonia has none bar him.

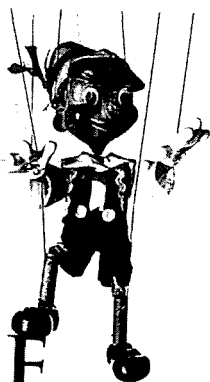
When he asked what was the best way to learn Ventriloquism, I couldn't resist giving the classic answer: Gractice, gractice, gractice!

While we were talking a tourist walked in and Basil Smith facetiously asked him if he too was a puppeteer. "Yes," came the reply, "I am the ventriloquist off the cruise ship now in harbour." It was Dan Axelrod, a New York vent who works mainly in nightclubs and specialises in dialect humour.

It turned into quite a day.

Dennis Murphy

THE ROCKS PUPPET COTTAGE



ENTERTAINMENT
THE WHOLE FAMILY
CAN ENJOY!

Kendall Lane, off Argyle Street

The Rocks Puppet Cottage is a magical and educational experience for the young and the young at heart. The home of puppetry is housed in a beautifully restored sandstone cottage festooned with a colourful collection of puppets from around the world.



Free performances every
Saturday and Sunday and
throughout school
holidays



For inquiries & performance times
please telephone 247 4972



The Rocks Puppet Cottage
is an initiative of the
Sydney Cove Authority



Band of puppeteers: Avril McQueen, Michele Spooner, Liz Talbot and Kathy

MELBOURNE TIMES
AUG 25

mētá
four



HAND SPAN

Handspan Puppet Theatre's most recent offering, *meta four* is a collection of four short works by company members, Katy Bowman, Michele Spooner, Avril McQueen and Lizz Talbot.

It was part of the Melbourne Fringe Festival and the first work programmed by Handspan's new artistic director, Ken Evans. It sees a reconsolidation of technique and approach. As Ken Evans commented, "It's back to basics stuff - no text, no actors, just puppets."

The idea behind *meta four* was to foster Handspan's members new work. Performing in Fringe allows room to experiment with a completely new piece. Each piece was conceived by one of the women who took part in performing each others work.

Essentially, the pieces were an exploration of medium and technique.

There were times during the performance when I sat imagining that these women must have grown octopus limbs; I was having trouble trying to conceive how they had managed to realise a particular image.

Katy Bowman's 'Cycle' was a wonderfully riveting series of transformations as a mound of fabric (brown paper) metamorphasised from a large pyramid to tiny sphere into a constantly stretching and changing human figure.

'Wired' (Lizz Talbot) opened with a striking image of a modified Bunraku-style puppet made from predominantly aluminium and wire curled up on what appeared to be a sacrificial pyre. This piece had a mythological flavour - floating snakes, red feathers - and suggested an exploration of female identity.

"Fluid Form (Katie Bowman), a short interlude incorporating the elements of light, music, the form of the female figure, and a manipulated elastic object - fabric stretched over a bendable ellipse-shaped frame.

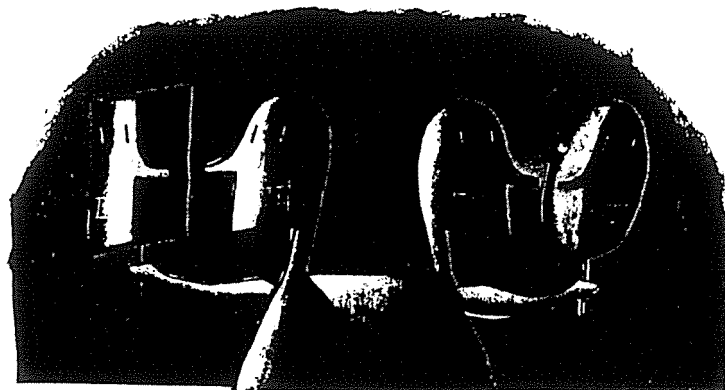
"The Insider" (Avril McQueen), while indefinite in its narrative content and certainly open to interpretation, it was a marvellous piece of manipulation to watch. Making use of several puppets, it was a series of transforming but culturally recognisable images. The hand was quicker than the eye - a very

small rocking horse was used to shift focus for an instant while the floating puppet figure was en-masked.

