



July/August

No 12 60p

The Regular Review of Live Art in the UK

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Cabaret Futura Moves On

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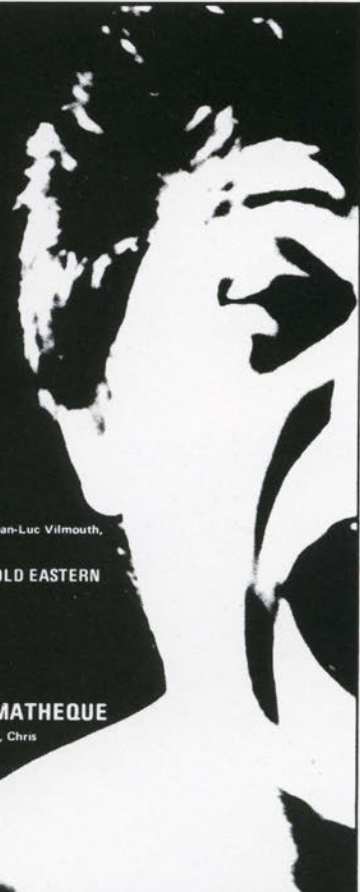
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Editor Rob La Frenais
Review Editor Luke Dixon
Design Editor Chloe Nevett
Associate Editors
Lynn McRitchie
Pete Shelton
Margurite McLaughlin
Bruce Bayley
Contributors
Andrea Hill
Paul Burwell
John Roberts
Phil Hyde
Neil Hornick
Tom Castle
Ian Hinchliffe
Paul Lyons
Liz Stolls
Charles Hustwick
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CONTENTS

LETTERS	4
CRITICS AND DOORMATS	6
CABARET FUTURA MOVES ON	8
STATE PERFORMANCE	10
PERFORMED MUSIC	15
RICHARD LAYZELL	17
SHOW TRIAL	21
REVIEWS	25
ARTIST'S DOCUMENTATION	30
LISTINGS	32

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LETTERS

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE ADMINISTRATION OF.....

In response to the impressive publicity aimed at prospective exhibitors sponsors and galleries we put forward an ambitious project fashioned specifically for..... At that point we were under the impression that our work was being entered for a prestigious exhibition that would be well organized and free of financial problems.

Ten days before the opening of the exhibition we finally receive confirmation that a venue has indeed been found where it is and a request to us to telephone the Gallery in to arrange the final date for our performance. This timing has effectively precluded us receiving any benefits from our performing in other than that of the audience of the day. It is now impossible for us to receive any previews or reviews or to organize our work being seen by representatives of any funding bodies we may submit to in the future as all such organizations require up to three months notice.

We have also just received a contract in the name of Charlie Garner (sic) offering us £50 of our expenses in advance (less than the return fare to for us both) the balance of £170 to be paid after the performance. It now seems quite impossible that we can even visit let alone perform there.

As one of the principles of was to "increase the chances of artists selling their work" and as performance artists have nothing to sell but themselves why should they be expected to perform for just expenses? If painters were merely paid the cost of paint and canvas paintings would just get bigger.

We wish it understood that although the nature of our proposed performance is apparently funny and that to receive claims for fees for "gay musclemen" may strike the administration as being hilarious our attitude to Performance is entirely serious. Performance Art is not a joke nor does it just happen. In the case of this particular performance both participants i.e. he who would subject himself to being whipped and he who would have to go through having to whip may well and do ask themselves "Why should I go through that for an audience of six art devotees in?"

Performance Art is not theatre. It exists in real time. It is not faked repeatable oractable. It is not a painting, it cannot be packaged posted unwrapped and hung. It requires the living presence of the artist at a moment for which s/he has been preparing but has not yet experienced.

Also with reference to our particular performance we wish to point out that this is and always was a joint project by/

of Charles Hustwick and Charlie Pig. It is therefore understood that for us to receive correspondence and finally contracts addressed solely to one of the participants suggests the nature of our performance and its content based on a dialogue (in whatever finalized form it attains in performance) has never been perceived or comprehended. To receive correspondence addressed solely to one of the participants creates negative tensions which make it difficult to work jointly on our project.

It is quite possible that knowing that his gallery would cease to operate decided to pull off the biggest practical joke of his career by lumbering

with a load of performance artists. The joke as usual is at the expense of the artist.

This letter is in no way intended as a personal criticism of (organizer). We realize that with the closure of the gallery he was left in an untenable position. We appreciate the great lengths to which has been in trying to accommodate this performance. We feel however that at this stage we cannot be passed on to yet another person.

Charles Hustwick & Charlie Pig
Block C
Norfolk House
Brookmill Rd
Deptford, London SE8

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Critics and..

In the last issue of Performance Magazine Shirley Cameron wrote at some length, and Roland Miller rather briefly in reply to Lynn McRitchie's article about them in the previous issue. Not all their criticisms were just, particularly those suggesting that McRitchie's rather circumspect remarks were 'careless', but it's always a happy day when disagreements are aired publicly, rather than being left to fester on the grapevine. While not wishing to prolong that particular battle, this does seem a good point to pause and consider what may reasonably be asked of writers with regard to performance art, and also to air some grievances of my own.

Cameron and Miller are not the first artists to feel they've been given a raw deal by a critic and McRitchie's article, as I have said, was by no means a bloodbath. I'm told that performance art circles are more sensitive than the visual art world in this respect; that performance artists feel themselves to be more vulnerable and less supported than more orthodox artists; and that while eggs, tomatoes and empty beer cans can be thrown with impunity by writers at mainstream painters and sculptors, this sort of behaviour is not considered good etiquette by the performance world. A possible explanation is this:

Among critics of all kinds (including more outside the art press) there is a widely respected but largely unspoken ground

'Performance Art is shunted off.... and generally treated to the rough side of what is already a seedy field'

rule that it's perfectly acceptable, and in some cases even agreeable, to go for the jugular of a well known established artist (or writer or actor) because they will survive and reach their audience regardless. With someone just starting out, on the other hand, it's recognised that criticism needs to be gentler and more constructive, more positive. I venture with some hesitation the theory that, in this country anyway, where being an artist is bad

enough, but being a performance artist is an incomprehensible endeavour, the younger artist - older artist syndrome is a metaphor for the performance world - art world relationship. That is, a performance artist, regardless of real age and stage of career, is perpetually in the position of needing to be treated with care (excluding, of course a handful of living legends) and requiring to be explained to the public and fortified with encouraging words. This propping up is needed because there's always mainstream modern art or the theatre to dominate and confuse the observer; to obliterate the unconventional message. Thus the performance artist's most ferocious and constant complaint is that they've been judged 'bad theatre' or 'bad art'; i.e. held up to standards which are not applicable. A terrible mental laziness on the part of practically everybody plus natural rebelliousness on the part of performance artists themselves means that performance art is shunted off into some obscure intellectual corner, treated unimaginatively and no more than dutifully by contemporary art historians, made to be performed in venues which are in many cases geographically as well as ideologically fringe, given absurd and preposterous write-ups in the national press and generally treated to the rough side of what is an already seedy field.

For one reason or another, because of 'marginalisation' by comparison with the art and theatre worlds, and because of fragmentation in the performance world itself, there seems not to be any solid and unified identity to which performance artists can subscribe (in the way that painters often see themselves as part of the historical flow of painting, even while holding all kinds of sub-views.) Neither does there appear to be a single ideological umbrella under which performance artists can shelter from the poison sometimes rained on them by critics. There is no integration, either internally, or with regard to what is usually referred to as 'high art'. Therefore the performance world is everlastingly in the position of the young artist, and its writers are (or are effectively) perpetually placed in an over-

extending position.

The Performance Magazine's writers differ in their manner of treating artists, but one thing they all reflect is the exaggerated scattering of beliefs and attitudes towards what properly constitutes performance art. This can cause somewhat different problems for each individual writer than the issue of whether or not to be nasty, but it adds up to the same thing.... there's little to cut your

'Attempts to compare or apply anything but the most flexible of standards is seen as an imposition'

teeth on. Impossible to order, group, cross reference artists and ideas except in the most obvious ways (theatrical performance, self-injuring performance, minimal performance, women's performance) everything seems to be all over the place. Resistance is strong on all sides to anything that smacks of "classification". Attempts to compare or apply anything but the most flexible of standards is seen to be an imposition, rather than as what they are — an interesting added dimension to the experience of art. Not the *only* dimension but a good exercise for those who want to engage in it.

I once took upon myself the task of reading through in an afternoon, one copy each of Performance, ZG and PS. I'll tell you right now it was a mistake. Some individual articles were gems but the whole lot together were so wildly diverse that the only way to integrate them would have been to borrow an approach from John Latham: Chew them up page by page and spit them into a bottle. As I recall, there was not a single overlap or congruence in artists, in ideas, or arguments. It's true they're all dealing with different concerns and motivated in a variety of ways, but still, they're all that we've got. To someone from the visual arts, an important show is an important show, all the magazines will cover it, a range of opinions will be accepted. (Granted, something like this did begin to happen with 'About Time',

Doormats

and may yet happen with the recent Brisley retrospective — but still it's rare.) With art history it's the same. Dozens of articles and full books have been written about somebody as recent as Jackson Pollock — where would you find the same concentration of as many writers taking an assortment of viewpoints on any single performance artist? (again excepting those who have been assimilated into the mainstream — the Beuys's, the Cunninghams, the Kaprows.) An art critic will think nothing of sitting down on a whim and writing an essay on Monet. A performance critic (and the very term sounds inappropriate) is hardly ever inclined to use the pages of any of the above journals to say a few thousand words about an analogous historical figure. There's no reason at all to suppose that performance journals should be anything like art journals, but equally there's no reason why they can't take themselves more seriously — which does not mean of course writing in ponderous deadly prose. Somehow it's not helpful, though it is vastly entertaining, to read unassimilated interviews with Kenneth Williams, or others, or even our own explorations of the showbiz world. Too much escape into whackiness and zaniness... we're too eager to adopt the persona of the jovial hack. These things need tying in, if they need to be there at all.

As someone who would rather die than

'In some ways, the ideal performance magazine would consist of nothing but interviews, documentation, scripts, and descriptive essays....'

execute a public performance, I can't say whether or not performance artists enjoy being mixed in with all manner of strange and wonderful events. Perhaps it's felt that diversity helps to keep the scene open, to preserve the democratic virtues which are undoubtedly among the most attractive aspects of performance. But for writers — (for this one anyway) — it's hell. You go into a bookshop to do a little research and there's nothing there. All your writing

starts to plunge into free association, (nobody to compare your opinions to) or giving the biographical details of the artist/group under discussion (can't assume anyone knows who they are) or going back to square one and explaining why it's not theatre. There's seldom a chance to examine anything. Everybody seems to be off on a different tangent. There are no paths of understanding, no common frame of reference, except one: that whatever it is, it's something kicking against the category, the classification. Other than that, nothing whatsoever can be obtained.

What is performance writing for? First and foremost it is a source of information. Once the performance is over, it's gone. You can't go and have a look at it in the artist's studio or look up a reproduction in an art book. Performance artists seem not to have the need that painters and sculptors have to externalise themselves in a solid object. Consequently, a large part of what *remains* in the performance artist's work is the attitude, the stance, the motivation. One aim of performance writing is therefore to keep the art alive after it (or the artist) is dead, and describing to those who didn't have a chance to see it. In some ways, the ideal performance magazine would consist of nothing but interviews, documentation, scripts and descriptive essays by writers saying everything the artist would like to have said. There's only one problem: presenting an artist as he or she would like to be presented, in careful language, with no wayward opinions attached, is often boring to read, and boring for the person to write. No writer with spirit can act as a press agent. As the adman says: It's more depressing than detergent.

Albeit that genuine enthusiasm is the most pleasant emotion for the critic, the happiest for the artist, and the easiest for the reader; where total enthusiasm does *not* occur, which is not infrequently for those who see a great deal of work, then the area where artists and critics meet is an arena, a battlefield. It's said that an enthusiastic critic that's careless can in fact damage an artist as much as a negative one. Over-praise can stifle the development as badly

as slander. The former at worst sows seeds of complacency, the latter only of extreme irritation.... just another word for adrenalin. When anger begins between artists and critics, and when that anger becomes public, to the publication of articles and retorted letters, then something fruitful begins to happen.

A magazine the size of Performance Magazine (that is, not a very big size) cannot possible do extensive damage to

'We are working on the understanding that all our readers and writers constitute a supporting circle'

anybody's reputation or livelihood. What is said here will go no further than that segment of the art and theatre world addicted to art magazines. Things can be said therefore, that we wouldn't dream of saying in, say, a national newspaper where there are prejudices of the general population to contend with. We are working on the understanding that all our readers and writers constitute a supporting circle. That's what makes negativity possible on a sensible level. Were we addressing the general reader we would probably close ranks and defend everything in sight simply to keep annihilation at bay.

What can be said is this: critics have difficulties with their work that parallel those that artists have. Many writers for art magazines *are* artists, but even those who aren't have to worry about getting published, getting read, getting paid, developing a style, developing one's ideas and intellect, keeping informed not only about what artists are doing but about what other critics are doing. There are some people we want to write about and others we don't. If we think something is a bad idea we have to write and say so. Artists, particularly performance artists, have over countless generations defended their right to be abusive, shocking, provocative and nasty. Who is going to deny critics, especially in such small circles, the same rights?

Andrea Hill



Photos by Robin Morley

Serenaded by the music press, gently mocked by this magazine, Richard Strange's Cabaret Futura became in its final weeks a worthy, if unpredictable, recipient of all the attention. A little pretentious, moderately self-conscious, it was nevertheless more than just a great place for a night out neo-romanticising. By the end of Strange's reign the real trendies had come and gone. The acts, largely loud and bad, became progressively more interesting as the night wore on and therefore elevating the place to the status of an endurance test.

Apart from the regularly and increasingly popular Event Group, now playing in Final Solution's promotions at places like Heaven, the performance bill was random and varied, failed tap dancers, a dry song duo called Eddie and Sunshine (heading full tilt to topple the ubiquitous Biddie and Eve from their kitsch nightclub act monopoly). Timon Dogg —

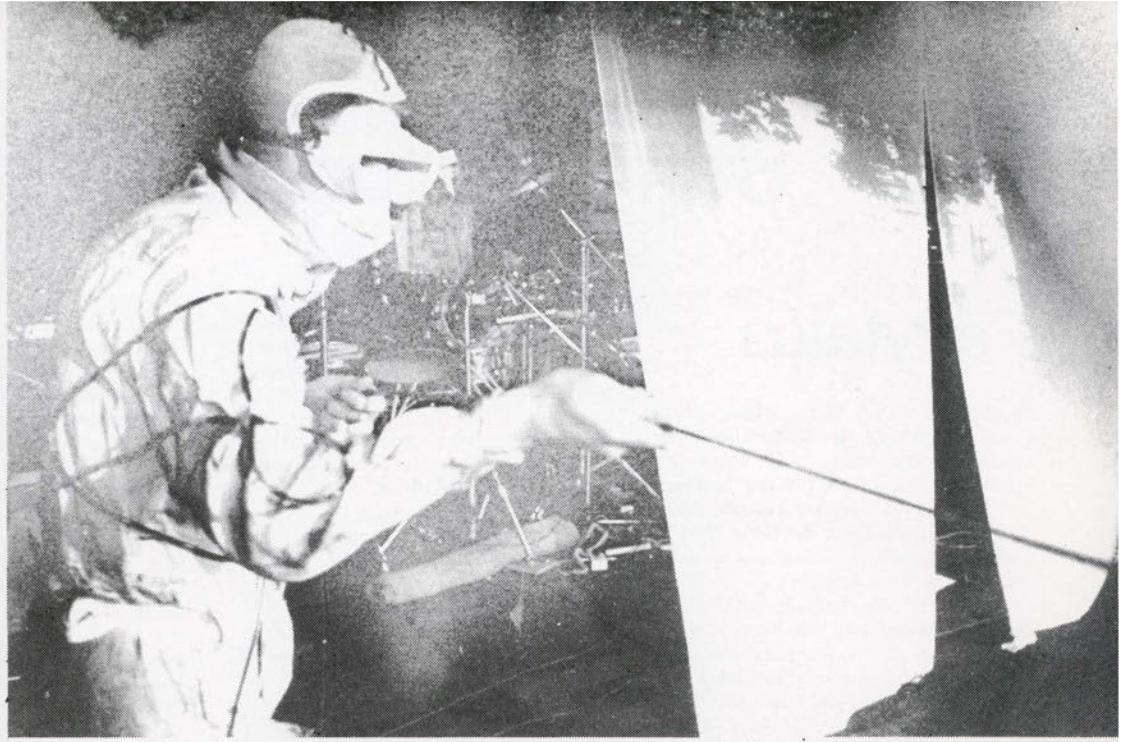
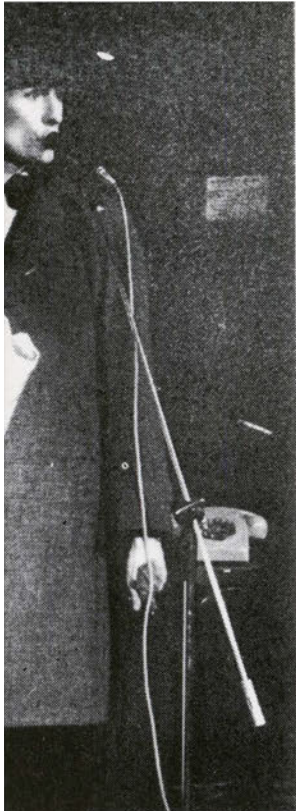
one man and his guitar and harmonica singing protest songs from the sixties in a quirky, modern, energetic, manner; the tumultuous 'Everest — the Hard Way' the Bowiesque and brilliant Phillip Jap combining solidly competent rock music with superbly sharp mime technique and a professional presentation quite unexpected in this Soho dive. For Soho Dive it is, housed in the bowels of the Latin Quarter Club (going since the fifties) at the bottom end of Wardour Street. With its planetarium ceiling and glitterball, small 'restaurant' and large bars, it is nothing if not a 'real' setting for performance. Tourists who have arrived on the wrong night for its other more traditional incarnation 'Scandals' (with gay blue movies) drinkers seeking small-hours solace at the bar, addicts mesmerised by the Space invaders in the foyer, fringe types actually there to see the performers, and, perhaps

most important of all, other performers along to keep in touch.

After his run there, Richard Strange took his entourage around the country on tour, and it will be an interesting and constructive side effect if some of the huge audience for rock outside London become interested in live art as a result. The Event Group, who combine images of cosmetic outrage and disgust with a pounding disco-bass line certainly show the crowds the way, brandishing miked up cricket-bats and actually *encouraging* them to throw beer-cans, shades of 'audience participation' no less. A stirring sight, though if you get a chance to see them. But now, a stricter, more esoteric regime holds sway.

Cabaret Futura has been left to the custody of Ann Bean and one Hermine and as a consequence may have been given just the uplift it needed when on the verge of becoming merely passé. Hermine and Bean's first night started off with some minimalist movies, somewhat different and rather less interesting than the buttocks and balls that had flickered across the screen an hour or two earlier, and after that it was live acts all the way. And this was not Alternative Cabaret yet alone New Variety.... this was performance art.

