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JUNE / JULY

PERFORMANCE MAGAZINE

NO. 24

THE REVIEW OF LIVE ART

- 1. INTERVIEWED:
- 2. PREVIEWED:
- 3. PROFILED:
- 4. REVIEWED:
- 5. PLUS:

- 1. Kazuko Hohki of Frank Chickens.
- 2. Urban Sax.
- 3. John Maybury.
- 4. Charlie Hooker's Mainbeam.
- 4. Natasha Morgan's Ariadne's Afternoon.
- 5. Performance in New York.



3.



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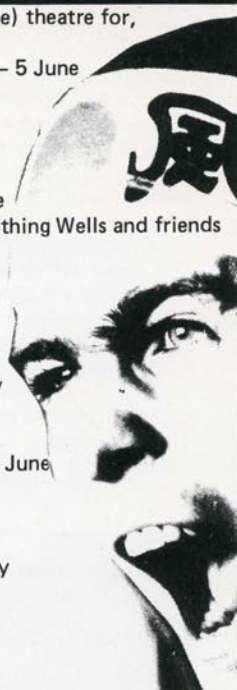
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L E T T E R S

Dear Performance,

I take the liberty of writing to you as I am trying to raise funds to get Michael O'Dowd, Performance Artist, 'Artnarchist', out of Madrid jail. Up to now it was just raising money and waiting for an eventual liberty, but it is now official that the bail has been granted, and that it is 'just' a question of sending the money . . . 6000 dollars!

Any donation would be gratefully received at my address below. For moral support and direct contact with Michael:

Michael O'Dowd 7117

Apartado de Correos 27007 Madrid 25 (S)PAIN (as he puts it . . .)

I very much like your magazine, until I met Michael I knew nothing of performance art, it's quite extraordinary. For anything you do, thanks a lot.

Catherine Terakopiantz
31 Dolphin House
Poplar High St.
London E14

ARE YOUR SUNDAY MORNINGS predicatable? Is making love on the Observer Colour Supplement or waking to a head-banger hangover becoming a habit? Do you long to turn one little switch and exchange boredom for uncensored sex, unspeakable scandal, unpublishable fact, illicit records and satirical humour that challenge prejudice and prudery wherever it lurks—or are you already dead?

Then switch on and tune in to the latest in alternative listening, Breakfast Pirate Radio (BPR is on 235 metres Medium Wave) and forget going to church. On 22nd May the first broadcast blasted a broadside into the air waves' notions of propriety. BPR's subversive message, unfettered by censorship, was put over (via a mad 'combination' of assumed accents, false names and fantasy personas) by a witty stream of attitudinally clinched presenters in factual and fictional situations. This could serve as Thatcher's excuse to eliminate CB radio, or could be greeted by the culture vultures as an extension to the Audio Arts.

Rachel Strong's Culture Watch interview with a well known 'Gay-Chauvinist-Bastard', surely fuelled the fires of macho rage in the dark satanic mills of the North. Southerners may have recognised him as the voice behind the black lamè and chain jock-strap which flashed itself at the Slammer recently. Meanwhile talk of ten thousand Northern lads being rallied to

Dear Performance Magazine,

I note four attributions of my play *The Knives Beside The Plates* to Binnie in the last issue of your magazine. It seems that you cannot get used to the idea that I write my plays myself. In your December issue you managed to attribute to Anne Bean my play *He Who Is Your Lord Is Your Child Too*. Now you transform into a collaboration a play I wrote some three years ago, well before I met Christine Binnie, not a single line of which was changed.

If you are referring to the teamwork of the production, you might have added the names of Sef Townsend, whose picture you failed to caption, and everyone else in the cast.

My name by the way is Hermine Demoriane.

H. Demoriane
3 Raleigh Street
London N1

drive the ancestral seed of the Norman Conquest from Southern bastions of power, must have focussed the entire Telecom fleet of detector vans on Featherstone Rovers Rugby Football Club.

Knife edge scandal came from Tim Cross (or was it Tony?), Mr Amyl Nitrate himself presented Tokyo's answer to Kate Bush in Down at the Old Bull . . . and threatened a future Bent Copper Slot if listeners sent in names. The inevitable roving 'Chopper' reported gore and culinary chaos during a live commentary on a motorway pile-up, cleared finally by the arrival of coachloads of Dr Barnardo's kids with knives and forks! Other items to moisten the jaded tastebuds were Billy Connelly screwing Am..... (sorry the signal faded), Michael Jackson letting it all hang out in private session, anonymous tales from the Lead Lined Bunker, Lenny Bennet trying not to be white, 'the freaky little boy' of alternative comedy Keith Allen, trying not to be, (with song Three Bags Full Sir), a single, Government Bed & Breakfast, recorded in prison by conscientious objectors to Vietnam the Dillon Boys, Maggie Thatcher's latest hit Enough is Enough, Rachel Cromerty, Luke Steiner and everyone but Max Bygraves, all rounded off with Mantovani's Love is a Many Splendid Thing . . . If that doesn't change your outlook on Sunday morning, nothing will!

Maxine

Dear Performance Magazine,

We found your article (Reviews No. 23) critical, in the correct sense, and interesting—with one exception, which I will discuss later.

I would look on the article, in parts, as misleading, but certainly not destructive. I think readers new to this area of the work will be misled by your statement of the (lack of) political nature and content of the Laboratorium's work. *Akropolis* contained a distinctive political inference, quite close to the manner of *Memorial* in parts. I showed your article to a visitor from Poland recently, who was also concerned about this point.

For the record, *Osmegnia Dnia* are the 'Theatre of the Eighth Day' and not as they were quoted. Our First Statement and that of Cardiff Laboratory are only similar in the essential requirements—training etc. There is quite a difference of statement regarding their closed performances and workshops, and our desire to create an extensive communication between our work and the public. One factor behind this is to promote an understanding of 'Physical Theatre' in a country where this form of work is riddled with misconception, misunderstanding and suspicion.

We took exception to the closing paragraph of your article. Robin Morley has every right to make such a comment, and it would be quite a challenging question if he was conversant with the background and overall working methodology of the company.

We feel he is not fully conversant with these matters and the work of the Laboratorium. As a journalist, he has the right to put such a question, but it is our view that he must undertake the responsibility to answer it himself.

We therefore lay down our challenge to help facilitate his conversance with our work, and will supply documentation to help him answer the question he posed.

Thank you for your interest in our work. Critical, but not destructive. A question and a challenge, and not an insult. Therefore we remain open to you and welcome your interest.

Paul Bradley
Theatre Babel
The National School
Choppards Bank Rd.
Holmfirth
West Yorks.

Next

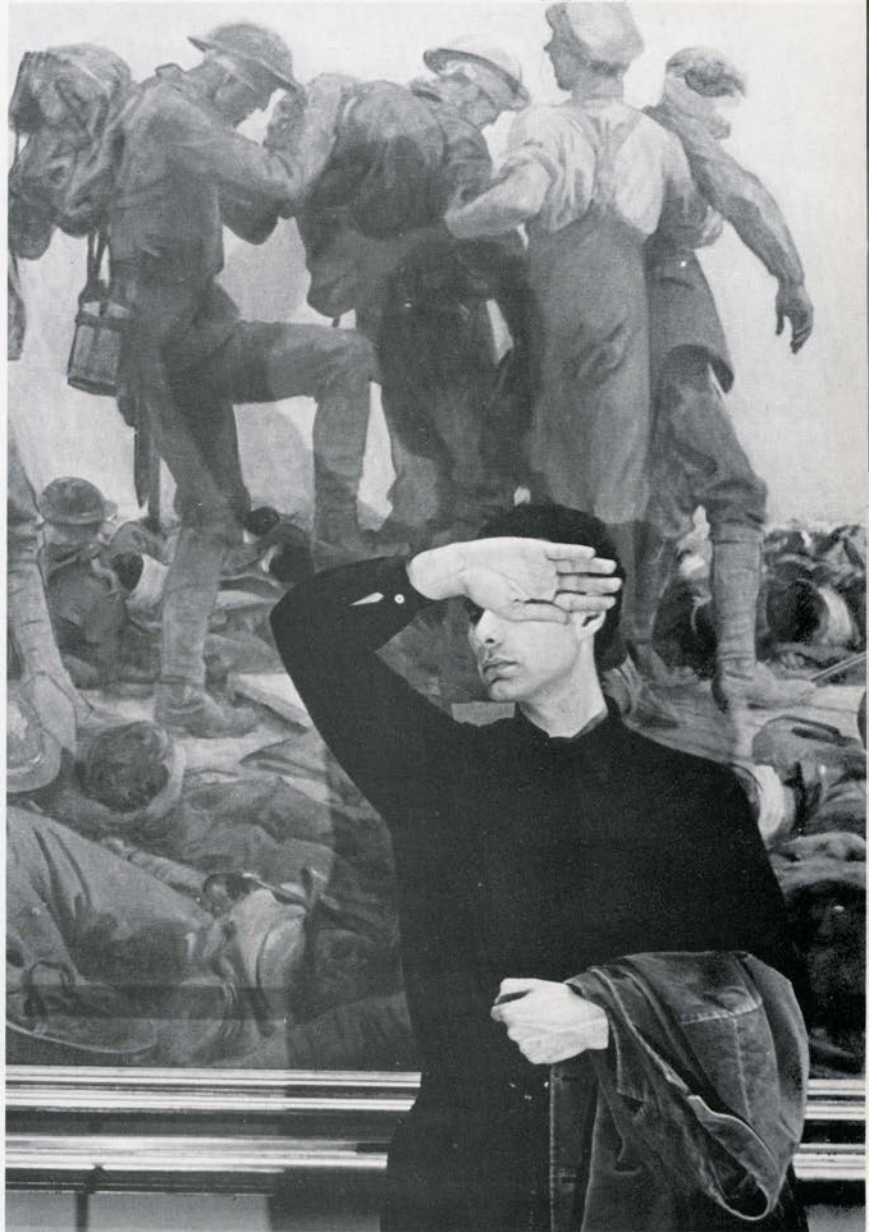
PERFORMANCE MAGAZINE will have unbelievably arrived at its 25th issue in August, and it promises to be the best and most ambitious to date. Not only will there be a free performance flexi-disc, specially produced by the Basement Group Newcastle, but also an exclusive interview with Joseph Beuys, a unique feature on Performance Journeys—that is pilgrimages, parades, quests and explorations as performance—and not forgetting full coverage of all the festivals, the rural fairs, urban carnivals, and complete preview coverage of the 1983 LIFT Festival. Don't miss it!

PERFORMANCE

Mark Lewis *Despatch from a forthcoming correspondence*

The Review of Live Art
Performance Magazine
14 Peto Place, London NW1
01 935 2714

Editor
Rob La Frenais
Contributing Editors
Lynn MacRitchie
Marguerite MacLaughlin
Luke Dixon
Pete Shelton
Administration
Mary Lee Woolf
Contributors
Robert Ayers
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Charlotte Keatley
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Charles Ledesma
Ann Cullis
Art Editor
Robert Carter
Layout
Diane Butler
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Cover design by Robert Carter
Cover photo of Urban Sax by Irmgard Pozorski
Cover insets, painting by John Maybury, 'The Subtle Body',
photograph by Dick Jewel

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I

It's actually better to watch it on fast forward – John Maybury.

Throughout May, the B2 Gallery presented a programme of videos, films, performances and paintings by John Maybury in what promised to be one of the most interesting London shows of the summer. It was the most recent public exhibition of a body of work which is constantly expanding and altering as it assimilates new ideas, reflecting the fluid but precise thought processes of the artist. Maybury himself discusses the show as if it were the product of a long, continuous research project. Places, dates, shifts and reactions and thinking are mentioned, along with currents in fashion and the state of the art in audio-visual technology. Research is a discipline which suits Maybury's work and the times which produce it: it permits the presentation of private obsessions in objective, controlled conditions, whilst ensuring that our increasing media resources get pushed to their limits.

A work by John Maybury can exist anywhere within these conditions. His first video, *So This Is Now*, was the result of processing and reprocessing sequences shot on Super 8 film until the images became mobile areas of intense colour and extreme brightness. Completed in 1980, it was originally presented in a completely black room in which video monitors were surrounded by huge, photographically enlarged black and white drawings. Today it is presented in a much less rigorous manner: it would be quite permissible to screen the work, without its sound track, in a busy night club where people could watch it if they chose to. Or, with the flick of a switch, you could compress the video's running time into a few minutes by watching it on picture search.



Dick Jewel

Subtle Body

II

There is the Tiger; it is rumoured that there is even an Oedipus in the network; boys calling girls, boys calling boys. One easily recognises the very form of perverse artificial societies, or a society of Unknowns. A process of deterritorialization is connected to a movement of deterritorialization that is ensured by the machine. – Deleuze & Guattari: 'Balance Sheet – Programme for Desiring Machines'.

The potential of audio-visual equipment being placed at everybody's disposal could permanently alter our conceptions of visual response. Exchange of information, images, and soundtracks could result in an endless network of connections and correspondences similar to those expressed in Deleuze & Guattari's description of the crossed wires in the Paris telephone system.

In Maybury's *Court of Miracles*, made last year, there is a five-minute sequence of an outdoor event: the weather is bright and sunny, people eat, drink and smile for the camera. This footage is in complete

contrast to the heavily processed, densely overlaid and mannered material which surrounds it. Maybury didn't film this outdoor sequence: it was what he received back from the Kodak labs after he had sent them a roll of Super 8 for developing. He decided to go along with Kodak's mistake and use what they had sent him. Someone, somewhere has Maybury's original footage – unless they have buried it or turned it over to the police, which is equally likely. The flow of images and styles, and the constantly changing application of those materials as represented in Maybury's work, demands a high degree of 'use'. Here, 'use' replaces conventional ideas of storage, retrieval or transmission.

Images are used and re-used, reprocessed and repeated, especially in the later, much more loosely structured video pieces.

Court of Miracles includes tapes of performance artists like Hermine Demoriane at work, along with Super 8 footage of Tokyo kids going through

elaborate rock dance steps in an enormous, crowded hall; all heavily overlaid with colour fields and material taken from diverse sources. However, the most obsessive and haunting image here is a single static photograph of Maria Callas singing. With her eyes wide and her mouth open, she looks as though she is screaming in terror. This image is constantly repeated, spinning like an old cyclorama picture, bathed in violent red light. Late in *Court of Miracles*, Callas' face is broken down into fragments of eye, mouth, cheek etc. Works like *Court of Miracles* reflect an awareness of how the storage of, and access to, images increases the information value of a culture, but also simultaneously deprives those images of their intrinsic meaning. The reclamation and reappropriation of the flood of potentially meaningless information is still a dark area, but one which inevitably involves a commerce in ideas and expression which it would be foolish to ignore.

The Subtle Body

III

That sex which offers nothing to see no longer has any form of its own – Luce Irigaray: 'That Sex which is not One'.

How much would you pay to see a movie of the Manson Family in which a dog is killed, blood from the dog is drunk and poured over numerous Family members fucking? Village Voice article, October 14, 1971.

There's this whole thing about the black and the gold. It sounds really stupid when you say it but it happened when I was having sex, and as I came . . . It's like when your eyes are closed . . . that whole thing was light . . . speckles of gold and black. Then I did it in a film. I chucked gold dust into the lens of the camera and it looked exactly the same –
John Maybury.

In view of Maybury's concern about 'meaningless information', it is interesting that he now finds himself dealing increasingly with sexuality in his work. He does however qualify this by stating that what really fascinates him is the 'moment of orgasm', something which immediately begins to create divisions within his work. Sexuality operates today as an elaborate, all-pervading social construction based on diverting attention away from various 'forbidden' areas. This does not mean 'forbidden' in any legal sense or in terms of a taboo but rather in the sense of being a dark or silent area where representation and discussion are not encouraged: the moment of orgasm is such an area. It is a source of distraction. Maybury's involvement in the representation of sexuality stems from a series of paintings which incorporate reworkings of pages from pornographic magazines. In painting over these images, he has not so much retouched the pictures as changed them completely. The clumsy dynamics involved in the photographing of such acts as oral sex, sodomy, and bondage, have a familiarity which is exploited in these paintings. They become writhing fields of red, black and gold paint, slashed and streaked across the magazine pages, following and enhancing the lines of contours of the bodies depicted. Faces are distorted – the genitals grossly enlarged. At present these paintings are all still magazine size but there have been plans in the recent past to have them all photographically enlarged to the size of advertising hoardings. This abrupt and stark change in scale would complete a closely worked-out obsessive series of thoughts on sex and sexuality, allowing these pictures to connect strongly with his other huge canvasses in which human bodies are depicted in the throes of orgasm and delirium. In these earlier works, the body and the face are reduced to their simplest terms: the head – for both male



Subtle Body

and female – is a shaven skull. These brutal forms pulsate with the same black, red and gold paint which reworked the pornographic images. This inevitably reintroduces the idea of 'use' and, more specifically, how use involves the accumulation of layers of meaning. In the case of sexuality this accumulation, in conventional terms, serves to distance us even further from areas of experience normally denied to us.

IV

There is no theory of the media – Jean Baudrillard: 'Requiem for the Media'.

I'm working on a film where I look like my paintings. – John Maybury.

There is a page in his note book where Maybury has written out the following terms in black capitals:

**GLISTENING WITH ENERGY
ESOTERIC ISOLATION
CULTURAL IMPOTENCE
PHYSICAL EXPERIENCE
THE PLEASURES OF THE SENSES**

These expressions not only offer a useful series of references for Maybury's work but also suggest some of the associative links and tensions which exist between his various ideas and their relationship to wider, external issues. I hope that the B2 show and his future projects help to expand on these issues. Certainly his thinking at present is too discursive and allusive to allow him to do more than reflect, or throw out for discussion, some very interesting and stimulating ideas. There is already a body of work available here which goes a long way to involve us in such questions, whether that is something Maybury would care for us to do or not. In addition, there is no guarantee as to the permanence of the works on show: it is entirely within their nature to be removed altogether or replaced by something else at any time in the immediate future: for the moment however they very much deserve our serious attention.

Ken Hollings

Rob La Frenais: *Japan today seems to be full of modern myths; suicide stories, businessman stories, gangster stories. To what extent does your work reflect this?*

Kazuko Hohki: I'm very interested in those cheap stories. In Hohki and Marre we use a half-American, half-Japanese boy, who becomes a boxer, which is a kind of very cheap legend. I like dealing with those cheap legends.

Cheap legends. That's what you'd call them. Things you hear in bars maybe?

Yes that's right. I'm very interested in that.

Also you get the ubiquitous figure of the G.I. Where does that come from?

When I was small, we had the idea that Americans were very rich. When I was in kindergarten there was one American child in our class. I thought that he must be really rich, because he was an American. One day he was wearing socks with holes, and I was really surprised that he could be that poor. We had always been told that America was a very rich, strong country, but now America is not as strong as Japan, which has overtaken in many ways. I wanted to put that idea through the half-American, half-Japanese boxer, having a strong image of his American father; but in the end he finds out that the father is not so strong.

Your earlier work with the Japanese-American Toy Theatre reflected aspects of American life that were exaggerated in Japanese society. Even in village life.

Lots of Japanese people have been brought up with mostly American culture. Japanese kids don't come across much Japanese traditional culture. We meet more American modern culture, TV and music and things like that. We are dipped in American culture and we wanted to do something about that.

It's said however, that Japanese society, despite this, will never actually change. Is this true?

They say in Japan that things exist in parallel. Traditional things exist with very modern things. The main street things are all American, like Macdonalds. Then you go to the back streets and you can hear people practising Japanese traditional music.

What's your personal view of this?

I quite like it.

As an artist or a Japanese person?

As a moralist. I like things that don't reject other things. I like things which absorb everything, but can exist strongly. I don't know whether Japan exists strongly, but at the moment it's quite good to absorb everything, I think. I don't live in Japan, so I can't tell.

You're outside Japan, so you can say this. Do you think you have to be outside Japanese society to see these things?

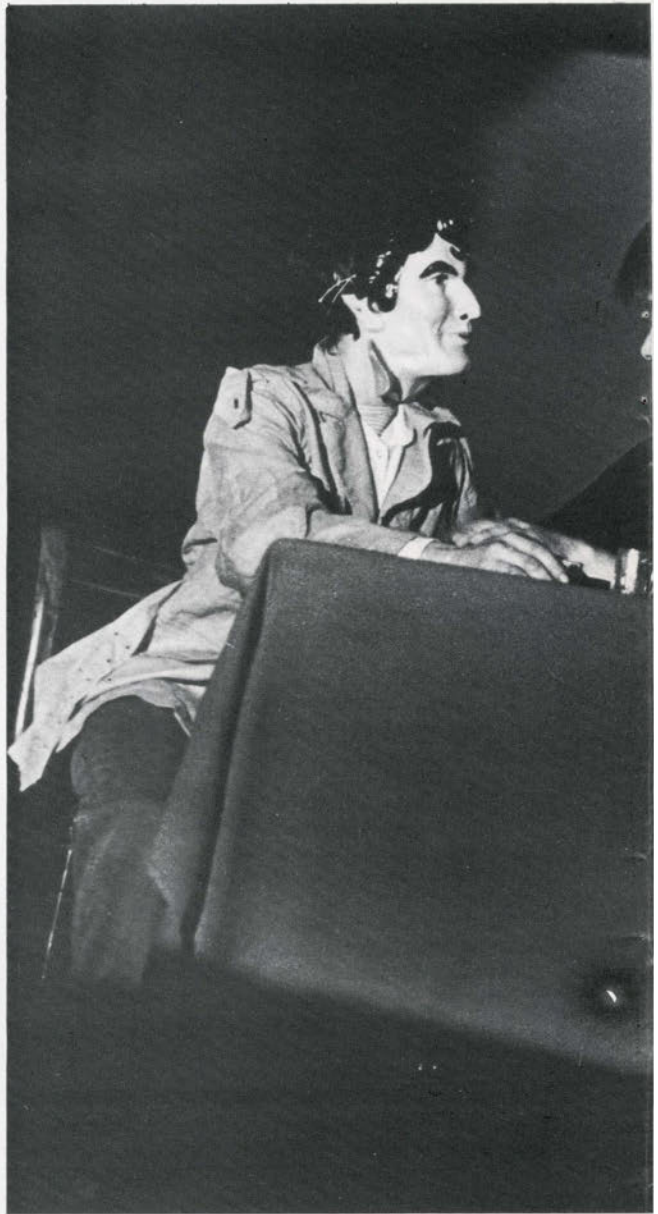
I suppose so, yes. You realise how Japan is flexible when you're in England. In a way they don't have much confidence to refuse. You can say that as well. Like English people seem to refuse the power from outside more easily.