'Light Dance' (K.B.) was an experiment involving the human form covered with many small mirrors and the manipulation of light - a potentially audience confronting technique as beams of light were scanned over and at them.

'Rights of Passage' (Michele Spooner) came as a welcome change of rhythm containing ritualistic/ceremonial elements and delved into the object manipulator relationship. White on white Bunraku style, the puppeteer operating the puppet's head with her mouth. Her movement mirrored the puppet's action, broken by moments of 'the illusion of interaction'... The most dramatic of the short works, the drama was underscored by the use of percussive elements - bamboo poles.

Meta four overall was economic in design, Black theatre style, there were no distractions from focus on the puppets. Floating, transforming, appearing and disappearing figures and objects. The pieces conveyed their narrative components through a visual language of symbols and although I'm not sure that this always managed to transfer effectively to the audience, they all definitely had their sublime moments and were open to interpretation from an actively engaged audience, thanks to masterful use of technique. Each piece, I felt, was in itself potential material for further development...I should also mention the lighting - designed by Philip Lethlean which contributed to the overall effectiveness of *meta four*.



SCHOOLS ENCOUNTER - Charleville-Mezieres - June/July '93

I have recently returned from time in Japan and Europe, observing Puppet companies and schools of puppetry in their training process and was impressed by what I saw. Following is a brief account of the 2nd International Encounter of Puppetry Schools, presented in association with the Institut International de la Marionnette at Charleville Mezieres in France.

Margarita Niculescu, Director of the Puppetry Institut in Charleville, is the initiator of this project.

The success of the first schools encounter in 1990, led to a schools presentation in Ljubljana at the 1992 UNIMA Festival. At this years encounter, 15 schools were scheduled to appear on the programme. A last minute withdrawal due to illness came from the Berlin school.

At the end of the conference I was told that the standard of student from this year was not quite at the level of the first encounter of students. I must say that I was very impressed by the depth of work coming out of the schools. From Prague to London, Poland to Stuttgart, Norway to the Puppetry Institut in Charleville, the variety of technique and style was as diverse as the schools themselves.

Given the title "Myth" as a subject to work on, each schools work, whether it be a solo piece or a group presented work, covered a particular mythology related to the respective culture associated with that school.

I will not go through all presentations but feel that the Prague school requires special mention.

"La tour de Babel", a work by the students of the Academie des Arts in Prague in association with the Puppetry Institut, Charleville, starring our very own Bob Parsons, (Terripin, Spare Parts fame) opened proceedings. The schools director, Josef Krofta (known by many here in Australia) created a wonderful work with his multi-national cast, merging actor with puppet/object to create an exciting and at times rather breathtaking performance. In fact, I felt that the work coming out of the Prague school was the most challenging and developing work dealing with the puppet/puppeteer relationship. Krofta and his designer Petr Matjsec have the capacity to give their work a sense of mystery, which allows us as an audience to fill the fantasy, thus revealing moments of magic.

It was interesting to note that at least 50% of schools presenting work used shadows in a variety of ways. The work presented by the schools came from 1st year through to 4th year students. Each school had worked on their pieces from 3-8 weeks, as part of their course and as part of knowing that they would be presenting at the schools encounter.

Not all works were a knockout, but I felt it an important exercise for the students to exchange their work and ideas with each other. Puppetry was central to all school courses, although subjects like Theatre History, Voice, Movement, and Making were as much a part of the training.

I have the feeling that puppetry is very much alive in Europe. I look forward to the next 10 years with great anticipation and excitement to observe where puppetry is moving to and to share the influence it has on mainstream theatre..

The schools encounter was an invaluable 8 days. It gave me the opportunity to observe the training technique and process of a variety of schools and to look for the freshness and innovation one always looks for in the next wave of thinking.

PETER WILSON
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR-SKYLARK THEATRE CO.

Josef Krofta : PUPPET THEATRE AND ALTERNATIVE THEATRE.