A visual cross between Dylan Thomas



Far left: Hermine with Andrew Logan. Below: Ann Bean. Centre: Eddie and Sunshine. Above: Event Group

and Bernard Manning with an eloquent touch of the brogue, John Mackeon, the Fritz Kreisler of the fringe, brought things to a belated beginning with his *fin de siècle* fiddle playing and calculated sexism; there was Safe House, an acerbic rock band with an ethnic touch and an opening number in Punjabi; an off-duty Cripps exploded in and out with a lively little number for clarinet and machine gun, the sequenced bangers that accompanied the clarinet leaving fluorescent green bits strewn across the stage.

Paul Burwell looked magnificent as he drummed, his freshly shaven head emblazoned with red paint. Ann Bean meanwhile read from a book emblazoned with real flames. Bean's second piece in which she mouthed 'white man's gotta God complex' while thrusting a knife point into the various tubes of black liquid strung about her body, left her intermittently barking audience measled with dark spots. The merely curious had by now begun departing for the mellower haven of Ronnie Scott's though it is indicative of something that both Scott's and the 100 Club are about to close for good while Cabaret Futura flourishes.

Crushed with people as the show moves

deeper into the night, Cabaret Futura is as noisy and hot as Ronnie Scott's but the harsh unsubtle lighting brings out the tawdry rather than the Ritzy aspects of the venue — at two in the morning this is certainly no Heaven — and there is all the strident glamour of an ICA Young Contemporaries Exhibition opening in a disordered shoe box. Amidst the feedback and beer cans there are the inevitable longeurs — the swiftness with which Richard Strange whisked his acts off and on so as to keep interest from flagging has not yet been re-established — but the lovely Hermine keeps things moving along as best she can in her amazink French accent (can it be coincidence that The French, Soho's last bastion of bohemia, acts as a pre-Cabaret rendezvous). On her first night Hermine took Roy Plomley's role in asking Andrew Logan, for it was he, what records he would like to have with him on a desert island (Baby Face, 'Death in Venice' Mahler and Muscle Beach Party if you really want to know).

The climax to the first evening under the new regime was provided by Furious Pig, four scraggy youths with mouths as wide agape as those of baby cuckoos, using such expressions as booga, ah, ssh, yeeaa and

just about every other combination of letters that you will not find in the Shorter Oxford. Their best number was full of booga booga and entitled 'I wanna call this one the Royal Wedding but we think it's a bit topical'.

For those old enough to remember, this smokey subterranean den of novelty may bring back echoes of times past at the long defunct Howff in Regents Park where the senior generation of performers, Phantom Captain et al, then warm from Jim Hayne's arts lab, flourished through the evening and cabareted through the night. Whether Cabaret Futura will leave the lasting impression of the Arts Lab or the Howff we will one day know but at the moment it has the precarious transience of an art school party invaded by a gaping public, a poor man's Chelsea Arts Ball that may be all but forgotten next season. The Demolition Decorators' haphazard houseparties of a couple of years back attracted a comparable following and attention and perhaps Cabaret Futura is a similarly isolated phenomenon. That there is nothing else like it in London may say as much about the paucity of night life in the capital as about the originality of the cabaret itself. **Luke Dixon Paul K Lyons**

Cabaret Futura moves on

State Performance

Fairytales

Once again we are in the midst of what Claude Cockburn once called, the "consensus of exuberance". Cockburn was referring to George V's Silver Jubilee in 1935. 1935 was dominated by the Means Test Hunger Marches and riots. 1981 has been dominated by — but that would be spoiling the story wouldn't it.

On the 29th July in St. Paul's Cathedral bitter-sweet fairytale will become joyous spectacle, in which church and monarchy will envision their common ascent. Over 700 million viewers will watch 3000 guests watch the Very Reverend Alan Webster perform the marriage vows. A global, pan-cultural extravaganza; ecumenical splendour will rub shoulders with military power and Royal grace.

The Prince and future king after a long and at times disappointing search has found his princess, who, as the story demands, has turned out to be none other than the girl-next-door, and (to the uncontrollable delight of Debrett's) a sixteenth cousin twice removed. A veritable "English Rose". Abetted by Fleet Street's obsessive desire to finish the story before it had begun, their romance became an open confrontation between the monarchy's wish for privacy in its personal matters and Fleet Street's "obligation" to report everything it could about the burgeoning relationship. Fleet Street's powers of perseverance and ingenuity were tested by Charles' half-obliging, half-misleading responses. In fact one gets the impression from reading Harry Arnold's *Charles and Diana — A Royal Love Story*, that press and Royalty were working out for the benefit of their readers some prewritten script in which excitable, scoop-hungry reporters and aloof Royals conducted an elaborate, weary game of oneupmanship. All this of course has given the story its mysterious edge; an imbroglio of half-truths, furtive whispers, secret assignments, in which dashing prince and vulnerable princess are hounded by an unkind and selfish mob. The romance, true to the conventions of pure love, was conducted against adversity. Lady Diana was smuggled in and out of Sandringham and Balmoral, escorted by plain clothes policemen to the door of her Kensington flat. But although protected to a certain extent by friends and family and Royal protocol, she wasn't able to avoid all public confrontations with the press. Her public baptism of fire as "Di — the new girlfriend of the Prince of Wales" was her *Royal rite de passage*, the harsh test of her suitability as potential wife to Prince Charles.

Utmost discretion was demanded all the time. Ironically her discretion earned her praise and respect from the press hounds and actually increased their curiosity.

Sex is not something that is given lightly or at all in Mills and Boon land. The romance was free of any signs of public physicality because both Charles and Diana knew that as participants in a public morality play their conduct would be



susceptible to misinterpretation and innuendo. As 'contender' the weight of this responsibility fell on Diana. Once the engagement was announced it was then safe to talk, if not about sex, then about procreation and direct descent. The court astrologers (no longer employed by the Palace but by the women's magazines) soon got to work: "A boy and then a girl will be born within the first four years of their marriage, and after a space of a few years, perhaps a third child".

Children have been one of the leitmotifs of the story. What could have been better than having the future Queen of England working as a nursery assistant. Those now famous *contre jour* photos of Di at the Young England School are the very basis of the symbolic framework that has been built into the romance. It functions on two

levels: as a pure, fairytale image, a madonna; and as an image of awakening sexuality. No wonder that around the world it was this image that Picture Editors chose to put on their front pages. This hot/cold image symbolizes where she has come from and the power invested in her future — her procreative and public duties. It is in its purest sense prefigurative — the girl who will become Woman, who will become Queen. Since the engagement, these new meanings have been set in to operation. The transformation from the shy girlish figure in the Young England photos, to the regal, imperial figure on the cover of the Official souvenir is not simply the girl-made-woman, but the site of a whole new order of things. Her virtue is no longer her own.

It is not surprising then that as a woman she had to carry an overwhelming moral load, or to borrow a phrase from Dale Spender, has had to do the "shitwork". The sexual double-standard of the romantic novel is a familiar trope (the hero is allowed a shady past, the heroine nothing other than a virtuous one or at the most a broken marriage if repentful) it is therefore no surprise to see this line reaffirmed in the fanzines. Diana has no form (the racing terminology has been common practice in all the brouhaha) Charles has a bit of a roguish, playboy past. He has the satisfaction of having played the field, Diana the satisfaction she hasn't. "Dishey Diana" Harry Arnold writes, "is acceptable in every way to the Queen and Prince. She is quiet spoken, unassuming and has an impeccable background". She has been the model of female silence. Harry Arnold again: "Charles had long ago decided that a wife would have to know her place". Most of his former girlfriends (divided in the fanzines between the golden girl who got away and the thorn in the side) failed to marry Charles because they either showed too much independence or were too demanding or careless with their views, or were seen with other men. Beyond temptation (she refused the advances of many men her flatmates revealed) Diana hasn't put a foot wrong, she has been polite to press, deferent towards Charles' demands for total discretion, and a willing pupil to the Queen and Queen Mother in the ways of Royal responsibility. What the fanzines have constantly emphasized is her adaptability and patience. Her patience like that of the nurse or the nun brings its own rewards. It has been claimed that Lady Diana has kept a photo of Prince Charles at various times over her bed since she was eleven and that when asked by a friend a few years ago what she would like to be when she grew up she replied "I would love to be a successful dancer or

maybe the Princess of Wales". Not only has Charles man of action, lover, 'come home' so to speak, but Diana too has fulfilled the greatest of all her dreams. "Next to Prince Charles, I can't go wrong. He's there with me".

Hundreds of other couples will marry on the same day, some will even do their best to copy the dress and pageantry of the wedding, some no doubt will call their future children Charles and Diana. The wedding will bring with it not only a sense of style but a message, a strong emotional empathy. Unity and loyalty are the great *idée fixe* of the Queen's Christmas speech — the emotional bedrock of all political rhetoric. The Wedding of the Year will show more than anything the transfiguration of individual loyalty to one another in marriage into a social and religious consensus. This I presume is one of the "qualities" the Official souvenir tells us the marriage will symbolize. Reagan's "moral majority" couldn't have been more diplomatically put.

Royal commentators talk about the changing role of the Royal family, in particular its new found 'independence' and outspokenness — or gaffs one might say. Charles as emissary, diplomat and all round public servant is the focus of this new relationship. Charles has become 'professionalized'; the new populist aspirations of the monarchy, under the guidance of the media, has carved out a new dynamic for the Royal family, a mixture of the common touch (the walk about, the jokes and risqué language) and tough P.R. work abroad. Part and parcel of this new dynamic is the way Prince Charles' and the Royal family's image has been increasingly 'democratized'. In the *contre jour* photos of Lady Diana we are shown a 'working' image, albeit relaxed and elegant. (Lady Diana like many young well-connected ladies is the first generation of aristocratic women to eschew the trappings of the debutante life-style and seek independence through work). The notion of work, the image of work, has played the central role in how we see Prince Charles dealing with the world. On one hand we not only see him talking to industry but speaking for it at guild meetings, trade delegations and so forth. Similarly the Royal Family's acceptance of Brian Organ's recent portrait of Prince Charles relaxing in a chair in his polo gear, is an acceptance that court portraiture has a part to play in establishing these new meanings. The portrait is *informel*, unpretentious, owing more to the hard critical glare of hyper-realism than Winterhalter and Sir George Hayter. It is clear that the increase in popularity of the monarchy is due in part to this careful stage-setting, in which the vulgarity and ostentation of earlier generations has been replaced by an image-conscious pragmatism — press and monarchy work for each other on the understanding that what is at stake is the 'democracy' of Britain and its standing in the world community as a whole.

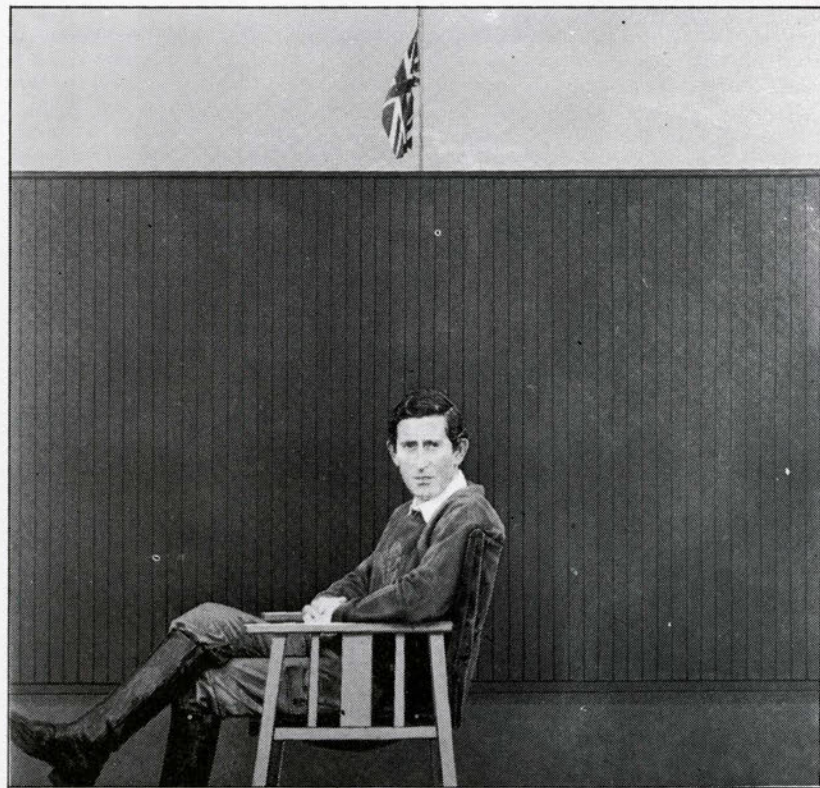
But that is only part of it for what will make The Wedding of the Year surpass all

other recent state occasions is its heightened sense of other worldliness. Ronald Reagan will be there, so will Marget Thatcher, but Tony Benn has decided against it, Mrs Ghandi will be there, but General Amin will not, Spike Milligan has said yes, but Barbara Cartland has said no. In dulcet tones commentators will recall Queen Elizabeth's wedding in 1947 and how she had to save up her clothing coupons for her dress. Lady Diana's dress will be thought of as "startling, original, a real departure". Willie Hamilton will be quoted as saying "mush". The following day the Stock Exchange will be bouyant. A Charles and a Diana married on the same day will be discovered by the *Star*, the *Sun* and the

Daily Mirror. Their story will make them celebrities. A thousand parties will begin and a million flags will flutter. The following day the *Morning Star* will print a brief notice on its back page. Anti-Royalist graffiti will be discovered near the Mall. A telegram from President Nixon will be one of many read out on T.V. Granja Forbes, Court Correspondent of the Press Association will be asked: What will Lady Diana be taking on honeymoon with her? Over 50,000 cards and letters of congratulation will arrive at the Palace. On the following day people will say it was the most beautiful thing they have ever seen. "It was just like a fairytale".

John Roberts

Painting by Brian Organ.



The State Performs

When Princess Margaret was on Desert Island Discs recently, she made the astounding choice of several jaunty, up-tempo military marches. Astounding because of its obviousness, the choice went full tilt against the image sold to us by the *media of a sophisticated modern constitutional monarchy* stripped of its anachronisms; its members waterskiing, discoing, windsurfing, relaxing with corgis, piloting aircraft etc. A travelogue of human activities made only faintly bizarre by its ridiculously expanded scope. But

Margaret, (the black sheep even, having stepped for a brief period outside the charmed circle) with her choice, brought home all we had secretly suspected: yes they *do* wake up every morning by the means of a military band placed *conveniently beneath each bedroom window*.

They live and breathe pageantry, from birth the epicentre of a gigantic icon, a stark, solid but gaudy machine with gilded knobs, a primary coloured monolith activated by the beating of drums, the blowing of trumpets, the billowing of flags. The

changing of the guard, trooping of the colour, all the precise codified rituals surrounding the emblems of power composes the everyday environment of the Royal Family. They grew up within it. It runs in their veins; they don't notice it, like the smell of fresh paint everywhere they go.

The same may well go for large sections of the British public, too. Although the place just up the road from the ICA in the Mall where all this pomp and ceremony is conducted is largely ignored except for gaping tourists, the country/military families who turn up for the special occasions and when the 'popular' events like weddings and jubilees happen, the affairs around the palace are still an unseen focus for a nation-state which has not seen a revolution for centuries, an invasion for ten centuries. Turn an eye to the trooping of the colour, for example, and the constituent parts of a drumbeat national consciousness are still to be sensed amongst the symbolism, the music and the colour. No artistic aesthetic this: here is the vulgar iconography of power. The coats of arms, the uniforms and the banners are all keys to ancient feudal loyalties, favours bestowed, lands carved up. And they all spell out one thing: the continuation of dynastic might (not necessarily British, but Anglo-Saxon). Forgetting the frailty of the human machinery that makes up the huge wash of red, black and gold in the parade (the guardsmen who drop like flies in the heat, still standing to attention, a tribute to British masochism) it is not impossible to avoid being touched by the awesome permanence of the spectacle. Not to mention the culture-shock caused by the audacity of all this vivid soldiery strutting and swirling in perfect sequence within the centre of a modern, sprawling, decaying city like London.

One does not need to be a heraldic expert or a psychoanalyst to appreciate that there is strong archetypal symbolism tied up in the visual art of State. Vulgarised it may be, the basics are all there. The Lion, the Unicorn, the Dragon and the (Prince of Wales') Feathers are mystical devices intended to bind and unite the subjects and subject nations of the United Kingdom. The creatures are all well known inhabitants of the subconscious mind. On the insignia, which, by way of keeping Her Majesty's subjects in thrall, is seen discreetly, subliminally, pretty well from birth onwards on school exercise books, all official forms, passports, etc. by everyone living here. Either side of the slogan 'Honi Soit Qui Mal Y Pense' the Lion is triumphant, and the unicorn (symbol of intuition, occult force) is in chains. Both have penises in official renderings. Like the eye in the pyramid on the US dollar note, the esoteric nature of the monarchic trappings can prove a ripe field for the conspiracy-theorist.

Certainly, without even attempting to stretch the imagination too far on the subject, it could be said that the ancient resonances are so effectively nurtured to the

extent that, when faced with the rows of bearskins and hypnotised by the thundering of drums, all the world's instability flies out of the window and any aspirations to bring about change in this country through politics, social action, or art seem to flounder in the face of this battery of rooted, emblematic triggers.

Quite appropriate therefore, that recently an unemployed seventeen year old nearly managed to upset this appercart of pomp and circumstance. By firing a few blanks, he managed to break the inhuman line of bearskins, (all of which fell off in the ensuing struggle) and that distant mounted figure, the red-uniformed woman who is for some reason of birth the recipient of all this brandishing and presenting of arms, unfurling of colours and holding of agonised frozen salutes, nearly fell off her horse. The psychopathology of assassina-tion (the mystical equation whereby the ordinary feel the need to wrest symbolic energy from the immensely powerful by publicly taking their life) goes beyond the scope of this article and is anyway outweighed by the inevitability of such an event in a country where unemployment is the accepted by-product of a twisted economic doctrine that directs yet more wealth into the uncharted reaches of the dynastically advantaged. The fact that the use of blank cartridges makes this a performance event is the icing on the cake.

I am not sure whether what I am saying will quite apply to the coming wedding. There is a smack of Ruritania around the events leading up to and around His Royal Highness The Prince Charles Philip Arthur George, Prince of Wales and Earl of Chester, Duke of Cornwall and Rothesay, Earl of Carrick, Baron of Renfrew, Lord of the Isles and Great Steward of Scotland KG, KT, GCB, AK being married off. They are pulling out all sorts of gross visual aids apart from the usual glass coach and massed flypasts. A firework display, for example, which includes an incendiary replica of the pair, all their obvious facial features outlined by roman candles and catherine wheels, which is supposed to float up 100 feet in the air. Parading as it does up and down the Street of Shame, amid all the flunkeys, there will be the usual corny attempts to cover up the anachronisms. Runcie's carefully ecumenical sermon, the elevation of current chic in the Emmanuel's' dress to State chic...(and thence, swiftly following the fate of Hartnell and others to suburban tawdriness).

All, as I say, a bit Ruritanian. But once the dust settles, once back to the palaces and keyed back into those carefully timed, scarcely noticed state rituals, the unseen panoply of power continues exerting its subtle influence on the stability of the State. The heirophantic muscle quietly flexes, the Lion and the Unicorn hold sway over the little community of exalted humans, with distant military music filtering in through the constant smell of fresh paint.

