PERFORMANCE
Karen Finley, BITCH! DYKE! FAGHAG! WHORE!
Rose English, DUMB TYPE

THEATRE
Perth, Melbourne, Brisbane
and the Festivals

MUSIC
Stevie Wishart,
Machine for
Making Sense,
Jon Rose, Australistics,
Chambermade Opera
and Steve Reich

DANCE
Galiotta, Persythe,
Morris

AUSTRALIAN WOMEN PERFORMERS Survey

VISUAL ARTS
Techno-arts, Adelaide Installations, Zona di Transito

FESTIVALS
Adelaide, Perth, The Gay & Lesbian Mardi Gras

PLUS the Very Small Sports Column, Eating Way Out & At Short Notice.
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EDITORIAL

C all this the violin issue of REAL TIME — it features the avant gardists of the violin, Jon Rose and Stevie Wishart, photos of David Branson bowing for Vicki Spence and Deborah Pohl in their performance Full of the Roman Empire and Anna Broinowski fiddling in the Yiddish Dream Theatre of Timothy Daly's Kajka Dances for the Griffin Theatre Company. Keren, Bal- amucci and the Brodsky String Quartet get a look-in and, analogously, the new director of The Performance Space, Angharad Wynne-Jones, raises the crescendo. This fortuitous profusion of violins and bows signals the ambition of REAL TIME to place performance and theatre in the context of the new musics, dance, visual and techno-arts, sound, radio, popular culture and the performative elements of everyday life.

The 90s are an astonishingly rich time for the arts, a richness barely acknowledged. The quality, diversity and proliferation of work, the rugged beginnings of effective national touring, the baring of our work of performance, new opera and the techno-arts, and a dynamic interplay between forms are seen everywhere. A surge of new arts journalism countering the paucity of newspaper and television reportage will hopefully be sustained (watch out Melvyn Bragg). On the downside, funding does not match the quantity of talent, reviewers in the mass media (even where sympathetic) can't find the words to grasp the new. State and federal funding are prone to falling out of killer, spurious fears are about that image-based work is expanding at the expense of theatre, that too much money is going to project and development grants (at the expense of larger companies), and there's a worrying desire, a fear of the artist, to replace artistic directors with producers and managers, plus there's the predictable carping aimed at an Australia Council remarkably supportive of innovation in theatre and performance (perhaps too supportive for some within it). The tired old Sydney-Melbourne debate — most recently Sydney actors being described by someone who should know better as 'sipping their chardonnay while waiting for the jobs to come in rather than getting out there and making theatre like Melbourne types do' — is kept up instead of recognising the volume of new and original work produced by a large number of companies and artists in both cities and the nation, but rarely seen by other. These gaps have been exacerbated by the lack of a national picture, a reliance on newspapers and the negligible attention to the arts by television. Touring through Playing, Australia must be coordinated with the funding timetables of the Australia Council and initiatives to survey the national arts, like REAL TIME, SBS's In:Image, the new Radio National arts program and others, must open out the arts (and a greater range of the arts) to larger audiences.

The formation of a new committee within the Performing Arts Board to fund new work that has emerged over the last decade is long overdue: earlier attempts were aborted. Its focus will presumably be on cross artform, multimedia, image-based work often erroneously assumed to have no interest in last-guage. It is a direct response to new developments in the arts and to the successful work of established and new companies in the performance field, most receiving their support from the Drama Committee but lobbying that their existence they are not theatre companies in the usual sense, they do not do plays, and often have very different skills) needs at least philosophical acknowledg- ment from the Council. Like REAL TIME, these companies and artists see the performative in many art forms and spaces, in ritual and in the everyday.

The first edition of REAL TIME opens up the possibilities for writers and artists everywhere in Australia to contribute to the spread of information and ideas across art forms and distance.