_Recently, Hannah Kodlcek went to Czechoslovakia to record a documentary for BBC Television on Czech puppetry. After filming excerpts from Smetana's opera "The Bartered Bride", performed by the Bohemian Puppet Theatre company "DRAK", she interviewed its artistic director JOSEF KROFTA. As Krofta has also been appointed Head of Department at the newly renamed Faculty of Puppetry and Alternative Theatre at Prague Academy of the Arts, she also asked whether there will be some changes in the Czech approach to modern puppetry. There follows an edited transcript of the interview, first published in ANIMATIONS, Aug/Sept. 1991

What is your policy as Head of Department?

Our students need contact with real artists: not just teachers or famous personalities, but creative people who are able to study the theatre as a branch together with the students. Studying means attempting something in practice, trying again and again from different points of view. I try to gather students and teachers who love to study theatre by making theatre. I want to bring up a generation of artists who would devote themselves to being in the forefront of the renaissance of puppetry. After all it is the least chartered terrain in the theatre.

What do you think about animatronics?

A sensitive understanding of a performance requires the sensitive involvement of the audience. It is hard to be in awe of animatronics because it excludes the viewer from the life of the puppet. Imitating nature down to the last detail is not the aim of the puppeteer. Besides, it is boring to watch. The mystery lies in the imperfection, when the child's fantasy can color in all sorts of things. This is when a miracle happens. A piece of cloth without features becomes a puppet if it is handled sensitively. Maybe we should remind ourselves more often that the word "to animate" doesn't mean "to make move", but "to give a soul", from the Latin word "anima". This is terribly important. To breathe a soul into an object doesn't mean making a perfect copy of it. A good animator isn't someone who can make a puppet twist a piece

of spaghetti on a fork. That is just craftsmanship. An artist makes us believe that any object he touches is alive and "en-souled", that it has a soul.

Your theatre makes a policy of playing for both children and adults. So, what makes you decide which play is suitable for puppets? Or rather, when to use puppets and when to use live actors?

To me, the best way of using puppets is in combination with actors but there must always be a good reason for the puppets to be there; they must not simply be a replacement for an actor. I have to stress again that we must never get to the point where we are bringing little robots to the stage. The value of puppets lies in their irreplaceability as vehicles for our imagination. For example, Eugene Schwartz's "Dragon", which is an allegorical fairy tale about a power that usurps a little town, might seem a very good opportunity to cast the townspeople as real actors and to use a puppet dragon. In fact, Eugene Schwartz himself recommended this. Instead, I decided to do it the other way around, casting a human actor as the dragon who literally manipulates the townspeople, who are puppets, by pulling their strings. This, to me, is a better way of portraying their total lack of freedom.

Tell us a little more about your plans for the School. Does the change in the name to encompass alternative theatre reflect the fact that some of the new teachers are not puppet theatre practitioners?

I brought together people whose work steps outside the framework of drama and classical puppet theatre. Our School should be a place where we can look for and find the new face of modern theatre with puppet theatre as one of the theatrical alternatives.

It was a shame in the past that this School only specialised in one specific discipline because it avoided confronting other forms of theatrical expression. We need confrontation : it can make us blossom. There is so much still unexplored in puppet theatre, so much we have to learn about ourselves. We won't have time to find all the answers, but one of the reasons that I am teaching here now is that I wish to nudge people to take note of this mystery and start opening out it's secrets.

Contr. Peter Wilson
Skylark Theatre

PUPPETRY IN THE NINETIES

OR

HOW TO OPERATE THE COMPUTER INTERFACE FOR A FULL SIZE HYDRAULIC ROBOT TYRANNOSAURUS REX.

**by Philip Millar
Artistic Director
Polyglot Puppet Theatre
Melbourne**

From mid April to mid July this year I was fortunate to be able to travel to the United Kingdom and the United States of America to study advances in puppetry in film, television and theatre. I visited numerous puppet workshops and theatres under the terms of a Churchill Fellowship. My trip gave me the opportunity to observe a wide range of technical approaches, new materials and techniques, a variety of control systems and trends within puppetry. My feeling is that regardless of our chosen tools, puppeteers are quite alike in their goals.