Rob La Frenais

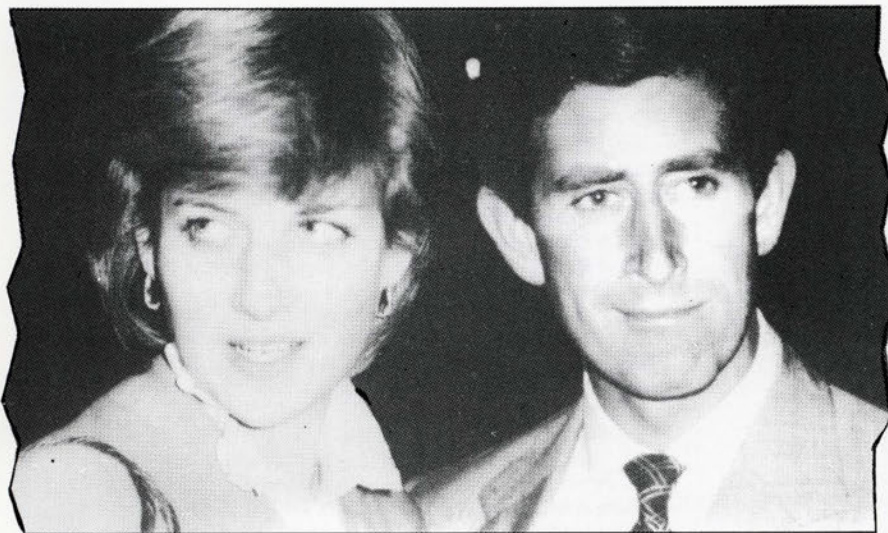
The Wedding of the Year

I suppose that weddings are one of the few occasions on which ordinary people can directly experience ceremonial. For the couple, a public plighting of troth. For the guests, a duty of celebration. Something for everyone, unlike baptisms and funerals, those other universal rites, which surely exist for the onlookers rather than the principal participants. Christmas and Easter, in this most half-hearted of religious countries, don't really count. So no wonder the 'Wedding of the Year' would seem to have won so many hearts and minds. There's nothing like a little empathy to ensure interest, and a wedding is something that most of us surely have experienced sometime in one way or another.

The Royal Family, though distanced from the rest of us by history and status, are still people. Thus the empathy doesn't work quite like it does in the cinema, say. For not only are the Royal Family exemplary, they are also known to be real. Impersonation is not involved. What must be considered is embodiment, the physical incarnation of certain virtues — leavened carefully and publicly with just enough 'human' quirks to keep them interesting.

For, like many others, I was brought up on tales of the royals, carefully recorded in the pages of *Woman and Woman's Own*. I knew about Princess Margaret's weight problems and talents as a mimic long before her marriage to artistic Tony Armstrong Jones was announced. I know that the Queen always travels everywhere preceded by cases of Malvern Water. Princess Anne, it's said, is not really fond of children (she has built a swimming pool for her horses). Prince Charles' lengthy bachelor state caused increasing anxiety and lengthy speculation as to his eventual 'choice'. So now, with Lady Diana, 19, pretty and 'just perfect', the sighing of relief is almost audible.

Audible because it is so general. For empathy and interest are most certainly there. Carefully nurtured, subtly encouraged, a majority of the nation is in thrall. How is it done? I stumbled on a clue to the method on a recent visit to the cinema. Sitting through 'Mrs Miniver', that most exemplary of wartime melodramas so skillfully directed by William Wyler, I found a salt tear or two softening my cynical smile as the family saga unfolded. In amongst the sentiment, the turning screw struck home. Just as I am rivetted now by details of Lady Di — her ailing father, her love for her natural mother and dislike for her step-mother, the unfortunate Raine-so the Minivers' story-gracious mother, wise father, brave and dashing son, tragic love and sudden death — I eagerly devoured. The key to the mystery of the power of such a response would seem to lie in a simple principle — what *not* to show. Potential sources of conflict are kept carefully hidden. The Minivers, for example,



have children, three of them. But mother and father have single beds from which, tucked up apart, they bid each other a fond goodnight. On their honeymoon, the Minivers' son Vin and his young bride Carol went walking and ate well — "How we ate!" Similar single beds awaited them on their return. Mr Miniver, though always busy and evidently rich (much is made of his purchase of a dashing sports car) is never seen to work.

The point of royal occasions, like the power of propaganda movies, and the nub at which their meaning lies, is not so much in what is said but in what is not said: not in what is shown, but in what remains hidden. And what is hidden? Quite simply, sex and money. Just as Mr Miniver never goes out to work, Prince Charles, although always busy, is not employed. The Queen, it is said, never carries money. They are so rich, in fact, that they never have to handle the stuff itself. For money you will remember, smells. And some of that smell is made up of sweat.

Neither does sex enter the picture. The Queen, like Mrs Miniver, procreates, but you cannot imagine the fuck. Prince Charles liked girls and "fell in love all over the place". Just what that means, when it comes down to it, or *it*, is never stated. For royal girlfriends who have done *it* and have had the misfortune to be both adult and honest, have been quickly swept aside.

But the power of propaganda and the royal image has a double aspect. For there is what is *not* shown (the messy, smelly, sweaty bits) and what is. In Mrs Miniver and with the royals, there is an emphasis on duty and service, the sharing of which forms a family bond of caring and respect. Common purpose gives courage and dignity, even under threat. And there is affection. Minivers and Royals are often shown sharing greetings, laughter and kisses. Such human virtues surely provide the positive aspect which ensures that Mrs Miniver and the Royal Family don't just appeal to sentimentalists and convinced royalists but can win their necessarily broad audience. For some human qualities certainly merit aspiration; and love, faith and courage are surely some of them.

Marriage, of course, is supposedly one of the supreme repositories of such virtues. Thus a royal wedding is a celebration both apt and powerful, capable of uniting a nation in hope.

But let us consider another wedding, one not attended until much later and in the most gruesome circumstances, with any sort of public attention. What of Mr and Mrs Sutcliffe, now tried, held up: Peter the Ripper, killer of thirteen women? What of their wedding, its photograph published in so many papers? Somehow it is haunting, that picture. Who is to say that they too did not expect the security and freedom from care that marriage is supposed, by its very existence, to ensure? A solemn contract had been entered to guard the happiness of the other, no matter what might befall. Not much seems to have befallen the Sutcliffes. For they, it is emphasised, lived a normal life. But some aspect of that normal life included, for the man, the possibility of murder, of inflicting death, death on thirteen women. And for the woman, it was claimed in court, that

'normal life' included schizophrenia. Prince Charles and Lady Diana will have every opportunity to be happy — security, money, homes, time, space and endless love, given by subjects who need to believe in what the royal couple represent. But an army of servants and retainers is necessary to make it possible to sustain that illusion, of singular peace and love, of a future taken care of, a happiness the product as much of careful planning as of passion. But for the rest of us, such security is surely impossible. The daily grind wears us out and makes us tired. We are not nineteen and don't wear diamonds.

Sexuality, despite careful nurturing by the media to follow certain patterns closely linked with a staged consumption of products related to an assumed 'sex-drive' — attraction, consolidation, bonding, settlement, progeny — remains mysterious and continues to manifest itself in unruly and unexpected ways. No doubt the royals have hidden ways of dealing with such things. After all, no matter how important Lady Diana's so-called 'purity', does anyone seriously think Prince Charles is a virgin? Or even expect him to be? For the task of initiation lies in his hands.

Peter and Sonia Sutcliffe went mad. Peter Sutcliffe killed 13 women. Which is the Wedding of the Year?

The last time there was royal junketing in London most of my friends kept well out of it. I went out and watched the Silver Jubilee parade, just as I expect I'll watch this wedding. For it is good to look, to witness, to see just how much takes — in silk and diamonds, gold and retainers, police and Rolls Royces and adoring crowds — to ease those ties that bind. Myself an escapee from wedlock, I will trust to my scars to keep me safe, even if another salt tear — for there is always one, for all that misplaced, heartfelt hope and that eternal need for love — runs down. **Lynn McRitchie**





British Events

The Royal Couple (see front page) are interviewed by the Performance Magazine.

Performance Magazine When did you first meet?

The Royal Couple 1977. In a pub in Bath. It was a Jubilee Affair.

PM Don't you find the day to day routine of attending ceremonies, openings etc. onerous?

TRC We do try to avoid excessive repetition. Our aim is to strike a balance between process and product — the original idea and straightforward theatre. These days it's all product, product, product. Where will it all end. Ipi Tombi probably.

PM Who is your outfitter?

TRC Ourselves, actually. We involve ourselves in every aspect of the creative process, rarely subcontracting. Specialisation in theatre is a death force. Performing is just access to audience and often the least interesting part of the process.

PM Do you find it difficult to keep smiling whatever happens?

TRC We've had several Arts Council premium bond wins, which helps.

PM Do you find you have a wide appeal to the nation?

TRC There's nothing wrong in being popular. The essence of our work, as with all art, is imagination. At its very best it is subversive — because it affects the hearts and minds of its audience. That is where real change takes place. In the heart, not the wallet.

PM Do you have any trouble with the press?

TRC People love categories! We are always being misrep-

resented. We cannot relate to the vast cathedral silences of performance art or to the box office timidity of straight theatre. We prefer to be 'amateurs'. All the truly revolutionary strides in British performance in the last decade have been taken by people who were not subject to the constraints of the 'profession'. We might look back in ten years and see the current attempts to legitimise experimental theatre by unionisation, or in the Arts Council's case, cost-effectiveness — as a death sentence. Despite Michael Billington's assertions, the simple fact remains that the West End is the least interesting option. Always keep your options open, and your definitions to yourself.

PM How do you usually travel around the country?

TRC By Persil rail voucher. It's high time the Arts Council came up with a similar scheme. In Holland they've been doing it for years.

PM What do you think of Britain today?

TRC Britain doesn't take enough chances, and that is reflected in the theatre climate as in all else. In 1977 we visited Australia — a whole continent without an artistic tradition. No great dead cultural heroes to fund. The word experimental has a different meaning when applied to an entire society.

PM Some people have criticised you for your military role. What do you think of this?

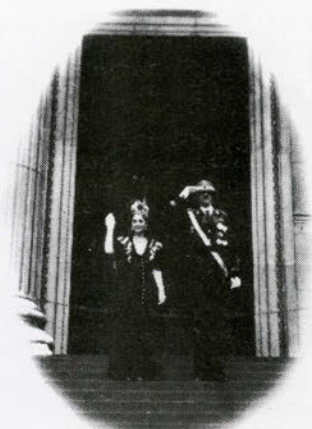
TRC The aesthetics of violence are available as a raw material to create with as is plaster, wood, or bronze. Our last indoor show, 'Midway' was a musical documentary set on the flightdeck of an aircraft carrier. It climaxed in a reconstruction of the Battle of Midway fought between opposing fleets of scale models which the audience watched through binoculars. Virtually untourable, totally impractical, and entirely out of step with current performance trends. It was a great success.

PM Do you mind being in the public mind all the time?

TRC No. And we don't mind being up their noses either. In the summer, most of our work is at festivals. We winter it out on the circuit of the arts centres. We always like to 'first foot' performance in unusual places. Yesterday it was on a ledge half way up the front of County Hall for the London Cycling Campaign Bike Ride. Tomorrow it'll be up a canal in the middle of Birmingham.

PM Finally, what are your ambitions for the future?

TRC We have a brand new performance — 'Storm Warnings' apolitically anti-nuclear and a bit christmassy. It's a fairy story set after WWII. It's post-holocaust — but we haven't stinted on the props. The Arts Council gave us three grand to do it. It's a major piece and perfectly reflects where we stand politically, aesthetically and theatrically. You either love it or you hate it. We're also doing an adaption of John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress rewritten as a boat trip along the canals of Birmingham following a pre-prepared route from the city of destruction to paradise. Proving there is still room somewhere for a happy ending.



The Royal Couple are Corrinne De Cruz and Mick Banks of British Events, who specialise in, among other things State Performance.

Photos by Robin Morley

Performed Music A rundown by Paul Burwell

I decided to talk to Anthony Wood about Actual Music, his concert promoting organisation, as I had heard lots of speculations from musicians as to how it was run, and rumours about how it was funded. I want to write a short piece based on my conversations with Anthony to try and give some idea of his aims and motivations and organisational approach.

As I have been performing myself in New York and Canada for most of the time since the last Performance Magazine I have not been able to attend any performances in England that I can talk about, and our editor didn't want me to write about any of the performances I attended in NY (the unacceptable face of provincialism). However, the best, most riveting performance (musical or art performance) that I have seen for ages was given in Squat Theatre in New York by Sun Ra and his Arkestra. They performed a riveting four and a half hour set. Steve Cripps and I sat transfixed for the whole concert as did most of the audience, and although we had just given a performance downtown ourselves, neither of us left our seats to walk the three yards to the bar to buy a drink. Anyone who knows Steve will realise what a strong testimony to the quality of the performance that is. Although he has performed in Europe a lot, Sun Ra hasn't performed here for many years, and then only two shows. Next time I see Anthony I'll talk to him about bringing him over....

Actual Music has been existence for over two years, and in that time has come to occupy a significant place in the English Improvised music scene. Actual '80, held last year at the ICA was one of the major events of the year for Improvised Music — a festival spanning several days at a well known venue as well as many English musicians, performing to capacity audiences and the traditional minimal press response. Actual '81 in August, also at the ICA promises to be similarly successful. Also, just over, there was an International Festival of Improvised Music, Movement and Voice at the Cockpit Theatre. There have in addition, been series of concerts and a small tour organised by Actual Music.

Actual Music is the idea of Anthony Wood, who organises all the concerts and festivals. I thought it would be a good idea to talk to him about the workings of his organisation and his motivations in operating it and investing a lot of time and money in the venture, as he is just about the only disinterested person involved in promoting this area of contemporary music, because of his success (on occasion) in obtaining financial backing, and because of Actual Music's relationship to the musicians and audience that comprise the music scene.

Anthony's original involvement came through a frustrated desire to play, which

he feels, withered for lack of encouragement during his youth, but he became an avid listener and got involved in improvised music over ten years ago, and got into concert organisation when various musicians asked him to help with putting on some of their self organised concerts and the involvement grew from that.... "I wanted to put something back into the music that had given me so much".

Presenting concerts and festivals was also a way for a non musician to become involved with the music scene and the musicians, a way of participating actively in the musical life, and becoming an important part of the scene.

He started organising concerts of musicians whose work he admired, "the sort of concerts that I would like to go to" and soon found that lots of musicians were contacting him and asking him to put on their work at his events, but although he sees a lot of growth potential for Actual Music — he would like to see it become a full time occupation — he says that if the organisation grew away from presenting the work of the people he would like to hear, and he found himself in the position of not wanting to go to his own concerts, then he would call a halt to the whole thing. He concedes, though, that Actual cannot completely reflect his personal taste but must reflect the whole spectrum of contemporary Improvised music.

The position of a promoter in this area of work at the present time is complex, especially as the qualities required to successfully undertake such a role are the same characteristics that can make it difficult to relate to the wider implications of the position of power that an organiser finds themselves in. For instance, on at least three occasions, Anthony has put together groups for concerts or festivals for which he has suggested the line up — which is the sort of useful initiative an organiser can sometimes take... an outsider can sometimes see how various performers could work well together when the combination might not have occurred to the individuals involved, and an organiser may be in a position socially to arrange musical meetings that circumstantially had not arisen for the performers themselves (the arranged marriage or blind date that works out ok). The arguments against this approach are that musicians are perfectly capable of attending to their own creative relationships and are the best judges of what playing combinations are appropriate to their music. Also, the pressure to accept a prestigious performance for a relatively high fee cannot be completely ignored. I'm not suggesting that musicians would sell out their principles and play with people whose work they didn't like, but in less clear cut situations may provide pressure to look on the bright side — and the theoretic of improvisation does contain a strong tendency to respond positively to new or unexpected situations.

The pros and cons are not necessarily ideological by nature but more circum-

stantial, and only require discussion so that everybody concerned knows what is going on, and what their options are.

An organisation such as Actual Music also fits into the way that the Arts Council like their clients to operate — they don't like to deal directly with artists or performers, and much prefer to deal with entrepreneurs and administrators, although in Anthony's case this hasn't always led to subsidy being forthcoming and he has had to put his own money into some of his promotions, (and lose it) and has had difficulty with the Arts Council's attitude that American and European musicians are worth considerably more than English musicians, which is not an attitude that Anthony (or I) share.

Actual Music can be contacted at 23 Mirabel Road, London SW6 and will send you free information about future events.

Spontaneous Music

This performance by John Stevens' Spontaneous Music Orchestra was the second of the "May Daze" series of concerts that focussed on the integration of Improvisation and Compositional Structure. The two part series had encompassed certain risks, both artistic and financial. Composition and improvisation have never been seen as the easiest of bed-fellows and the opportunities in which to resolve this problem in large-scale groups are few and far between, constrained, no doubt, by the difficulties in funding such ventures, given the reduction of subsidy now available to the fringe arts scene as a whole.

Interspersed by performances by pianist Howard Riley and the current version of the Spontaneous Music Ensemble (Roger Smith — guitar, Nigel Coombes — violin and Stevens himself on percussion and cornet) the evening was given over to two of Stevens' compositions that sprang from conventional notation and musical organisation. For this, the S.M.E. was augmented by a five piece brass section and vocalist Maggie Nichols.

Whilst being the most engrossing of the two pieces, "Triangles" bore the weight of the problems incurred in performance. Three groups of three musicians were seated in the shape of a triangle, each group working within a compressed dynamic. The sound came in small fragments that quickly developed an overall shape and character, both within the trios and the wider conglomerate. Given good stereo separation, it would lend itself well to record but constraints on the physical placement of the audience tended to detract from an appreciation of the whole. The detail of the piece was governed by where you were seated at the time. I found myself having to wander around the hall to prevent being swamped by the sound of any particular group of musicians. I can only hope that a solution to this problem can be found before "Triangles" comes up for a repeat performance. (I later found out that the seating arrangements were beyond the composer's control).

"Static" developed from two bars of notated music and was, if anything, more characteristic of Stevens' form of open composition. It was a more forceful piece, and at times the musicians tended towards somewhat reactionary moves (given the circumscription of "Triangles"). Periodically the music suffered as a result, the more turbulent sections veering towards detachment rather than embellishment of the feel indoctrinated by the score.

David Ilic

Quentin Crisp

Mention the name Quentin Crisp, and the reply will undoubtedly refer to actor John Hurt's eloquent representation of the writer-cum-preacher-cum-entertainer in the dramatisation of Crisp's 'Naked Civil Servant', screened by Thames Television some six years ago. I suspect that the TV film has played a considerable part in the plateau of success which Crisp now enjoys. At the time of writing he is presenting a

London stage show, his latest book 'How To Become A Virgin' recently hit the stands and now the appearance of this curious double-album, previously obtainable only as an import from America.

However, to think of Crisp as a mere leech on the talents of John Hurt is to pay this self-acclaimed stylist something of an injustice. He commands attention as a public speaker as this album (recorded during his visit to New York in 1979) so adequately bears witness. The first of the two records comprises Crisp's survival package in the evolution of one's lifestyle. He has retained a sharp edge to his persona, even if the emerging Gay Rights scene has taken away the sensationalism of former years. Throughout, Crisp proceeds to ride roughshod over society's pressures and the will to conform, although his pursuit of individuality may appear to have its roots in a type of conservatism (he constantly refers to the past for his examples). It is a professional if somewhat baffling set where Crisp's dialogue

matches his lifestyle (colourful and witty) — it is clear that he has a power of self-awareness and he commands a rich vocabulary with which to put this across. I remain somewhat disappointed with the second album (Crisp replying to questions written by the audience). This could have been the chance to closely scrutinise his theories. However, Crisp gets off relatively lightly, the questions tending more towards politeness and superficiality. This goes more with the concept of marketing Crisp on album, reinforcing the idea of entertainment beyond his own humorous delivery.