Do you think you could ever go back to live and work in Japan?

I don't know yet, but not now. As a Japanese woman it's very difficult to do things there. Society has a very fixed expectation, and you have to worry about the family and . . .

Is this changing though?

Yes. Today I got a letter from my friend who is a quite strong feminist in Japan. She said that the Women's movement is quite healthy now, but not like here. In a way though . . . I'm watching those old Japanese films at the NFT, they have a season now . . . and the other day I was thinking that men in those old films, Japanese films, were not macho. Here you see lots of obvious macho men, in the pub and places like that. Women have a more obvious target, but in Japan, maybe not so obvious.



Hefty Church

Leon Morris

Kazuko Hohki—born in Tokyo and founder member of numerous performance and music groups; recently of note, a Karaoke-singing trio called Frank Chickens, already touring nationally and receiving popular attention. She is also responsible for the Japanese-American Toy Theatre of London, an ironic yet naive celebration of consumer objects, soapy stories, and cross-cultural absurdity. Rob La Frenais asked her a few questions about her work, and found it impossible to avoid widening the discussion to the nature of Japanese society, a subject about which the West has not yet exhausted its intense fascination. Indeed, Hohki bases much of her work on Western expectations of that society, and explains her desire to play with the cliché.



Kazuko Hohki

Why do you think the West is so fascinated with Japan at the moment?

Maybe they've got an inferiority complex! (laughter) Because Japan does so many...like all young culture seems to be connected with Japan. Motorbikes, computers, audio equipment. If power is connected to youth, at the moment youth seems to be very connected to the image of Japan. People seem to worship . . .

It's reciprocal also, because when you go to Japan everyone is copying American and British youth.

Yes, in the lifestyle . . .

Punks, Hippies, all that . . .

Yes but what provides . . . Japan is providing what the youth needs. It's interesting that Japanese people can't become original or revolutionary, so they have to import youth revolution from England, but the function is provided by Japan.

Yes that's very true. To change the subject, what other artists are you interested in?

When I was in Japan I liked Gilbert and George very much. They came to Japan, so I met them in a party. I really liked the idea that they were performers all the time, and didn't divide the private and public . . . I really liked that idea. I thought it was similar to Oscar Wilde. And also it's connected to Japanese culture, in the sense of Zen.

Anyone else?

Artists?

Yes.

Now? Well I like David Toop and Steve Beresford (laughter).

Who you work with—that's a mutual fan club!

You mean outside people? Ah . . . David Bowie, I suppose. And also the people in Takarazuka Girls' Opera. Have you seen Takarazuka Girls' Opera? It's all women, and some of them dressed like men, and they do a kind of Hollywood musical, with very elaborate staging and costumes. And they are supposed to be all virgins, so they have to quit that theatre group when they get married. Lots of teenage girls like it. It's very cheap entertainment but it's got very sexually ambiguous obscenity in it. But it's very good. It's a pity you didn't see it when you were in Japan.

Tell me about the Japanese sense of humour.

I don't know. I'm not a representative of the Japanese people. But I feel that Japanese people are more into nonsense. When English people say nonsense . . . we were talking about it among Frank Chickens . . . English people use the word nonsense, don't you, when talking about people like Lewis Carrol, and people like that. But still there is a lot of sense. Like Lewis Carrol used the words to play, but still those words had a meaning. But if Japanese people really go into nonsense, the sense really disappears. A Japanese will laugh at real nonsense things. English people still try to look clever when making a joke, but Japanese go into a really senseless world when they are making a joke.

Do you think that, with Frank Chickens and Japanese American Toy Theatre, you are working against Western cliches about Japan?

I think we want to deal with, we want to play . . . we don't necessarily want to work against them. I think some cliches are quite nice cliches. We want to judge for ourselves, not be judged from the outside. We want to play around with those ideas and expectations which they have of us. Some of them we want to reject. Some we accept.

Which ones do you want to reject?

Some of the ideas which they have about Japanese women we want to defuse, I can't say which image . . . it may be just a part of it we want to defuse. It's difficult to pin down. Also, some cliches are good in certain situations and some are bad in others. We don't like the idea that people have cliched ideas that are always there. We want to go in and out all the time, we want to be flexible all the time.

Can you give an example from your work of this?

In Frank Chickens we suddenly include martial, military movement. Because we know that lots of people think the Japanese are very militaristic, fascistic. We want to put the military movement next to all those funny movements, and first we want to devalue it and also we want to move . . . sometimes we are quite militaristic! We don't think we are so good that we can't be fascistic. We can be fascistic. You have to accept that so you can criticise yourself. Sometimes you need to be quite strong on certain occasions. You have to realise that what you are doing all your life is a mixture of everything. You have to realise that you can move around all the time. Also people should expect other people to move around as well. Or something like that. Is it clear?

Yes it's clear. For example there is the cliché that the Japanese can be very cruel.

Yes. People have cruelty inside them. All the kids torture insects and animals . . . in any country, I think, not only Japanese people. I think English people did a lot of cruel things in Indonesia, for example, in the past. But because our history is more new, we get more criticism for . . . I think maybe it's dangerous to say this, but anyway . . . people should look inside, and should realise that everybody has cruelty inside. Then you can criticise yourself and go further. Sometimes you have to be cruel . . . sometimes you have to kill animals to eat. You can't say you are so good you don't kill animals. Otherwise, if you do that some people may starve. Sometimes you have to do cruel things, for necessity or something. You have to include all those things and accept it.

It's a problem for every culture. Though recent Japanese history does seem to bear heavily on cruelty.

It's not really whether human beings are cruel or not, like what happened in Asia and things like that. It's more connected to the problem of 'Where was the power?' Not the problem of human being's cruelty.

Another cliché is the link between Death and Beauty.

You mean aesthetically?

Yes. *The idea of a beautiful way of dying, honour and dishonour . . .*

Yes, I approve of all those things. I like Mishima. Mishima combines love and death. I get very excited about those ideas. I don't connect . . . Mishima describes cruel things . . . and I don't connect that cruelty with the cruelty which happened in Asia, that the Japanese army did. I don't connect that, because the Japanese army's cruelty was more based on the problem of where the power was. The power control.

Obedience.

Like unbalanced power. People didn't have power equally. The world still functions in that way. That's the thing which I want to . . . I think this is becoming too heroic . . . but basically people ought to fight against the fact that power is not very well distributed.

Well America wants to re-arm Japan now. Then there's the rewriting of the history textbooks.

That's right. I don't know how to fight politically because I don't read newspapers much, and I don't belong to any organisations, so in political decisions I have to follow the people who I respect politically. I think through my work I want to present the idea that we are fighting against . . . that bad structure of the world.

It's fascinating in a way, the combination of this sort of ethic with the playfulness that comes out in your work. Again it goes back to a sense of what humour is. Seriousness and humour. That there is an edge to some of the playful jokes. What sort of work did you do in Japan?

I did two performances, which were very miserable in Japan! I and two other Japanese women did a kind of public weaving, we called ourselves Normal Rabbit.

Weaving?

Yes, everybody was doing weaving at that time. We did a kind of public weaving using scrap paper and things like that. We didn't have much idea at all, we just wanted to do a performance then. And I just sung with improvising musicians a bit.

What led you to this? Was there much of an avant garde movement in Japan at the time?

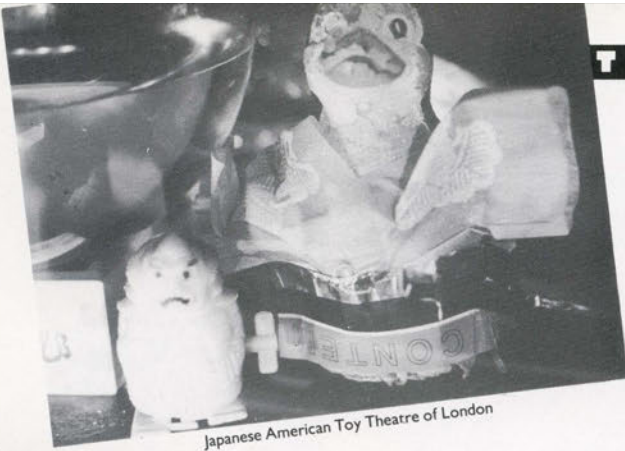
I was working in a very avant-garde conceptual art gallery called the Maki Gallery, and there was some performance there, and I read about English performance, like Gilbert and George, and I was really interested in it. I was interested in theatre very much, but I could never do what actors had to do, like suddenly you laugh, or suddenly you cry. I have to have motivation from myself, inside. So I wasn't a very good actress. But I was still interested in doing performance. I'm a very big-headed person, so I always think I've got very good ideas, and I wanted to present those ideas in some way . . . and it seems that performance is . . . I quite like writing too, but performance seems somehow more immediate, and that's how I got interested. I wanted to present my ideas using myself, and it's so nice to be looked at as well, having an audience.

Could you ever see Frank Chickens performing in Japan?

Not in this form. Because we work . . . I'm interested in working in context. Now, in this place, what we do works. We are kind of introducing, as we say, street-level Japanese culture here. But in Japan they can see street culture anyway, apart from us. So probably it wouldn't work like here. It would work in a different way. We'd

Frank Chickens





Japanese American Toy Theatre of London

probably deal with other stereotypes which they have, like about intelligent women. Japanese society tends to make fun of intelligent women who talk a lot. I think Frank Chickens, we like talking and speaking about our own ideas, which Japanese society may not expect, and accept. We'll probably want to play around with that idea. Sorry, I sound like a very big-headed stupid person!

Why do you say that?

Probably because I'm still in traditional Japanese culture (laughter).
Do you get a lot of Japanese people coming to Frank Chickens' performances?

Recently. Not a lot but . . . we met someone the other day who saw us at the Sol y Sombra. He thought it was great, because although we are Japanese women, we looked really tough on stage. He really liked it, to our surprise. He is a Japanese man, but he must be quite unusual.

Why do you think that's unusual?

Japanese men like very untough women, very soft women who approve of everything men say. But he said we should go in the direction of threatening people, which we want to do. Menacing. We don't want to be threatening all the time though, we want to move around on the borderline of things.

To what extent are you influenced by popular theatre on Japanese TV?

In Frank Chickens we use a march for our entrance which is a theme song for an old Japanese children's TV programme about a boy detective fighting against baddies.

Do you mind having a constant association with Japanese culture?

I can't avoid looking like a Japanese, looking different, which I sometimes don't enjoy, but mostly I forget. And sometimes I enjoy the difference, and I like dealing with that. Because I'm different, people expect certain things of me, and I want to play around with those expectations. I'm quite happy here, being Japanese in England. And here women can be much more free.

The song about the soup by Frank Chickens illustrates the kind of modern myth which I was referring to, by the way (several of these stories are related but are too lengthy to be included).

Scandalous cheap stories. On the third page of newspapers you get all those cheap stories. Did you hear about the Japanese student in France who killed his Dutch girlfriend and ate her?

Yes I heard that one in Japan.

Recently a very avant-garde playwright—he has a theatre group called Red Tent, which is very popular in Japan—wrote a novel about it which got the highest literary prize. I haven't read that book, but a recent article said that it was disgusting, full of racism against western people. How a Japanese man killing and eating a white woman is conquering white culture. I don't know. I liked that playwright very much so I want to read it. Also it seems that a friend of mine is in that book.

In the book? He wasn't doing any of the eating? How many people have you eaten? (laughter). And then of course there's the thing about the earthquake, which everybody expects to come.

My father's really worried about the earthquake. He keep talking about it in his letters. My mother doesn't seem so worried. I read quite a good article by Angela Carter, when she was in Japan. She was a bit extreme. She said, because of earthquakes and fires, and people living in paper houses, they realise life is short, and so Japanese everyday life is full of fun. Which is a bit of an exaggeration, but I think it's quite an interesting viewpoint.

I noticed in Japan that when people died, they'd put a coca-cola can or beer can with a flower in it on the grave, and not think anything of it.

They don't divide the spiritual world and material world so clearly as here. I quite like that. It's such a kitsch place. Lots of kitsch things happen there. Some Englishman said that there is genuine Dada, unconscious Dada in Japan, which is true.

It's possible that in the West we will adopt some Japanese attitudes, simply because of the enormous effect of its technology. It's interesting that you are going to be the first interview to be typeset by computer for the magazine.

I wish I was as clever as a computer!

That's a very Japanese thing to say.

Please put it in then. I love cliches.





Irmgard Poczorski

MUMMIES FROM MARS, Metal Machine Marauders, Faceless Fall-Out Victims, Opium of the Urban Masses, The Men Who Fell to Earth, Robots with Heart, Phantoms of a Strange Opera, or, most baffling, Punk Zen, are among the many banal metaphors employed by European commentators of a phenomena called, only slightly less turgidly, *Urban Sax*.

Of course, I cannot translate the subtleties of the various languages involved. In Italy, where photographers pursued each other around Venice to capture 'The Ghosts of the Future in the City of Death,' the hyperbole was at least melodious. 'I Sassofonisti Francesi dell'Apocalisse...' Roll that round your tongue.

Who are these space invaders? Simply, some dozens of French saxophonists, often with choir attached, who from sonorous bass to squeaky soprano, eschewing electricity, do ample homage to Alolphe Sax, the (French) inventor of that joyful instrument. The fuss they cause wherever they appear is due not only to their bizarre and populous mis-en-scene, but to the quality of the music, a continuous, hypnotic, ever-changing drone.

Their reserved, soft-spoken leader is a Frenchman in his mid-thirties called Gilbert Artman (no alias.) Once an interior designer, then a jazz drummer, now a composer, he was involved in suitably obscure projects such as Lard Free and Operation Rhino before devoting his energies to Urban Sax. He is bearded, of course, and does not play the saxophone. His orchestra began with 12 musicians in 1976, and filled out, Mongolfier-like, to between 40 and 60. Members, or components of this human wall of sound, pursue their own, usually unconventional, lives and musical pathways, and assemble in as great a number as possible to rehearse and play on one of those rare and grand occasions when some cultural authority

can be induced to pay their expenses. In seven years they have materialised in divers parts of Europe, at festivals of Theatre and Socialism, carnivals, comic operas, inaugurations and millenia. Last year they were present at Versailles, standing in a fountain, to serenade the leaders of the industrialised countries after their conference dinner. Margaret Thatcher left for home after the cheese course. Not surprisingly. Urban Sax have a great knack for taking institutionalised culture, with its liberal smiles and 'open-minded' hospitality, turning it on its head and shaking it until its false teeth rattle. They are the terror of Mayors, Administrators and Security Guards. They Go Too Far.

An Urban Sax performance is not a concert but a remote-controlled invasion. Last summer they went on tour in North-West France, preparing perhaps for this year's offensive across the channel. In their path was the quiet, unsuspecting port of Dunkerque. Here is a neat, new, little Art-Gallery-cum-Cultural Centre, built in concrete by some trendy architect out of somebody's slush fund. It has a moat around it, and a sculptured landscape that used to be a slag heap. The Mayor and corporation have reserved the best seats in the open-plan auditorium for themselves and local dignitaries. The people too, have been made to sit down. A strange, unearthly sound is heard at last, but not from the stage, not even from the wings. From outside. The sound develops as if, at sea in a fog, different ships far apart were all beginning to set their horns to a pre-arranged sound frequency. The curious leave their seats and drift outside, to the consternation of the ticket collector. The Mayor, a patient man, sits tight, to set an example. Outside, in the night air, figures are beginning to appear, far off, clad in white. Some disappear again. The sound, the music, continues. It is picked up, much closer, on a deeper note. The





Urban Sax



gathering crowd on the drawbridge looks up in surprise to see two white-overalled masked figures blowing baritone on the roof of the gallery, above their heads. Slowly, over twenty minutes, the figures converge on the building, as the sound gathers force and depth. Some arrive in Indian file, others in an ambulance with all lights flashing. A boat appears from the far end of the artificial lake and disgorges another load. Last and best, a fork-lift truck, its platform rising and falling in time to the music, advances on the drawbridge. All the figures are in white nuclear-chic overalls, masked and glued to their saxophones. Each wears an FM receiver which relays the base programme so that the whole company can play in perfect synchronism, hundreds of yards apart. By this time the gallery is packed with excited spectators, and a way has to be cleared to get the fork-lift onto the drawbridge to unload its passengers. Only the dignitaries are still inside, missing it all.

Once inside, the saxophones and their attached bodies wander all over the gallery, up the ramps, down the stairs, sometimes aimless, sometimes aggressive, moving people, enticing people. The sound comes in steady swells, the continuity dependent on precise patterns and the fact that three parts of the orchestra plays while the fourth draws breath, its timbre taking profit from the subtle fluctuations, one might even say imperfections, inherent in the saxophone's sound.

Security men desperately try to explain to the public that is forbidden to look at the paintings while the concert is in progress. They soon have to give up. The city fathers look on grimly, trying to look superior and indulgent, and contriving to look confused, absurd, *depassé*.

In the morning they will say "Thank God that's over," but the Art Gallery will never be quite as polite, quite as ordered as they had

planned. Once again Urban Sax will have taken on the Ministry of Culture and won.

It's not just the outlandish uniform, inhuman figures making massive inhuman sound, or the sight of Gilbert Artman conducting with gestures you could never imagine Karajan loosening up for. The music itself needs space, a mobile shifting acoustic. It makes you want to look around, walk about, re-situate. Many critics have compared Artman's work to the building of a cathedral of sound, and it seems to need three real dimensions to spread out in. Neither the music nor the performers go in for star turns—there are no solo breaks—and the edifice they build over an evening seems most like a beehive where spectators and performers all have their necessary functions. The music is intended as a metaphor for such a system, the hum and business of urban life, many co-ordinating into a great and roaring whole.

There is little point in trying to describe the music further, save that it denies the American myth of the saxophone as the mark of the individual, the virtuoso. People have drawn comparisons with Philip Glass and Steve Reich, and Paris Match, in a note of gallic dissenting philistinism say they simply play four notes repeated for half an hour.

Be prepared England. You may just find them one evening, just around dusk, parachuting in on St Pancras Station, or emerging from the rip-tide, dripping but already blowing, on some Kentish shore.

William Green

Urban Sax are in fact coming to Britain this June, where they will be appearing at the Bath Festival, and in August as part of the LIFT festival. Phone 01 607 3060 for details.

Performing In Jewellery

THE LINK BETWEEN jewellery and performance is not perhaps an obvious one but as David Ward, organiser of a recent exhibition *The Jewellery Project* suggests, performance is a possible direction which jewellery may follow.

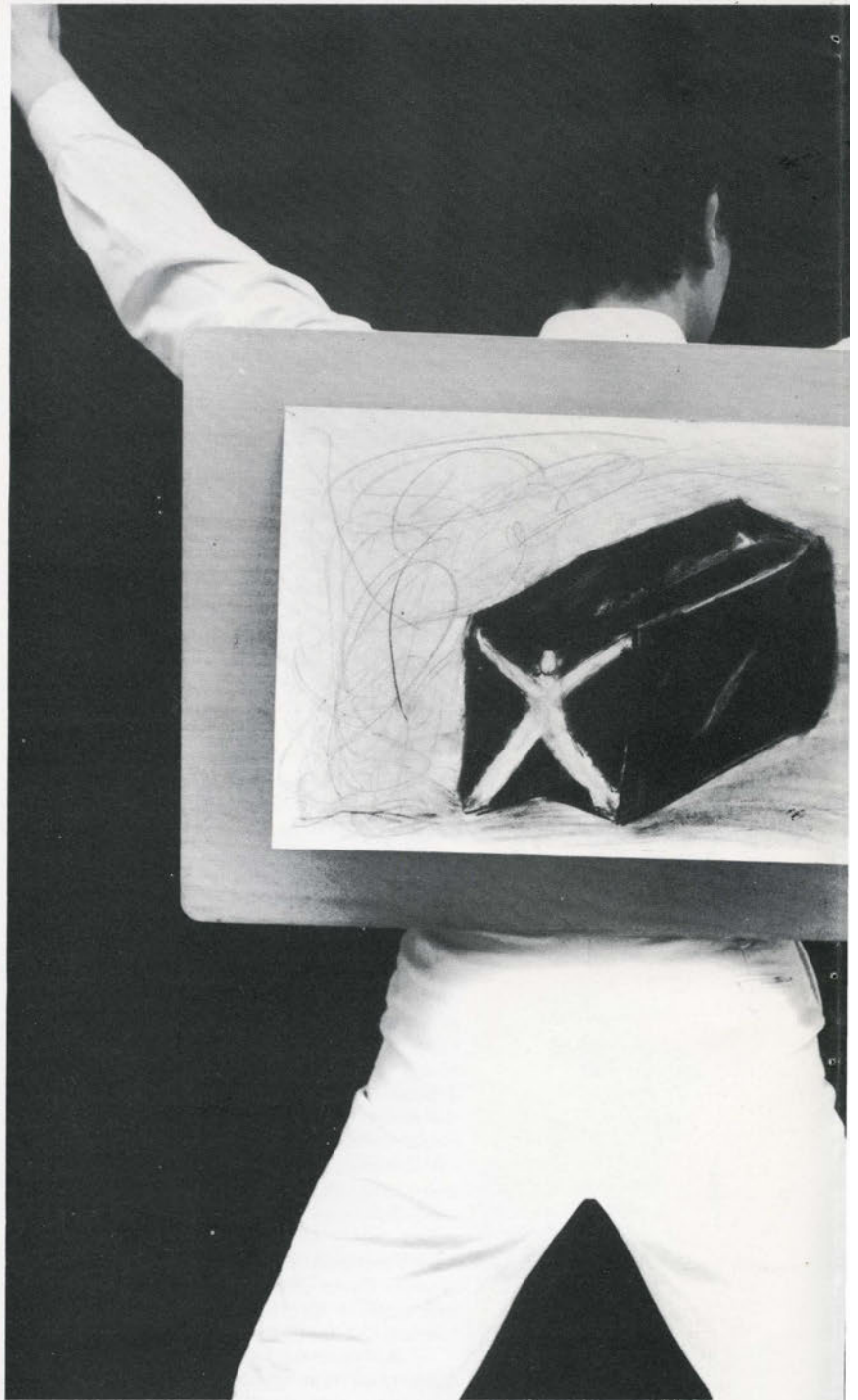
The Jewellery Project itself is a fascinating display of new jewellery collected by Ward and Susanna Heron from all over Europe on behalf of a New York family. The collection has taken three years to form, and now, in its complete state, offers a perceptive insight into recent departures that have been made. Perhaps the most striking of these is the exploration of new relationships between wearer and worn.