My study took me from the HENSON CREATURE SHOP in London where "The Flintstones" puppets were under construction to STAN WINSTON'S STUDIO in Van Nuys, LA where the "Jurassic Park" dinosaurs were built. Despite the overwhelming complexity and sophistication of much of the puppet making that I observed, it was reassuring to see that the role of puppeteer remains central to the eventual performance, whether on film, television or the stage. The means of manipulating a creature may have changed but the essential nature of the puppeteer's intention, to instil life and character into an inanimate form, remains basic.

The HENSON CREATURE SHOP in Camden was working at full speed when I visited in April. The workshop was building about twenty five characters for "The Flintstones" movie, including suit and puppet versions of Dino and the sabre toothed cat. Nearly one hundred makers had been working on the project for more than ten weeks and there was a definite sense of a fast approaching deadline.

Many of the puppets were designed for single scenes or sometimes single shots, yet would still require weeks of work. The house style of foam latex skins over heavily mechanised armatures with a computer assisted control system kept many people very busy. However a few makers noted that often a simpler, less mechanical solution would be more appropriate but the production line which had been established tended to lock the workshop into a set approach.

Major characters like Dino required both suit and puppet versions, with three separate heads; stunt, lightweight animatronic and fully mechanised for close-ups. The close-up heads can include as many as twenty-five radio-control servos each controlling a particular facial movement. The servos are in turn controlled by an elaborate set of hand controls which allow an individual puppeteer to operate the entire head. The Performance Control System won a Technical Achievement Oscar a few years back. The System is used to great effect in the first two Ninja Turtle movies and the LA. based "Dinosaur" series.

Ironically, the technical advances incorporated into the Creature Shop's puppets have now been superseded. Computer Generated Imagery (CGI) will replace the suit and puppet approach. Dino the puppet is now useful only for lighting tests on set, with all his movements to be created in a computer at Industrial Light and Magic (ILM) in California. "Jurassic Park" has completely redefined the boundaries for computer

effects in the film and television worlds and many puppeteers are finding the change extremely threatening.

At the Puppeteers of America Festival in San Francisco, one of the highlights for me was a talk given by Steve Williams of ILM. He discussed the development of CGI and showed, through video examples, how the technology had been used to create characters in "The Abyss", "Terminator 2" and most recently, in "Jurassic Park". The basic thrust of the talk was that computers are capable of creating photo realistic simulations of real or invented creatures, of an almost infinite variety of image manipulations and distortions and that digital image control was quite simply the way of the future.

Working with conventional puppet animators and a mime coach for movement lessons, the ILM animators created about six minutes of phenomenal animation for "Jurassic Park" including the Gallimimus stampede and the final sequence. The bulk of the film's dinosaur effects were achieved with Stan Winston's live action puppet dinosaurs. Nevertheless, Steve Williams hinted strongly that it was simply a matter of time before computer technology could more quickly and cheaply achieve the same effects as the live action puppets.

While the advances of CGI loom on the horizon, animatronic puppetry is still creating remarkable images on screen. The full-scale tyrannosaurus puppet used on set for "Jurassic Park" is an impressive piece of work. When I visited the Winston Studio the T-Rex was in bits, as storage of a 40 foot long dinosaur is a problem. The arms were lying on a bench while the eyes were stuck in a box, together with the Velociraptor and Dilophosaurus eye mechanisms.

The sculpting of the T-Rex took sixteen weeks with ten sculptors, working every day. The scale of the project was quite awesome. Huge ovens were used to bake the foam latex skins which covered the elaborate hydraulic and radio controlled skeleton.

Now, in answer to the question posed in my title, to operate the creature the puppeteers did what puppeteers have been doing for centuries; they held the controls and manipulated them to bring their character to life.

In this case the controls were handles on a fourth scale computer interface waldo mechanism and the character was a full size dinosaur mounted on a flight simulator but the intention was still the same. Movements of the small scale puppet were fed into a computer which then fed control instructions to the full size puppet. With the computer, movements could be recorded, edited, speeded up, slowed down or operated live. In this way the T-Rex could be operated in very close to the actors with very precise interaction.