The question is, who is this album aimed at? For sure, Crisp has a devoted audience (those present at this recording appear to dote on his every word). For me, it falls a firm second to actually witnessing a live performance, but for the first album of Crisp's uninterrupted narrative alone it is worth checking out.

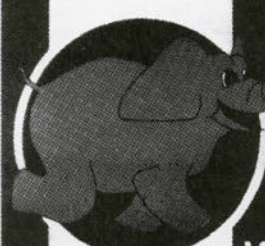
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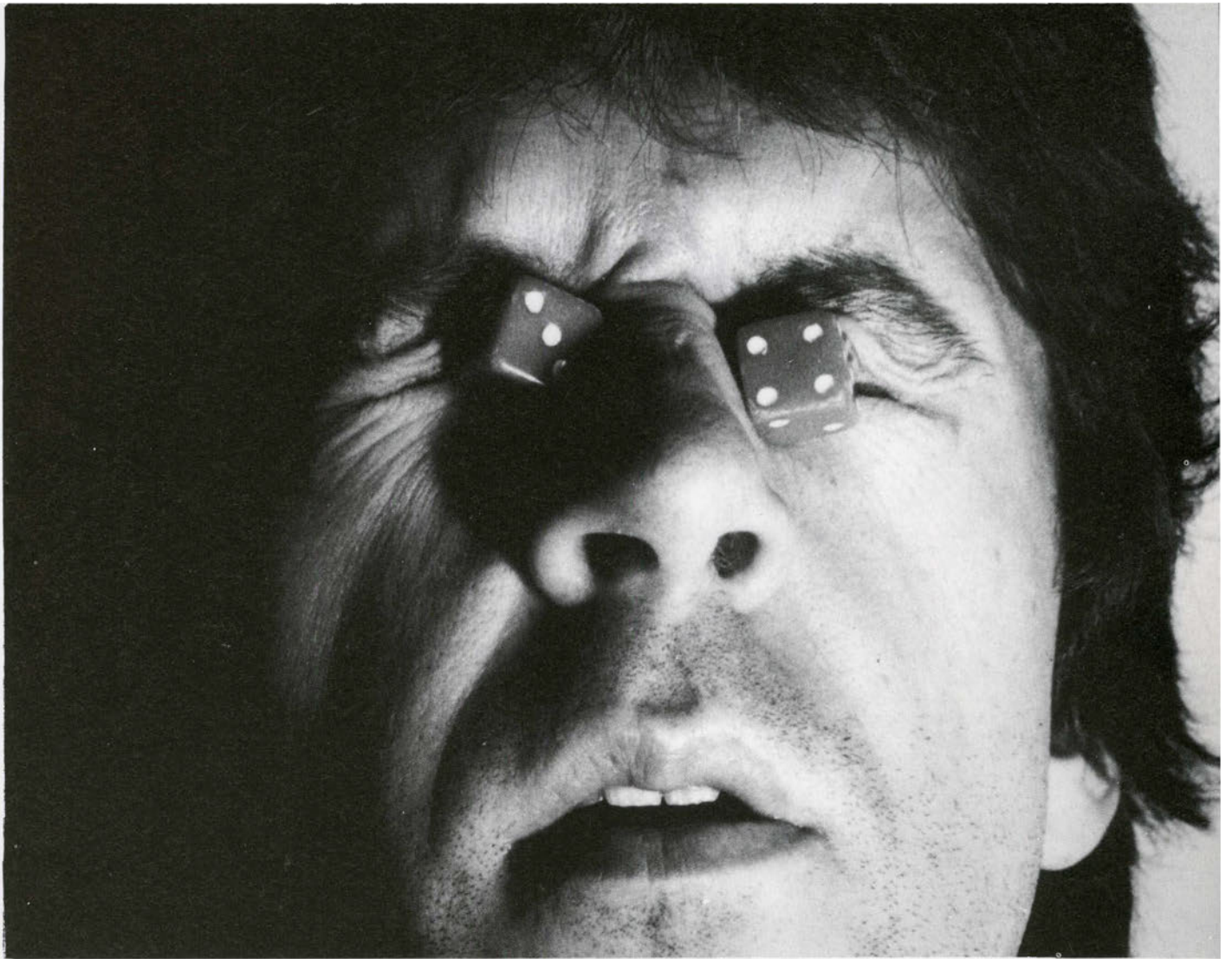
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Richard Layzell

Performance, as McLuhan said about television, leaves little to the imagination. He was comparing it to the radio — we can't so easily compare performance to live visual art. We have to do a sort of reverse disappearing trick — did the performer really mean to do *that*? We do not have the leisure to peruse, to conjecture, to take little mental voyages around the circumference of the artist's intentions as we do with painting or sculpture. There is plenty of scope for the live artist to present us with a *fait accompli*, to cover up intention with artifice, to do the job for the audience, fill in the gaps, help the perception along. If this temptation is resisted successfully the artist is accused of obscurity. If not, the temptation to please, to make easier, to titillate a bit, if indulged fully will point to the booming vacuous world of box office returns, the *Theatre*, where artists are slaves to the fickle public (or at least some publicist's projected fantasy of it).

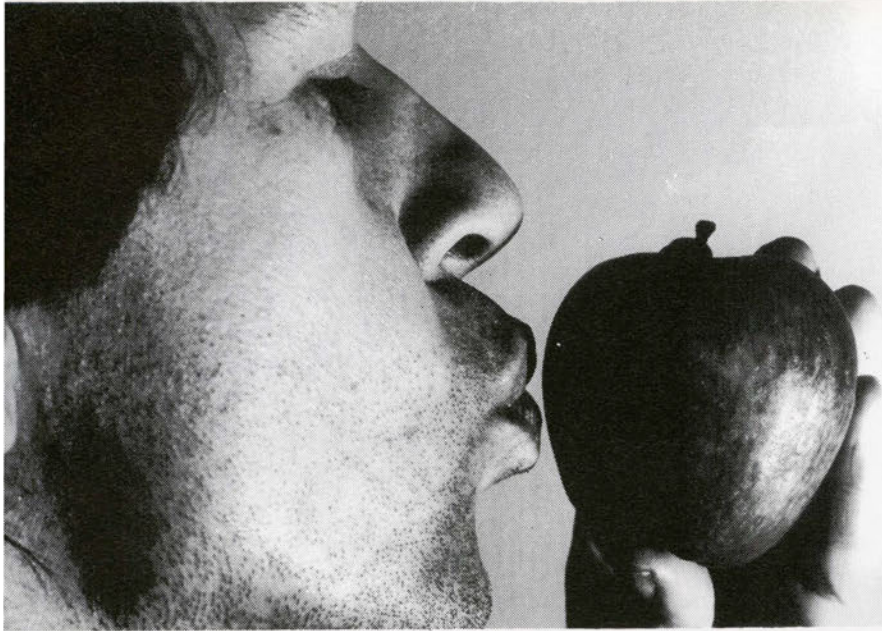
Which is why Performance, the visual art end of it, is so carefully cordoned off by artists and critics alike. One step over the

line, one gesture to the audience's perception of live art invokes the dread spirit of empty applause, the painted clown, the performing seal. One artist, Richard Layzell, with all the 'correct' Art School credentials, background and solid grounding in visual art, risked crossing that line and bringing down the wrath of his contemporaries when, a few years ago he took a course in mime and improvisation. Layzell, after years of work in sculpture, drawing and film, has since then been obsessively, but consciously concerned with the audience's perception of his live work.

Oddly enough, after early experiments in the sixties (he studied at the Slade with people like Marc Chaimowicz and was taught by Stuart Brisley) he had given up live work. Having done work on environmental sculptures, sewing together sections of fruit and vegetables which he called 'graftings', he moved on to do what were then known as 'events'. During one such event (NNYM) in Regents Park he suddenly felt that it was all too self-

indulgent — "A person walked past me in the rain and I wished he wasn't there". So he went into what some might call a self-imposed wilderness, for seven years concerning himself with mainly conventional work in the visual arts. Then, at the same time as the Butlers Wharf phenomenon was beginning to flourish in 1978, he did the workshops, came back into performance work with a piece entitled 'Line Flying' and put himself in a more or less unstoppable path to the recent prolific, high energy, high risk years of performances and video work that no one around that area can fail to have noticed; approve or not.

Performance artists, like everyone else, have limits and one of them seems to be that what they do can only be charged with meaning and immediate transmittable relevance for short bursts in their career. After that it is fair game for the art historians, the documentation, the legends. Chris Burden could only shoot himself once, Judy Chicago could only have put together one Dinner Party, (but which still



Photos above and on previous page from 'What do you mean by that' 1980.

exists), Stuart Brisley could only move on to less adrenalin-exacting tasks (the hunter becomes gatherer in his recent ICA piece), Nuttall and the Boys could only have made their drunken grass roots showbiz-outrageous waves at a certain time in those northern towns (an anachronism no longer tolerated). Those who are wise, wise down, slow up or burn out. They wait for the next opportunity to walk the conceptual tight-rope in the glare of the high-expectation critical spotlight, if it ever comes again in their lifetime.

It is therefore exciting to come across by accident, an artist at a high peak in that ephemeral medium of performance. It's usually a case of the one that got away; nine times out of ten one comes across people at the fag-end of their work attracting a public which is drawn by previous notoriety and mystique — only to drift away disappointed and confused (maybe to cultivate a re-inforced prejudice against performance itself). But with Richard Layzell, firing away most cylinders, it would seem, with a whole series of closely time-linked performances starting with 'What do you mean by that?' and ending with the satisfyingly titled 'That's What I mean' there is a sense that he has been caught at his best.

A series of coincidences led me to see Layzell for the first time quite unintentionally.... the first in the series — 'What do you mean by That?' which was at Air Gallery as part of the Video at Air season organised by London Video Arts. Basically concerned with semantics, it was dismissed from that point of view by Keith Frake in Performance No. 10 in that it "included all the rubric essential for a serious investigation of meaning construction but fell hopelessly into the old bourgeois camp that perpetuates the notion that it is the 'individual who makes meaning.'" I disagree. Although Layzell managed in a nervy, electric way, to slowly bring the whole audience into his personal feeling of clogged communication, a groping out of a symbol-blindness that could almost

cornily be compared to a rebirth experience; he was not an 'individual making meaning' but was himself being reconstructed by the programmed sequence of video images combined by the random series of objects (ordained by dice) themselves projecting their essence, hammering their symbolic nature on to the flesh of a performance artist. There was, if you like, something akin to a controlled possession by these things, these apples, these dice. What at first seemed a standard conceptual exercise for myself, a rather inconvenienced critic who was thinking of leaving at the earliest decent opportunity was transformed slowly into a gripping experience involving most of the public present. So much so that Layzell, once made coherent by his gradual consumption of a symbol-structure, was able to manipulate, to play on the expectations of those in the room in a way that seemed fraught with risk. "That's the end", he announced. No it's not. Yes it is. No it isn't. The relationship had changed. Layzell talked normally now, but no one trusted him. His flirtation with incoherence, with temporal impotence became public and the audience was slowly involved in the risks. He paced the room with a psychotic innocence, and forced those in the room to examine their preconceptions. The performance ended on an undecided note, as many of them seem to do. He said later that he felt that the piece had produced sadness.

But Layzell's critics do have a basis for their uneasiness, and he himself admits that he is unsure about the way in which his own personal character strongly conditions a performance. He is able to empty himself, to be a tool of a strictly imposed time limit, or the foil of random events as he does in later performances, but there is a strong delinquent element, flashes of pure personality, that fuels his sudden ability to make the public feel vulnerable. The key may be in the way he is able to suddenly strip down all the barriers — to present a blatantly vulnerable self-image. Some are suspicious — is he really doing this, or is it

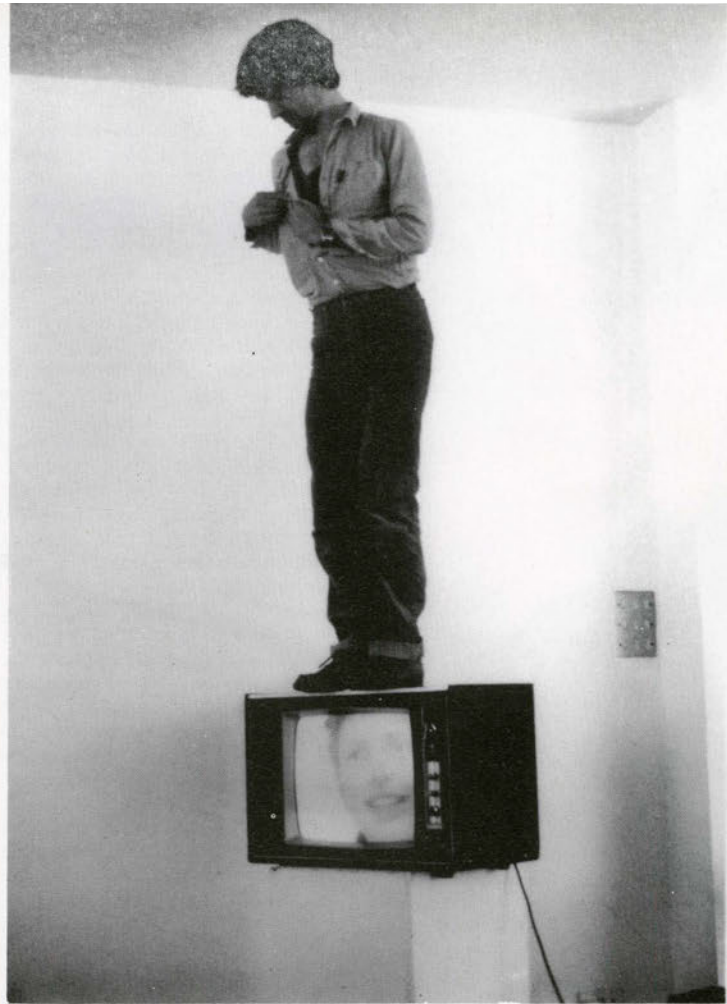
an actor's trick? After seeing three separate performances, I would say there are no tricks involved.... his brief experience with mime worked simply as a trigger to release something that was already there. His vulnerability.... he's always being asked for money in the streets (and he always gives it, apparently) indicates a real-time basis to his work. During some of his performance preparations, for example, he says he dreams of nothing but that performance for the whole duration. And when talking to him one gets the contradictory feeling of a nice, normal chap, who just occasionally reveals the look of one who is haunted by his actions.

He feels, he says, a responsibility towards those who come and see him. After the 'sadness' produced by 'What....' he decided to follow up with a piece called 'Hooray', a deliberately positive work, with a celebration of colour, sound, movement, primitive art, himself. The audience came in in the dark with the TV switched on — air and music playing. Using a torch he directed them to their seats cinema style, the chairs arranged in rows in the centre of the room. An audio tape played with the sound of space invaders, the now familiar concrete buzzes becoming one single hum. Pure colour came on the video screen fading from red to yellow to blue. Hovering around the edges of the audience Layzell started to put into motion a crude, unseen programme of sensations. Starting with an audio joke using a slide projector — clicking slides monotonously lecture-wise he started to syncopate with wooden blocks clacking together. He then moved around the audience with the blocks in the dark and the joke started to become threat, the aggressive clacking putting people on edge. Then water sprayed from a hydrator, literally cooled people off and renewed the sense of a joke as people slowly got wet. Then threat once more. Marbles thrown across the audience landing on the floor deafeningly. This time there was no relief when they were followed by ping pong balls. Again, it was something, in a "quirk" of Layzell's innocent-psychotic nature that put a whiff of fear into the air, as effective an implied physical threat as when Keith James once walked around a pitch black room with a Black + Decker drill (Action Space 1976). Layzell switched on the light, a retina-scorching experience after 20 minutes of darkness, and calmly started to bring himself into the experience where previously he had been an operator. He started making small sounds relating to things in the room and then to the room itself. He then painted his face red and blue and drew a circle of string around the audience. Gaining coherence, he then read slowly from a Ladybird Book called SHAPES. He then talked on random subjects for five minutes, and finished the performance. (The talk was intended to have no meaning — but feeling a sense of relief, people tended to find the speech amusing). The main thing he felt was that people came out feeling good. In this case he had deliberately contrived it to be so, in

an almost theatrical sense, but clearly for his satisfaction, or for this stage in his series of work. The audience themselves had been put through a purifying process.

'Conversations' the final work I saw, was for him the most important work to date, and was certainly the work where most was left up to chance. Again, it involved Layzell handing out his personality on a plate, as it were, to the public. I suppose that what distinguishes him in his ability to actually do this without being pretentious, obscure, dull or just plain loony is his ability to hold a firm line while stripping all safeguards down to the bone in a way that clearly embarrasses the average angst-ridden, secretive artist. In 'Conversations' he spent the day in the Acme Gallery just talking to people with a video camera — in the evening performance, the results were roughly presented with an added commentary, on top of the sound track, by Layzell. His disturbing frankness added several dimensions to what were, on the face of it, reams of grey indistinct video garbage. His intuitive actions during the day gave results that looked like a mixture of sloppiness and a silly version of the avante-garde home-movie pictures of feet, noses, elbows etc. But it later transpired that what Layzell had been doing was this: Someone would say — 'I don't want to be filmed', and Layzell would then say 'Alright, can I just film your shoes, gloves, etc.' Amazingly, they'd agree, and expressive aspects of the shy visitor would emerge, along with Layzell's description of minutiae, that would never be revealed with a straight recording.

Jonathan Harvey



Above and below: 'Conversations' in the Acme Gallery 1981.





'Improvisation' 1979. Basement Group, Newcastle.

Both 'What...' and 'Hooray' were relatively carefully structured, but 'Conversations' literally was constructed out of totally informal moments. This informality could threaten the nature of the work; it could also threaten Layzell's seriousness of intent, and he came perilously close to demystification out of existence, where the audience began to overtake Layzell in the informality stakes. He would be talking, and people would be laughing and throwing comments back, when he would suddenly stand on one leg on a chair while carrying on as normal, or stand on the monitor. We got the flash of strangeness, the threat of madness, but somehow the rarified atmosphere of previous performances was not there.

It was simply taken for granted that he *would* do things like that, that this was within the rules. But then, there was also a group feeling of a shared experiment, of a scientific collaboration. This can be an important feeling. All too often it can become obvious that a performance artist is engaged on some private experiment on his or her perceptions, consciousness etc., and is somehow incidentally doing it in public. It is all very well not to expect the artist to entertain or explain, but it can be hard going if the audience is totally excluded from the work, that its being there is a mere adjunct, a condition to the work being performed in the gallery, or getting a grant, or whatever. With Layzell's experiments, you are somehow in

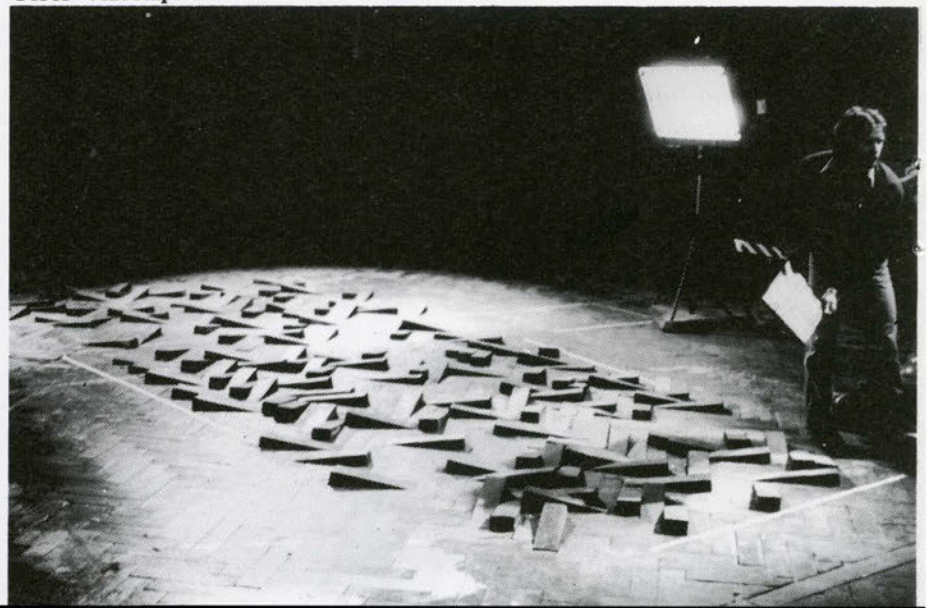
on the night I saw 'Conversations' there was a full feeling of consent among the audience. That being said, the following night, he went on to impose a different regime by taking away all the chairs and the audience automatically lined the walls as if, once more, expecting a psychological attack from Layzell.