REAL TIME Performance in Australia

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WOMEN WITH ATTITUDE

Catharine Lamby keeps herself nice as Finley and Ventura give lift

After almost a decade in storage, Politi-
tics, like flares and eyebrow tweezers, is
once again an essential accessory in the
art and performance world. The home-
less, AIDS, queer rights, racism and feminism
are back on the agenda and, rather like the
consistent revival of 1970s fashion, there’s
often little to distinguish the rhetoric from
the original product.

Karen Finley’s high profile. New York performance artist set to tour her latest full
length performance, A Certain Level of Denial, around Australia this February, is a cause in
point. While Finley has been performing her
highly politicised work for the past decade, it’s
only in recent years she’s achieved interna-
tional standing. Her agressive blend of the
visceral and the ideological is now perfectly in
tune with the post-yuppy zeitgeist.

Finley’s performances sit comfortably in the
tradition of body art, performance art and
1970s happenings, dealing with pro-
cess rather than objects. Since graduating
from the San Francisco Art Institute in
1983, she has taken a consistent stance against the art market, choosing to perform in
nightclubs and other non-gallery venues.
Performance art, she says, is about upset-
ing, redefining boundaries of art. As an ex-
ception, her body art work is primarily concerned with being bought and sold and [and] it’s removed from the prominent creature of the purpose of an aca-
demic aesthetic history for the rich,” she
says. “Performance art has the power of pro-
viding ritual to a society that only believes in
the power of consuming.”

Her personal politics reflect a similarly
retro rhetoric. As a feminist, she is an
unflinching essentialist. Her philosophy, as
told to a US reporter, is based on a belief that
society is driven to a fear of female power. Of
the male and female, she says, “the female is
more apt to listen, be instinctual, use the
sixth sense,” nurture and heal. Men, in con-
trast, she says, deal with suffering by think-
ing about it instead of feeling it. Not surpris-
ingly, her performances reject a coherent, intellectual framework in favour of the
emotional, the visceral and the quasi-mythi-
ical.

The body which resonates throughout Finley’s work is her own body, object, ab-
normal and socially unacceptable, and primarily female, body. Disease, incest, eating disor-
ders, domestic violence, the desire for sex,
and the performance itself are all part of the
performance. The body involves her own self throughout her performances, from
living in circumstances, to her use of her body as an object, to her use of her body as
an object of self-sacrifice. She is, in short, a
woman who is objectified and objectified by
herself, in her performances.

Suzana Ventura

Then I stick little candy hearts all over my
body — because after we’ve been treated like
shit, then we’re loved. . . Then I add the alfalfa
sprouts (symbolising sperm) because in a way
it’s all a big jack-off... we’re all being jerked off . . . we’re just something to jerk-off onto.
After the “love”. Finally, I put tinsel on my
body, because after going through all that, a
woman still gets dressed up for dinner.

More recently, Finley has expanded her
focus to embrace people with AIDS, the home-
less, homosexuals and other marginal-
ised groups. In We Keep Our Visions Ready she
drew a parallel between Nazi Germany’s
treatment of the Jews and contemporary US
society. Her script ran in part: “We kil people
by not doing anything. And allow death for
no apparent reason. It’s just that our owns
are at a slower speed.” A Certain Level of Denial is an anguished monologue describing the
physical deterioration and neglect of a friend
with AIDS which she contrasts with the media fass over George Bush’s brief collapse and
administration in Tokyo.

Finley’s language, both performathe
and literal, draws heavily on taboo areas,
more commonly found in pornography. Shit,
comm, sperm and explicit sexual acts, as
mudity, feature heavily in her pieces. Her
“obscenity” has led to right-wing attacks from
her “obscenity” has led to right-wing attacks from
redneck US Senator Jesse Helms and a with-
drawal of funding by the National Endow-
ment for the Arts. Finley responds that her
own language and performances are sedate
compared to the brutality with which the state treats its marginalised. It’s a standoff
which highlights both the extremes of US
social politics but also the head of a decade of
conservative government and their failure to
graft here. And it is ultimately this contrast which may prove the most interesting aspect
of Finley’s performance for many Australian
spectators.