Traditionally in the West only small areas of the body—the wrist, fingers, ears, neck, throat and lapel—have been the places of adornment. This is equally true for modern, non-precious jewellery. Although some items in *The Jewellery Project* also conform to this expectation, many create completely new challenges for the wearer. They also raise questions about the meaning of the work 'jewellery' itself. Otto Kunzli for example, has rejected the discreet size usually associated with a brooch; his ornaments are large (the 'stick' is over a foot long), project outwards and so cannot be worn like conventional jewellery.

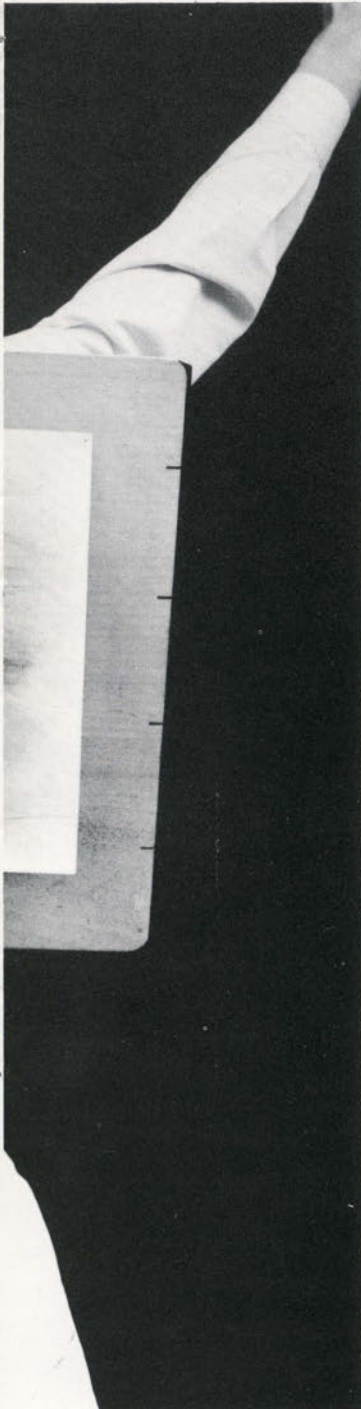
Lam de Wolf and Julia Manheim take this a stage further by designing jewellery which encompasses the entire body. Made of wooden struts tied with cotton they resemble cages. Herman Hermesen's *Headpiece* and Susanna Heron's *Hat, wearable* do similar things for the head. In each case, the effect is the same as wearing outrageous make-up or an extraordinary outfit of clothing: attention is drawn to the wearer. With jewellery such as has been described, the interaction between ornament and body caused by movement serves to highlight the dynamics of the body itself and the shape of its contours. As with recent painting, the emphasis is on figuration, the human body of paramount interest.

The actual fact of wearing therefore assumes a vital role. It is not enough for the pieces to be simply looked at as inanimate objects. Despite the sculptural potential offered by the constructed shape of some of the innovative jewellery designs (and many are aesthetically pleasing out of context), the real meaning is only perceived in relation to the body. Yet under current conditions, it is only in a gallery context (as displayed artefacts) that they are seen. How can they be viewed otherwise?

Julia Manheim has attempted to get round the problem by making her own display models—a series of plastic-coated steel wire 'busts' on which her neck-pieces rest. Her answer it seems, is to create a sculptural ensemble in which jewellery and mannequin merge in a unity of plastic tubing.



Pierre Degen *Pin Board* 1982, wood, webbing



Pleasingly bright and cheerful, these are attractive static objects but they lack the kinetic quality that seems necessary for a complete understanding of the work. Many of her designs were inspired by seeing workmen carrying ladders—a point that is easily missed by simply looking at the work in a gallery.

Pierre Degen is another jewellery maker who creates large scale work. Besides being included in *The Jewellery Project*, he had a recent one-person exhibition at the Crafts Centre. This featured such body pieces as his *Personal Environment*—a windmill-like structure made of wood, string and various appendages which are designed to frame the body while resting on the shoulder. Like Manheim, Degen's work seems to be inspired by watching people at work. His *Tool-sack* is exactly what it sounds like, and is designed to be carried on the back—a statement so extreme that it goes well beyond any suggestion of jewellery's ornamental function. Such objects also lack any meaning without a human context. They have to be seen on a figure for the witty point to be made. During the exhibition models were hired to wear some of Degen's designs but, unused to wearing such things, they looked uncomfortable and ill at ease as they wandered through the gallery. Who wouldn't? An inappropriate everyday social context only makes the jewellery seem like gratuitous self-display.

Historically speaking, there are of course many precedents for the wearing of avant-garde designs in a context of theatrical productions, where they have been absorbed with ease: the Cubist performance *Parade* is a case in point, or early Soviet theatre where costumes vied with artists' sets for the most extraordinary appearance; or Schlemmer's costumes for the Bauhaus. On the whole, these designs were primarily concerned with clothing. A 'specific' performance context for jewellery is quite unusual.

Ronne Lowensteyn, a Dutch jeweller, has perhaps got the nearest to a formal, structured performance by devising a piece with dancer Willy Verkuil to accompany her jewellery show at the Arnolfini. She uses three pieces of her own sculpture to explore body movements in relation to line and space. These large works are similar in theme and form to her smaller wearable, pieces composed of lines (coloured rods of titanium) which fall across the wearer's shoulders like spillikins. By instigating a performance within a gallery context, Lowensteyn deliberately calls into question the divide between sculpture, jewellery and performance, and suggests one direction which could be pursued by other jewellers.

Another area for potential development is that suggested by jewellery's close relation—clothing. If present day innovative jewellery has affinities

with early twentieth century theatre costume, it also bears comparison with some contemporary strides being taken in fashion, where again, traditional boundaries are being crossed. An exhibition of innovative clothing design was held last year at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology: an unusual venue for work usually observed in fashion houses. Significantly, the exhibition was called *Intimate Architecture*. By surveying some of the recent designs from Armani, Frere, Montana and Issey Miyake among others, it suggested ways in which contemporary clothing has come close to other art disciplines. Materials and fabrics are used to achieve sculptural forms in a way similar to the designs being produced by jewellers.

More recently, Anthony Price, the British fashion designer, suggested a new direction when he staged his very theatrical show of clothing design in London last month at the Camden Palace. With a structured and highly flamboyant and rehearsed performance, the clothes were seen in the context of an entertaining show—not as the lifeless repetition of models streaming down the catwalk to the accompaniment of purple prose usually associated with fashion shows. The fact of this being a performance in its own right is interesting, as few people at the show could afford to purchase the designs, or for that matter, even think of wearing them. Similarly, the most innovative jewellery makers have trouble selling their work in England or getting people to wear it. Even 'Detail' (one of the most enterprising jewellery shops in London) cannot shift the more unusual work. As such the relation of highly innovative jewellery and clothing to fashion has yet to be explored. It is too early to see what effect both will have at the present time, little seems to have penetrated to the street.

Yet if the latest jewellery designers do not appear to have found an appropriate niche for their work in terms of fine art, performance or commercial fashion, perhaps there is some hope in photography. Good photographs of the work offer every opportunity to display jewellery to the best advantage when shown on models. David Ward has produced some arresting photos of *The Jewellery Project* and Pierre Degen's work, giving full attention to the way pieces look on the body. It is obviously a promising area of activity. Robert Mapplethorpe has just brought out a book of photographs on the female body-builder Lisa Lyons in which her muscular torso is used to model clothes. Perhaps such photographs documenting the display inherent in the act of wearing (and Lyons calls herself a 'performance artist') can become valued in their own right. They certainly deserve attention.

Anna Moszynska

Two Weeks In New York

Recent media and art press interest in New York has placed the work emanating from that city on something of a pedestal. It's great, it's wonderful, it's whiz-bang dynamic—has been the constant message as yet another ordinary working experimental artist has been given the transatlantic hype. So PERFORMANCE MAGAZINE, prompted by the fact that many of its writers would be over there as part of the recent Britain Salutes New York Festival, decided to ferret around a bit, and produce a review section based on two weeks last month, in roughly the same way as it would here in Britain.

To co-ordinate this, the Festival paid for the editor, Rob La Frenais, to be there for a couple of weeks. What follows is his attempt to personally record the results of two weeks chasing around like a bat out of hell to cover everything not reviewed.

Attitude Adjustment Hour

FIVE MINUTES TO GO before flight leaves, AIR INDIA refuses to take my bicycle on the plane. Hence there will be no, I repeat no, bicycling anecdotes here. In departure lounge, spot performance artist SILVIA ZIRANEK, travelling incommunicado, that is, not wearing the Ziranek national colours of pink, pink and pink, chatting to a brace of Saville Row tailors, HUGO, and ROLAND. (Some of the names quoted may not be entirely accurate, due to inconsistency in what we will call ATTITUDE. La ZIRANEK, on her way to perform at the PYRAMID club and the FRANKLIN FURNACE makes up for the lapse in hue by collecting pink plastic in-flight ware which she smuggles into the Land of Opportunity. Standing at the portals of the hub of the Roman Empire we casually discuss alibis, until greeted by frontiersperson SANDRA J. REFERR-NICK, who promptly goes to lunch. On telling her replacement that I only wish to stay for one month at the most he insists on my remaining six months. Must be something to do with the dollar. Once in Manhattan SCZ sails off to change frocks, while I go to PHYLIS KIND gallery to meet contributor CATHERINE ELWES and performer/film-maker TINA KEANE. They are not present. Instead are gaggles of slick young men in bow ties and wealthy dippy patronesses of the Arts. So far, so normal. An art opening anywhere in the world. Then someone switches on a small cassette recorder, a woman starts dancing wildly and then proceeds to tear off her clothes. When she produces a piece of paper and starts to read it I realise with horror I am witnessing my first STRIPOGRAM, being delivered by some (no doubt impoverished artist) admirer to the super-wealthy, super-dippy, gallery owner. This, then, a first impression of a NY art salon. Erk.

Leaving fast, realising the people I was meeting had been refused admission (I being armed with a fake business card, an Excalibur in this land of pretentiousness and openly expressed snobbery). I hurry to the DANCEERIA, where RICH-

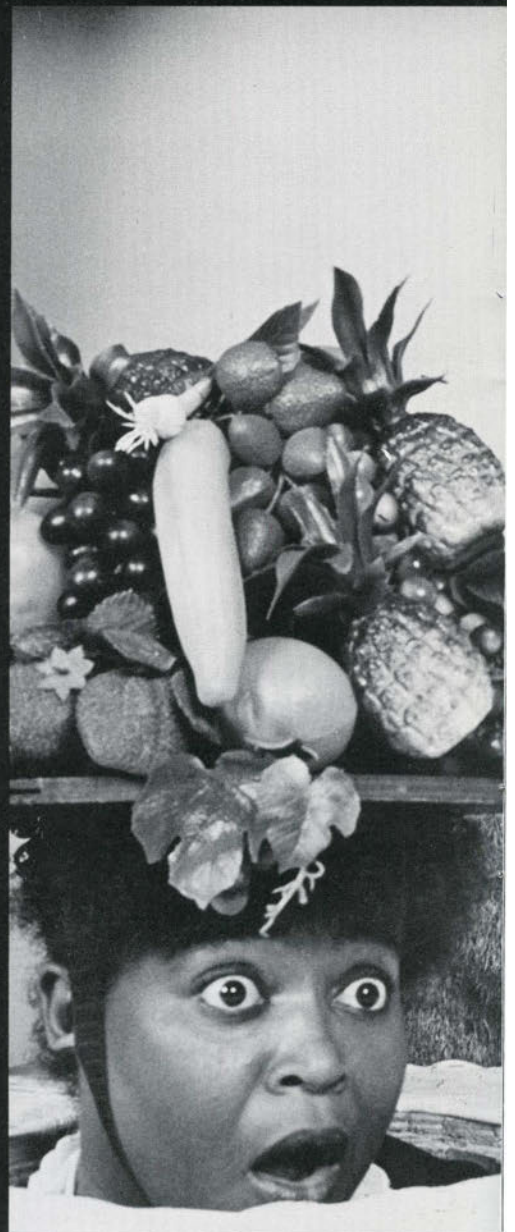
ARD STRANGE and the EVENT GROUP are holding court for the night. Anything British, and preferably from Manchester, is the order of the day here, and indeed much of New York, while punk is taking a long vacation in this city . . . possibly for ever. STRANGE seems tired after his N. American tour, and so am I, so back to my residence at the famous YMCA, opposite the less well known CHELSEA HOTEL.

To chaos of West Broadway art bazaar where visit GILBERT AND GEORGE show. In keeping with the wowie-zowie splash n' slash mood of that street's myriad galleries vying for attention, G&G show is suitably garish triptychs, scenes of stale London images, men pissing, streets strewn with old fish & chip wrappers, miraculously transformed into high-chic NY consumer art. Get your cheque book out, Myron.

A somewhat different atmosphere down in Tribeca where at FRANKLIN FURNACE, a series of 'Artists Sound-works' are in progress. Relaxed but incisive recorded dialogue from STUART BRISLEY plays to no-one in particular in the cool basement far from the maddening N. Jersey crowd (this is positively the last Manhattan snobbery-inspired crack about the Garden State that will be made.) ANNA SULLIVAN, of the Furnace, tells me about the previous weekends Irish performance season. Successful and apparently eventful, with the requisite amount of ankle-biting from ONE WHO SHALL NOT BE NAMED, in this column, by me at least.

After a pleasant 'Attitude Adjustment Hour', as Happy Hour is referred to in some quarters here, up to Washington Square where are B-Dancers, and turtle racing. Slightly disturbed to note that B-boys and girls are back-flipping to MALCOLM MCLAREN rather than home product. Still, the Village is not the South Bronx. Several culture-shocks later, while staring up at a particularly poignant skyline I hear in the distance the strains of rather clumsy, but exuberantly played,

Charles Ludlam's Ridiculous Theatre Company



Gershwin. Following my ears, I find the source, the STONEWALL ORCHESTRA an all-gay ensemble playing Rhapsody in Blue etc. to raise money for research into AIDS, in one of the many street festivals around New York this month. But live, outdoor Gershwin! In New York! It's too traveloguish to be true, if such a word exists.

Next day, out to PS 1, a big artists colony/space out at Long Island city. Here one can get lost among immense installations, giant video projections, huge piles of junk, and slightly less of the stink of money than across the Hudson. There is a loose open-day atmosphere here, with a series of dance/environment performances going on. What state funding there is here seems to go to projects like this. Like in London, with the dockland development projects, artists are being

driven out to the fringes of cities. Meanwhile the Lower East Side, with a long-established mixture of ethnic minorities, artists and musicians, the real-life sleazy paperback-cover Bohemia, is being bought-up, knocked down, and gentrified.

Back to Soho, the artificially inseminated version of the above, for the opening of Recent British Video (See review) at the KITCHEN, another Britain Salutes New York event. A good turn-out, mainly I would think of NY video artists 'just checking out' the opposition. On to party given by artist who is reconstructing the Trans-Siberian Railway in miniature around her loft gallery. There can't be much left that hasn't been done by someone, somewhere in this downtown area. There are for example rumours about THE EARTHROOM, an entire gallery filled with earth. There's another simply entitled I AM THE GREATEST ARTIST. In this, the single artist/proprietor displays nothing but paintings of vaginas on apple-juice cans...

To PLEXUS, a newly opened space on the West Side to see MEREDITH MONK'S 'Turtle Dreams' (What is this they've got about turtles here?) First time I've seen her, now I know where LAURIE ANDERSON got that high, trilling voice section from. Great style, good music, but overall a trifle confectioned... one bright colour, one amusing effect, one almost clownish character after another, with Monk queening it over her obviously grateful and dedicated performers on stage... No doubt she has influenced many, but it's not a world I would care to inhabit for long.

Back to Danceteria for party given by British FOOLS COMPANY about whom I know nothing but which seems to be composed of Clever Young Men from Oxford. Everyone is sitting around watching videotapes of MONTY PIE-THORN as they call it here. I here have first official contact with British Festival in the form of mad workaholic MARY TIERNEY, and breezy embassy socialite SALLY DE SOUZA. I'm asked to talk at a forum as a replacement for a more important Brit. In fact British events uptown have up to now somewhat eluded me. I've heard vague rumours of general disasters, early closings, cancellations, (as well as the debacle of the RSC, there is the sudden closing of 'Teaneck Tanzi' NY version of the British 'Trafford Tanzi', which only goes to show that foreigners really *aren't* allowed to make jokes about New Jersey.) There is also the clutter of Nancy/Ron-inspired glittering parties and social cavortings, but my concern is with the fifty or so events a day in the melee below 14th Street.

Uptown, however, for the WHITNEY BIENNALE, where amid what seems like two years and six floor of past ICA shows, ANN MAGNUSSON is doing a continuous performance in what is reputed to be one of the biggest lifts in the city. Called 'Upwardly Mobile 2' she has

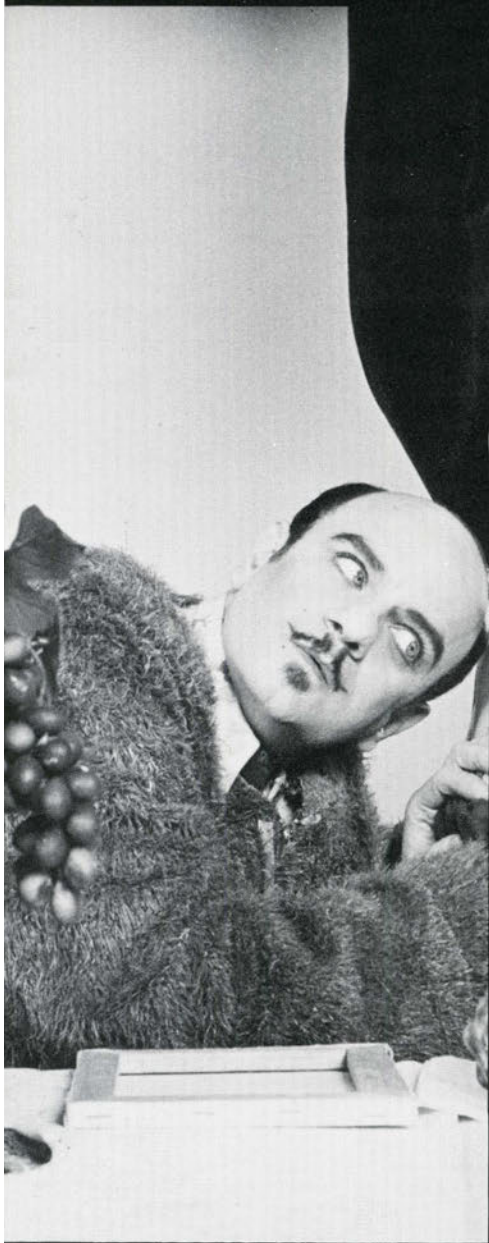
decorated the lift with piles of glitz and kitsch and old long-players and gave riders a concert of Muzak to 'pacify the tortured post-modernist soul'. Something of a doyenne of the performance demimonde, MAGNUSSON was a co-founder of the now-defunct Club 57, a regular performer at DANCETERIA and the excellent PYRAMID and appears in the opening sequences of 'The Hunger'. Her lift act is a neat combination of parody and ironic witticisms aimed at both the content of the different galleries at the Whitney and current obsessions... including cracks at the British, which go down particularly well. After about the fourth one of these I discreetly hand her my (London-addressed) card and leave.

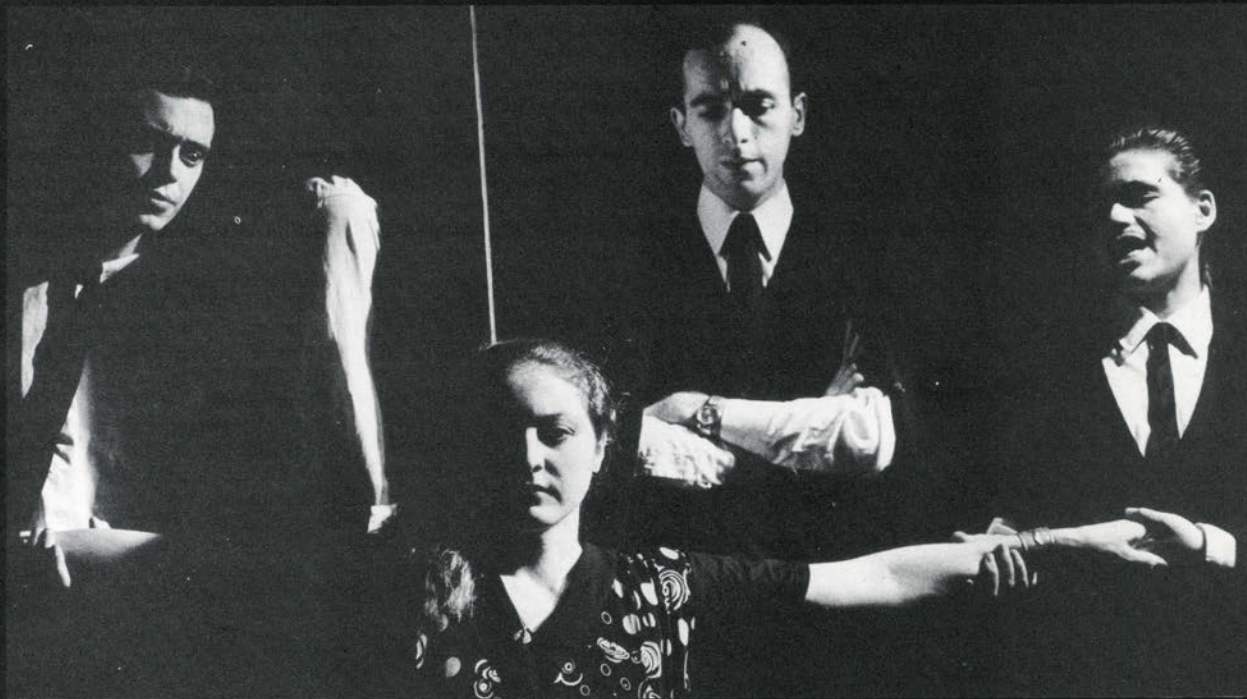
Things now moving rapidly. A bizarre opening party for gothic cult songstress COLETTE (from Manchester!) followed by a spot-on sound piece, set almost entirely in darkness with luminous tape, by CHARLIE HOOKER at the FURNACE. Then down to WHITE COLUMNS for JOSH BAER'S minimalist art-thrash SPEED TRIALS. Unimpressive.