But Layzell's attacks (for this indeed is what they can seem) are never direct. They always assume an interest in the work. Instead he attacks you by exposing himself. People that know him say: "How can you just stand there and reveal your personality like that?" Face to face with his uncertainties, his indecisiveness, his occasional madneses, they know that watching him can only rebound on them. His doubts are their doubts, he is making something out of nothing in the same way as his fellow artists.... but he is laying the process on the table for all to see. His actions are actions involving real risks, and that is the way we get a glimpse of what all performance should be about. His ability to communicate what others have to hold back for fear of losing it or burning out is frighteningly and devastatingly clear.

So, what price artifice, what price the infliction of strong personality on the live artform? Will Layzell find himself simply pushed over to the theatrical side by the rigorists and the structuralists of the performance art world? Or can it be that his ability to *make the choice*, to choose his own path between concern for an audience and making them sweat, making them work for an understanding of the work, will prove an example for us all? For he has certainly, once set on that road, lost no time in exploring those issues, and now it simply remains to be seen whether he can get his point across before he, too, burns out.

Rob La Frenais

'Floor' Videotape 1980.



**Richard Layzell:
Performances**

- 1969 Yellow Man — Collegiate Theatre.
Black Room 1 — Slade School.
- 1970 NNYN — Collegiate Theatre and Regents Park.
- 1971 Black Room 2 — Slade School.
- 1972 Figure/Structure — Holly Lodge Gardens, Highgate.
- 1973 Working Towards — Slade School.
- 1978 Line Flying — 2B Butlers Wharf, London.
- 1979 Normality Performance — Wolverhampton Polytechnic
Improvisation — Basement Group, Newcastle.
Steps — Spectro, Newcastle.
Backwards, Forwards — Demarco Gallery, Edinburgh.
Lining-Up — South Hill Park, Bracknell.
- 1980 Twitch — Coventry Events Week and Basement Group, Newcastle.
- Hi — Hi — NATFHE Conference, London.
What do you mean by That? — Air Gallery (LVA)
- 1981 Hooray — Air Gallery
Conversations — Acme Gallery
Fish and Chips — Art and the Sea, Sunderland and Liverpool
That's What I Mean — Brighton Polytechnic.

Show Trial

Some impressions of the Artists Enquiry into the Arts Council



Robin Morley

“What’s Berman getting involved in this for?” many may have thought as the PT Barnum/Freddie Laker/John Bloom (if you can remember back that far) of the subsidised arts awoke from slumber after years out of the spotlight; lurking in his million-pound Inter-Action Art Centre grabbed from within snapping distance of the jaws of the recession. The old self-publicist was certainly up to his tricks again. Ed Berman’s Show Trial, the Artists’ answer to Sir Roy Shaw’s newly convened Star Chamber (metaphor courtesy of Norman St John Stevas, ex-Minister of the Arts in a Sunday Times article criticising the way the Arts Council had misused the increased allocation that had, among other things cost him his job) would, like all good publicity stunts, either perfectly lacerate its target or fall flat on its face. It had a lot going for it. For a start, Berman had the active, willing and energetic support of a wide range of fellow artists (something that earlier ventures often lacked). Perhaps it was because of his willingness to put his head on the block along with everyone else; Inter-Action having had only a fraction of its corporate structure cut along with the forty other companies at Christmas. He had much to lose and little to gain by aligning with the growing movement pressing for the reform of the Arts Council. Anyway, for a fortnight artists, journalists, celebrities, Arts Council members, moles, and employees, ex-Ministers of the Arts, blind musicians, dancers, mad poets, sane poets, lawyers, drunks and ordinary taxpayers trooped in and out of the courtroom at the Tricycle Theatre, Kilburn, to give evidence, hear the various charges and vote on the verdict. We tried to get along when we could, and in no particular order of time, report on some of the proceedings.

Personal vendettas between Counsel for Prosecution and Defence are no stranger to the British courtroom, and this being the penultimate sitting of the trial, Counsel was prepared to forgo niceties and put a few pounds of their own flesh on the scales of justice in the hope of tipping the balance in their favour. Counsel as personality cult is a dangerous way of administering justice, but it has its appeal to the public gallery: the strutting ham-theatrics of Counsel arouses a popular desire to see which of *them* gets nailed, while the defendant remains an innocent by-stander.

Supposedly under trial were the Arts Council’s policies of regionalism, and the disproportionate allocations of funding to the few “National” companies. In reality this had little bearing on the evening’s proceedings as learned Counsel traversed the long and winding road beyond Contempt and control. So it transpired that the benevolently leering countenance of Judge Matheson looked down on a medium heavy-weight bout, East (prosecution) v. Berman (defence).

At the start of the first round, with barely a punch hitting home, it seemed that

these established rivals were going to try to make their points by merely flaunting themselves around the ring as goodies and baddies. From the start a mis-match was obvious. How could the affably honest Queensbury-rule Michael East be put in the same ring as the burly blathering, and below the belt Berman? This guy had been known to demolish two people between meals without it affecting his appetite, surely East would emerge from the bout as a handful of prime mince? Ah, but then East must have had a shrewd notion of his judges — surely the British passion for

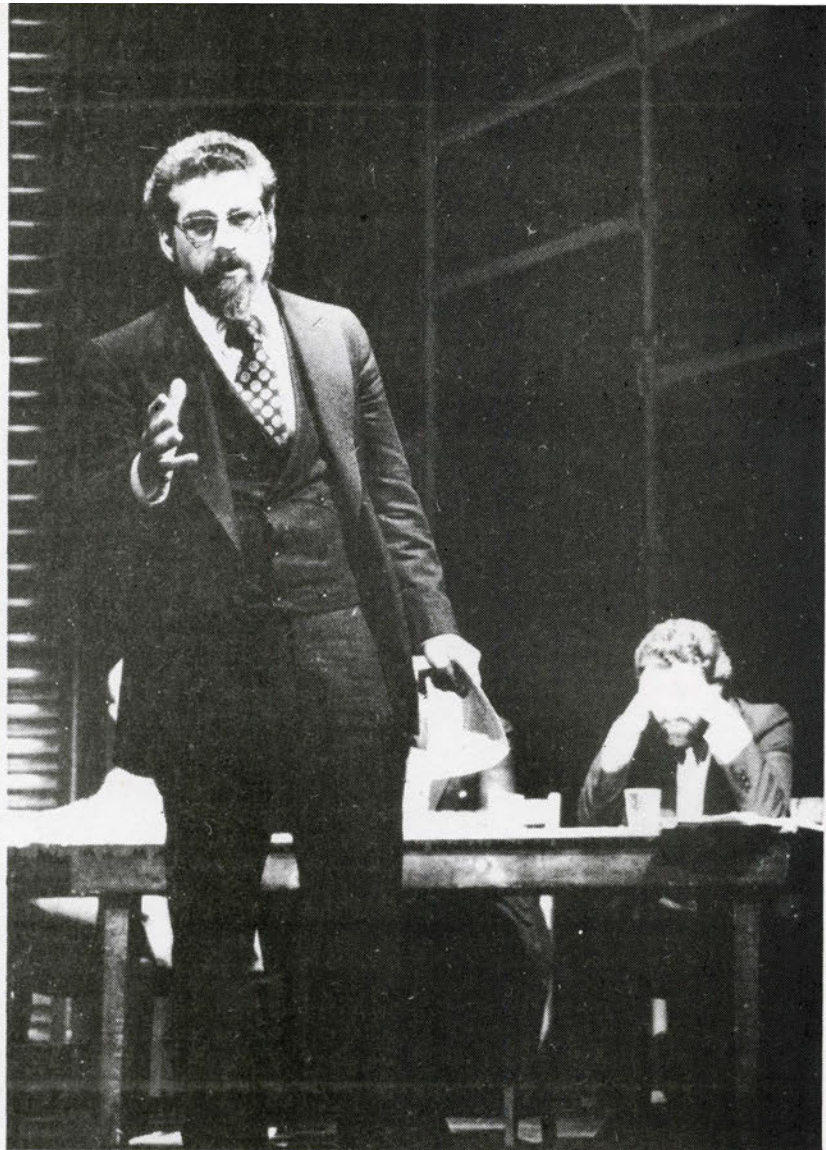
Richard Lavzell

supporting the under-dog would see him through the final verdict. All he had to do was stand there and take the punches, wearing his honesty on his gloves, and he was assured of a victory parade on the jury's shoulders.

The onus was on Berman to produce a knockout — technical or otherwise — and after a few preliminary skirmishes and flurries of gloves, this was what he tried to get. He could hardly have imagined the assistance East was going to give him. Shortly into the second round East apparently traded his Gentleman Jim credentials (which were in keeping) with those of village idiot (which were not). He somehow succeeded in putting up a witness (in the person of Ken Ellis) who agreed wholeheartedly with Berman. This remarkable act of delivering left-hooks to his own cheek probably brought the poor fellow to his senses — and stood him in good stead for what was to happen later.

One couldn't help feeling that East was too casual. Lazing virtually horizontal in his corner between rounds, he would have been better employed not thinking about what he was going to do with the prize money, and studying the brute opposite him. All the famous tell-tale signs of the weathered schemer were there to see. Berman, head hung low, one paw patting or scratching it, as if to make sure it was still there, and that this stupidity was not really going to rob him of the title; those cautious nods, seen by the judges, that were aimed to show that he thought he was doing well (and shouldn't they agree?); and, most telling of all, the involuntary knee-wobbling that was the true indication that some devious new tactic was about to be unleashed. Sure enough, more trouble was ahead for East. I don't know where the chap learned his trade, but I find it hard to imagine that a boxing coach exists that doesn't tell his student the difference between his left and right hand. After leading out south-paw he suddenly changed attitude to right-hand lead. The issue was large companies and *centres of excellence*. Having started to build his case on the left with the advantage of small companies, he invited the well-known proponent of the right (John Elsom — theatre critic of the Listener) to wax lyrically about the advantages of *centres of excellence*. In effect he had stretched his arm out so wide to encompass both the right-wing and the left, that he had left his body completely exposed to blows from his opponent. That he wasn't laid out for the count can only be attributed to Berman's dogged pursuit of some tactical line known only to himself, which didn't happen to include decisive upper-cuts at that time.

By the half-way point there was a fair number of points scored on either side. And despite Berman's threats that a technical knockout was just round the corner, the chances of the contest finishing within the distance seemed remote. But, by now another contest was underway. The referee had already turned a blind eye to the gross abnormality of a witness



Berman (above) and on previous page Peter Godfrey scrutinises the public

putting the defence counsel in the dock, and it was clear that any amount of cheap theatrics was now permissible. Now every Tom, Dick and Harry could leap into the ring and start a brawl. Surely in this contest Berman would be on home ground? On the cheap theatrics ratings Berman was already scoring well, with his periodic lurchings between a blown-up Perry Mason, and a champion of the ring made up of the mouth of Mohammed Ali and the slogging power of Sonny Liston. By the fifteenth round, however, East had seemed to win the fight by putting up a star witness (Fergus Early) himself a former Arts Council panel member who explained with precision the way small companies were starved by the greedy hands of the large. No amount of tough-stuff from Berman could rip the argument open. So what was he to do? The bell had gone on the final round, there was to be no more fodder for his cannon. He had veritably tried every trick in the book, including going to relieve himself as a sign of boredom with some exhibits. He had to have a knock-out. He chose the most dumb option open to him. He insisted that the proceedings have an extra round added to

them so that he could call himself as a witness. This was going to be his piece de resistance — Berman fights it out with Berman. Surely he should have learned from East's tactical blunders. But no, he was going to make an exhibition of himself flailing his arms, battering himself to pieces and confusing everyone as to which side he was on. Maybe he thought he could impress by making such statements as "if they think I'm an arrogant pig, they do have the right to take my grant away". Now no one was denying Mr Berman's arrogance, where he miscalculated was in thinking that anyone would find it funny. Mr East was handed the contest on a plate: he openly admitted, as he had done before that he didn't understand the evidence and couldn't think of anything worth asking the witness. By doing this he had re-affirmed that he was the affable and honest under-dog who ought to win. All Berman had achieved was showing himself as a bumbling goon. When East had done this it had seemed tolerable, but for Berman the grunting bull to do it undermined whatever stature he had striven to achieve throughout all that had gone before. Of course he would stand up for the

summing up and try to convince the jury and public that he was a reasonable fellow, but such notions were by now beyond the stretch of even the most vivid imagination.

Both Counsels had chosen the sticky method of using their personalities to influence the court, and were we engaged in a civil court action between the two of them the outcome would by now have been decided. It remains to be seen how influenced the jury will be by this crucial battle.

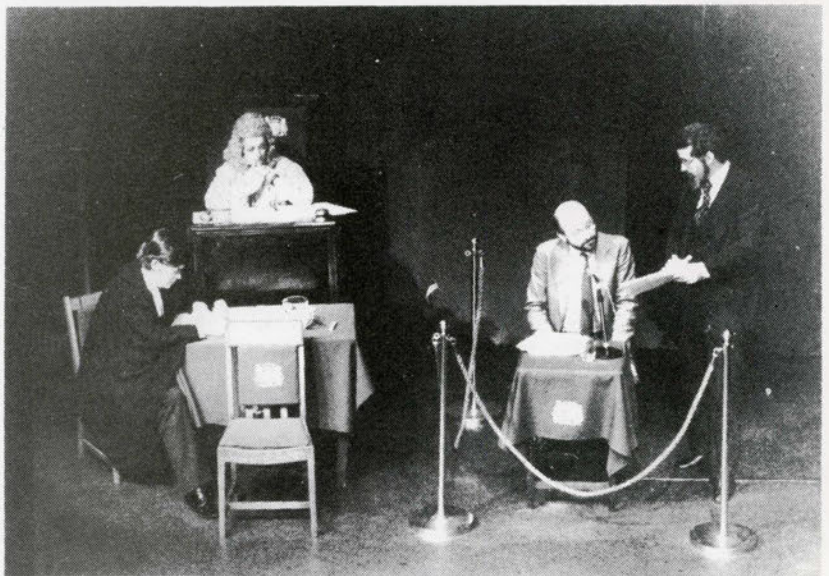
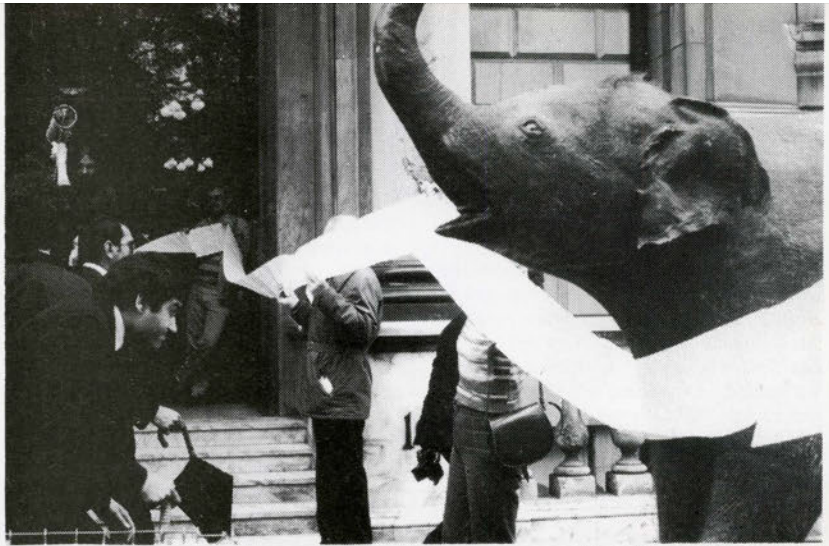
Pete Shelton

Saturday night, it is 7.15pm and the bar is abuzz with courtroom speculation. José, ex People show, enters as if out of a nursery rhyme, preaching on the evils of unemployment and the benefits of gardening. At the pitch of his expostulations he rips open the various bags of earth, lentils and beans that are strung around his chest, depositing, the contents across the carpet. But what shows grow at the Tricycle?

In court two issues are at stake. Firstly, that the AC unfairly discriminates against amateurs. Michael East, prosecuting, called Robin Howard to testify. As director of the Place he confirmed that it and Extemporary Dance began without support from the AC. Berman, passionately defending the AC as though it might bring back his lost grant, based his case on the survival of the good and that the AC couldn't sponsor all and sundry. Celia Greenwood gave evidence for the prosecution and we saw some of her young people from the Weekend Arts College: Fusion, a motley crew of most unlikely looking dancers, humanised a space invaders machine with surprising delicacy and professionalism. The cross-examination of David Wright, Director of the National Youth Theatre, by Berman degenerated into fatuous argument — Wright, childlike, refusing to answer directly and the judge, half asleep declining to control the proceedings. The AC was found guilty; after all how could the young, aspiring, not-yet professional survive against such discrimination? As most nights, the entertainment fluctuated between hilarious, tedious and interesting. Lord Eric amused with a twisted fable and John Dowie cut the yawns with his caustic and pornographic wit.

The second issue developed more seriously: that the AC permits exploitation of its grants for commercial advantage. The debate settled around Rob Walker and the transfer of Pal Joey to the West End. The Half Moon director, given special privileges by the Judge's winks, declared that the AC, despite the guidelines set out in 1979, should assist smaller companies who are more easily taken for a financial ride. Observer critic, Robert Cushman, pulled himself on stage to point out that subsidies exist for audiences not theatres. East, quietly impressive, proved his point, while Berman, lost for words for once, never quite came down off his high horse. Natural Dance terminated the evening with a mediocre performance.

Paul K. Lyons



Top: 'Save the Albany Empire' — handing over petition/protest at Arts Council, Piccadilly, London on May 19th 1981. Below: The cross-examination.

So, there we all were, having a quiet, civilized drink in the Tricycle Bar (great garlic bread, by the way) when the door flies open and in bursts one of the biggest blokes I've ever seen in my life. And he is upset. Very upset.

"You!" a quivering, bemused finger stabs in the general direction of an aesthetic young man. "I want you outside! Outside! I'm talking to you, prick face!"

(Prick Face was in little or no doubt as to whom the remarks were addressed.)

"Yes, you! Fuck features," he qualifies.

"Outside. I'm calling you out!"

Calling you out? I ponder. Bit archaic that, don't you think? Bit Scarlet Pimpernel, wouldn't you say?