While the connection may at first seem tenuous, I found all these advances to be inspiring for my own work at Polyglot Puppet Theatre. In essence, puppeteers in whatever medium are striving for basically similar goals. While a Theatre in Education puppet show budget is unlikely to ever approach the millions spent on high-tech animatronics, the design process and performance aims are fundamentally the same. We all seek to move and affect our audience with our manipulation of inanimate objects - to tell a story or evoke an emotional response whether through a simple sock puppet or computer driven animatronic dinosaur.

STRINGS ATTACHED

Puppet Theatre

Norbert Hausberg, founder of Strings Attached Puppet theatre in 1983 has recently published NZ's first multilingual booklet about his puppet theatre. "Strings Attached", illustrated page for page with photographs, includes an interesting sequence outlining how Norbert goes about making a simple marionette. It sells for \$ NZ 11 incl. postage to Australia and I estimate that it would be quite popular with children...my daughter thought so.

Norbert generally works to children, but his current show is aimed at a more adult audience dealing with New Zealand and its history. He plans to visit Melbourne in December and may very well be interested in meeting UNIMA members.

To order a copy or for further details /enquiries please contact

Norbert Hausberg
STRINGS ATTACHED Puppet Theatre
PO Box 1060
WELLINGTON
NEW ZEALAND



Puppets have a long and curious history to them

READ these puppet facts then draw a cartoon about one of them.

■ Puppet shows were performed in India as long as 4000 years ago.

■ In some countries puppets were used long before human actors because religious beliefs did not allow people to impersonate others.

■ In Elizabethan times in England puppeteers needed a royal licence or a 'noble' patron. Those without one were arrested as criminals.

■ In the 1600's puppeteers (often Italian) travelled all over England to perform at fairs and in castles. William Shakespeare often mentioned them in his plays.

■ The famous puppet Pinocchio or 'Punch' first came to England in 1662. Judy his wife joined him 50 years later. Punch and Judy were puppet superstars for more than 200 years.

■ Marionettes were more popular in France in the eighteenth century than live actors. Actors tried to get puppet shows banned by law. They failed.

■ In Burma a dancer's skill is measured by their ability to move like a marionette.



■ The metre-high Vietnam water puppets perform on a raft which floats on a lake. Puppeteers use a long bamboo pole and strings to move the puppets from 9-10 metres away. They stand in the water behind a screen for hours while the audience watches from the bank.

Creating a world with his puppets

MASTER puppeteer, Norbert Hausberg creates his own worlds. Magical aliens, genies that fly, and emotions emerging from boxes as puppets. These are all parts of a world he loves and shares with others in his one man 'Strings Attached Puppet Theatre'. Norbert writes his own plays, designs, carves and clothes all his puppets and make: all the scenery.

He grew up in West Germany the home of over 1,000 puppet theatres. After studying art, a puppetry career in Germany wasn't such a strange choice.

"Europe has a lot of puppetry on television and in the theatre and a lot of learning opportunities. My parents were fascinated by puppets and gave me plenty of encouragement. The real encouragement though came from audiences who enjoyed what they saw. After all your family has to like your show. They're not very good critics."

Norbert trained traditionally, performing with puppet troupes in festivals around Germany. Now, budding German puppeteers can study for a Master Puppetry degree through a four year university course.

Norbert's puppets are marionettes or string puppets. He carves them himself out of lime tree or Fijian kauri. Some puppets are over two metres high and have moving eyes or mouths. Too much

cleverness though distracts the audience from the story. The puppet's face is important and exaggerated hands.

Your school might see Mustapha and the Kauri Giant. This play is a multicultural tale about an endangered forest. It took Norbert about five months to create.

He studied Maori legends and found some of the creatures and characters were similar to those from the European legends he knew so well.

"Other cultures are important to me. We all bought something to New Zealand without knowing it. The Irish bought the pixies and the elves, the Germans the gnomes, the Chinese the dragon."