Extremely impressive, though, is the ROXY, a converted ice-rink containing a throbbing mass, literally thousands strong, of breakers, freezers, robots, flippers, and plain ordinary kids having fun. Once checked for guns through the metal detectors one can wander freely through this city within a city, observing the denizens' tribal habits and eventually selecting a mode... and succumbing till dawn.

Cross the BROOKLYN BRIDGE on a bicycle. (OK, OK!) I'm now staying in Brooklyn, and I take my hosts to see RICHARD FOREMAN'S 'Egyptology.' This is the first time I have seen Foreman's Ontological-Hysterical Theatre, so I did not quite expect to feel as if I had been dragged backwards through a haystack, which, after an hour and a half of loud crashes, screaming hysteria, and general simulation of a particularly nasty nightmare repeated over and over again, and neither did my hosts, one of whom expressed a desire to punch RICHARD FOREMAN on the nose for his pains.

This is however a specific genre, probably native to the hectic tension that is New York, and once one comes to terms with this, some fairly interesting notions about dreams, the juxtaposition of modern and occult symbolism, not to mention over the top humour such as a priest cutting a railway train in half with a chain-saw, begins to come to light. I question, however, the passive role that the audience is by necessity forced into by the brute intensity of the aural and visual imagery. Bullying the audience is fine, for five or ten minutes, but done over a period is numbing rather than meditative. As an Englishman and responsible critic I also find it extremely hard to take seriously anything that calls itself Ontological-Hysterical theatre. All the same, it is one of the most interesting performances seen so





Chang in a Void Moon

Kirk Winlow

far, simply because it reveals a genre relatively unknown in Britain.

Another genre I am eager to explore is Trash, and I seek this in the form of CHARLES LUDLAM'S *Ridiculous Theatre Company*. I do not find, however the glitzy low-camp from which *Ridiculous* takes its antecedents, the anti-theatre of Jack Smith et al documented well in STEPHAN BRECHT'S *Queer Theatre*. Instead, this is a slick piece of retrogressive philistinism, played for laughs to an after-dinner Off-Broadway designer label crowd. However, everything has its cause, and the 'whatever next' commercial rat-race of West Broadway needs its satirists. But this, with limpid jokes on minimalism, performance, sound poetry, and weekend avant-gardists barely covers ground scrupulously and hilariously covered 25 years ago by TONY HANCOCK in *The Rebel*. But let's not be chauvinistic about humour. There were one or two good moments, such as when a live turkey stamped out instant random music on a roll of paper pulled through its cage, to be ponderously recited by the sound poet, while CHARLES LUDLAM'S own manic portrayal of the successful grocer turned art dilettante is an ageless caricature. Faintly absurd, yes. But *Ridiculous*, no.

To Central Park for a real sense of the ridiculous; *THE HIGHLAND GAMES*. This is the sort of lunacy which, along with the *BOAT RACE* on the Hudson, and the opening of *BRITISH DOG PAINTINGS* at the American Dog Museum, one has come to look for in the official festival. But the skirl of Bagpipes soon wears off, along with the sight of hot and bothered men in kilts engaging in 'Heavy Events' that is, tossing cabers and throwing hammers. One is more intrigued

by the amusing spectacle of entire American families sitting on the grass carefully studying diagrams of a caber being tossed and its supposed trajectory. Wondering if the American people were really becoming like the Japanese, I join the moving throng of joggers, cyclists, skaters and assorted dingbats and head back downtown.

To Performing Garage for continuation of season of events by FIONA TEMPLETON, late of the British Station House Opera. A series of unexpected and challenging pieces (See review.) Slightly amazed by feminist controversy caused by one show in which both female performers are nude. That particular performance would have looked ridiculous with clothes on, there was no chance of voyeurism because no-one knew what was going to happen, and the specialist art audience present must surely have seen enough nudity for it to be nothing special. I may be wrong, but I don't think many feminists I know would care to be associated with such prejudice. However, my views are almost turned upside down when the next performance involves taking a live goldfish out of a bowl and throwing it in an ashtray, which outrages me, for one, so maybe it's all subjective. Or a provocation?

CHANG IN A VOID MOON! Down to the intrepid PYRAMID club on the Lower East Side—('As HANS EISLER said of his collaboration with BERTOLT BRECHT, "If anything new occurred, the first one to telephone me was Brecht saying, we really must do something right away"—Such is the spirit of the PYRAMID') where the above Performance Soap Opera has been running for 33 weeks.

Certainly the best thing around here,

CHANG, written by ex TV scriptwriter JOHN JESURUN, is a crazy idea which has, as things sometimes do in this city, actually worked. Using a combination of actors, performance artists, and ordinary people, each episode entwines itself, sometimes laterally, sometimes directly, around a byzantine plot which takes place simultaneously at several periods in the twentieth century, and which principally involves diamonds, a Contessa, drug addicts, maids, an Infanta, and numerous dubious and exotic relatives, all with names like SVETLANA, PICABLO, LENEARIA, SABARTES AND COAHUILA. In one of the episodes, the characters are arranged before the audience in positions that simulate camera angles, on stairways, at a table shot from above, down wells. The dialogue is delivered in a quiet, stilted fashion, that emphasises the heavy absurdity of the situations, while actually contriving to sound like a bad soap. A packed, enthusiastic regular audience has made **CHANG IN A VOID MOON** an exacting weekly experiment that Jesurun is finding difficult to stop. 'I feel as if those characters are taking me over, slowly getting into my head,' he says. After **CHANG** is over, the audience dance wildly, often on the bar. The **PYRAMID** is one of the few places where performance and nightlife actually mix successfully.

It is my last port of call before I leave Alphabet City by taxi for the airport (late again), HSU LAN, my chinese taxi driver tells me that . . . but no. No bicycle anecdotes, and most definitely no taxi-driver anecdotes. There are enough clichés about this generally, but not entirely overated city without my adding to them.

Rob La Frenais



Silvia Ziraneck at Franklin Furnace

Afterword:**A Round of Whirls in Sake Haze.
S. C. Z. in N. Y. C. 83**

NAME BRAND WAVE BRAND BEACH WEAR HI!
THERE CUTIE . . . DON'T BE LONESOME GROW A
BEARD. SPRIZZER IN A FISH BOWL: THE APPLE
PUREED PARRIED PARROTTED . . . PARADE IN
PARANOIA (SPLENDOR) "PARDONG MEEE—ARE
YOU SOME ART/EXHIBIT I MEAN (WHAT) DO YOU
REPRESENT (ANYTHING)."

STILL OFF POLITICS I SEE. SKY FRIES A LA MODE.
NO, JUST IMAGINATION FOR THE CODA. SUNNY
SIDE ERP: GEE FRESH OUT OF TALENT BUT AWE-
SOME/TUBULAR/GRODY (GAG ME WITH A
SPOON) ON HOLISTIC REPLICATION: HOW DID
YOU GET IN? HMM? THE WALL WAS OPEN, SO I
CRAWLED.

THIS TICKET ENTITLES YOU AND ONE OTHER TO . .
. SO FAR: JADED PYRONORMAL JELLOHOARDER
FINDS LERVS AND LIES IN A SHAKE PIT WHILE
CHARM IS OUT TO LUNGE. STURM UND DRAG
REVIVE A RARE (EXPENSIVO) CONDITION ("WEEK-
DAY HOPE" TO BE CONTD.) AND PLAY FOR DOUBLE
OR QUILTS. GARRISON B. FORM CHEWS OVER A
HOMESTYLE CHOCARONI AT THE SKYOBAR WITH
EXPERT (PART-TIME) ATTENTION AS ROYALE
(LAST NAME: GARB) CAPTURES THE WINNER UN-
DER THE BROAD WALK SIZZLING ON THE JOKE OF
A WAVE. HEY!

THERE, CUTIE DO YOUR HIDDEN FEATURES IN-
CLUDE A THRIFT MIXER ATTACHMENT WHICH
FOLDS TO GO ANY WHERE, A NON-SAG SPEECH
WITH GREASE-FREE SQUEAKABILITY? HMMM? AN
ALL PURPOSE WINDOW (??) WITH PROTECTION
AGAINST VIOLENT EROTIC TENDENCIES . . .

HI HO THERE RAPED LINGUISTICS, GRUNTS A GO-
GO, HI-RATE LIMBO, LATE NITE LOOKS GOOD,
TASTY TOASTERS, LEAPING BREAKERS, LEAKING
COASTERS, LAPPING WEIRDOS. THIS PLAYEES IS
WEEYERD. THE BIG (H)AY??? WHILE THE FUN
RHYMES.

AM I RIGHT OR AM I RIGHT? (RIGHT) LOSE YOU
CARES IN THE LUXURIANT FRAGRANCE OF AIR-
CAN-TRIGGER-BREA-THING. NEVER TOO LATE TO
HOP TOO LATE TO WAKE. BUT BETTER THAN
BOTHER IS SUPPER WITH DANGER NO FURTHER
THAN HI! THERE CUTIE. WHAT'S GOOD FOR YOU IS
GOOD FOR FREE. TEAR AND WEAR WITH MATCH N'
SHARE, THE WHERE IT USED TO BE. CHOSE TO BE.
FOOD FOR TEETH. HEURTEBISE. HORS DE CRISES.
HAUGHTY KNEES. IRISH PLEAS (KEEP SMILING) HI
THERE CEILING. GOING SOLO? BEFORE BEFORE, OR
TRANS MODERN? RAT SPOTTING. SPOT RATING.
WHO'S WATCHING. FAITH BLEACHING. BRINK
BATING. ALL THE WAY TO THE SKY—WITH
GLAZED RETURNS, IN BLUE EYED RUST, BAR-
TERED TRUST, TIPSY BABS (À CHESTY FLASH.
WITH TEETH TO MATCH). FROM VAMP TO CAB IN
ONE. PFFF. CHEQUER MATE. NO LATE NITE FATE.
THAT SHAKES WITH FREIGHT. HIPS THAT BASKE
IN THE LIGHT. ENRICHED SUPREMOS ("FOOD
WHEN YOU NEED IT") OF ASSORTED DISTINC-
TION; A RE MAR KABLE USE OF *EDIBLE* POTATOES
(WITH QUALITY REFILL) . . .

IT WAS LATENT FEBRUARY. FASHIONISM COMPET-
ED WITH TY-D-BOL FOR A "YES" HOME, WITH
NEWS WHEN YOU EAT IT: SET BY POWER BOOTHE,
AGE UNKNOWN COULD BE SAVAGE COULD BE 40.

FUTURE EVENTS TAKE PLACE ALL WEEK LONG:
JUDGE DOLORES K. SLOVITER OF THE COURT OF
APPEALS FOR THE THIRD CIRCUIT PERFORMED
THE CEREMONY BETWEEN EUGENIA TURTON
KETCHAM, DAUGHTER OF WOOD RICE (MRS) AND
MADISON BABBITT 3D, CREDIT ANALYST OF PUB-
LIC ISSUES, AND CHRISTIAN WILLIAM WOLF, 1ST
SON OF REENA RAGGI AND THE LATE GLENSELLM
R SUN OF GROSSE POINTE, MICH., AND MARBLE-
HEAD, MASS. THE BRIDE, WHO WILL RETAIN HER
MAIDEN GAME, IS EMPLOYED AS ATMOSPHERIC
ADMINISTRATOR IN THE EX-CELL-O DIVISION OF
POSSIBILITIES INC., OF WHICH HER HUSBAND IS
FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT MEMBER. EMILE PRA-
GOFF 3D WAS BEST MAN, MATRON WAS TARYN
PODBOR, A LEARNING SPECIALIST AT THE CHRIS-
TIAN RESCUE EFFORT FOR THE EMANCIPATION OF
DISSIDENTS. ENJOY . . .

SILVIA C. ZIRANECK

Stuart Dempster ROULETTE

STUART DEMPSTER's performance at Roulette, a loft-type space offering a varied programme of new music, was an engaging affair, casually presented yet authoritative and concentrated. An accomplished exponent of 'circular breathing', a technique that allows unbroken playing of wind instruments, he used the method to perform meditative compositions for didjeridu, trombone, and a length of garden hose fitted with a trombone mouth piece. His use of didjeridu and garden hose in particular displayed an idiosyncratic virtuosity, and he succeeded, through sympathetic rapport, in introducing audience participation without a hint of embarrassment on either part, when he asked us all to hum sustained notes in accompaniment to his mantra-like trombone pieces. This was thoughtful, gentle music that opened up spaces for the listener to explore at leisure.

Z'ev's piece at The Kitchen could hardly have been more different. A very deliberate installation of suspended metal sheets, large beaten-out alloy discs and piles of scrap tubing, were harshly lit from either side of the space. The artist entered, dressed rather predictably in heavy boots and tight jeans, his hair close-cropped, and began to beat upon the suspended sheets of metal. Leaving plenty of space to begin with, he gradually built up complete rhythms and washes of sound that filled the space, setting up intricate harmonic structures whose presence was felt as much as heard. The performance was in two sections, the first part entirely concentrated on the linear hanging construction, and the second using the beaten alloy discs and pipes which were beaten, dragged, bounced, swung and thrown about the space, producing blends of noise that were surprising in the absence of amplification. What distinguished this work from similar exercises currently popular in England was that it totally avoided the usual impediments, (fascist images, flashing light, snake bombs and visceral matter) concentrating entirely on the acoustic properties of the materials and space, and the performer's interaction with his installation. Unlike Stuart Dempster he made no attempt at direct communication with the audience, and at times he was more than a little alienating, but taken as a whole the performance succeeded through a combination of controlled experimentation and intuitive feeling. The piece almost went on far too long, but just almost.

I regretably missed Fast Forward at P.A.S.S. but saw a re-run of the piece a few days later. The event at P.A.S.S. (Public Access Synthesiser Studio) was part of a series on microcomputer music, and F.F.'s contribution to this was an arrangement of the Lord's Prayer for two Atari micros. The computers 'prayed'

simultaneously and were both programmed to random access pitch values and speed of delivery, so that phrases from the prayer modulated between the flat, metallic delivery of the computer voice untreated, and the almost unintelligible gabble that issued from them as the random factor was introduced. As the computer voices faded out, the composer began to play a steel drum, beating out simple rhythmic formations reminiscent of Balinese gamelan music and Chinese gongs, and nodding in the direction of the American minimalist composers. What this music has in common with both Stuart Dempster and Z'ev is that, starting with very simple elements, it gradually evolves complex harmonic and rhythmic structures, and builds a definite two-way relationship with the space it is happening in. It is essentially an environmental, performed music, presented by Fast Forward with an easy manner that belies the concentration needed to perform it. Like Dempster and Z'ev, Fast Forward avoids most of the pitfalls that could beset this kind of work, through a combination of technical expertise, and the discretion to know when to stop.

Jez Welsh

Recent British Video THE KITCHEN

PLOUGHMAN'S LUNCHES, warm Watneys ale, and an introduction by curator Stuart Marshall kicked off the screening of 'Recent British Video' at the Kitchen. With the temperature hovering around the high seventies, the audience was unusually large for a Kitchen screening. Artists showing were Tina Keane, Mick Hartney, Jeremy Welsh, Catherine Elwes and Margaret Warwick. It was about time such an event happened in New York, the British being far more acquainted with US video than vice-versa.

During the show, from beginning to end I found myself comparing the work to American video works and highlighting the differences, not qualitatively but contextually. These differences seemed similar if not equal to basic cultural differences between Britain and the US. To generalise, US video (particularly New York) tends to be bright, snappy, and technologically current, while the British video I have seen tends to be more analytical, frank, and with less 'surface' glamour. Also, each of the five works shown were very language based (with the exception of part of Mick Hartney's tape) with a strong narrative emphasis. Particularly interesting was how the language element contributed towards perception of the work. For example, the pieces by Catherine Elwes and Jeremy Welsh—were it not for the narration, could easily be perceived as American-made art, but the English voices and accents flip one's (relatively) objective senses and force you to view it as a foreign artifact.

It's a little baffling—because they share a common language, your unconscious

mind tells you that everything is very familiar, but in actual fact it isn't, and it comes from a culture which has an entirely different set of ground rules.

This particular event had something of a 'next' quality, where each artist introduced themselves to a waiting audience, then displayed their wares auction-style. These artists have in fact quite diverse interests, and I found some of the rapid transitions a little too far for my mind to jump, then neutralise itself for the oncoming selection. The virtue that lies within such a perspicacious course is being able to show such a diversity of material to one audience at one time. In this, Recent British Video 'succeeded'. As the flow between British and US video increases, I look forward to more in-depth exposure of individual artists.

Fast Forward

Barbara Buckner, Bill Viola, Dan Reeve Tony Dursler, Peter d'Agustino ELECTRONIC ARTS INTERMIX

LORIE ZIPPAY OF Electronic Arts Intermix, a video art distribution and production centre roughly equivalent to London Video Arts, showed us a selection of American video which revealed a diversity of style and attitude that the NY video I saw in Londo distinctly lacked. Sandborn/Fitzgerald's electronic trickery was already familiar to me and I looked to Barbara Buckner for a new approach. In *Hearts* she reprocesses two simple images: a heart and a tree. Colours, flashes and stripes streak across the screen in rapid succession producing some threatening effects suggesting explosions, fires or radiation leaks. But the tape soon turns into psychedelic wall paper—which may well be the intention. (John Sandborn remarked that he wants his latest tape to be like General Hospital on acid!)

In complete contrast, Bill Viola's *A portrait in light and heat* is the most beautiful study of natural phenomena. Minimalist images of a winter landscape are gently disturbed by waves of falling snow. The desert turns into a cross between a Rothko and a Cezanne as rising heat breaks up the landscape into fluid areas of colour. The tension between depth and surface, video illusionism and painted abstraction is held in perfect balance as a small black dot travels slowly across the screen, metamorphoses into a distant truck and disappears again returning the image to the surface.

Another strongly visual piece by Dan Reeves uses slow motion to great effect. In *Amida* a putrefied cat, a running dog and the pathetic death of a mouse under a car became horrific, slowed down as are sequences of 'ordinary' images: running water, a window and the paraphernalia on a carpenter's bench. *Son of Oil* is a crazy fantasy by Tony Dursler. Using absurdly

amateurish sets, toys, trucks, and costumes, he weaves sinister nonsense into a collage of adolescent surrealism. 'If you kill the president are you as important as he is?' he asks as a presidential doll dangles on a string over its dinky White House. This is punk painting on video and it works extremely well. Peter d'Agustino's *Teletapes* is a fascinating analysis of American TV voice-over: 'Kids think people in the box are their friends who will be angry with them if they don't buy the product'.

For me the best tapes were those operating along the edge of reality and illusion, exploiting video's considerable ability to simulate both extremes. Overall, I was impressed by Lorie Zippay's selection and we should soon be seeing some of these works in London.

Catherine Elwes

Fiona Templeton PERFORMING GARAGE

FIONA TEMPLETON performed a series of pieces over a period of 3 weeks at the Performing Garage, in Soho. The series *Five Hard Pieces*, in her own words '... display a dialectical opposition between 'hard' and 'soft''. I saw 4 of them.

The first, *There Was Absent Adrilles*, was performed in collaboration with Glenys Johnson. The space was an untidy, seedy, dimly lit office. Enter: two women dressed as grey-suited secretaries. They begin at once re-arranging the place in a seemingly efficient, yet totally unproductive manner, continuing their tasks in virtual silence, endlessly repeating the same useless actions in a somewhat stylised and exaggerated fashion. Within this furious activity a tape recorder is switched on and off several times. We hear a woman's voice making references to psychotic states of mind—her own? her patients?—we do not know. The obvious question is 'Who is the psychotic?' The person referred to on the tape or the supposedly 'normal' secretary? And where is the fine line between 'normality' and 'nuerosis'? The performance did raise these questions but suffered from a lack of precision and keen sense of timing which the work demanded. The two performers did not seem to be working in relation to each other, but rather as separate entities; the whole became diffused and attention dissipated. There were some beautiful moments however; one, when Fiona Templeton put on and took off her jacket in continuous rhythmical movements which expressed a melancholy no words could have stated.

Thought/Death, a solo piece by Fiona Templeton was much tighter, and much more informative. A speech without words, the words are forgotten, but no matter, her actions, her expressions were enough to entice us. And then we were

plunged into darkness, next moment the lights went on and Fiona Templeton lay dead on the floor. The lights continued to flicker, on/off, at short intervals, and each time, temporarily blinking at the lights, we were presented with a different way of dying, some funny, some corny, some ugly and horrific. We saw them for a moment, like a snapshot forensic photograph in black and white, cold and rather crude but always, always disturbing. Like images of war and death on the television news; there for an instant, a grotesque tableau, then, snap, back to cosy reality, the horror forgotten... or is it? The image keeps recurring in dreams, in memories, and so it is with this piece, fragments, frozen moments permanently etched in my mind.