The Furious Man, who entered with steam billowing out of the top of his head, is now getting REALLY cross.

"On your feet, pillock brain!"

Pillock brain declines the offer. This does not make the Furious Man happy.

"On your fucking feet!" he screams. "On your fucking feet, you little fucking fart. Want your fucking drink in your fucking face? You'll fucking get your fucking drink in your fucking face, you jumped up fucking little FUCKER!"

He snatches the fucking drink and throws it in Prick Face's face. Prick Face gets up wearily while his friends all make soothing 'sit down, Nigel' noises. Ken Black, the theatre manager, enters and rips off his clothes. "This is a job for Captain Reasonable" he mollifies, escorting the entertainment from the premises.

There is a moment of silence then everyone starts talking at once.

"Best bit of performance art I've seen all night."

"Who directed it?"

"Anybody know who his agent is?"

I have a sneaking suspicion that this guy does this to somebody different every night. At random. I have a secondary sneaking suspicion that it's probably my turn next.

My involvement with "Show Trial" was limited to four or five short performances mid-trial. The rest of the time I sat at the bar. So what else was of interest?

Well, every night, José, ex-People Show person, upset several members of the Tricycle staff by emptying a bucket of peat onto the carpeted floor. Except for the last night when, in a gesture of benevolence, he emptied his bucket ON TO THE

ACTUAL STAGE.

Jeff Nuttall (who's getting bigger all the time) walked past me bearing four whiskies. I decided privately that the only way to describe that action is: "Jeff Nuttall *bellied* past."

And the Company Stage Manager, the alluring and mysterious Ags Irwin, saw Ed Berman in his underpants. She entered the bar pale and trembling. "I've just seen Ed Berman in his underpants," she whispered. A horrified silence descend on the room. "What were they like?" I ask, involuntarily. She shuddered. "Horrible, horrible. Like something out of Lovecraft. Great multi-coloured, tent-like things that reached down to his knees."

"God." We sit awe-struck. (We'd been discussing Berman's sex-life only a minute before. He'd fancied a friend of a friend.) "Give me her phone number," he pleaded. Next evening he enters the bar a bit tired and emotional.

"I've lost that number, can I have it again?"

"Which number?"

"The number of your friend. The one I fancied."

Pause.

"I *am* the friend you fancied."

And finally — the dogs. Two large black ones. They had a disagreement in the bar and set about each other for several disturbing minutes. If there are any Barbara Woodhouse freaks out there, I'm here to tell you that "Growl, growl woof woof snarl!" is Dog for "You! Prick Face!

Fuck Features! I'M CALLING YOU OUT!"

John Dowie

In 1979, a Tory government with roots in bourgeois and upper-class Britain began its programme of support for a meritorious society. In 1980 the ACGB cut away the "dead wood" amongst its clients to allow excellence to flourish. On the 4th June, 1981, it stood accused at Show Trial of unfairly discriminating in matters of class and taste. Would Show Trial get to the heart of the matter at last?

An evening of "Reality Theatre" examining the issues of ACGB funding proved to be a strange kettle of fish. Animal metaphors abounded in this kangaroo court. Anthony Matheson as the Judge turned out to be an amiable sheep in wolves clothing while Ed Berman as defence counsel for the ACGB demonstrated how easily a leopard can change its spots. Michael East prosecuted with the unremitting zeal of a terrier that won't let go.

Before long, the documentary enquiry was overlaid with the advanced sophistry of a university debating society. The witnesses' interesting input (Jim McGuigan on his ignored sociological report, Peter Blackman of Steel 'n Skin on pre-programmed consumer art, Su Braden on the ACGB as a propoganda machine disseminating narrow values and taste) was taken up by East in support of his thesis that the ACGB sustains only a small section of the taste and values of the whole community only to be stood on its head by Ber-

man's brilliant defence in the best legal tradition of questioning stance and definition.

And so they hacked away at it, East pointing out the rewarding of talent at the expense of ignoring need while Berman defended the legitimacy of subjective judgements. Peter Godfrey as the jaded Clerk of the Court fidgeted and doodled to allay the tedium which was occasionally relieved by artists' demonstration of their products. The Ian Spink Dance Company performed with great style in their idiom which had failed to win them further project grant support after a one-off assessment on a first-night performance. The Bee and Bustle Company gave an eloquent demonstration of why their music hall work has failed to interest the Drama Panel.

The evening wore on, occasionally underpinned by notional excursions into the oppression of working-class culture by a middle-class power monopoly that imposes standards reflecting its own taste and rewards talent by ignoring need. The tired marxist ideas rang very hollow in a gathering of Guardian readers (as the public gallery was described) and the show eventually wound to a vote, bogged down in the grey-suited male ambience that created both the evening and the establishment that it purported to attack. The public gallery acquitted the accused by nine votes to three and so far from skipping a beat, the heart of the matter continues to tick peacefully away.

Phil Hyde

Attending the first and last evenings of Show trial and listening to bar gossip about the intervening nights, my own view is that Show Trial was an unqualified success. With the anarchic train of irrelevancies disciplined only by the appliance of obscure procedures, punctuated by infuriating longeurs, it actually represented a real court at its worst. However, this did not get in the way of some very powerfully put arguments which generally were sharpened rather than decreased by Ed Berman's role of devil's advocate (successfully reminding those who had forgotten quite what a nasty piece of work he is). In a final evening which at times seemed like a live version of Pseuds Corner and a 19th century bedlam rolled into one, with poets standing on their heads reciting in the middle of a pile of earth and a voluble and inebriated jury, shouting abuse at witnesses, the carefully constructed and brilliant dissections by Madhav Sharma of the Arts Council's failure to distribute £78 million pounds in a way that supported progress and experiment, shone through. There were in between many valuable and illuminating evenings particularly, it was said, those covering discrimination in race and sex. We considerably regret having missed the opportunity to cover them. The most memorable, and chilling final quote came from Conrad Atkinson, the visual artist whose work was censored for political reasons, when answering the shrill demand from Berman "Are you implying that the Arts Council would seek retribution on artists appearing in this trial?" Atkinson: "I wouldn't like to suggest that..... but I do."



Ian Hinchliffe

Introduction and Afterword by Rob La Frenais

REVIEWS

Sedition 81 Old Half Moon

Theatre of hate screams the News of the World while for Roland Muldoon and administrator Warren Lakin fending off the media and vocal Tory backbenchers becomes virtually a full time job. The show that has caused all the fuss is 'Sedition '81', commissioned at the end of 1980 by Belt and Braces who needed a touring production on the road, but revived under the CAST banner at the end of March this year when Belt and Braces' Arts Council grant was withdrawn.

Roland Muldoon has of course long-earned his prominence in establishment demonology. Chroniclers of the alternative theatre movement tend to pinpoint 1968 and the opening of Jim Haynes' Arts Lab as the year in which the fringe was born. But even further back in the mists of time, as long ago as 1965, Roland and Claire Muldoon had formed the original agit-prop company CAST. Through the intervening years as governments have come and gone, society has changed, wars have been lost and won, CAST (Cartoon Archetypal Slogan Theatre) has remained a constantly irritating thorn scratching the skin of the establishment. It may not have left any scars but it is significant that, in over a decade and a half, it has never before attracted the hostility and fear that surrounds it now.

On the original tour of Sedition '81 the production played in many venues unused to CAST shows, and for Belt and Braces, themselves unused to 'a bit of straight agit-prop', it was rather an uncharacteristic show. With a company reduced from seven to five including Claire Muldoon and with a reworked script, the second tour was uncompromisingly a CAST production.

Much of the controversy that the show has attracted has focussed on particularly 'outrageous' episodes such as the passing of joints amongst the audience and the beheading of the Queen on stage, as well as on the more general principle of whether the state should subsidise a theatre company avowed to undermining it.

For 'Sedition '81' is, as its title makes clear, an undisguisedly seditious show, its denouncement of the status quo so radical and indiscriminating as to allow Tony Benn and Red Ladder ('socialism step by step') to be attacked with as much vigour as Margaret Thatcher and Teddy Taylor. It is a ramshackle affair and its politics, a warm and deafening fart of frustration, are anarchistic and garbled, but that is all to the good after the formula solutions so often trotted out. This is pier-end political theatre billed as 'New Variety' and opening with a bravura stand-up routine from Muldoon, partly improvised night by night, as he passes the notorious joint:

"I'm the working class answer to Shakespeare. That's my job... We haven't been cut — I can't look other left wing theatre groups companies in the eyes..."

Film of violence on the streets of Belfast comes next, accompanied by Wurlitzer music, and then on to a confrontation with a representative of 'Taxpayers against Public Expenditure' played by Muldoon. Muldoon is a sort of comic genius, and the production, despite its many strengths, can never entirely escape being a showcase for his own talents, even though, apart from his one-man show 'Full Confessions of a Socialist' which won him an OBIE in New York last year and played in San Francisco and Theatrespace, 'Sedition '81' is the first CAST show Muldoon has performed in for a couple of years.



The writing is essentially a series of monologues. Some are performed by Muldoon in his persona of the 'crazed red drug fiend on an Arts Council grant', others by him in more obviously adopted roles, some by other members of the company. Songs, sketches and the picaresque stories of the dope-fiend himself link things together with Ray Meredith, once of Counteract, brought into the company as Musical Director, his talents well exploited if poorly integrated into the show.

There has been a recent return to agit-prop of a very limited campaigning kind with the anti-nuclear theatre groups, but the agit-prop that was so much a part of the late sixties and early seventies is very much a lost form, and Roland ('I'm so far left wing I've been round twice') Muldoon and his troupe are perhaps its last exponents, reason enough for their elevation into the Arts Council pantheon alongside Shakespeare, but no solution to the dilemma of a company dedicated to the overthrow of the State accepting the patronage of that State to further its work. As the show's closing number makes clear that conflict is irreconcilable: "Don't come to me for any answers" sing the cast as they exhort their audience to bite the hand that feeds them.

Luke Dixon

Station House Opera Air Gallery

"The erroneously carried out action is specially suited to express self-reproach" said Freud in the *Psychopathology of Everyday Life*. The faulty, accidental or repressed action has for Station House Opera been a way of expressing a world governed by unreason, in which the inversion of convention and the denial of expectation harbour a barely concealed paranoia. Although there is a tendency to label this kind of anti-realism Absurd Theatre, Station House Opera are closer in spirit to the novels of Thomas Pynchon than Ionesco and Adamov. Ionesco's debunking of bourgeois theatrical conventions is miles away from Station House Opera's highly personal group improvisation work. Although Station House Opera may now be creating a post-Anthony Howell type of group performance, they are not so intent on setting themselves against a preceding generation of performance and alternative theatre. Their work should not be seen as a reaction against the illusionism of mainstream theatre or the mannerism of recent performance, but as a response to the post-modernist spirit of inclusiveness and discontinuity.

Wittgenstein's notion of language being an autonomous activity (as opposed to the end-governed disposition of activities such as cooking and knitting) has become a convenient (and at times fairly banal) paradigm for talking about the arbitrariness of rule-systems or the thin dividing line between the abnormal and normal. Station House Opera in their recent untitled piece at the Air Gallery (an all-blue piece) use the notion of the language-game to create a burlesque on family life. Wittgenstein's language-game is a theory of *use*. Station House Opera put language to work in a humorous way in situations of conflict and unease. Each player seems to be living out his or her psychotic life at the expense of others. People issue commands or make sudden demands: "I want sex" shouts an American lady with a shaved head, but there is no reply; people refuse to do what others ask of them. The most repeated language-game is the disclaimer: "I am not a removal man" someone says in response to being asked to move one of the props. A man sits on a chair and it collapses into its constitutive pieces. "I am not a carpenter" he says disowning it as object and concept as it lies scattered on the floor. Games with words, games with objects Station House Opera offer us a mixture of vaudeville, (in *Natural Disasters* the humour was very physical, knock about stuff) and mental gymnastics. Most of the new piece was taken up with games in the bedroom: sexual fantasy and farce.

The imagery was based on birth. Props were divided along a womb/phallus con-

junction. The piece began with two figures wrestling in bed. On the other side of the room two figures emerged from underneath a table, later on they emerged from underneath a carpet. Towards the end the American lady was rolled up in a carpet. In an Oedipal fantasy sequence a girl gave birth to a red-faced Julian Maynard Smith. People pop out of things, pop into things. In another sequence two men and a woman seated at a table, writhing like figures in the Laocoon, drink water from a bottle and squirt it into each others mouth.

But what does this aesthetic of — “it’s not what it is it’s what you make it” — amount to? Where does it leave the viewer? The success of *Natural Disasters* rested on its allegorical dimension, which brought to the hot-house atmosphere of eight people locked up inside some *fin de siècle* boarding house or hotel, the power of dream. The new piece, albeit shorter in length and smaller in scope, lacked that total, disarming dimension — what the viewer got was a sequence of occasionally humorous, occasionally arresting vignettes. Robert Wilson — who has had an enormous influence on this type of performance — has taken the Cage aesthetic, dropped the Zen and homespun affects, and given it an operatic form. Like Cage and Wilson Station House Opera short-circuit meaning, preferring to engage with that shadowy area between sense and disorder. For Cage that was always a moral activity: by refusing the comforts of order he felt he was somehow closer to the music of the spheres — nature in the manner of her operation. That meant an increased responsibility for the viewer. For Wilson that increased responsibility meant time for the viewer to fantasize while his marathon works drifted on. Reverie in the viewer is not a state Station House Opera induce or want to induce. What they have created for themselves, to return to Freud, is a theatre of psychopathology (they call it “behavioural expressionism”) which is as compelling as it is confusing. The viewer is like the visitor to the madhouse — disturbed, humoured, but occasionally pulled up short by moments of strange beauty and truthfulness.

John Roberts

**Patti Bee,
Laura Gilbert
Oval House**

“Her faded, soiled and tattered costumes, her props and costumes hung about the room and close to her was a small chest containing a few letters and the shabby clothes of her infants.” This description of Elizabeth Poe’s deathbed suggested to Peter Oliver devising a piece for Patti Bee portraying Elizabeth while speaking texts written by her son, Edgar Allan Poe. Either by chance or design, the next week at Oval House saw Jail Warehouse performing a piece specially written for Laura Gilbert by Jeff Nuttall. The proximity of the two pieces, each written by a well res-

pected fringe initiator for an acknowledged woman performer, suggested a concerted look.

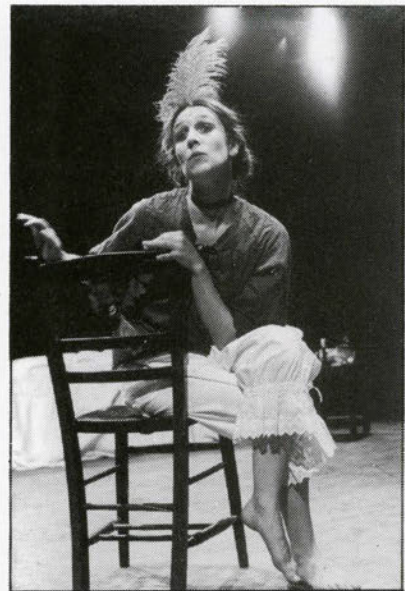
Climbing up the raked seating blocks in the downstairs theatre, one looked down into an elegant tableau revealing a sleeping Elizabeth. While Schubert’s “Death and the Maiden” played quietly, the mood of a still life drew the audience back in time while allowing them to appreciate the sensual qualities of the setting — the gauze drape over the bed, the polished wood of the few sticks of furniture, the brass kettle steaming over a spirit lamp — all neatly isolated from the everyday world and established within the idiom of a studio theatre setting.

At last, Elizabeth awakes and agonisingly reveals her condition, alone and racked with tubercular pneumonia. She comes forward to the audience, her awareness of our presence turning us into dumb, complacent witnesses of her plight. Hurtfully, she rebukes us, sometimes mocks us until, locked inevitably in her fate, she screams her horror which we must accept on behalf of the world. However, she is open to our presence and moves closer to us, entertaining us with routines and anecdotes from her stage repertoire only to fall disenchanted into solitary musings.

The style is realism but the spectacle is an illusion. Despite a powerful and skilled performance by Patti Bee, one sees an actress perform and the romantic elements of horror and despair become titillations instead of a confrontation for the audience with their own mortality. Clearly the intention was to give Patti Bee a vehicle for her own performance. But was the stumbling block the rich, dense imagery of Poe’s text obstructing the personal touch that one might have hoped for from this performer or was it the falling between two stools of a conventional theatre setting and personal expressionism?

Jail Warehouse’s starting premise seems only too conventional — interpreting an original scripted text. However, the stool proves to be not for sitting on. Re-entering the same space a week later, the end-on rake has been divided and arranged along both walls. In the aisle stand three ringed areas, defined by the curvilinear fragments of a scarpard. No 1 contains a table of saucers precariously stacked, No 2 a smouldering brazier and No 3 an amorphous bundle labelled “Heaven”. Impressions of a circus, the nightwatch and a ludicrous tea service abound.

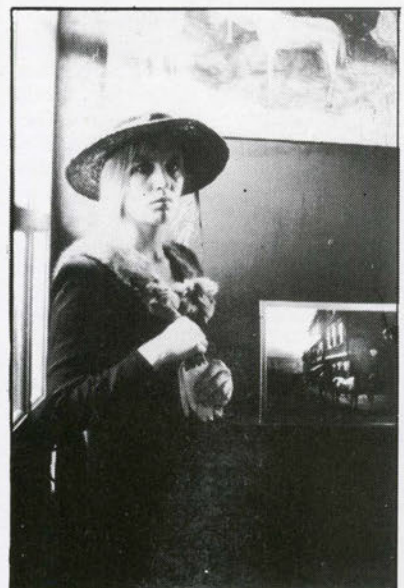
The lighting box has been pressed in to service as a performance area where Derek Wilson operates the technics of light and sound. Ensnared in his aerial orchestra pit, his attitude transcends his total concentration, his relationship with the events unwinding before him becoming one of a sculptor moving his maquettes towards an optimum grouping. Laura Gilbert appears and marshals the audience into the three areas. Nuttall’s prose unrolls — the anecdotal incidents concerning the three ringed circus, Zarda Sarpristi, the failed nun with her three wheeled pram. His



Patti Bee

juxtaposed selections belong to a tradition other than the theatre — Tzara, Schwitters, Rauschenberg — the English connection being “the raid on the inarticulate” but without Eliot’s defeatist murmurings.

Laura is casual but direct, unsmiling, almost severe. Her performance is the focusing of a personality to convey an attitude of resigned ruggedness that takes imperative precedence over the many faces which one can turn towards the world. A reaction spreads around the audience, actively grouped in their three rings. A turbulent imagery resonates around and about, so close that, as plates smash and water cascades, a disquieting fear creeps around the audience as they witness the feminisation of the Trinity and the Transformation of the Holy Hostess. An irrational world invades the studio theatre, an enclave otherwise providing entertain-



Laura Gilbert

Sheila Burnett

ment and release from its contradictions and tensions.

The curious and inevitable goings-on of the world are presented with no room for refutation. As one faces up to this stern offering, one learns to look anew with shared intrigue as the charted design achieves an ascendancy over the wayward events of the everyday and reinforces human capacity, if not to understand, then to accept.

The two pieces proved to be greatly apart in their concerns. On the one hand was a surreal journey into a world which, far from providing escapist release, focussed attention on immediate conditions and on the other was humanitarian concern for solo anguish in the face of death. But both contained a genuine quality of experience that owes nothing to today's spurious notions or to funding written in telephone numbers. This quality is owed to the activities of a handful of people working with humility and honesty.