In this tale the German Heinzelmannchen (from the gnome family) a dragon from China and the Maori Patupaiarehe work together.

He first writes a play for himself, as a performer. He can have six characters on stage at once and works three or four off the one control. The play must be entertaining, action packed and have a few messages for you at the same time.

It's a hard way to make a living with seven or eight months of the year spent on the road. "But performing to young people is very important. Like any performer you've got to work through your doubt."



DUCK & CO PUPPET THEATREpresents.....



there's a moon in my room

★ A
Whimsically funny
puppet play about the night stay and a
lost birthday ... PLUS meet Delphine
the Disco-Dink and see how
shadowpuppets
are made!!

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Drummond St, Carlton
Sept 11, 18, 20-25 11am & 2pm
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★ Children/cons: \$5
★ "Family": \$20

★ Bookings/Enquiries: PH 417 4662

★ THE COMPANY OF WOMEN

★ Part of the Women's Season of the
★ 1993 Melbourne Fringe Festival

Australia Council
for the Arts



WOMEN'S Season 1993

NEWS ROUND-UP



AUSTRALIAN CENTRE — INTERNATIONAL THEATRE INSTITUTE

The Australian Centre of ITI is a performing arts information service that promotes international exchange. The following is reprinted from the ITI NEWS ROUND-UP, the Centre's bi-monthly newsletter. For further details on these items or other ITI services contact: 8A/245 Chalmers Street, REDFERN, NSW 2016. Tel: (02) 319 0718. Fax: (02) 698 3557.

FESTIVALS AND EVENTS

Overseas ..1994 New Zealand International Arts Festival, Wellington Feb25- Mar18. ..Celebrate Australia, Japan, commences in Nov. Largest event ever undertaken by Australia in Japan, will include a tour by the Australian Ballet, the Australia Ensemble, Spare Parts Puppet Theatre, Chrome, the Aboriginal Islander Dance Theatre, Stalker, Alan Dargin, Stretch Mark1, Playbox Theatre, Southern Crossings, Handspan Theatre and Chamber Made Opera Company., ... The 13th Festival of Theatre for Young People, Aarau, Switzerland Nov 12-21 will feature Swiss and international groups and companies performing theatre for young audiences. ... The 2nd International Puppet Festival, Lahore, Pakistan Oct10-20 '94, Hosted by Rafi Peer Theatre Workshop. Invites the participation of Australian puppet groups. They are prepared to cover all local expenses, accommodation, transportation to festival venues & visits to places of interest. Address included in this Newsletter, (see page 4)Styrian Fall, founded 25 years ago as a festival for contemporary culture, will take place in Graz, Germany, Oct. Since the beginning of the 90's the festival has tried to show interdisciplinary points of reference in art & endeavours to encourage audiences' reflective irony as well as curious amazement. A long list of events in the program, including theatre and dance performances, concerts, a film festival, various exhibitions & symposiums dealing with art and culture.

Australia ... A Fringe Festival is on the drawing board of Gorman House Art Centre Inc & the Arts Council of the ACT to be held biannually from March'95. Potential participants or interested persons should contact the Gorman House Arts Centre on (06) 249 7377. ...The Melbourne International Festival of the Arts, Sept 9-25. ...

WORKSHOPS AND TRAINING

Overseas The 2nd International Winter Workshop School on the performing arts of South India will be on Jan1-30 '94, Kerala, India & will feature the dance theatre form Kathakali, the martial artform Kalarippayattu, South Indian Vocal & Percussion, Yoga, Folk Theatre, Mask Making, Puppetry & Costume. The school seeks participants who are students or practitioners of dance, music, theatre & the visual arts... Theatre Management: Building New Audiences is an international residential seminar for arts managers, administrators or theatre artists organised by The British Council to be held in Glasgow, Leicester and London Apr10-23 '94. The seminar will be jointly directed by Gerald Lindstone (Goldsmith's College, Uni of London) and Professor Noel Witts (De Montfort University, Leicester) and expects contributions from 15 leading arts organisations in England. Applications close Dec 10.