Experiments in the Destruction of Time, another solo piece, extremely complex in its construction. It centred around words and gestures describing around the verb 'to go' or 'going'. Within this structure she managed to convey extreme sensitivity next to extreme aggression whilst suggesting an ongoing narrative. Her own description of this work was 'simultaneity, immitability and abstraction to prove atemporality, which of course fail'. To me it was more about conflicts between masculine and feminine and the difficulty experienced (especially by women) in expressing themselves through language. At one point with her eyes closed, facing the audience, she said 'It doesn't really matter if you don't understand what I'm saying because I don't really know if the words I use describe what I'm thinking. You see, language is only a sign that I am speaking'. For me, this statement summed up what the performance was essentially about. However, having read this piece as being derived from a somewhat feminist sensibility my illusions were cruelly shattered by the last performance which was done in collaboration with Miranda Payne from Station House Opera, called *Under Paper Spells*.

It opened with Fiona Templeton seated on the floor, naked, her back to the audience. A long, long length of white paper was slowly lowered from the ceiling and she proceeded to wrap herself within it until she was dressed in some wondrous, mountainous costume. The glorious sound of the crackling paper coupled with the pleasurable thought of the sensation of paper on bare skin made this extremely enjoyable to watch. If the performance had stopped there it would have been fine but it didn't. Miranda Payne was revealed, naked, except for a minimal paper costume resembling a wizard's or ice maiden's outfit. The two then staged a mock battle during which most of their costumes were left behind. More rolls of paper were dropped from the ceiling, blocking the view of the audience, which they then tore away to reveal themselves, through it. Though playful and slightly humorous at times, I could not erase the fact that the sight of two nude women

romping around in masses of paper was an extremely big turn-on for the majority of men in the audience and that women's bodies have been used and abused enough through and by patriarchy. I am not saying that female nudity can not be used again in art, or that women cannot find pleasure in the sight of their own bodies, but it is an extremely complex and difficult issue which this performance did nothing to solve. For me, it could only be seen as retrogressive. Some works should be shown to women-only audiences and this I think is one of them—perhaps then we could have all ripped our clothes off and joined in!

Margaret Warwick

Linda Montano JUST ABOVE MIDTOWN GALLERY

WEST COAST PERFORMANCE has traditionally fused life and art into extended rituals that rely heavily on the credibility of individual artists' (publicised) intentions. The next step, art as private therapy, can be extremely tedious for anyone not directly involved with the artist unless some connection is being made with wider art or political issues. The humour of Linda Montano's early work of ten saved her from self-indulgence. Her love-hate relationship with the Catholic church produced some wonderfully irreverent performances. Since she couldn't become a priest, she confessed her sins publicly with a permanent smile on her face. As Sister Rose, she gave extremely detailed lessons on sinning: friendly kissing rates as a venial sin, french kissing definitely mortal. Where her ideas shrink to the purely personal—several days spent handcuffed to Tom Marioni, listening to her heartbeat or getting to know her dog, my interest flags considerably. But when an extreme and universal experience is processed and re-processed through art, the result can be a revelation.

The videotape of *Mitchell's Death* is derived from several performances the artist made after the death of her husband. An out-of-focus black and white image slowly sharpens to reveal the artist's face threaded with acupuncture needles. With these metal tears hanging from her eye-lids, she resembles the Mater Dolorosa. The effect is heightened by a chanted account of the events leading up to the news of Mitchell's death and the mundane activities that are often the only way of anchoring grief in reality—'Tuna and Tears' the chanting and a delay between words and lip movements help to distance the viewer sufficiently to absorb the information without being overwhelmed by it—but Linda Montano's experience of death remained uncompromisingly clear. I was extremely moved.

Catherine Elwes

Silvia Ziranek
FRANKLIN FURNACE
PYRAMID CLUB

A Deliberate Case Of Particulars (The Intemperate Heart) (I Ate Art) presents a scene from film noir: black and white, the desk, venetian blind, two men with characteristic accessories, trenchcoat, shades—lighting, smoking, and discarding cigarettes, silently. Silvias's dress an unreal black sac, stiff and loose, cutting a straight line across her chest, suspended from spaghetti black, asymmetric straps. Central, flat venetian blind, closed, obscures Silvia, excepting her black stockings, contorted silhouettes, which pose, kick, and point: each position infinitely expressive, sexy, as her monologue piles on the seemingly endless accumulation of 'his' attributes, description like a snow-drift, incessant. A structure of accretion, lists of particulars that do not adhere. Eventually the blind opens, Silvia peers through, and the description of 'she' commences. After this presentation, the figures can begin to move, walk.

It is, like classical Hammet and Chandler, the story of a seduction, doomed, yet a seduction in language only: the intimacy of her metaphors is contradicted by the brusque collisions (they literally bump into her), the obliviousness of these bodies: the men merely brutal, impersonal, masculine. The presence of two makes 'him' an arbitrary other; neither man, nor Silvia, quite coincides with the object of her poetic attention. Is there an object? Humour allows the cumulative disorientation, to the moment when she gives it all up: 'I begin to suspect I am alluding to a specific person.' 'He' and 'she' exist only as inconsequent collections of precise yet incoherent sentences. They don't add up.

The piece is on romance, noir, the impossible narrative that positions woman as femme fatale, phallic (unfortunately Silvia smokes a cigar throughout) dangerous yet opaque, innocent: 'Sometimes a girl is anything—but sleepy.' This is familiar territory: the detective story missing a corpse, lacking in incident, weaving the trappings of (a) mystery, while the crime remains indeterminate. The sentences don't coalesce, make sense, it is unclear what the crime may have been (heartbreak?) but there is no doubt that the woman is the victim as well as the murderess. 'The police called it murder. I call it millinery.'

Ziranek's work seems to be about surfaces: the intersection of one-dimensional constructions (discourses of cooking, fashion, romance) does not produce depth. Like a glossy magazine, Silvia's juxtapositions slide, slip, disparate languages that do not cohere, mere superimposition—thereby demonstrating the impossibility of the feminine position. Nietzsche: 'Women are considered profound. Why? Because one never fathoms their depths. Women aren't even shallow.*'

In *From a Considerable Amount Of Height (Pyramid)*, the language of cookery meets, collides, comfortable with the language of romance—both presented as sets of instructions, recipes for femininity. The result is manifested as the synthetic pink, relentless frivol of the feminine monster: Bride of Frankenstein, anonymous, placed somewhere in the cross between sex-queen and homebody. Is there such a thing as feminist kitsch? In *I Ate Art*, delineation is more exact, within the highly constructed genre of film noir; this is Ziranek taking on the masculine other, his desire as well as her fantasy: 'He

was fairly short if appearances were anything to go by. In effect he was magnificent—rope springs eternal.'

The language is poetry as recipe, her theatrical enunciation cool, as words slippinto rhyme, pun, play slip out of place. In *I Ate Art*, her syntax remains clear, while vocabulary slips, expressive, a shiny collection of loose paraphrases, humorous: 'His hair, seductive as pasta in brodo, billowed in amorous tufts reminiscent of whipped screams.' Occasionally a beautiful metaphor intrudes, accidentally, momentarily serieuise: 'Her skin was like pollen, her touch lighter than hesitation, her voice wrecked by too much sleep...'

Overall, she achieves sheer surface: managing to eschew both narrative and depth, one's interest does not penetrate or follow this text, as it glides slippery past the ear.

Ziranek's poetics derive from the perception that the congruent metaphorical structure for romance is cooking—recipes, preparations, menu-as-poetry, seduction/devouring. She presents the feminine as an impossible coincidence of poetic surfaces, as blank and opaque as a menu. The ramifications extend towards sex n'death (or at least flirtation n'murder) but these ingredients refrain from drama, making only, insistently, surface definitions, the social construction of femininity—sans subjectivity. Yet, we, blurring laughter, are moved—by the old wish, that compelling fantasy of masculine/feminine, romance: 'There's no maze like hope.'

Olivia Onions

*Twilight of the Idols, (1889) Maxims and Arrows No. 27.

THE BYAM SHAW DIPLOMA

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Brighton Zap Club

Info: (0273) 506471
June 4: Neo Naturists, Ian Kelly, George Nobody, Dance Factor 7.

June 11: Dave Bapart, Yorkshire Actors present 'Bouncers'.

June 18: 'Seconds of Pleasure', plus full cabaret and performance.

June 25: John Hegley, Desperate Men.

July 2: Pat Condell.

July 9: Compass Theatre present 'Refugees'.

July 16: Jenny Lecoat, Roy Hutchins.

July 23: Sharon Landau, Ian Hinchliffe.

July 30: To be announced. There will be at least 4 events on each night—further events to be announced.

Bristol

Arnolfini

Info: (0272) 299191
Until June 11: Ronne Lowensteyn, jewellery/performance exhibition.
Until June 19: 'Under Cover', exhibition of recent works by Stephen Willats that centre on the way different groups of people have expressed themselves in fighting back against the conforming pressures of insitutional society.

Until June 4: John Furnival 'Frying Tonight'.

Until June 5: 'A question of Silence' 90 minute film from the Netherlands—winner of 3 awards. 'An excellent and challenging film—the more you think about it, the better it seems—the most important feminist film this year!'.

June 7 & 8: Molissa Fenley: 'Eureka'—dynamic new evening-length solo dance by this tornado of a dancer from the USA, 8pm.

June 9: The Lost Jockey—part of an exciting development in English systems music; comprises 20-piece line-up and 'promises to be Arnolfini's musical sensation of the year.'

June 10-12: Live Support System, and expanded media performance of kinetic sculpture with photography, film, rhythm, sound, poetry and moving bodies, 8pm.

July 14-21: Richard Wagner's 'Parsifal' directed by Hans Jurgen Syberberg—'A movie experience no film- or opera-lover should resist... a sustained and astounding burst of filmic invention... brilliant'.

July 22-23: Forkbeard Fantasy, 'Brontasaurus Show',

8pm. The Arnolfini is now open on Sundays from 2-7pm. Video Library open daily from 1-8pm Tues-Sat, and Sunday 2-7pm.

Bath

Bath Fringe Festival

Info: (0225) 335424
May 27-June 12: Bath Fringe '83 festival includes a wide selection of exhibitions, theatre, performance, dance and music groups from all over the country. Contact Nikki Milican for details.

Urban Sax

June 8 50 saxophones in, around, over, next to, through the Theatre Royal Bath—an ambience will begin to swell from 8.30—the good burghers of Bath had best leave their preconceptions in their semi's. Free, at twice the price. (See Touring and feature this issue).

Berkshire

South Hill Park

Info: (0344) 27272
 Festival of Performance
June 10: Firework Display.
June 11: Forkbeard Fantasy, Tim Batt—juggler, Bill Brookman—one man band and dancing gorilla.
June 12: All Day Suckers—Children's Theatre Show. The Earthlings Phone Home Show, starring the Dial Tones, Birds of Paradise Steel Band, Prof. Jimmy Edwards: Performance with Brass Instruments.
June 13: 7.30pm Presentation of Performance and Video Art Events by London Video Arts. Performances by Jeremy Welsh and Zoe Redman. Video tapes from Catherine Elwes, Tom Castle, Chris Ruchton, Gary Unsworth, David Critchley, Nan Hoover, Tina Kene.

June 14-16: Installation and performances by students from the Fine Art Dept., University of Reading.

June 16: IOU Theatre Company, Ian Hinchliffe.
June 17: IOU Theatre Company, The Late Night Show with Anne Bean and Paul Burwell, Charlie Pig and David Medalla.

June 18: Stephen Taylor Woodrow, Anthony Howell, Sue Carpenter, Carlyle Reedy, Nik Payne, IOU Theatre Co, Annabel Nicholson, The Plumb Line.

June 19: David Medalla, Sonia Knox, Silvia Ziranek, Kevin West, Stuart Cameron and more.

June 24-26: Festival of English Music.

July 1-3: Jazz Festival.

July 8-10: Folk Festival.

David Medalla *La Sibylla Equatoria* 1982



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Cardiff

Chapter Arts Centre
Info: (0222) 396061

June 1-4: Howard & Eberle 'Dance cabaret'—a tongue in cheek look at dance and dancers from the stage to the supermarket.

June 8-11: Teatr Bara Caws—'Hat '83'. Welsh language theatre that you need no Welsh to understand.

June 10: The Lost Jockey 26-piece line-up playing their own form of systems music.

June 15-17: Brazilian Blend Instant Theatre—'A day in the death of Joe Orton'. Almost free, energetic young company.

June 14-18: Forkbeard Fantasy—'The Brontosaurus Show'. More antedeluvian humour from the brothers Britton.

June 23-25: Dance Wales—'Out & About'. Free dance in unexpected places.

July 14-16: The Kosh—'The Jago'. Dance & acrobatics and music based on Arthur Morrison's book 'A Child of the Jago' with music from Jim Dvorjak & James Mackie & dance direction from Fergus Early.

June 13: Indian classical dance from Chitrerete Boler.

Cornwall

Elephant Fayre '83

Info: (0503) 30816
July 29-31: Elephant Fayre '83 is the third festival to be held at St. Germans and 'will maintain its tradition of quality & variety. As in previous years hundreds of performers will gather from all over Britain (and beyond) to present the very best contemporary entertainment in all fields of all performing arts—everything from the finest touring theatre troupes to puppeteers, clowns, performance groups and the ever popular strolling minstrels.'

Derbyshire

Buxton Festival

Info: (0298) 71010/78939
July 23—Aug 7: The fifth Buxton Festival includes music, opera, theatre, film, talks and interview and workshops (various venues).

London

Air Gallery (London Video Arts)

Info (01) 734 7410
June 2: Ron Kuivela, American audio artist in Performance: part of May's calendar 'Video & Landscape'.

June 9: Janusz Szczerek: Videotapes.

June 13-18: New installation by

Steve Littman.

June 16: Recent work in video and slide/tape.

June 23: Film, Video and Performance from Maidstone Art College.

June 30: Mitchell Kreigman—Performance and video from USA.

Almeida

Info: (01) 226 7432

June 7: The Lost Jockey, perform under a name borrowed from a series of paintings by Rene Magritte.

June 8: Alterations, with Misha Mengelberg (piano), **June 9:** Alterations, with Lol Coxhill (sax). Formed in 1977, Alterations combines the diverse talents of composers/directors/musicians, Peter Cusack, Terry Day, Steve Beresford and David Toop.

June 10: Jon Gibson & James Fulkerson with the Barton Workshop. Jon Gibson is a composer/performer/artist from Los Angeles who has worked extensively with Steve Reich and Terry Riley, and has performed since 1968 with the Philip Glass Ensemble.

June 11: Eisler Ensemble (director, John Tilbury) with Aries Voices (conductor, Gregory Rose) Brecht/Eisler Songs.

June 12: Emas—first of a series of electro-acoustic concerts—the programme includes works by Trevor Wishart, Denis Smalley, Rolf Gehlhaar, Steve Montague, Jonty Harrison and Per Hartmann.

June 13: Piano 4T's with David Tudor—works by John Cage for piano and electronics.

June 14: 'The Intermediary' for piano and tape.

June 15: Piano 4T's with John Tilbury—piano works by Cornelius Cardew.

June 16: Piano 4T's with Richard Teitelbaum—'The Digital Piano', or 'Solo for Three Pianos'. The advent of digital electronic hardware makes it possible to interface one or more pianos with computers to create an interactive multi-piano performance system.

June 22-July 16: Joint Stock Theatre Group present 'The Crimes of Vautrin' by Nicholas Wright after Honore de Balzac. **Apples & Snakes**
Info: (01) 699 5266

June 4: Joolz, Slade The Leveller, Dinah Livingstone & Andy Naff.

June 11: Greenwich Festival entry—At Clockhouse Community Centre, Woolwich—Spartacus R, Pat Condell, John Hegley, Jenny

Lecoat.

June 18: Brian Patten—Mega Poet's appearance at Apples & Snakes.

June 25: Attila The Stockbroker, Sandy Gort, Menzie.

July 1: Two day event to be held at the Surrey Tavern: With Son of Man (reggae), Slade the Leveller, Jenny Lecoat (feminist comedy and songs), Little Dave (ranter from Harlow), Joolz (Bradford ranter), Markus Jahn (Brixton Street poet), Pete Murry (comic poet).

July 2: Two day event continued—with The Czechs, Spartacus R, Kevin Coyne, Little Brother, Belinda Blanchard, Chris Cardale and Emile Sercombe.

B2

Info (01) 488 9815
Voices at Curfew, series of events presented in collaboration with *Index of Censorship* magazine brings together exiled and banned artists from three different continents: Latin America, Europe and Africa & the Middle East.

June 11: Tito Valenzuela—Using slide tape, poetry and performance, *Dadui/Ytic* is a multi-media 'bilingual exercise' by this poet, performed by the writer.

June 18: Abdullah al-Udhari—Adonis is a Syrian poet who, after being imprisoned in 1956 went into exile in Lebanon. His work is banned in much of the Arab world. Samih al Qasim and Mahoud Derwish are Palestinian poets whose work is banned in the Israeli occupied territories. Their poems, and others, will be read by Abdullah al-Udhari. Salman Shakuur—from Iraq, is one of the worlds finest oral (Arab lute) musicians, and will play both classical and modern oud music.

June 25: Zdena Tomín—spokesperson for Charter 77 in Czechoslovakia and writer and subject of the recent Granada drama documentary *Enemies of State* will read from Czech writers. Jaroslav Hutka, now exiled in Rotterdam after repeated detention, is a singer/song-writer and member of Charter 77. He will play together with Jacek Kacmarczyk, who wrote many of the songs most associated with Solidarity, and who is now exiled in Paris.

July 2: Abdilatif Abdalla—Swahili poet—will introduce a dramatised reading from a play recently banned in Kenya, and will read from his own prison poetry. Pitika Ntuli—South

African sculptor, painter and poet—was released from jail in Swaziland in 1978. His performance will combine sculpture, video and dialogues in poetry and music with Eugene Skeefalso from South Africa, and Ahmed Sheikh from Senegal.

Battersea Arts Centre

Info: (01) 223 8413

June 1-4: Pula & Imbumba presented by Soyikwa African Theatre Productions. Play about the resettlement in South Africa, with special reference to the flood that plagued Soweto in 1977, when so many people suffered whilst others reaped riches—7.30pm.

June 8 & 9: The Harmony Theatre Project present *Alice in Wonderland (Via Bank)*: satirical and musical adaptation of the well-loved classic—8pm.

June 10: *Hand in Hand in Still Flame*: New play by Alphanso Tyndale performed by a cast of thousands, includes live band. The plot deals with the problems encountered by Derek who arrives in England to join his family and 'get a good start in life'. But things aren't so easy, he fails to live up to his parent's expectations, is conned by the music business, loses his girlfriend...

June 29 & 30: 'Just Desserts' from Spare Tyre: a humorous look at life (and food); this time a wry and cynical look at the pressures and difficulties facing Sue, a single woman trying to survive alone in a couple-crazy world. Music.

June 5: John Orway—a well known English eccentric, who plays guitar, vocals and the fool—8.30pm.

June 15: Shannakey—a return visit from this brilliant and highly original Traditional Folk Band from Co. Wicklow.

June 19: Kevin Coyne, Peter Nu & Friends—8pm.

June 24: *Eyewitness*—this exciting new multi-racial seven-piece band combines reggae, West African highlife, juju and rock sounds—8.30pm.

Cabaret:

June 11 & 25: Harvey & The Wallbangers & Guests—8pm.

June 16-18: The Joeys—quartet of comedians present a night of comedy, cabaret and theatre in their multi-faceted show.

June 26: Janice Perry aka Gal—one-woman show as a blend of 'comedy, spunk, theatre, music, satire'.

Cockpit Theatre

Info: (01) 402 5081

Until June 4: 'Strindberg's Last Walks'—Production of 'Dream Play' based on Ingmar Bergman's adaptation of August

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Strindberg's play. 'Characters are split, doubled and multiplied, they evaporate & are condensed, are diffused & concentrated . . . a mixture of memories, experiences, unfettered fancies, absurdities & improvisations'.

Half Moon Theatre

June 9-11: For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide When The Rainbow Is Enuf.

June 15-18: As above.

June 29-July 2: Theatre Centre present '1983'.

Eccentric Enterprises

ICA

Info: (01) 930 3647

Theatre:

Until June 18: *Three For All: Theatre for, about and by young people featuring Lyric Youth Theatre, Theatre Centre & The Kosh.*

June 12: *Opening The Doors: An Alternative Theatre for the 80s—seminar, 7.30pm.*

June 21-26: *Radical Bingo—The best of new cabaret, clickety click and comedy with Seething Wells and frinds—8pm.*

June 29-July 3: *Tenkei Theatre, from Japan. A painterly theatre, performed in almost complete silence, directed by Shogo Ohta.*

July 5-17: *Womad (World of*

Music and Dance) festival.

July 19-31: *Rational Theatre.*

July 15-19: *New Film & video by John Maybury, including The Cultural Impotence of Stupid Boys No 2.*

June 22-July 3: (In-) *Dependent Film & Television, a season of films shown in The Eleventh Hour slot on C4 in January.*

Video:

June 7: *Lawrence Weiner, Nancy Holt, William Wegman, John Baldessari—7.45pm.*

June 14: *Richard Foreman, Terry Fox, John Jonas—7.45pm.*

June 21: *Vito Acconci—7.45pm.*

June 28: *Martha Rosler, Richard Serra, Ron Clark, Dara Birnbaum, & Peter D'Agostino.*

Oval House

Info: (01) 735 2786

June 1-5: *Asantewaa*

Company—Musa (and His Bowl) Rahmatu (The Beggar) and The Seven Eyed God. Saga of legendary fantasy . . . this dream world is not only a play, but the words mingle with constant movement . . . mime.

The style is far removed from the kind of theatre we are accustomed to.

June 8-12: *Siren Theatre Company in From the Divine , a*

feminist appraisal of the links between militarism, patriotism and Patriarchal control. Set in the 1940s it tells the story of three women who set off to entertain the troops at the front.

June 15-26: *Lambeth Ensemble Theatre in A Temporary*

Rupture. A humorous play, written by Michael Ellis and directed by Jimi Rand. A play about a Jamaican couple in their late thirties as they come to terms with one another in a strange country.

June 29-July 3: *Niagra Falls, takes on the straight myths about gays . . . a real treat, original in conception, cleverly plotted, rich in characters, genuinely funny.*

July 6-10: *Forkbeard Fantasy—The Brontosaurus Show.*

July 20-13: *Ditsy Blond Goes*

Hollywood by Roxanne Shafer.