Phil Hyde

Andre Stitt Filmmakers Coop

I have not seen any work by André Stitt prior to his performance at the London Film Co-op last month, and aside from knowing that he had studied at the Art College in Belfast, knew nothing about him. He is in fact living and working in London now and 'Dogs in Heat' was the last of a series of performances functioning under the general trade mark of AKSHUN MAN TRIKTER CYCLE.

The nature of the performance was ritualistic and involved the use of many symbolic objects/props. The underlying purpose of the performance was to examine the nature of changing identities, as illustrated in the American Indian *Trixter Cycle* of myths. The performance failed to do this, the juxtaposition of the soldier in Northern Ireland with that of the American Indian being portrayed as the 'noble savage' was confusing and detracted one from any universal theme that may have been present. The final transition in the series of soldier-noble savage was that of an old man who made his way out of the 'magic' circle that had contained most of the action clasp a white walking stick. Which brings me to a further point relating to the clarity of the performance. I am not a believer in simplicity for its own sake but neither do I believe that by crowding in innumerable objects or props (which in the general ritualistic aura of the performance, leads the spectator to believe that they carry a symbolic significance) are of any use to any central aim the artist may have unless they fortify the myth or emotional tide of the performance. The audience may well, as Stitt commented afterwards, derive their own meanings from the collection at hand but on the whole audiences are to be played to — not involved in a symbolic quiz game.



Andre Stitt

The underlying N. Ireland/Belfast conflict also added further to the pot-pourri of emotional and objective responses the audience could feel. In the end it was not so much the aspect of changing identities and political conflicts that claimed the day but a vision of humiliation, self-degradation and anger. This did not reveal itself as a specific response to a situation (to Belfast for example) but was of a personal and wider nature. The two moments when this came over strongly was when Stitt left the circle to deliver a tirade of personal anger, from the standpoint of making a political speech — into a microphone and eventually smashing his hand into a footlight (which had an unfortunate calculated air to it). The second example was a very powerful piece of performance. This was when Stitt scampered like a dog on all fours around and on the edge of the circle (a thin line of red/purple powder and mud shaped like excrement) to the sound of dogs howling and whimpering.

Despite my criticisms, I felt no desire to walk out on the performance (no one else did either). The performance was never boring and even though it never 'rose' to itself it contained some powerful moments. The soundtrack, a collage of some amazing Indian percussion music, short wave radio transmissions and distortion held the performance together in an interesting manner. I feel that we will see more of Stitt's work in the near future. Risks are an important part of performance work and Stitt is prepared to take them but if you do invite an audience they cannot be expected to mind-read the artist's intentions, and a bridge must be built by the artist that communicates them.

Roger Ely

Cunning Stunts The Tent, Battersea

Cunning Stunts' style of performance echoes that of the circus — mixing narrative with acrobatics, mime and dance, and the inevitable 'audience participation'

sequences. And so it was that I found myself on this wet and windy night in a cold, muddy tent in Battersea Park winding a piece of pink bog roll (supplied) around my right index finger, alternatively gabbling gibberish and dabbing my eyes with the pointed end.

This is what to do, we were told, 'when you want to make someone feel really guilty and confused — and you want to say goodbye to them.'

I'm not too sure about this kind of audience involvement in their show. It seems to be slotted in as a rather token gesture — as when we were later handed plastic cups with straws in order to make our own music because the musician was feeling 'isolated' and needed some support.

The 'Opera' dealt with the nature of women using symbolism from nature, myths and legend. The characters included the 'Child Queen' representing the state propped up by unquestioning tradition; the domesticated and repressed 'Owl' who finally grows wings to fly free of her mundane nest; the hyper-sensitive paranoid 'Fabulous Beast'; and the 'Tree' representing knowledge and understanding.

I was happy to see that they were to concern themselves with the theme of women. Watching their Christmas Show at The Tricycle I felt they had a lot to say about women but were dealing with a subject (nuclear war) which was only secondary to their real interests and thus weakened the performance.

At Battersea I have to admit that the programme notes made much more sense of the performance than I could ever have done on my own but, as with much of this kind of performance, there were several sequences of incredible power which used simplicity to force the impact.

There was some wonderfully absurd imagery as when the tyrannical Child Queen slowly tried and succeeded to grow up and 'stand on her own two feet', somewhat hampered by unwieldy six-inch stilts strapped to the end of her legs. Much of the strength of the show lay in these moments



of black comedy.

But the most powerful sequence in the show, a sequence that I found both rivetting and disturbing — and therefore highly effective — was when five of the women came in balancing 5 ft sticks in the palms of their hands.

This simple balancing act said much about the nature of women — maintaining the object of balance by compensating themselves. But this role suddenly changed and the sticks became weapons, the focus of the womens' faces moving from concentration solely on the sticks outward to the audience and, one supposes, the rest of society. The unity of this stark sequence, performed with honesty, was quite moving.

But, as a whole, I wasn't happy with the show — too many good and bad bits. The lengths of the individual sections may have been short and snappy, but all too often the content was not. Perhaps this means they need to work together for a longer period of time, or perhaps it means they need to re-think their performance technique. There is plenty of individual talent in the company but it is not drawn together tightly enough to fulfil its potential.

Liz Stolls

Winston Tong and Bruce Geduldig Chapter, Cardiff

Quite by chance before this show I was discussing with a friend the relative attractions of film and live theatre to the viewer. Not unnaturally she, trained in film-making, felt the screen image could involve the audience more; and I, trained in theatre, swayed the other way.

After seeing Winston Tong and Bruce Geduldig's show, I have to admit to a certain shift of stance. Frankie and Johnnie mixes film and theatre in a quite extraordinary way, blurring the lines between the two artforms, continually surprising and jolting the viewer, providing an hour of compelling entertainment and many hours of after-thought.

Sub-titled, a 'live' movie, a study in lip-stick and gunpowder of the half-life of a schizophrenic as confessed to Winston Tong and Bruce Geduldig', the show's framework is the American blues ballad 'Frankie and Johnnie' and the songs of Billie Holliday. After a deliberately laid-back opening of preparation, stage dressing and half-heard off-stage chat

which successfully de-theatricalises the setting, the first film sequence establishes the sense of period — the Blues Age, the Harlem culture of the first half of this century.

Two projectors are perched on a suitcase downstage — no pretensions, no overt statement, "this is a show". From there we are led into the sequence of thirteen Billie Holliday songs, with Tong as the lip-sticked, black sheathed lady herself. Such dialogue as there is tends to be elliptical, snatches that register images and impressions — other phrases drifting by without effect. This element of fleeting imagery is also apparent in the songs. Though presumably structured in a deliberate fashion it is never easy to follow a narrative line. This could, of course, lead to a distracting, jarring, muddled impression, but whilst Tong and Geduldig obfuscate any areas that seem like sinking into meeting audience expectations, there is no sense of frustration. It is this continuous blurring of the lines between theatre and film, life and art, mirror and reality, male and female that makes the piece fascinating. It is most successful, more through novelty (though I don't mean that perjoratively) than anything else, in two aspects.

First, the film switches to back projection and Tong/Holliday walks through the screen, enacts sequences on both sides, sometimes in silhouette, sometimes in shadow, with a half-screen image, with a full-screen image, sometimes in counterpoint to a smaller image inset into a half-screen image. Woven into this is some effective corner lighting creating huge silhouettes on the auditorium walls, or an enveloping venetian blind effect.

Secondly, from a suitcase Tong/Holliday produces two three feet high dolls of amazing verisimilitude. His manipulation of them is so precise, so careful and demands an acute focussing on the part of the viewer. This quality of attention was, for me, the hallmark of the show. Throughout the piece Tong and Geduldig posed questions in the minds of the audience. Is that character a film image, or behind or in front of the screen? Is this



character really only 20 feet away or a carefully preconceived celluloid image? Surely that doll's facial expression has altered?

"Schizophrenic" is a much abused and misunderstood word and I, and I suppose Tong and Geduldig, wouldn't presume to offer a definition, but certainly all those connotations of half-life, split personality, dream world are present in this show in a compelling format; Frankie and Johnnie merge and divide, Tong is both in drag and straight, Geduldig is a partner and an opponent, film is theatre is film.

Winston Tong and Bob Geduldig are purveyors of a powerful and thought-provoking experience. If Frankie and Johnnie done it wrong, Tong and Geduldig done it right.

Martin Lamb

Steve Cripps Acme Gallery

Explosives are not readily associated with creativity. In fact aside from their liberal use within the confines of the theatre world and their presence within the more creative firework displays, the reverse is true. Explosives produce death, injury, shock and at best are noisy and smelly. So it comes as a surprise to find an artist using such materials as his *primary* medium of expression.

The artist in question is Steve Cripps, a past student from the Bath Academy of Arts and now a full time fireman. Seemingly Cripps had been attracted to explosives from an early age but the notion of using such material as a vehicle for expression did not occur to him until he left college. If you are looking for historical precedents for such a medium then they are few and far between — perhaps Tinguely (whose influence Cripps acknowledges). In the end you have to evaluate the effect of his performances on you in reference to other media and real life situations. Before this last series of performances at the Acme I had only seen Cripps perform once and that was in the company of musician/performers — Anne Bean and Paul Burwell. This performance took place at the London Musicians collective in April and for performers perhaps more musically orientated — it was a surprisingly theatrical and visually exciting performance. The event entitled 'The Fall of Babylon' featured a slightly more subdued performance from Cripps but also highlighted his ability to bend and distort the audience's perception of the event through a series of earth-rending blasts and blinding flashes of light.

Cripp's piece at the Acme produced a much more stoic and excessive demonstration. The mood of the piece was minimal and not theatrical in nature. He used a variety of explosive devices ranging from Jumping Jacks, Crow Scarers to Maroons and the assorted flash powders and Gerbs (a type of Roman Candle) all of which were used for their particular sound and visual qualities.

These explosives were in turn positioned in/behind various musical instruments and objects (Chinese Gongs, bells and a metal dental tray attached to a metal ship mast — the latter was also used as a wind instrument with the addition of a Bassoon reed). The explosions thereby created quite subtle sounds in their wake. I later discovered that two Maroons had been placed inside a bag of flour and in a bag of lentils, further illustrating the visual quality of Cripp's work (the flour once activated appeared more like a snow storm) but both were interpreted by myself at the time as something a little more sinister — ie plaster and debris from the ceiling striking my face. The flour, blast marks and the debris created by the explosions were not cleared away and by the time of my second visit the area had taken on an interesting and derelict pose.

My fear or anxiety concerning what I believed to be bits and pieces of Acme housing flying around the gallery brings me to the heart of Cripp's performances — they can be painful to the ear and disturbing. The gallery is transformed into a city under attack from an unseen enemy. Once you have tasted a few eruptions you find your hands cringing just below your ear lobes. I found myself, perhaps naively, sheltering behind a certain William Rayban who was shooting a 16mm film of the event in the belief that no artist does away with the documentation lightly. Cripps throughout all this assumes a mainly secondary role — occasionally you catch sight of him, like a stoker caught/silhouetted at an open furnace door. On the opening night the gallery was packed with artists and people 'in the know', consequently we gained courage through this and cheered, applauded and laughed the explosions away. This was far from the atmosphere created by the second performance that I was able to see. The second performance had far fewer spectators and a colder, more lonely feel to it. My

impression of the evening was not that different from sitting out an attack — defenceless and unable to escape — waiting for the nuclear dust to settle. But we still laughed — because Cripps is a player of the nervous system — he knows the beauty of a carefully timed space between explosions, he also has a sense of humour. For example his serenading of three balls swung arc like from the ceiling before clattering to the floor and his extended fumbling for a match before igniting yet another brain rumbler.

I enjoyed experiencing Cripps work. I do feel that it would do no harm to print a warning about the noise/smoke level for those with weak hearts and punctured ear drums though! I also feel that the locations for his performances should play a larger part in his future work — after all his work is not just about blowing people out of enclosed performance spaces.

Roger Ely

Tina Keane Four Corner Films

Performance as a completely private experiment in perception can only be undertaken with the complete consent of the audience. With Tina Keane's 'Playpen' this consensus was there, if only in that it fitted well within the programme of women's work at Four Corner Films, "Public Memory — Private Memory". In performance, Tina Keane gives little to the audience to work with. Instead it has to work its way within her framework of ideas. Once this initial work was done, the performance was, in fact, quite engaging. The performer is in a playpen, dressed in pastel adult-version towelling playsuit. A video camera points up past her to the audience, forming an image on the closed circuit screen representing the child's eye view of the world. The structure of the

work is carefully ordered around a clapping song, known roughly as "When Susie was a teenager". The soundtrack follows ages of woman, as represented by the Susie in the song. In the videotape showing alongside the live playpen monitor various versions of 'Susie' are slipped into another parallel playpen, starting from a baby and ending up with an old woman. When the tape was made, the participants were told to do what they wanted for a given period within the pen. At the end of their action, simultaneous with the changing song motif the camera is faded and another woman takes the previous one's place. The playpen, defined as a territory of action by both Keane and the video women is a highly resonant form, with echoes of domestic childhood filtering in through the soundtrack (Crossroads on the television, late afternoons). It is a counterpoint of tedium and possessive security, feelings that are invoked by these images of childhood. But while in the children's song women's actions are conditioned by enforced expectation, though laced with humour (When Susie was a teenager: she said ooh-ah, I lost my bra in my boyfriend's car) the women on the tape are given the option of free action within the 'lost' childhood environment. Movements, actions are made which either complement, ignore or oppose the themes in the clapping song. Tina Keane herself shuffles silently around the live playpen... trying to deal with changing modes of expression? It was an intimate, partially understood performance, but the audience, mainly women, seemed to be making the effort to probe into Keane's intentions. It left a number of questions open about the nature of identity and introduced video as a tool to rewrite personal history. Questions to which performance work should apply itself, though potentially at the expense of the public's attention span.

Rob la Frenais



Cripps

ARTIST'S DOCUMENTATION

'MAKING UP GLASGOW'

A PERFORMANCE BY CATHERINE ELWES

PHOTOGRAPHED BY JOYCE AGEE

AT THIRD EYE, GLASGOW

MAY 9, 1981



I last visited Glasgow in 1975 when I was employed by a large TV company as a trainee make-up artist or make-up girl or powder puff girl depending on how you look at it... We were all women, with a man at the helm, of course... A servicing department, you see...

'Miss Elwes, you must understand that if you want to do this job effectively, you need nothing short of a vocation. You will be working irregular and unsocial hours. We issue fortnightly work schedules and reserve the right to amend them at a moment's notice. If a girl goes sick on a night shoot and there's no-one to cover for her, we might just have to get you out of bed at 3 in the morning! You cannot expect to maintain a full social life outside the corporation. No leave is guaranteed. Most of the girls mix with other members of staff. Its really impossible for people outside to understand the necessity for this kind of flexibility. Incidentally, do you have a steady boyfriend?...'



'Catherine, where is your overall?'... In the studio, only make-up girls wear overalls - like nurses and cleaners and canteen women...



'The versatile anonymity demand'.. We were mother, sister, friend, lover, nanny, whore, psychiatrist, confessor, confidante....



Two horsemen break across the silver sands as evening closes in.. agitating manes.. thudding hooves... Ah, its moments like that....



One day they set a village alight... Women dutifully screamed while their babies howled for real. Buildings exploded, smoke everywhere. Seeing it as it were in live performance, I found it hard to sustain my disbelief...



My colleagues in the department were mostly white, middle-class, young, heterosexual, English and good-looking.. Grooming was at a premium. We curled our hair, painted our faces, discussed diets, fashion and men...

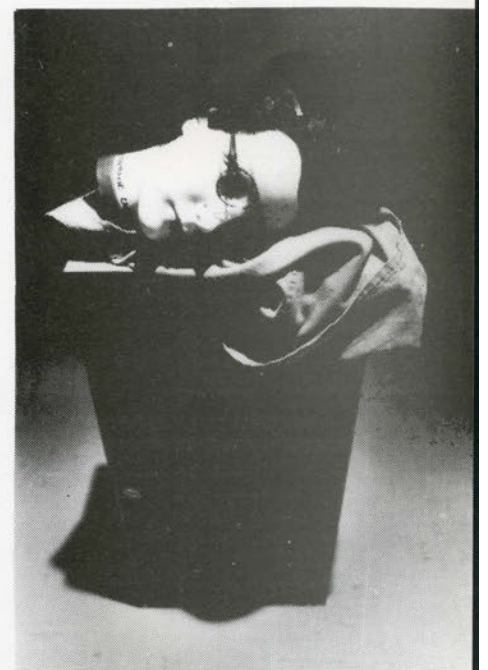


The crash of breaking hearts was deafening as lightning location romances dissolved in the heat of the next show....

It was a very hot July afternoon and the actors and extras were suffering terribly in their heavy costumes. We were all being plagued by clegs - the horses in particular attracted these unpleasant insects. The filming involved some tricky work and things weren't going too well.. The horses were becoming difficult to handle and various stunts had to be abandoned. I was in my element cutting the throats of a dozen English soldiers, the victims of an ambush. Blood and Gore were something of a speciality of mine and I carefully calculated how the blood would have spurted from the severed jugular, where it would have spilled given the angle of the soldier's fall etc. I was so absorbed in this gory task that I didn't notice the group of horses grazing nearby nor the props guy who was trying to swat the flies from their flanks.

As I reached

my third soldier, a powerful leg suddenly lashed out. The props guy caught it right on the jaw and landed at my feet. I looked down. His lips were mouthing soundless words, his eyes stared and his whole body was shaking uncontrollably. "Mm, the blow fell on the upper part of his jaw, possibly breaking some teeth, certainly fracturing his jaw and causing severe concussion. There must be a great deal of internal damage. Ah yes, here comes the blood.." Thump. Another body fell at my feet. The director had fainted. His view of the situation suddenly invaded my imagination and I started to panic. Someone took charge and ordered me to get water. Greatly relieved, I did what I was told.. The props guy spent two months in hospital with his jaw wired up and I was generally congratulated for the realism of my manufactured wounds.



In the three odd years I was employed in this manner, I failed to make a single entry in my diary. For me, this constitutes a stunned silence...

National Performance Listings

BIRMINGHAM **Birmingham Arts Lab** **Info 021 359 4192**

July 15, 16, 17. Lizzie Cox, Somerset. In the sunlight the sheep glow orange amidst the stubble of a harvested field. Soon the bright colour will be washed away in the outburst of rain that has been so long awaited, and for an hour the annual cycle of life in the Somerset field will be recreated in visual collage, dance and music. (Performance No. 11) August 6, 7, 8, 9. Towards The Celestial City. A theatrical pilgrimage from purgatory to paradise. An epic journey of spiritual and architectural rediscovery. Become a pilgrim for an evening. Join Phil Grimm and friends as they voyage through the undiscovered canal system of Birmingham in search of the celestial city. A ship-board continuously moving performance by British Events, Luke Dixon and friends. (Boats leave at eight).

BRISTOL **Arnolfini Gallery** **Info 0272 299191**

Until 4 July Festival of Improvised Music, organised by Bristol Musicians Co-op continues. Music, Dance and Sound environments. Until August 1 Fashion and Fantasy, an ambitious jewellery exhibition will include performances 'wearing' the jewellery on the quayside. (See Performance No. 8 - Tom Saddington - Cigarette Packet Performance for the kind of scope they envisage).