OPPORTUNITIES

The Japan Cultural Centre offers up to \$1000 in partial assistance to non-profit organisations involved in staging Japan related programs or events in Australia. ... The Japan/South Australia Cultural Exchange Program assistance to South Australian professional artists wishing to visit Japan to extend their artistic skills. Sponsored by the Bank of Tokyo, closing date is Oct29. ... Ansett Australia now offers a 5% rebate on domestic airfares & a 9% rebate on international airfares to recipients of funding from the Australia Council. These special fares are subject to certain conditions, but it is worth a try. for details contact ITI.

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Jodie Edwards, a secondary-school drama teacher, will be attending the Akademi Seni Tari Indonesia in Bandung, Java. She will be studying traditional drama, dance, music and puppetry to pass these skills onto her students in Australia. Jodie was awarded a scholarship by the Indonesian (not Australian) government.

Address for Pakistan Festival
kindly forwarded by Leslie Trowbridge
MR FAIZAAN PEERZADA
PRESIDENT PAKISTAN FESTIVAL 1994
25-F/3 BLOCK-D. NATIONAL HOMES
NEW MUSLIM TOWN LAHORE
TEL: 839122 FAX: 867440
Sorry I don't have the prefixes.

FROM THE EDITOR

Greetings. As I sit writing this in late August, I realise that in all possibility by the time this reaches you the Newsletter stands a good chance of being tardy. Response to my plea for State News gatherers, introductions and information was mixed. On the one hand, I have had some welcome contributions from those recently arrived back from foreign climes. On the other, there has been no response, particularly from the western States. I have also had an enthusiastic response from some of our New Zealand members. It seems that puppetry is alive, well and flourishing over there. And of course, regular contributors and news gatherers for the Newsletter have again come through.

A suggestion from Dennis Murphy was that I tell you about my background in puppetry. My first introduction to puppetry in practice was in 1987. I was studying Stagecraft/Performance in a Certificate course offered by TAFE after having spent the previous 8 years travelling around Australia, Pacific and SE Asia and becoming a parent. The puppetry teacher in that course was Andrew Hanson of Handspan Theatre. It was a very basic but thorough grounding that spanned a period of 12 weeks. (It was helpful to have had previous craft and design skills and a familiarity with various mediums.) My interest and practice in puppetry continued while studying further at Melbourne University.

I am currently doing my final year Dramaturgy component of an Arts Degree. I received a Writer's Grant from Melbourne Uni Theatre Board in 1992 for a piece I am still working on. For the immediate present I am directing a cast of 10 in a puppetry/acting fusion, written collectively with 6 other students. "Honk If You're On Lithium" is a black comedy that explores the notion of normality by examining various aspects of mental illness. The puppetry elements of this play are extremely simple, and I hope therefore, achievable by my beginner puppeteers, effectivity relying on their placement within the overall structure of the play. This is scheduled to open on the 15th Sept. at the Open Stage (cr Swanston St and Grattan St, Carlton) and consequently I am frantically busy right now.

I am a shameless eclectic, have an adventurous nature and consequently my artistic pursuits are generally on the experimental side, being particularly interested in cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary practices.

Generally, I think that the audience needs to be respected, a certain amount of engagement and/or readability is necessary for your spectators and I try to resist being too obscure or self-indulgent. I believe that a performance/cultural theory and performance practice interface has something definite to offer in terms of strengthening and clarifying our work, both individually and collectively. An awareness of the responsibilities of representation and, paradoxically, audience manipulation is certainly something that has become a keen focus for me since being introduced to dramaturgical thinking.

I think an open and active discourse on these topics is to be encouraged and this Newsletter is one of a few possible forums available to Australian puppeteers. I think that it's important for the Australian puppetry community to not only draw together, but to be actively engaged in discourse and a cross-fertilisation of ideas. I realise that there are many different styles of work, many different target audiences and different working motivations. Nevertheless, this shouldn't inhibit open discussion. If you have any concerns, queries, topics for debate, information, please send them for the next issue (December); I will be looking forward to receiving some copy.....Ed.