A loving musical spoof on the Hollywood of the late 40s & early 50s. It tells the saga of Ditsy, an innocent 16 year old child-woman who manages to capture Betty Grable as her fairy Godmother.

Upstairs

June 1-5: *Janice Perry—singing solo acapella . . . performing her own original, humorous*

feminist material.

June 10-12: *The Wild Girls perform funny sketches and songs and utilise popular culture to destroy stereotypes and shatter expectations. 'Don't expect Art!'*

June 23-30 & July 1&3: *Consenting Adults in Public in Lord Audley's Secret or The Righteous Punish'd —A Gay Victorian Melodrama by Eric Presland.*

July 6-17: *Bridge of Sighs in Sister Streams. A play which has been devised through improvisations. Its starting point is the life of Dorothy Wordsworth and concerns her perception of five other characters, some from her earliest childhood memories and others whom she met later in her life.*

Tricycle Theatre

Info: (01) 624 5301/8168

June 6-25: *Beyond the 'A' Steps—a first play by Tony Dennis. Jamaican-born Tony Dennis has written a hard-hitting account of the life of a Black immigrant household near Paddington. The family tensions generated when their unemployed teenage son becomes involved in violent*

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crime are presented with humour, compassion and anger.

Manchester PAT

Info: (061) 224 0020
PAT/Radiator has now found a permanent home which will open in early 1984. The Green Room is situated in Little Peter Street, Knott Mill, Manchester 15. The Green Room will present a wide variety of events from theatre to performance art, vio, poetry and music. It will be open at least five days a week with late night shows at weekends.

Theatre Totale
(formerly the Eleventh House Theatre Co) Info: (061) 225 9694

Theatre Totale with 'Movie Movie'.

Until June 3: Thompson's Arms Sackville Street, Manchester City Centre—10pm.

June 6: As above—8pm.

June 1: Withington College, Mauldeth Road, Manchester.

June 16-19: Melkweg, Amsterdam, Holland.

July 11: Leadmill Theatre, 6/7 Leadmill Street, Sheffield, 8pm.

July 29: Buxton Fringe Festival, The Octagon, Pavillion Gardens.

July 31: Buxton Fringe Festival, The Paxton Suite, Pavillion Gardens, 2.30pm.

Newcastle

Basement Group

Info: (0632) 614527

June 11: LVA—Show of video tapes from London Video Arts—8pm, free.

June 18: A show of work from 15 students from the Department of Communication Studies Sheffield Poly.

June 22: The Adventures of Twizzle present 'Richard Younger: Dungheap'.

June 26: Silvia Ziranek at Pizzaland in 'A Deliberate Case of Particulars . . . 'His eyes were cold as jelly, her lips as hot as chips'. Performances 3.30pm, 5.30pm & 7.30pm.

June 27-July 2: Kevin Simms, Phil Docking in 'The Realisation of a Shadow'.

Basement as a base working towards a presentation on July 2.

Nottingham

Midland Group

Info: (0602) 582636/7

Summer Music Series

June 1: One + One—music for 2 amplified violins. Virtuoso violin soloists Liz Perry and Alex Balanescu return to the

Midland Group after

appearing here with Michael Nyman, to perform work encompassing experimental/avant garde as well as the classics—7.30pm.

June 2: A Little Westbrook Music—Kate.

June 4: Orchestre Jazira—Hi-life music from West Africa—8pm.

June 9: Dagarti Arts Group with Mario Bayor. African dance and drumming with Ghanianin Master drummer Mario Bayor.

June 11: The Lost Jockey—British systems band: keyboards, marimbas, pitched percussion, saxophones, woodwind, strings and vocals. Performance:

June 17-18: Michael Frankel presents 'Limbo Tales'—an exploration of the nether regions of human consciousness—nightmarish, frightening, and humorous!

June 23/24: Burnt Bridges present 'Special Powers'—Womens Performance Company exploring the physical and mental condition of prisoners in a totalitarian state.

June 30/July 1: Richard Layzell presents 'Song Song'—Video, film, music and sculpture to explore dreams and signs.

Rochdale Art Gallery

Info: (0706) 47474

June 3-24: Performance Arts Fellows Ann Wilson & Marty St. James present 'Performance Art Show: a culmination of performance art fellowship since Christmas plus related paintings and documents.

Touring

A-Z Theatre

Info: (041) 339 7744

Cameron & Miller, info: (0742)

660143, a performance on the theme of the Sorcerer's

Apprentice, but with roles reversed, so that the magician is a woman and the apprentice a man.

June 3-5: M.J.C. Gorbella, Nice, France.

Forkbeard Fantasy

Info: Droxford 605

June 5: Outdoor Events, Rochester Dickens Festival.

June 11: Brontosaurus show, Southill Park, Bracknell.

June 28 & July 2: Brontosaurus show, Chapter, Cardiff.

Horse & Bamboo

Info: (070682) 6642

Summer Horse-Drawn Tour (Fife and NE England) 'Needles in a Candle Flame'—marquee performance, film, and street show.

July 2-3: Hebden Bridge Festival (Previews).

July 7-12: Dunfermline ('The Glen')

July 17-23: Pittenweem/Anstruther

July 26-31: St. Andrews

Matchbox Purveyors

Info (01) 422 9653

Touring Brass Tacks

June 6-7: Bath Fringe Festival

June 18-19: Glastonbury (to be confirmed)

Touring Theatre of Pneumatic Art

Info: (061) 236 2951

Touring Mandarin Complex & Moonquate

June 4: Southwark County Show

June 5: Foglane Park

June 11: Russhulme Festival

June 19: Brookdale Park

July 17: Wythenshawe Park

July 23-24: Lambeth County Show

Natural Theatre Company

Info: (0225) 310154

June 26: London to Brighton Bike Ride, Street Theatre.

July 1-3: Cycle '83, Harrogate, Street Theatre.

July 23: Street Theatre, Cardiff Festival.

Urban Sax

Info: (0225) 65065

June 8: First ever British appearance at Theatre Royal, Bath. Urban Sax were founded in France in 1973 by Gilbert Artman and have gradually grown under his continued direction and inspiration to the extraordinary

size of approximately fifty performers. Saxaphones apart, they also include giant gongs, vibraphones, dancers and a female chorus. In performance, Urban Sax wear bizarre black or white outfits with metallic or polythene skins and insectile helmets . . . (See Bath and feature this issue).

Welfare State International

Info: (0229) 57146

June 6-23: Midsummer Celebrations—A three week long community residency: working with local groups to revive the tradition of 'Fete Chempetre' (started in 1838) in the Botanic Gardens, Belfast. A series of open air carnival events with fireworks, performances and barn dance.

July 2: Ulverston Carnival, Cumbria.

July 18-August 20: The Raising of the Titanic, Canal Dock Basin, Limehouse, London. An extended residency, working with local groups and other companies participating in the Festival. For twelve performances the wreck of the Titanic will be raised from the waters as part of a scenario featuring the decline of Western Civilisation seen as spectator sport!

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Charlie Hooker *Mainbeam* Gateshead Car Park A Basement Group Event

Multi-Storey-Minimalism

'THEY THREW A MAN off the top,' said a member of the performance team working on Charlie Hooker's *Mainbeam*, a 'ballet for vehicles' taking place in Gateshead Multi-Storey Car Park, Newcastle. He was referring to the last time the structure was used for somewhat less mundane purposes, the filming of Michael Caine's *Get Carter*.

Now taken over for a performance devised specially for the space, it is an example of the collaboration between Newcastle's Basement Group and artists working in or visiting the city. One of the organisers, John Bewley, said 'We wanted to work with Charlie again and at a meeting, I said, "Where's the best place to work with him then, a multi-story car-park?'. So that's what we did. Charlie Hooker was challenged by the opportunity to do it. He devised the performance over a six month period with an OO-gauge model of the car park and practice runs in his own Fiat in the multi-storey at Crystal Palace. Now, the audience was arriving out of the shinning well-lit Metro transit system, Newcastle's popular alternative to the car. The carpark was stacked like concrete toast on top of the Gateshead shopping centre, tribute to the auto age and the municipal planning fever of the 60s that ravaged the city. A sign asks us to wait at the bottom of the stairs till 9pm. Above, the architectural void echoes with the sound of metal pipes being clapped together. A tribal rhythm in the urban jungle night. 9pm arrives and we ascend to the 2nd level, a bare concrete shell lit by the tungsten glare. The media have beaten us to it, they are filming the last stages of the performance we are here to see. The sensation is of arriving to see a film so

early as to catch the ending moments of the previous showing. The dramatic and powerful effect of the building and the space for the performance has been somewhat lost. However, the Nationwide film team retreat as the audience arrive, the performers wandering around the space having a break and cigarette. The four cars take up positions on either side of the central pillar that runs through the building. Two on the floor sloping upwards away from us and two on the downward sloping floor. It feels like a film set getting ready for the next shoot. But this interval allows for the late-comers in the audience to arrive, and it's a good turn-out. Especially given that the venue is unfamiliar and the performance art audience faithful—the art students—are still away on the Easter break. Testimony to the growing interest in the city for this kind of art activity. A head count produces a 130-odd audience behind the dayglo bollards and tape of the Gateshead Highway Department dividing off the performance area.

A flat area in front of us, the junction of the two sloping floors, contains a grid marked out with small upright sticks. Four black-clothed performers stand at one end of the eighth-segmented grid, batons in each hand like relay runners at the start. The cars silent except for the crackle of their Citizen Band radios, wait at the back of the sloping floors in the darkness. Hooker, like a track marshal, darts about making final adjustments. Finally ready, he whispers 'One, Two, Three, Go' into the handset CB. The grid performers, called 'walkers' by Hooker, rhythmically pace up and down the grid. The cars start up and move slowly towards

us and the grid. The walkers are clapping their metal batons together in unison at predetermined intervals. Hooker dashes in and adjusts the frequency by placing marker objects on the grid, literally like notes on a line of music notation. The four cars slowly form a convoy to pass in-between the grid and the audience. Low organ music comes out of each car window as they pass by. Headlights pick out the moving legs of the walkers. The cars follow a figure-of-eight to pass in the centre in front of the grid. The walkers change pace, fall out of sync, set up a new pattern and then another. They operate in tight movements with a sense of urgent forward progress like a preprogrammed clockwork mechanism. In contrast, the cars appear rhythmical, swooping by with their headlights. The cars follow the shape of the carpark space which controls their movement and sound, whereas Hooker controls the movements and sounds of the grid-bound humans. Eventually the cars break their pattern and reverse tightly up against the grid on either side. The walkers are forced into a tighter formation as their grid shrinks, the metallic clang of the batons becoming faster.

As the cars move forward again the walkers stop in stages strung out across the grid, turn and pace across a new grid and towards a wall. Stopping one pace from the wall they then advance together crashing batons into the concrete. Silence. Then applause; the public like it. Nationwide film the crowd, picking out individuals for comments. A member of the Basement Group is surrounded by the film crew, tungsten light, like a night-moth against the parapet. They question him. There are fears among the artists that



Stephen Collins

Nationwide may do a 'Tate Bricks Job' in reporting on the performance. In the end they don't. The performance was successful. Apart from the loss of control of the situation in the beginning with the film preview, Charlie Hooker and The Basement Group have brought it off. Charlie Hooker's recent work is part of a tradition of minimalist performance work, drawing on the bare qualities of space, sound and movement. He designs each piece for the space and the situation. His formal training as a musician, then as a painter, followed by an interest in dance, has led him to seek a synthesis in performance. The tradition of this work leads back to the constructivist, suprematist and futurist experiments in Europe at the beginning of the twentieth century. They intended to point the way to a new, pure art-form based in the technology of reinforced concrete, skyscrapers, speed and the machine. The rise of political revolution seemed to give hope and the artist could shape a brave new world. By returning to the original qualities of form and materials, a new aesthetic would arise divorced from past tradition. The bare concrete form of the Gateshead Multi-Storey is a legacy of this hope. Charlie Hooker has come home by basing his own work, also drawn from this ideal, in a living architectural example.

In planning this event, the Basement Group have made an achievement in their programming of a performance event outside the normal safe situation of the performance gallery space.

The use of cars and CB radios involved contacting two local CB clubs—'Night Owls' and 'Moonbase Modulators'—and inducing them to take part. Members with the call-sign names 'Asterix', 'Carpetbagger', 'The Unknown', 'Braker' and 'JK' took part. The son of 'Asterix', known as 'Captain America', in fact became one of the walkers along with John Bewley, Sid Smith and Richard Grayson of the Basement Group. 'He had perfect timing and kept the counting rhythm going at one point when we lost it,' said John Bewley. Interestingly, the CB clubs do their own version of carpark synchronization, when they organise the carparking at outdoor charity events using the CB sets.

Organising of the use of the building had involved the Basement in preparing reports and lobbying the Gateshead Council committees to gain access for the event. To the council's credit they responded after some initial caution: a local councillor Evelyn Henry was reported to say, 'This is not my scene, but somebody

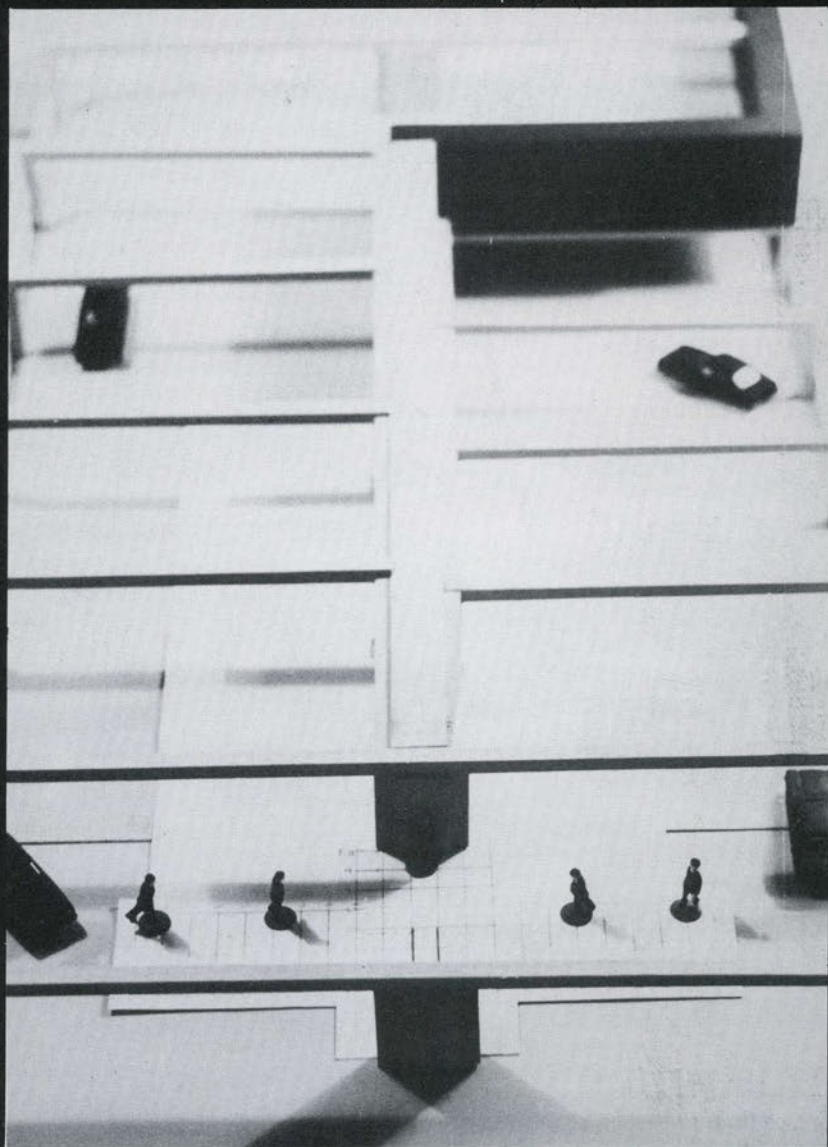
is sure to like it. I certainly can't think of a better use of this multi-storey carpark'. Similarly the Chair of the Highways committee commented 'Other interested bodies have no objection to this rather unusual form of art and neither have I'. This hopefully opens the way for more events by artists in public spaces in the city and the involvement of people not normally taking part in the production of events. Later this May, Bruce Maclean will match the car park event by using the Elswick swimming pool for his own spectacular, involving synchro-swim-

mers, with 'music to drown to.'

Meanwhile, the new city Metro, the most modern in Europe, has had a startling effect on its users. The hour after closing time on Fridays and Saturdays is called the Mad Metro Hour. Passengers jump off the platforms onto the tracks and run crazily down the tunnels between stations; in this same city, the Gateshead Multi-Storey is only used on two levels, while the restaurant on the top, used for the nightclub scene in *Get Carter* never opened.

Robin Morley

Charlie Hooker *Mainbeam* maquette 1983



Stephen Collins

Stuart Brisley
LEWIS JOHNSTON

IN A SQUARE, DIMMLY LIT room, an iron cage rests on two saw horses. This cage, made of thick mesh, is about 12 feet long by 6 feet high: its scale is imposing, practically forming a wall down the centre of the room. Hanging on wires inside the cage is an accumulation of old gloves, each filled with plaster and carefully tagged with one of three labels which, when read together, form the statement, 'Georgiana Collection VI—This is a record of failure without parallel, without reason'.

Stuart Brisley's installation, the latest addition to a 'developing institution', is nothing less than a memorial for the unemployed of the United Kingdom. Each of the discarded gloves represents 66,666 men and women without work. However, the installation itself generates considerable power and refuses to give in to, or embrace, this sense of waste. Brisley makes this statement concerning the piece:

The specific absence or presence of employment is not the context for the sculpture; neither is it concerned to act as a conduit for current reactions to the idea of work. The image of negativity presented by contemporary notions of redundancy neither confronts immediate individual problems nor questions abstract systems of order.

The vocabulary used in this statement, coupled with the sombre and harsh nature

of the installation itself, reflects something of the complexity of the work's subject. The problems of unemployment within a capitalist society, and the methods of analysing and reporting upon it are bound up with the way in which the concept of production dominates our ideologies and discourses. The gathering and dissemination of information, the creation and diffusion of images have become subject to the same political economy which regulates work and normalizes the social value which work confers on the individual. In other words, the citizen has as much value as an item of information as he or she has as an economic unit. However, once industrial society ceases to function, the individual's value alters drastically, not only within the economy of the factory workshop but also within the cultural economy of our methods of communication and expression. Consequently, the statistic becomes a reality, not the representation of a specific condition. When such a deteriorating condition affects the entire social body, as in the case of mass unemployment, the problem worsens rapidly and irreversibly. The channels of thought, the sources of information and the means of expression ultimately seize up and end by overpowering the populace with lines of figures and worn out rationales.

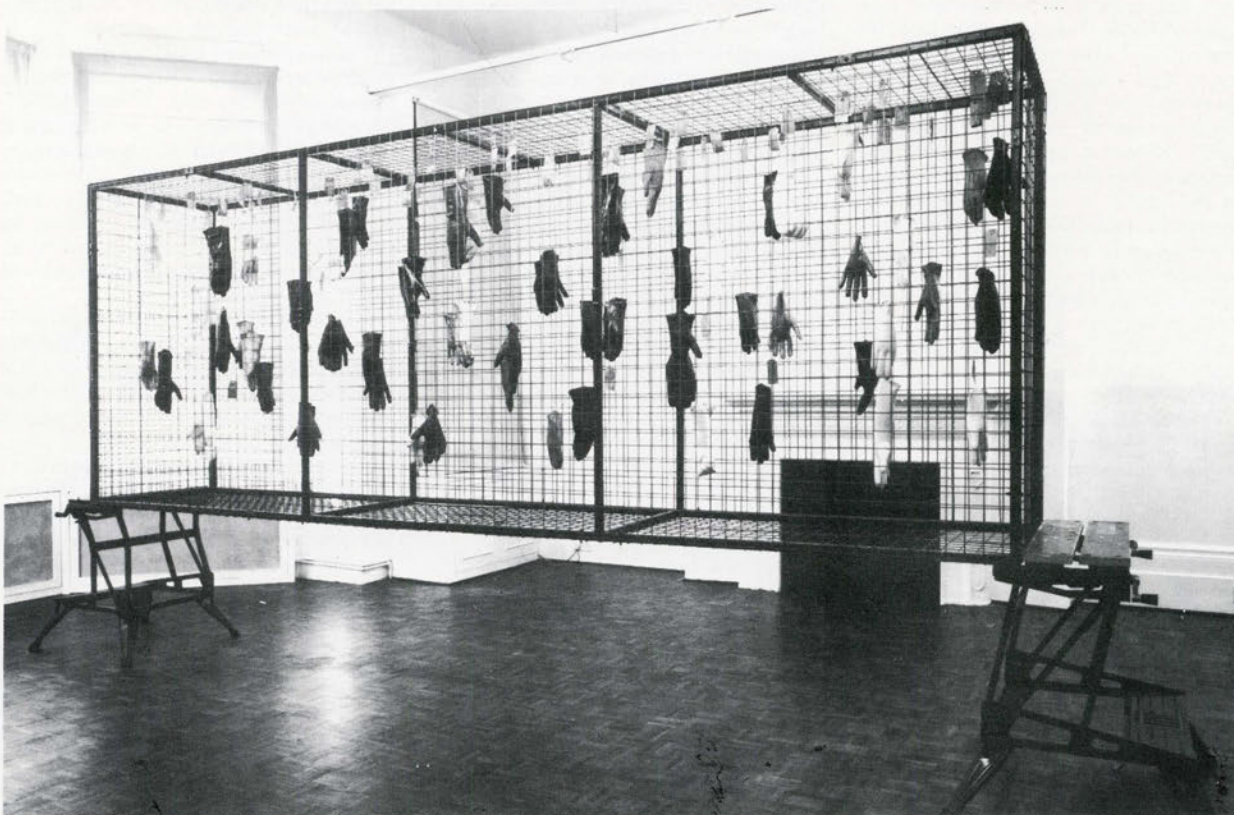
Today we must acknowledge that our thinking on unemployment, its causes and cures, has become almost completely paralyzed. The art and media industries are as culpable as the governmental and managerial bodies in this respect. It is

therefore not surprising that Brisley's *Georgiana Collection VI*, which points up such short-comings, should have met with either silence or a fundamental lack of understanding.