BRIGHTON **The Richmond (Pub)** **Info 0273 506389**

Every Thursday, New Wave, Performance Art, Jazz etc. (Performers wanted phone Neil Butler at above number). July 2 Roger Ely, Birds with Ears.

CARDIFF **Chapter Arts Centre** **Info 0222 39061**

July 3. Henri Chopin. The originator of 'Poesie Sonore' performing and exhibiting his text-sound and visual poetry.

July 18 Robin Williamson. Ex member of Incredible String Band who has developed poetic and theatrical elements in his work into this solo performance which incorporates theater, music, story, song and legend in the same bardic tradition exemplified by Yeats, Dylan Thomas and Robert Graves.

July 30, 31. Performing Arts Factory presents Circus Sacrifice, a solo performance by Nick Birkinshaw (ex-Moving Being).

August 1. Terminus Cafe. First in a monthly series of monthly music/performance cabarets along the lines of 'Cabaret Futura'.

August 13-15. Bite Theatre Group. Bite Back, In Memory Now.

August 20-22. New Arts Consort. Punishment by Roses - A Paean for Yukio Mishima. Also check Cardiff Festival for other performances around Cardiff. Info 0222 39061.

EDINBURGH **Edinburgh Festival Fringe.** **031 226 5257**

Edinburgh Festival Fringe takes place in August/September and the following performance groups, artists, etc. will be performing around the city at various times too numerous and complex to list. Phone the above number for details. Acme Acting, the Bogden Club, Cafe Graffiti, Dog Company, Eureka Ensemble Theatre (US), Impact Theatre, The Graeae, Jack Klaff, Lumiere and Son, National Theatre of Brent, Tamagara Dance and Drama, Traverse Theatre, Wildcat Theatre, New Arts Consort, Walter Bartussek, Christiane Matti (Switzerland) Madhouse Company and Friends, Medieval Players, Cliffhanger, Lunar Tricks, Moving Picture Mime Show, Roger McGough, Brian Patten, Ivor Cutler, Bryony Lavery's Female Trouble. Some of the above will be taking part in a Street Theatre day on August 23rd, and Acme Acting will be performing in Edinburgh homes for the duration on request by phoning the above number.

GLASGOW **Third Eye Centre** **Info 041 332 7521**

Puppet Festival: August 13 Whisper and Shout, Derek Carpenter, August 14 Gordon Hunter's Carpetbag Puppets, Phil Spellacy Company. August 15 Canadian Folk Puppets, Black Box Puppets. August 20 Barry Smith's Theatre of Puppets. August 22 Masquerade Theatre of Puppets.

LONDON **Acme Gallery** **Info 01 240 3047**

July 20-August 8. Tony Sinden. Performances entitled 'Space Between Oblique Space Beyond' Subtitle: 'Dialogue between an upstairs room and

a private view'. August 20, 21, 22. Martin Ives. Performance. The Acme is closing down this autumn. This focus for visual performance work of the not easily classifiable kind will be sorely missed, and it is to be hoped that others will rise to take its place. It is planning a final performance season in the autumn with Bruce Lacey and Jill Bruce (September 4-20) and Stuart Brisley will do the final show at the Acme (September 28-October 10).

Action Space **Info 01 637 8270 (Drill Hall)**

Was cut by the Arts Council at Christmas, but is fighting back and has now managed to re-open for workshops, classes and hire of space (phone above for details) The Cafe has also re-opened, providing a welcome meeting place for artists in London. Donations and messages of support to 16 Chenies St London WC1.

Air Gallery Info 01 278 7751
London Video Arts (Info also 734 7410) Events. July Jill Scott (US) Videotapes and talk. July 16 Simon Power. Performance. July 23-24, 30, 31. Student Shows.

Cabaret Futura. (Ann Bean & Hermine Presents:) **Info 01 242 3007**

Stop Press. The new Cabaret Futura, run by Anne Bean and Hermine, has had to move temporarily to The Screen on the Green, London (See our feature this issue) because of a sudden closure of the Latin Quarter (after 23 years!) June 29: Last night in the series. Matchbox Purveyors, David Medalla - Opera, Charlie Pig and Charles Hustwick - (Synaptic Realist Tie Company), Archie 2, Hermine, Terry Day & Maggie Nichols, Mike Coopers Video Band, A Popular History of Signs, The Promenaders - (Paul Burwell, Lol Coxhill, Max Eastley, David Toop, Steve Beresford, Peter Cusak) A crowded evening!

Heaven (Final Solution) **Info 01 439 1907**

Night Moves, run by the Final Solution music promotion outfit, continues the Richard Strange format of Cabaret Futura at the Heaven Disco on Monday nights The Event Group (see feature photo) are among the regular performance groups appearing. Heaven is under the arches beneath Charing Cross station, London.

ICA Info 01 930 0493
Until July 11. Ella, by Herbert

Achternbusch. Ella is set in a henhouse, inhabited by Ella, the mother, Josef, the son, and several chickens. It is the very confused story of a life of extreme deprivation, lived by the mother and told by the son, while feeding the chickens, cooking the eggs, looking after Ella and losing the tin marked 'cyanide'. July 14-August 1. National Theatre of Brent. Zulu, Charge of the Light Brigade, While All The World Wondered. The National Theatre of Brent is a unique and rare company devoted to the participatory re-enactment of the stirring battles of our nation's story. With the assistance of his colleague and close personal friend Stanley D. Livingstone, Desmond Oliver Dingle, auteur, impressionist and poet, has already produced and place in repertoire Hastings - The Fatal Arrow, Oh Edgehill!, Bosworth A Kingdom for a Horse, Khatoum - End of a Dynasty or Revenge of the Mahdi?, and Harfleur - A Royal Seige. Includes ILEA approved visual aids.

August 4-9 Theatr Provisorium (Poland) It is not for us to Travel to the Islands of Happiness.

August 4-16 Cuatrotablas (Grotowski based company from Peru) Wanderind and Sleeplessness.

August 11-16. Het Werktheater (Holland) One of Them.

August 18-23. Actual Music 81.

London International Festival of Theatre Info 01 222 4891

Taking place from August 3-16 at various venues around London, including street work. Phone above number for details of specific events, or write to LIFT, Box UP, 78 Buckingham Gate, London SW1. Also open discussions and workshops. The LIFT Box Office is at the Festival Centre at the Piccadilly Hotel, London W1. This is a list of some of the events, venues included. Grupo de Teatro Macuaima (Brazil) Lyric Theatre, Suasana Theatre Ensemble (Malaysia) Shaw Theatre, Natural Theatre (UK) Street Work, Het Werktheater (Holland) ICA, Die Vaganten (W. Germany) Tricycle, Teatr Osmeo Dnia - Theatre of the Eighth Day (Poland) New Half Moon, Theatre Provisorium (Poland) ICA, Cuatrotablas (Peru) ICA, Tamagawa Dance and Drama Group (Japan) Tricycle, Greta Chute Libre (France) Old Half Moon. Street Events, which include many other seasoned UK street performers, will take place at Paternoster Square, Covent Garden Piazza, St Martins-in-the-Fields, and the South Bank. Again, phone the above number for details. The Forum, in association with the ITI, includes discussion and debates on the following: August 6 Reviewing the Visual - towards a new critical language, August 8 Theatrical Form as a Political Weapon, August 13 Stage Designers and their Use of Space, August 15 The State as Policy Maker - implications of public funding



Ella

(All at ICA). The Performance Magazine will provide a full report of LIFT in the next issue.

Jacksons Lane

Info 01 340 5226

July 3 Belinda Neave. Solo dance.

July 12 Claire Hayes. Solo dance.

London Film-makers Co-op

Info 01 586 4806

July 6-11. Performance and installation summer show. Artists include. Fiona Wire - video installation, Paul Jackson - performance, Marion Urch - Slide/Tape installation, Lulu Quinn - Film installation 'What Are You Looking At?' Dave Parsons - installation.

London Musicians Collective

Info 01 722 0456

July 3 Siran Savaskan and Sarah Carter
July 9 Paul Burwell, Terry Day, Peter Cusak and others.

July 16 Obstacles, and others.

July 17 The Axidental Orchestra

July 18 Spontaneous Music Ensemble

July 23, 24, 25. Association of Little Presses are celebrating their 15th anniversary with a bookfair and a festival of readings and performances. For details, phone Bob Cobbing 01 624 8565. July 31 Doug Gill and Phil Jeck. 'A Pair In Shorts'.

October Gallery

Info 01 242 7367

August 7, 8, 14. Jack, Or The Submission. Performance of Ionescos work by Studio 7. August 19 onwards. Exhibition of photographs by Brion Gysin and William Burroughs (See interview with Brion Gysin, early performance and multi-media artist, in Performance No. 11)

Oval House Info 01 582 7680

July 3-5 Images Theatre Company.

Amazulus (Children of the Heavens)
July 17-19 Forkbeard Fantasy. Seal of the Walrus.

July 22-26, 28-August 2. Othello. Oval House Production co-ordinated by Gordon McDonald. August 4-6. The Great Nobodies in a black and white comedy: "I Gave You The Spare Ribs And Told You To Get On With It" August 7-9. Turntail, by Yasmine Judd. August 5-9. Bahumutsi Drama Group of Soweto in The Hungry Earth, by Maishe Maponya. Oval House will then be closed until October 1, when it will re-open with a dance Festival: Dancers Dance, a season of New and experimental dance.

Riverside Studios

Info 01 738 3354

July 9-August 2. War With The Newts, Ken Campbell's latest production, adapted from the science fiction satire by Karel Capek. The performance includes a full size inhabited by giant newts who threaten to destroy mankind and take over the world, and a live onstage TV studio, in which the seven performers impersonate every conceivable TV and political personality including David Bellamy, Esther Rantzen, Russell Harty, Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer, Michael Foot, Margaret Thatcher, Wedgewood Benn, Enoch Powell, Ian Paisley, Dennis Healey, Edward Heath, Clement Freud, Morecombe and Wise, Donald Sinden, Max Wall, Robin Day and Malcolm Muggeridge.

Theatre Space Info 836 2035

July 14. Watch This Space. Until July 12 - New International Theatre. The Onion. Performance group known for improvised work: Turning, Still Turning performed last summer. Also - Theatre Space Festival at St. Martins-in-the-Field. Theatre Space has a widely varied and closely packed programme of short-run performances, usually booked at late notice, to give new work a chance. Phone above number for further details.

Tricycle Theatre

Info 01 328 8628

Until July 11. Tapdance on a Telephone Line. A musical by Donna Franceschild. Tap Shoe Theatre Company. Several months in the lives of four telephone operators in Los Angeles exchange do battle with their jobs, the craziness of the telephone public, the supervisors, and ultimately the world's largest multinational corporation, the America Phone Company.

South Hill Park Arts Centre

Info 0344 27272

July 3, 4, 5. Bracknell Jazz Festival. Many improvising and new musicians, too numerous to list. Phone for details. July 10, 11, 12. Performance of Peter Bellamy's Folk Opera, The Transports.

York and Albany **Info 01 387 2304**

July 1-19 The Dog Company. Paradise Street. In a road of that name in present-day Liverpool Queen Elizabeth I consults the local GP on her child-bearing potential - part of a plan to return to her own time and breed a race of women whose dominance will determine history. The Queen and her glittering court cannot avoid deep involvement with the local inhabitants. Their interest is divided between personal plots which outline the battle of the sexes, and a diagnosis of the uncanny resemblance between sixteenth and twentieth century methods of dealing with unrest in Ireland. July 22-August 2. Munich Mannequins - Cabaret and black comedy Falling Out. Followed by (date unconfirmed) Christopher Tookey's Ladies and Jurgen

NEWCASTLE **Basement Group** **Info 0632 614527**

No performances July - August. Reopens September.

NOTTINGHAM **Midland Group Gallery** **Info 0602 582636**

The Performance Art Platform, advertised in the last issue, has had to be postponed because of the sudden illness of the organiser; until October 17-18. The full programme will appear in the next issue.

YORK **York Arts Centre** **Info 0904 27129**

July 10-11 The Cabinet of Dr Caligari - Yorkshire Actors Company. July 18 Shameless Hussies. Cabaret by 'a ten woman gang of cultural vandals from Hull who can tear sexist stereotypes with their bare hands'.

We have tried to list as many events as possible which fall within our definition of Performance. If you feel we have left something out that should have been included, please write to us at PO Box 421 London NW1 0RF.

TOURING

This section is for artists and groups whose tours include events at venues not normally listed by Performance Magazine. It is particularly vital that we get listings in writing at least a month before a tour in order to be included here.

Action Space Mobile Info
061 224 0020 or 01 637 1353
In Search of The Lost Tomb. An archeological expedition, spanning the whole of Northern England and

Scotland, seeks volunteers to find the Lost Tomb, last seen in 1906, but whose location has been obscured by a series of uncanny mishaps. Base camp, a series of mobile pneumatic structures, will be set up in the following areas at the following dates. Ring the above number for details. July 1-12 Manchester, July 14-18 Edinburgh, July 21-24 Newcastle, July 30-31 Tameside, August 6 Bury, August 10-11 Accrington, August 13-14 Tameside, August 17 Bracknell, August 18, 19 Rotherham, August 20 Manchester August 21, 22 Tameside, August 25 Sheffield, August 28, 29 Bolton, August 30-31 Northwich, September 1 Manchester.

Belinda Neave **Info 0222 702005**

One-Off. Solo dance performance. A performance devised with the collaboration of Geoff Moore (Moving Being) Ian Spink, and Richard Alston. A witty colourful and inventive performance, using the music of Patti Smith, Fats Waller, Jon Keleihor and the Flying Lizards.

July 1 Wolfreton School, Hull, July 3 Jacksons Lane, London, July 10 Guizer Theatre Aberdeen, July 11 Edinburgh, July 13 Dudhope Arts Centre, Dundee, July 22 Cupar Fife, July 24-25 Aston Arts Centre, Birmingham.

British Events **Info 0225 27558**

British Events (See this issue's cover and interview with royal couple) are Mick Banks and Corinne D'Cruz. They specialise in openings, celebrity appearances, equestrian still lives, and uniformed subversion, as well as performing indoor reconstructions of epic events in modern military history: (Midway, Storm Warnings) They will be performing at the following events during the summer.

July 9 City of London Festival, July 12 Anti Nuclear Campaign March to Sharpness, July 18 Round Table Mardi Gras, Bath, July 30-31 Elephant Fair Cornwall, August 2-9 Birmingham Arts Lab - see Celestial City in venue listings, August 17 Performance in Bath for The Great British Bike Ride as the cyclists pass through on their way from John O' Groats to Lands End.

Bruce Lacey and Jill Bruce **Info 0953 603262**

Bruce Lacey and Jill Bruce carry out ritual performances all over the country in outdoor locations, as well as doing installation performances in galleries. They "collect objects from special places at special times and perform with all these in celebrations of special days, special times and special places, and in our own way relate to the energies which surround us". From July 25-26 they are at Caddes Hill Faerie Fair, Caddes Hill, Lyng, Norfolk.

Incubus Theatre **Info 01 637 4789**

Incubus Theatre's latest production 'Cozenook Cabaret' is set in a home for retired artistes. Victor and Opal Beasley, once better known as Rockin' Vic and the Opalettes in the golden '50s of Rock 'n Roll and Monty and Bunty Delmar, Photoplay's romantic couple of 1956, clash uncompromisingly like any contemporary opposing youth culture. Incubus welcomes you to an hour and a half of musical parody, exquisite bad taste, irreverent sociological comment through the couple's remonstrations, fading memories and fantasies. July 4 Wyeside Arts Centre Builth Wells, July 7-11, W. Midlands area, July 8 Stichley Studio Telford, July 9 Worcester Arts Workshop, July 10 Droitwich High School, July 11 Tamworth Arts Centre, July 14-18 E. Midlands area, July 24 Chats Palace London, July 25-26 Caddes Hill Faerie Fair, Lyng, Norfolk, July 28-29 Riverstreet Hall Portsmouth, July 29 Goodwood Races, July 30 The Plough Torrington, July 31-August 2 Elephant Fair Cornwall, August 7-9 Sidlidgtw Festival.

Kaboodle Theatre Exchange **Info 09363 78280**

Kaboodle perform disturbing and non-naturalistic work that contacts audience in an immediate but non-rational way. This group is of particular interest as they have sharply moved away from previous conventional theatricality to stark visual performance. Their latest show, Dorothy's Progress, is 'a commedia piece combining the magic of the original story (The Wizard of Oz) with additional emphasis on 'The Journey'.

July 3-4 Wirral - Merseyside, July 6-8 Chester Gateway, July 10-11 Southampton Show, July 13-14 Tower Centre Winchester, July 15 Cheltenham Festival, July 17-18 Putney Open Air Theatre London, July 19 South Hill Park Festival, July 24-25 Crosset Centre Peterborough, July 25 Norwich City Park, July 29-31 Manor House, Luton.

Welfare State International **Info 051 727 6847**

Though a vast body of work in Britain and abroad over 12 years WSI has pioneered new forms of Celebratory Theatre within particular social contexts, fusing the elements of fine art sculpture, performance, dance, music, food, landscape, fire and water to produce a vivid poetic whole.

July 4-5 Ulverston Carnival, Cumbria, July 6-19 Sunderland Residency - Journey of the Ceolocanth, August 1-16 Lyme Park Festival Stockport - The Skeleton The Pilot and The Rainbow Fish, August 8-29 Residency Cleator Moor Cumbria, July 23-24 Jail Warehouse: Happy Days by Samuel Beckett.

Edinburgh Festival

FEMALE TROUBLE By Bryony Lavery: A new show for the festival. Weeks 1/2/3 August 16-September 4 (Not August 24 or 31) Midnight, Assembly Rooms, George St.

NATIONAL THEATRE OF BRENT presents Desmond O'Dingle's Zulu! The show of the film. Weeks 1/2/3. August 17-September 5. (Not August 23 or 30). 12.40pm Wildcat Theatre.

IVOR CUTLER Teatime Special: Life in a Scotch Sitting Room. Weeks 1/2 August 16-29 (Not August 24) 4pm Assembly Rooms, George St

ROGER McGOUGH AND BRIAN PATTEN Week 2 August 24-30, 10.45pm Queens Hall, Clark St.

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PERFORMANCE MAGAZINE THE REGULAR REVIEW OF LIVE ART IN THE UK

**Performance Art — Fringe
Theatre — New Music — Video
Dance — Spectacle**

Back issues:

No 4 Academia Ruchu, Mary Longford, The Masterwork, Gay Sweatshop.

No 5 Cardiff, Stuart Brisley, Silvia Ziranek, Sonia Knox, Charlie Drake (interview).

No 6 Midlands, Naked Art, Drag, Steve Cripps, Point Blank Dartington Dance.

No 7 John Cage (Interview), Merce Cunningham, Street Performance, Tadeusz Kantor, Lumiere and Son, Forkbeard Fantasy.

No 8 About Time, I Giselle, Tom Saddington, Stefan Brecht, Pip Simmons (Interview).

No 9 Entertainment Special, (Showbiz, TV, Tourism, Bingo, Waxworks, Discotheques,) Ivor Cutler (Interview).

No 10 Chris Burden, Station House Opera, Cameron and Miller (Interview), Video Festival, Belgian Performance.

No 11 Lizzie Cox, Brion Gysin (Interview), Stuart Brisley, Artworks, Riverside Dance, European Theatre of War.

Each issue also includes a wide range of performance reviews. The Performance Magazine is published bimonthly. To obtain back issues, there is a subscription form inside on page 3. For further details telephone 01-485 7476 or write to PO Box 421 London NW1 0RF.