In choosing to confront the public with a monolithic installation—rather than a series of statements, documentation or action—Stuart Brisley has created an area of forbidding silence to surround his subject. The iron cage has a very strong presence which is extremely difficult to describe and which no photograph I have seen has been able to capture. It deliberately fails to fit into those areas where performance and the standard methods of media reportage connect and interact. It is not enough to read a review of *Georgiana Collection VI* or to look at photographs of it. You must go and see it for yourself.

Similarly, it is a mistake to see the work as a metaphor or as a representation of something outside itself. The relationship between the installation and the unemployment figures is ideological, not actual. In three months' time, the figures will be different but the correspondence between this work and the conditions of the unemployed in this country will remain the same. The formula 66,666 = 1 gives the work coherence and structure but not its final meaning. The gloves have been allowed to solidify into twisted, grotesque versions of human hands—they hang like dead weights and the dust settles on them. In themselves they are an appropriate monument to the human scrapyards of the UK and to those which will follow.

Ken Hollings



Edward Woodman

Feminist Arts Group MIDLAND GROUP

SHIRLEY CAMERON'S WITTY *Craft, Technology & Performance* was in three inseparable, but distinguishable, layers or strands (like toasted cheese sandwiches or wiring plugs). Doing three or more things at once is something familiar to all women involved in domestic work and childcare, and Cameron demonstrated, firstly, how easy it is to switch from one thing to another and, secondly, how craft, technology and performance aren't as far apart as they appear to be. Investigating 'Performance': what are its elements? Dressing up? (a special performance suit). Singing? Acting roles? Audience involvement? (each person signed a piece of paper). 'Technology' demands a change of clothes—white overalls, then a boiler-suit. Someone comes to mend the TV. Cameron has been teaching herself about technology and—miraculously!—the video recorder works first time. The camera is directed at a kitchen-space where, whilst she makes glacé icing, her Performance of 'Craft' (cooking) is seen also on Technology (the video). It is noticeable, and surprising at first, how difficult making glacé icing is—separating eggs, filling the piping bag—compared with adjusting the video. As she runs back and forth to focus it or zoom-in or change the position of the camera (or hit it when it doesn't work), Cameron actively invites us to 'read' her 'symbolism', to make meanings. Footsteps link craft to technology and back again. An apron is a borrowed costume for performing a craft-role. Egg whites are beaten with a hand-whisk and Cameron starts to write carefully on biscuits the names of some of the women present. As each is completed she holds it towards the camera so that the named biscuit appears on the screen—the size of the biscuits precluding names longer than four or five letters (women always have to adapt to confined spaces). Those of us who were given a biscuit were to choose whether to stand on the craft side or the technology side. Women of the past? No, cooking's too difficult. All six of us stood in the future.

Evelyn Silver performed *Snakes & Ladders*, dressed as a snake in a bundled-up green tube which crept down her body, long, and longer, as she walked. At the top of a ladder is an apple, guarded by a garden (of Eden) gnome and her painstaking task is to reach it. But the steps of the ladder are littered with little cards: 'sweetheart', 'stupid', 'stereotype', 'sugar', 'Freud says snakes are phallic', and before she can get to eat the apple, she has to carry each word down and stick it to her trailing body. On top of the ladder is a book from Greenham Common women's peace camp. They play snakes and ladders too—squeeze under the fence or climb over it. So maybe snakes aren't the baddies

after all, perhaps they represent women's knowledge and intuition? 'Serpent Power'. Silver sloughs her skin and arranges it to form a women's symbol. Freud says snakes are phallic, does he?

What would you say if you had one sentence to speak to the world? Carole Crowe has asked many people—first friends, then strangers—what their sentence would be, and has written the answers in a beautiful book with an embroidered cover. Some people said very important things; about peace, no to nuclear weapons, love, friendship, demanding your basic rights. Many answers, even more moving, were; 'You can't say anything,' 'There's too many things to put in one sentence,' 'I'd be silent'. She arranged some cards around herself on the floor. Her sentence read 'I am a human being'. I hope she continues asking the question.

Carole Glover initiated a piece in which all the performers took part. *More Visible Women* was sung by Liz Churton as Glover led out each woman, one by one, dressed in black and white, to stand holding hands against the wall. Around and between them she made a 'drawing' out of paper silhouettes of legs, bodies, and heads, which stretched across the real women, making a big crowd. All the women in the audience then joined hands with them in a line that stretched right across the space and round the sides of the studio. (It was appreciated when the two men in the audience remained seated. They showed far more solidarity with us by doing that than if they had joined in.

This ending to the evening summed up all the performances. The performers had been illustrating facets of all our lives, which are very different (so many layers) but which are parts of a whole: being women as individuals and together. I don't feel it's necessary to justify the fact that these pieces were obviously and deliberately made for a female audience. Some performance art (by men) uses techniques of threat, unease, dominance, violence and embarrassment to make its point. This isn't necessary most of the time and I think that the Feminist Arts Group's performances demonstrated their point extremely well, with confidence and affection.

Ann Cullis

Lotte & Lotte

I FIRST SAW Lotte & Lotte perform their *Literati* in a damp cellar at the Albion Mills, Ipswich. Lotte 1 in a shimmering emerald dress and Lotte 2 in glimmering blue, appeared with pink feather roses in their hair and immediately delved into matters of the heart; absurd, funny and also very serious. *The Sting in the Centre of the Rose* sums up their act... they cha cha with image and language, their poetry both political and bizarre (a much needed

cocktail), they lament lost heroines, lay into a few heroes ('If only Superman loved them'), cross victims off their ideological hit list... and hit out they do—not by delivering manifestoes or adopting an easily accessible jargon now so fashionable on the 'alternative' circuit.

They are truly articulate and thus thoroughly subversive... the way cabaret is meant to be. Madam Mao visits the footbinder, a Terrible Turk (her oriental jelly is spiked with fright), Dr. Psycho with his burnt rubber dollies, chameleons, a feminist detective who dissects a modern gigolo spy, red toed turtles... to name a few, all feature in this performance. Take your daughters along.

Rosa Silver

Ariadne's Afternoon

THERE ARE MANY things in this world about which I know very little, and the life and work of Edward Gordon Craig is one of them. So is the story of Peleas and Melisande. This does not, however, deter me from attending a theatrical performance which refers to these subjects, any more than lack of ancient Greek deters an audience from Sophocles. *Ariadne's Afternoon* sounded good. A many-faceted piece from a writer I had admired. Excellent performers and musicians. A pleasant venue. Some hours later, frustrated beyond measure by the performance and numbed by the terrible seating, I stumbled out into the Islington night. What had gone wrong? It had not been the first time a performance which promised so much had not delivered.

Thinking it over, I realised that there is a tendency—in that school of British theatre which lies close to more experimental performance—to sacrifice much for a certain *je ne sais quoi*. Style becomes all, and content is the victim. *Ariadne's Afternoon*, written by Natasha Morgan, directed by Pierre Audi and presented by the Almeida was such a casualty, much like its recent predecessor *Secret Gardens* at the ICA.

The 'style' in question is a very particular one, which really deserves a generic title all of its own. It is a creature of many influences: Pina Bausch for actions and approach, including a great deal of significant walking about; film-noir for plots, sets, lighting and dramatic confusion; usually costumed with elegance, often in black and white, its clothes date from the late nineteenth century up to the 1940s but seldom earlier or later; its dialogue is a digest of quotes from the distinguished, reiterated in sentences of measured cadence, not too long, not too short. Nostalgia for childhood and a fascination with the mores of the upper classes are underlying themes (*Brideshead Revisited* is perhaps its apogee...). In sum, much mystery and elegance, signifying—well, what?

'Visually stunning' is the phrase critics

Rose Finn Kelcey

SERPENTINE GALLERY



That's Not It present *Ariadne's Afternoon*

reach for to describe such pieces of work, and visually stunning indeed they often are. But so is a firework display, and no-one expects much intellectual stimulation from that. From the theatre, one expects a little more. Happy to suspend belief, one can still get cross if abandoned half way up a garden path, no matter how pretty. The aspirations of works such as *Ariadne's Afternoon* are immense, the imaginative leaps taken by those who have put its pieces together dizzying. Sitting transfixed, as clever image follows clever image, the brain begins to ache with its efforts to make connections, to understand.

The relation between form and content is the most fundamental in any kind of art, with live work no exception. Endlessly watching a parade of images whose carefully contrived effect is nullified because they are incomprehensible is not a satisfactory artistic experience. Choosing a cast for a certain look doesn't really help either. Just looking good—and who doesn't look good in the correct costume—is not enough. The ambition of such work is very high. But the source from which so much of the imagery and style is drawn—B movies, detective and spy tales, adventure yarns, autobiographies—were originally concerned with telling a story. Their stylish means served simple ends. Taking material about people with strange and interesting lives—Edward Gordon Craig, Nancy Cunard, Virginia Woolf—and leaving the audience still much in ignorance about them seems to say that those who responded to the original material were not capable of understanding what it was in the source matter which attracted them so powerfully. Using visual cribs and extracts from memoirs unquestioningly with blind faith that it will both work on stage and be meaningful, is not enough. There must be some effort to analyse symbols such as the white elephant in *Secret Gardens*, the crown falling in the water in *Ariadne's Afternoon*, to seek out the more universal meanings behind such pretty effects. Then the symbolic elements could be

represented in such a way that a general audience might be able to respond to their deeper meaning.

Dressing up and fleshing out another's dreams does not make a satisfactory play. Nor do unfinished comments about other art forms. Playing at making a film—a device which took up much time in *Ariadne's Afternoon*—because really you would like to be making ones with all the money and fame it implies, instead of scraping along in the restricted confines of fringe theatre, does not in itself make much of a dramatic point about either film or theatre or the relation between them. Once again, the stylish allure of cuts and takes and moving lights obscures the fact that films too are usually concerned with getting the story told, their complex technologies a means to that end.

I am not arguing for plays with a beginning, a middle and an end. The performance-based style can be extremely effective. Natasha Morgan's earlier piece *Room* worked beautifully. As well as material drawn from the life and writing of Virginia Woolf, it included autobiographical material about the author's difficulties in coping with work and her family. The meshing of these strands in the beautifully designed production was illuminating and affecting.

Ariadne's Afternoon had no such humble reference points, no way in for an audience, however eager to understand. The space of the Almeida, nice though it is, the whirling of the two huge wooden screens, the perambulations of a tall and charming tower, even the efforts of a man with a chainsaw, were not enough to relieve the tedious pantomime of the two main characters or the small chorus of other under-used performers. The musicians' excellent score occasionally included noises of ear-splitting cadence which gradually became a suitable metaphor for my state of mind. Bored to distraction, I felt like screaming MORE: more content—more analysis—more hard work. It could have been good, it could have been so good.

Lynn MacRitchie

ROSE FINN KELCEY'S *Glory Oh the Standins are Standin' like Statues* is the fourth in a series of vacated performances in which the performer is either absent or of little importance.

The first and only other time I have seen a piece by Rose was in Nottingham in 1981. The piece I then saw, *Live, Neutral & Earth—A Vacated Performance* consisted of a collectoin of old radio sets suspended from the ceiling of a tiny, blacked out room. The audience, restricted to 8 people at a time, were comfortably seated at tables, and in the cosy glow given off by the radios, listened to a collage of spoken words and sounds. Dominated by a machine-like voice describing the circumstances under which the 'button' of ultimate destruction can or may be pushed, and interspersed with sounds of war, music and other voices reflecting on war, the collage contrasted sharply and ironically with the sensual pleasures of the cosy atmosphere. The performance had a tinyness and a fragility, coupled with an extraordinary and provocative power of evocation. The absence of the performer made the experience not so much impersonal but more universal, unencumbered by a personality or the inevitable inaccuracies of live performance.

It was one of those magical experiences which you come out of feeling genuinely moved, but without being quite able to say exactly what it was that was so moving. I have since then hoped that Rose would recreate *Live, Neutral & Earth*, but as yet she has not found the right place or opportunity. However, an upper room at the Serpentine Gallery proved an ideal location for the next piece in the series, *Glory*, which in keeping with the location was a kind of last supper, an ironic tribute to the warmongers throughout history.

Glory was equally precise, fragile and powerfully evocative as *Live, Neutral & Earth*. The small, immaculately white room was empty except for an equally immaculate white table with a lamp suspended low over its centre. Rose entered and to taped sounds of violence of all kinds, interspersed with a jaunty little melody, deployed around the table immaculately made, white cardboard cut-out images of violence and power. Knights in armour jostled with Napoleon, and Montgomery, battleships, bombs, knives and swords, Mao, Stalin, Reagan & Thatcher, they were all there. The table is a map of the battlefield on which the strategist plans her campaign. Impersonally and detachedly manipulating cardboard figures that in reality are the lives of ordinary people. Yet here the figures are the strategists themselves. At the end the performer dons a cardboard head of medusa, the goddess of destruction, patron saint of destroyers, placing the figures in the realm of mythology, and so

the table becomes a graveyard, the white cut-outs standing in serried ranks like tombstones to the 'heroes' and their deeds of 'glory'.

Glory like *Live Neutral & Earth* employed a brilliant use of the evocative podwer of the marginalia of experience which becomes the mnemonic of recall. As bland cut-out followed bland cut-out, I was shocked by how easily and without conscious effort I could identify the images. Just as in *Live, Neutral & Earth* the tones, accents and delivery of the voices were so easily identifiable. The heroes and weapons reduced to cardboard cut-outs are no mere paper tigers, for the persistence of such images has given them a kind of talismanic power and they retain all the ability to cow and terrify as the real thing. Rose Finn Kelcey, with her 'technician du reve' Harry Walton, have developed a style of performance which is as precise, fragile, and as miniature as a printed circuit board and which is equally powerful. As they say in a lesser publication, Highly Recommended.

Steve Rogers

Musk MIDLAND GROUP

THE ONLY INFORMATION I had about Julyen Hamilton and Matthieu Keyser was that they comprised dancer and musician respectively, and that their concern was with 'the relationship between music and dance'. It did not bode well. For a start, I am always suspicious when I see the words 'solo percussionist'; images rise unbidden to my mind of a hushed, darkened room, one solitary figure periodically hitting a gong, whose ritualistic clangs are supposed to create a transcendental Buddhist monastery atmosphere. And as for exploring 'the relationship between music and dance', I'm afraid I'm always cynically inclined to ask myself what performances of music and dance don't explore that relationship.

At this point, I can do one of two things. I can morosely report that my worst fears were realised, or I can humble myself and say they were firmly squashed. Well, I don't like *grands denouements* in non-fiction so I'll state here and now, that every preconception I had was put to flight in a most ignominious way.

I entered the Midland Group's Performance Studio to find the lights on, a radio playing and what looked like last minute touches being put to the set by a roadie. Except that there was a little too much self-possession and stage awareness about that roadie . . .

Light dawned. The performance was, of course, on, and Hamilton & Keyser had started as they intended to go on; in a refreshingly down-to-earth, original and visually striking way. For the opening few minutes, they both 'limbered up', piecing together the material that would form the basis of the whole performance.

In Matthieu Keyser's case, this involved building (or, more truthfully, simulating the building of—there's quite an important distinction) his array of instruments, which itself created music of sorts, as he sawed through wood, and chucked blocks into a big chest. Julyen Hamilton meanwhile, was going through routine exercises and establishing his performance space, patiently moving obstacles to one side as he met them.

Suddenly, Matthieu Keyser burst into action with a fast, loud solo on the percussion set he'd just built, and the audience realised they'd been duped; the dead, characterless sounds he had produced while 'testing' his equipment during limbering up time were all part of a clever deception. In fact, the strange construction of wooden boxes with slats across the top was a kind of inelegant, but very effective, glockenspiel.

From this point onwards, what slowly emerged was a duel, taking place between music and movement. For a good hour, the two performers gambolled around the space, cajoling, tempting, threatening, deceiving, forcing, frightening . . . each hell-bent on establishing supremacy over the other. With this, by any standards flimsy, story as the unifying thread, Hamilton & Keyser created a vivid series of highly colourful, exciting tableaux which seemed to melt almost casually from one into the next.

The ability of the two to achieve continuity bordered, at times, on the miraculous. If Julyen Hamilton was changing costume for the next tableau, Matthieu Keyser would indulge in a lively, and/or amusing, percussion solo (at one point, his virtuoso playing of a typewriter had the audience in stitches). Likewise, Matthieu Keyser used a battery of solos whose movements and shapes ranged from the beautiful to the positively neurotic.

Yet the two moved in and out of the confines of the story effortlessly, ensuring their performance possessed that essential ingredient of all art; an abstract level where music, movement, words, whatever, signify nothing but themselves.

Who won the duel? Well ultimately it's hardly of great significance to the study of aesthetics, but, like the rest of this performance, it's fun to know. So, for the record, Julyen Hamilton made a strong claim for movement as he wheeled Matthieu Keyser off the performing area safely captured in an oil drum. But he did it at the expense of his own presence in the performing area, and anyway, the ostentatious protest of the squeaking trolley certainly put in a strong bid for noise!

Phil Jones

Piccolo ICA

A BUNCH OF ITINERANT Italians with a performance 'dedicated to the wardrobe of Eleonora Duse': an irresistible lure to the ICA. Piccolo Teatro are based in Pontedera and have formed close links with companies throughout Europe. They have themselves been seen at the major European festivals and have hosted visits to their home town from Odin Teatret, Grotowski's Teatr Laboratorium, Bread and Puppet, Living Theatre, Yoshi Oida, the Columbaioni Brothers, and an array of other performers from as far afield as Brazil, India, Japan and Indonesia. Although we have seen some of these performers on our shores, England remains obstinately off the beaten track of the European touring circuit. What traffic there is, is decidedly one way. It is frustratingly the case, now as it has ever been (despite the valiant if frugal help of the Visiting Arts Unit) that if you want to know what is happening in European performance you have to go to Amsterdam. If you stay in London you will miss even the most interesting British work yet alone what is happening further afield. Chapter Arts Centre in Cardiff (which is more expensive to get to than Amsterdam by British Rail) do their best to promote international programming and every so often the ICA make as much of a gesture as their funds will allow.

Piccolo turned up at the ICA as part of a week-long blitz of work from across the channel entitled *Eurocheck*—three companies from as many countries with no less than five performances between them. Even with the offer of a season ticket it was demanding of an audience, rather like a coach tour in which you stayed in your seat whilst the world flashed by—if it's Tuesday they must be Belgian. It was the link of two of the companies involved with Chapter that occasioned their being in the country in the first place. Whilst others went to see Tiedre and Academia Ruchu and discuss them elsewhere in this issue, I took myself off to the Italians.

Though the three performances were significantly different in content and in the way in which they related language and narrative to visual imagery, it was the similarities which were of most immediate interest to a spectator little used to contemporary Italian performance. All three were theatrical in their origins—Duse's wardrobe, Chekhov's most famous play, the life of Puccini—and all treated their subject matter in ways that constantly reminded one that Italy is a country where opera is and always has been a popular art form.

Vestitions d'Antan was the simplest piece and the purest visually. Eleonora Duse, born into a band of travelling players and the greatest Italian actress of her day, created a wardrobe in Florence

Maurizio Buscarino



Piccolo Teatro Di Pontedera

which she christened 'Teatrino Brendel' and to which on her retirement she consigned all her costumes. On the day of her death, 21 April 1924, a group of poor itinerant Italian actors stumbled unsuspectingly into this strange mausoleum of garments. 'History', the programme note told us, 'has mistaken them for thieves'. Piccolo's performance built on this incident, not to examine it historically or to explore the truth of the event but rather to use it as a starting point for an exploration of the whole business of costuming: the relationship between clothes and identity; the effect of costume on sexuality; the eroticism not of undressing but of dressing up. The production was rife with sexual ambiguity. A woman was dressed half in a white ball gown, half in black tie and tails; the swapping of sexually identifying costume led to the swapping of sexual roles. Colours took on significance. When the wardrobe/performance area was entered for the first time the predominant colour was black, but as trunks and cases were opened white began to predominate. And where such white garb in a British show would conjure up little more than thoughts of cricket and village greens here there was a wealth of erotic allusion. The performance was at its strongest in making tangible the connection between what we are and what we wear, the links between appearance and reality, and the glimpses into other lives that the wearing of other people's clothes can give us. Ever-present was the realisation that for the poor players that strutted and fretted in this bizarre wardrobe, this was a brief hour of pretence. The shards of a broken mirror and the ambivalent 'custodian in black' were constant reminders that for all its seriousness this was still in many ways the brief attic game of children.

While *Vestitions d'Antan* was essentially a visual piece deftly constructed as a fluid and rhythmic performance in a series of variations on a theme. *Il Giardino* was a decidedly literary affair attempting we were told to 'transcribe' Chekhov's play *The Cherry Orchard* into an hour-long piece for eight actors. Now quite why anyone should want to do this—unless of

course they have only eight actors in their company and make a point of having all their performances last just sixty minutes—I cannot begin to guess. And in performance the idea was quite as perverse as in theory. It is true that you can transcribe a piece of music from scoring for a full orchestra to scoring for a small ensemble. But you cannot foreshorten when you do this. A Beethoven symphony takes as long to play on a piano as by an orchestra. But if the intellectual basis of the exercise did not bear much examination, the visual result had some good looking moments. The setting was a paper canopy over stage screen with confetti; there was a ritual washing of hands in a wheelbarrow full of water as each of the characters left the stage, and there was a surprise return of all the performers, in a coda that would have surprised Chekhov, as they were dragged off to some sort of hell. All this was by now deeply obscure to a London audience who might know their Chekhov but certainly did not seem to know their Italian. And fundamentally problematic was the equal youthfulness of all the performers which made any attempt to tackle the complexities of relationships inherent in the text somewhat fruitless.

Un Po'per non morire—they kept watch for Giacomo Puccini was ravishing to look at. The set was of sawdust and feathers against a red velvet curtain. The lighting was from gas lamps, candles, oil lamps and matches (what a lot we have lost with the coming of electricity). If ever there was an artist whose biography was confused with his art, it was Puccini and here the complexities of his relationships with the women in his life and the women he created for his operas were well portrayed. And having the arias and ensembles from the operas sung by actors rather than singers gave a particular immediacy to the characters. True verismo. Puccini's was a dramatic life that matched anything he invented for the stage but all the same it was a pity to see this performance sink into Ken Russell grotesquerie towards the end.

Luke Dixon

Optik

RADIATOR, MANCHESTER

INTO A LANDSCAPE OF bulbous white sculpture, mostly phallic, or reminiscent of the orifices that people disappear down in Bosch paintings, marches a Victorian lady with notebook in one hand and broly in the other. Miss Amelia Edwards (Sally Gulley) is fastidiously documenting the ruins of Egypt, resolutely keeping pace with the flow of objects brought before her by a grinning, splay-footed Egyptian guide (Heather Ackroyd) who proffers boat tours and shouts 'Panoramic views!' at appropriate intervals.

This is Optik's fourth show since they started in 1981. They excel at creating a surreal environment for their work which establishes a viewpoint of bizarre humour

from which they examine reality. *Ancient Sights* takes place on the banks of the Nile in the declining years of the Empire, with a prologue and epilogue which jumps forward to the twentieth century. A back wall of stepped white rostra double as pyramids, interiors and a certain famous attic in 1956. Such flexibility of time and location enables an exploration of imperialism not only of the cultural kind but in the personal terms of male/female relationships and the balance of power between individuals.

Optik's work is group devised, under the direction of Barry Edwards. Since the present company comprises one male and two female performers, the humour of the work and the perceptions of events are very much through a woman's eyes. Often the viewpoint is an inversion of a situation frequently portrayed in theatre or film: the chat-up. At the start, two French girls are dressing up in cotton frocks when a young man, perhaps an American soldier (Martin Brett), parachutes into their field. One gauche provincial belle steps forward, ogles eye-liner at him and receives chocolate and cigarettes. Her friend is too chic, she can manage eye-liner more adeptly.

Later we are reminded of the scene when the Egyptian boat-hirer sits in a desert bar, over-dressed in jewellery she has looted from the pyramids and over-made up in Cleopatra wig. She fingers a roll-up and waits for the British officer to wander in. Heather Ackroyd manages to evoke a ridiculous parody of movie-star glamour whilst portraying a poignantly real moment of human tragedy: for later, Amelia Edwards batters the officer to death with a spade. Who's wining? Is this a symbolic gesture of the end of an Empire and of the birth of female emancipation?

It is tempting to start reading such meaning into Optik's work. While their shows flow along on dream logic and evade literal interpretation, there are obvious topics being explored, so one searches for at least a continuity of ideas. Where it disappointed me was in passages that drifted—a visual ploy such as the assembling of phallic ruins being played too long. Other parts were extraneous to the central ideas and were not as original as the company's own imagistic vocabulary—for example the parachute which billowed out to become a tent, boat-sails and then wings. Other performance companies have ably demonstrated multiple uses of the parachute; I would rather Optik cut it out.

Similarly, I resented the reversed role-play of *Look back in Anger* at the end, even though it was a relief to find that Jimmy can iron too. Making references to other theatre works alienates members of the audience who don't know the work. The point about role-playing could have been made through a more accessible and original scene of Optik's own invention. Optik's strength, appropriately enough, is in visual illusion—the entire cast and musicians (Clive Bell and Marjie Under-

wood) encompassing the pod-like or serpent shapes of Egyptian instruments, their eerie discordant music evoking an ancient civilization lost beneath the desert sands. It was an unforgettable glimpse of the iconographics that are locked in the pyramids beneath Amelia Edwards' feet, the images of past collective memory and of the subconscious which Optik manage to bring to the surface in their work. I look forward to seeing more of this.

Charlotte Keatley

Gilgamesh LEEDS



IN THIS RE-INTERPRETATION of *Gilgamesh*, Tiedre Theatre Company from Belgium have incorporated Third World political and economic issues and images of nuclear war. King *Gilgamesh* is a third world despot, a giant puppet with a huge grimacing face, blue and silver turban and a brocade body whose feeble limbs jangle hysterically when worked from behind by an actor. He is at once Ubu, Baal and Idi Amin; similarly the show uses Biblical and Buddhist imagery side by side with evocations of a concentration camp and missile weaponry. *Gilgamesh* may be a universal myth, but that doesn't exactly mean it can embrace the entire history of the world.

A vocabulary of mime, masks, dance, song and Turkish music tell the story in an exotic visual style that ranges from circus to ritualistic theatre. This is a reflection of the multi-racial company: present members are from Belgium, Holland, Surinam, Malaysia and Turkey.

The total effect of Tiedre's style is highly entertaining and visually enthralling, but it is flawed by the contradiction between style and content. They are trying to tell a specific story but use such an eclectic performance style that there is no continuity in the imagery. The idea behind using visual media is that their performances can communicate across language barriers: in practice, there is a tape summarising the events scene by scene. Without this, the contents would be incomprehensible. The need for a tape confirms that the performance language is inadequate.

"The tape is not an illustration of the text, it's a complement, it's something in itself", comments Tone Brulin, Tiedre's director. This is all too evident. Some of the scenes do not fulfill the purpose

described by the tape, either because they are obscure, or because the performance talents of the actors take the scene in a different direction.

For example, King *Gilgamesh* is sent an accomplice, an American military adviser—another giant puppet, this time with ten-gallon hat, square jaw and cowboy boots. They enact arms transactions in a Punch and Judy style, in swazze dialogue. The children in the audience squealed with delight and the actors picked up on this rapport. It was all highly amusing, and not the least bit frightening. One assumes (hopes) that the idea was not to depict how friendly military dictators can be. But the performers put no hint of threat into the characterisations; we were left with nothing but whimsy, which was too often the predominant mood where something much more sinister could have been created.

At other times the imagery was blatant: King *Gilgamesh* wooing a silver missile dressed up in a pink gown and blonde wig, then embracing his prize. But it is insulting to an audience's imagination to produce such simplistic imagery, and morally irresponsible to theatricalize such a serious subject in flippant pantomime. It seems to me that by incorporating such a wide range of cultures, Tiedre have reduced their effectiveness rather than enlarged their scope, because they are forced to use the lowest common denominator of expression which is too frequently clumsy or banal. Glimpses of potential richness, such as a haunting Moroccan song or the choreographic flair of a snake dance, are never pursued because there is a story to tell. It is frustrating, when Tone Brulin has assembled such a diversity of performers, that their talents are hitched to the overloaded vehicle of *Gilgamesh*. How ironic that a company striving for non-verbal performance have restricted themselves to a traditional narrative format. They cannot then expect papier-mache to articulate for them.

Charlotte Keatley

Akademia Ruchu ICA

IT'S PERFECTLY NATURAL that Poland should have developed a tradition of performance that focuses strongly on the movements and actions of the human body as a means of expression. When the shortages within the Polish economy can make buying even a sheet of paper a problem, it's logical to rely on a medium that's always available. Akademia Ruchu means the Academy of Movement and is the ironic title of a subversive performance group founded in 1973. Far from pursuing academic questions of movement, their paratheatrical actions and street performance develop a critique of the social situations in which they occur. As might have been expected, the imposition of martial law has also brought a crackdown on artistic activities and Aka-

demia Ruchu have had all rehearsal and office facilities and most of their state funding withdrawn. A two month sojourn in England has given the company a breathing space by allowing them to work abroad before returning to Poland to continue their task of challenging the official culture. They brought a selection of pieces from their repertoire and one in particular, *Daily Life after the French Revolution*, seemed to offer a clear account of what it's like to be living in Poland today.

It's a harsh picture, as harsh as the three tungsten halogen spots that glaringly and uncompromisingly light the piece throughout its duration. Within a playing area formed by ceiling-high bands of white cloth, the company of seven perform a series of actions. A man enters the space and stands still. It's uncertain whether he's waiting or whether he's become a zombie. A woman enters and stands as well. Two, three, even four minutes pass. Then they simply leave. Other people come and go. Newspapers are read, a ball is bounced to a waiting child. Two men are given a set of army fatigues. A bench is placed in the space, people sit on it and then leave. The actions seem totally meaningless. In any other situation, this would be totally dull performance and the cue for a mass exodus. But here, this endless cycle of actions has a compelling quality. It's like watching TV when the programmes are mundane but you simply can't take your eyes away. In fact, when the actions take on elements of anecdotal allusion, (as when a man is kissed on the cheek and then arrested, a reference to Christ's betrayal in the garden) the performance loses some of its tension. It's as if the slight element of narrative is just enough to sweeten the uncompromisingly grey and bitter reality that the company are revealing. But the performance continues. Suddenly, something seems to have happened. Unsure of what, the spectator has to survey the scene even closer to pin down any vestige of meaning. The comings and goings are now familiar. In fact, the actions are being repeated but with slight variations. The four people who pose for a group photo on a bench now all lean to the right whereas before they were upright. Suddenly a character is wearing sunglasses whereas before he had none.

On and on the performance went, telling its non-story of a bleak and privated culture. This was not a piece to entertain although with its mock heroic title and obviously absurd actions, it must surely have been constructed with a good dose of stoical black humour. This was a piece to inform and it did so by a simple process of representation. But it was a more accurate depiction of people's behaviour than the most studied stagecraft could have achieved and gave a more telling insight into life in Poland today than any amount of naturalism could have done.

Phil Hyde



Channel 4

After Alter?

AFTER IMAGE HAVE CROSSED the great divide. In common with a handful of other video enterprises they have succeeded in turning the Channel 4 dream into reality—the modern alchemy—the transmutation of ‘video’ into ‘broadcast television’. Unlike most of the others, though, their programme *Alter Image* hasn’t just squeaked into a late-night cocoa spot, they’ve captured a prime-time slot on Thursday evening. They’ve hit the big time.

For those of you who have somehow not yet managed to see *Alter Image*, let me give a brief rundown on their first broadcast:

Opening up with Sankai Juku, the Japanese dance/performance group who were the rage of last year’s Edinburgh Festival, may have seemed like safety first. They are just the kind of group that appeals to Omnibus and the South Bank Show. But would either of these bastions of mainline arts have given the group the opportunity to work in the flooded basement of Battersea power station? I doubt it. The reason for this choice of opener must have been mainly due to their arresting visual images—the group’s in-

tensity and immediacy which negates the need for commentary or explanation (a distinctive quality of the programme). Colourless bodies evoked the victims of a mechanistic torture chamber against the equally colourless rusting iron dereliction—the hands reaching out of the ovens, the repeated metallic beatings, the growing imprints of coals on their bodies.

Separated only by a brief synthesized graphic, there followed Andrew Logan’s alternative chat show. Logan is high on the list of ‘people least likely to be offered a chat show’—which is presumably why he was chosen. This week’s oddity was Sonia the Opera Singer, replying to not very telling questions with operatically sung replies. ‘In the bath I play Tosca’ is fine as a thirty-second jape, but it couldn’t sustain itself over even a very short slot.

So by the adverts the score is one-all. From bad to worse. Sculpture is never going to be active in the way this programme requires, and even if it is the sculpture of Yellow Pages, it remains a problem. They tried to save the day through rapid editing, but committed the cardinal error of letting the sculptor talk about his work—for all the world as

though he was facing a grilling by Robin Day.

They needed to pull a real humdinger out of the bag—and they did. The Three Courgettes song *Oh Dirty Pan*, brilliantly choreographed around that kind of How-Mrs-Jones-keeps-her-kitchen-clean TV commercial, hyped up into skating around the kitchen floor on Flash-filled moppers. Simply effective because of its wild humour, and as a zap on TV.

Likewise Stephen Taylor Woodrow had TV in mind as he carried out a grand guignol raid on a family watching Crossroads. Raining down fire and brimstone in a manner capable of curdling Vincent Price’s blood, his audience remained in their stupor as though this apparition coming through their wall were just a normal part of their evening’s entertainment. Once again, simple, direct and effective.

The racy pace of the show, reminiscent of good pop promo videos, easily keeps the audience going through its thirty minutes. Indeed the enormous amount of post-production work done on each of the items both reveals how little the television companies do, and the massive benefits of



Scarlet Napoleon Bordekeux wearing jewellery by Judy Blare

After Image's video roots. In terms of format they have created a totally unfussy framework, which invites you to hang on to see what will turn up next.

While I am full of praise for After Image's achievement, it is difficult not to wonder about the future. Channel 4 has already admitted that it has been taking far too many independently produced programmes. They have a habit of making only statistical announcements, without any reference to quality or to the service a particular programme is offering. Of course these judgements are being made, but when Jeremy Isaacs talks about reducing C4's independent intake to one quarter, it is easy to understand the unease and uncertainty that these producers must feel.

Will *Alter Image* be just another one-series wonder, never to be seen again? The evidence is promising so far. It's not only its prime-time slot that shows that people are taking this programme seriously. The carefully worded introduction from C4's presenter took pains to avoid the standard jauntiness that we have come to expect. No toeing the line with the *Daily Mirror*'s 'weird arts show' description. An even better indicator lies with the surrounding programmes. Early evening viewing on Thursday has been very carefully fashioned to grab and hold an 'alternative' audience. Or, to put it more cynically, *Alter Image* is being 'hung' between *The Optimist* and *Soap*. 'Hanging' is the process of having two large-audience attractions with a less obviously attractive programme between: the theory being

that the viewer will keep on the same channel while waiting for the next 'big' programme.

The point is that the person deciding the schedules will only give preferential assistance to a programme that they think deserves it. That *Alter Image* has achieved this rather peculiar accolade are grounds for reasonable optimism that another series will appear.

But the door is closing, and it is difficult to imagine that many more will go the way that After Image have trodden.

So where's the programme of artists' video? Why has the proliferating area of video art failed to make a significant dent in C4's programming? Have they left it too late to try?

The problem common to all areas of video activity is distribution. There is no shortage of people capable of creating high-quality video tapes, but there is a great shortage of outlets for the finished tapes. There may be a few people happy to create tapes for their private pleasure, but most are hoping to have their work seen by a much larger audience. Video exhibitions and gallery screenings are a first step, the growth of video libraries a very welcome second. Beyond this there are some very interesting ideas floating around for more straightforward commercial distribution. But surely no-one is so coy as to ignore the potential of broadcasting? It represents both a far greater and wider audience, and the possibility of reasonable remuneration.

I am not suggesting that every tape is either suitable or acceptable for television. But, whoever would have thought that alternative performance would be, until After Image proved it could be done? The best video art says and does more with and about the television/video image than any amount of learned papers, in-depth discussions or the like. As such it should be

demanding air-time on C4 as a right. It is very difficult to see how the correct package could fail to succeed.

I suspect that it is the 'packaging' that is the big stumbling block for video artists. Once again though, they should look at After Image's experience. By choosing the correct concept and format they have succeeded, both in providing a programme that is highly watchable, and providing performers with an opportunity to broadcast, and a very helpful climate in which to create their work. The decisions artists would take on concept and format would, in all probability, be very different, but I find it hard to believe that it cannot be achieved.

The once apparently insurmountable problem of broadcasting—the refusal of TV engineers to handle 'low grade' video tapes—is crumbling. The demands of news programmes to have highly portable equipment has meant that television has to accept material produced on equipment which is only a small step away from the gear normally in use in colleges and local video resources.

The only other barrier to be crossed is that of individuality. Individual applications for broadcasting stand an ice-cube in hell's chance of success. But if a consortium could be created which was the foundation of a production company, the credibility gap can be closed. It requires pragmatism—not always the most evident quality in artists.

The case I am making rests on a belief that everyone should have a right to broadcast. Looking at the broadcast institutions as remote and unapproachable achieves nothing. If we want to influence broadcasting policy we have to believe in that right, and take the bull by the horns. The door is closing rapidly and it's necessary to jam a foot in it before it slams.

Pete Shelton

Programme 9 Pookie Snackenburger Bongo Herbert His 99th Nervous Nightmare



Celebration In Cardiff

A CONTEMPORARY ARTS centre that can organise a performance for an audience of 60 with 60 performers, deserves a second look. Three years ago in our fourth issue, we looked at Chapter Arts, Cardiff and found a refuge for five highly idiosyncratic visual theatre companies. Recently we went back to check what was happening, coinciding with a 'special event' presented as ambitiously as the above.

There are considerable problems, but also considerable advantages, in running a 'producing' arts centre. One of the most obvious problems in the case of Chapter Arts is that they have become increasingly associated with one genre, the Grotowski-based physical theatre that forms the background of many of the resident and associated companies. The former director of one of these, Diamond Age, is Janek Alexander, and he has now become responsible for performance programming at Chapter. He says that while there may be this impression—because there is no other British centre for this work, and because of the strong influence of the most permanently resident group, Cardiff Lab—it did not affect what was brought in from outside. The main criteria for selection was, that if something appeared at Chapter, it had to be changed by it.

Like the more visual-art-based producing centre in Newcastle, the Basement Group, (see *Spaces*, issue 22) this meant that artists would be encouraged to not only work outside the centre, in places like Cardiff Castle or in villages, but to include other resident artists in their plans. So Chapter is, while making this special demand part of the increasingly coherent circuit of live art that is developing outside London, even now drawing fresh audiences for new work.

But Chapter are also in the special position of being almost a national contemporary arts centre for Wales, and the kind of budget they are on suggests that there may be pressure to package a more conventional, bland arts mixture. Evidence would show that they have resisted this so far, but for how long it is difficult to imagine. However, it is clear that the general Cardiff public have been educated to some extent beyond the usual expectations of the 'theatre-goer'—as theatre is the outward form used here to mean what we would call performance. At the 'special event', enthusiastically attended by what one might rate as a fairly non-specialist audience, it was extraordinary to see the entire building turned over to a multi-sensory experience that would certainly have taxed most preconceptions of an evening out. Called a 'Special Celebration', it was one of a whole series of events that was part of the Exposition by Cardiff



Lab that had included an outdoor event called *For a Lost Hour* which had celebrated the changing of the seasons and the beginning of British Summer time.

The Special Celebration centred on Good Friday, April Fools' Day and Akademia Ruchu's 10th Birthday. We arrived at Chapter to be ushered into one of Chapter's many corridors to wait, lined up against the wall, for the Special Celebration. Opposite us a video camera operator and assistant put in a prelude to the performance by struggling, bound together with hardware, to retrieve batteries, leads and cassettes which fell to the floor, with perfect timing, in rapid succession. Our attention to this event was interrupted by the arrival of two court dandies, a lady and a court fool dressed in grand ballroom style. Catching the eye they handed out fruit, to the line now stretching out of the doors. Divided into

groups of fruit owners, we moved off, the apples leading the way, with their leading courtier. We were taken into an incense-filled space to take seats looking on a tableau of the Last Supper. A massive church organ intoned to one side, accompanying the madrigal-like songs coming from the upper gallery. Solemn and orderly, the atmosphere hung heavy over the audience. The tableau moved and the organ stopped as the disciples came alive and danced a square dance in a confused and half-aware state, in their black dinner suits. Just as things had finally broken down, Christ arrived as the Conductor, baton in hand, he took over and with a click of the baton brought the orchestra of disciples to order.

Leaving them, the journey continued through the spaces of Chapter, continuing with images of the Last Supper, Betrayal and Crucifixion told in a series of tableaux



Special Event Cardiff Laboratory Theatre

and performances. Other references to earlier and more original Celtic rituals and customs occurred scattered throughout.

In one room in the bowels of Chapter, Akademia Ruchu and the workshop members had constructed an industrial workplace, the bare concrete walls reverberated with the sound of goods-trains and industrial machinery outside. Eight workers under the newspaper-shrouded light bulb worked in the half gloom, numbers written on their workclothes. An electric kettle boiled endlessly; a man sawed wood into short lengths, another read the newspaper; a game of cards went on between two workers. A six-inch nail was being used to mark the wall in apparent mindlessness and boredom. On another wall a sign was being painted, 'Traez Wosc', while white cloth lay under the workbench. The workers' movements were limited and repetitive. Then a bowl was placed casually under the bare feet of one of the workers, a sharp pencil of light caught the action and paused momentarily as attention was captured. Other incidental actions in the workplace were spotted: the exchange of money, five bread rolls spread out for a snack, the manufacture of a small cross. Components

of a larger event, reminders of a story told. Setting it off well was an offhand crucifixion in the hi-tech Chapter cocktail bar, with artists scribbling on paper spread out on the bar tables to catch every detail.

In all there were six different events, and a finale—a rerun of the Last Supper—with the audience seated at long white-clothed tables, a glass of red wine and Hot Cross bun to hand. A white mannequin served as the Saviour. The orchestra struck up again and we were invited to dance with the disciples to Strauss' *Also Sprach Zarathustra* waltz, and off we went.

Chapter Arts is an intensely multifarious undertaking, with a thriving gallery, film and video workshop, and artists' studios. But it was clear from this event, and from scanning their performance programme, that there is indeed considerable overall influence exerted by Cardiff Lab Theatre. Through them, Chapter have access to a whole network of foreign companies, many of whom opt to come to Wales in preference to London. Many of them are within the 'physical theatre' genre, and as Lab director Richard Gough put it, they all have the common denominator of a 'life wish' in their art, which presumably

means that they are totally immersed in the process of a lifetime's development.

Officially, Cardiff Lab are totally separate and act as 'advisers' to Chapter's programming. And the other current resident companies, Paupers' Carnival and the New Arts Consort, also have a strong effect on events there. But the spectre of Grotowski hangs low over the establishment: however valuable his influence and theories may be, it needs to be fully exhumed in order for Chapter to be seen as fully accessible to completely different sorts of touring work.

Notwithstanding this, Chapter is remarkably informal and free of the usual kind of high-pressure arts centre tension experienced elsewhere. And the message that comes across is that the centre welcomes—indeed Cardiff itself welcomes—artists with ideas. That there is a thriving community of them around the place bears testimony to that. And if certain groups should happen to gain a cultural ascendancy, as Moving Being did in the mid- and late-seventies, well that's better than having no identity or production policy at all.

Rob La Frenais & Robin Morley

Announcing our new regular feature— the Pull-Out-Apologies-Section . . .

In the last issue, *The Paper Pool Corporation* should have been credited to Adrian Hall.

AND . . . Cover photo on last issue should have been credited to Bryan Nicholls, and the photos of *Shadows through a Landscape* 1981, and *3 Yellow Pieces* 1980 should have been credited to Nan Hoover.

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