If Finnythe rights from her own high
moral ground. Penny Arcade aka
Suzana Ventura has little truck with either.
With her performative wit, she says: “F*ck!
F*ck! What? Ventura has earned the wrath
of both feminists and fundamentalist Chris-
tians. A former Warhol satellite, she sur-
rounds herself with a troupe of scantily clad
male and female exotic dancers and proaches
what one reviewer described as “post-Reichian
sexual, personal and social liberation”. Le-
bians are denounced for thinking “if you’re bisexual you’re not trying hard enough”.
Anti
abolitionists laud her performances as if “life
starts at birth”.

The chief focus of her confessional/obses-
sive monologue is to force people to con-
front their prejudices, whatever their political
persuasion. A favourite target is the portian-
ul strik in the 1990s which bore much of her
real life go-go dancers present a direct affront.
She comments that “Bitch! Die! F*ck! Whore!”
Whore! Whore! Whore! Ventura has earned the wrath of both feminists and fundamentalist Chris-
tians. A former Warhol satellite, she sur-
rounds herself with a troupe of scantily clad
male and female exotic dancers and proaches
what one reviewer described as “post-Reichian
sexual, personal and social liberation”. Le-
bians are denounced for thinking “if you’re bisexual you’re not trying hard enough”.
Anti
abolitionists laud her performances as if “life
starts at birth”.

Like Finley’s, Ventura’s show focuses on the
AIDS epidemic, but unlike Finley, Ventu-
ra relies on humour and irreverence rather
than rage to make her points. Philos-
opherically, she is an earthy humanitarian with
the traditional commitment that implies to
theater. “The ecology of the theater is being
eaten in a group,” she told an interviewer recently. “We don’t go to church anymore. Here it’s
very raisinad, very thirsty.” Doubtless, some spectators will find nei-
ther performer’s rhetoric appealing, heavily
laced as both are with different versions of
the New Right’s argument. Whether or not
both shows are certainly worth catching for
no other reason than they provide an opportuni-
ty to see the spectaculum of US grass roots political
action.

Ventura is touring the Sydney and Ade-
lade Festivals. Finley is playing Mel-
bourne, Adelaide and Brisbane in February.

SYDNEY

The Performance Space

Sydney’s The Performance Space is
already showing signs of new life: remark-
able when you think of the exsanguination
and draining events brought to it by Sarah
Miller (now Director of Perth’s Institute of
Contemporary Art) and the Performance
Space. It’s not that the space doesn’t show Sarah’s palpable energy, but her calm is experienced as a clear-eyed inten-
sity. She is an artist with an epic, event-
mental, site-specific works with taxi fleets
(In Sea and Air) and boats (Hydrofrisons) for
large audiences, and yet performs intimate
soiras in the Ivan Dougherty Gallery with the
sculptural and threatening beauty of a cross-
bow (Margin For Error). or public pieces like A
Bird in My Mouth in Martin Place for the sur-
ficial exhibition; she peels off layers of pink
underwear to Lou Reed’s Vicious to reveal
a skin of small latex crotcheties and penises.
stands on a platter of ice cream and invites the
audience to share it with her.

Why environmental works?

“Because they’re outside theatre spaces
and galleries. Because they create an unusual
contrast between audience and artists.”
Because audiences are more willing to partic-
ipate than they are in those closed spaces.
I worked with Industrial and Commercial The-
aatre Contractors in the UK for ten years in
this kind of work, moving from performance
to directing. The solo works meet a need for
intimacy and the freedom of creation. The big
works mostly occur in meeting rooms and
entertainers nights curated by Penny Thwaite
will encourage site specific works. We’d like
to be more a part of Redefiners. We’re establish-
ing our own quarterly magazine. We’re tak-
ing on a part-time marketing manager.

Yes, but most directors have ended up as
managers here, having to forget their own work
for two to three years, quite unlike, say, artists
directors of theatre companies.”

“You take on the job knowing that.”
Can you curate yourself creating a large
site-specific work as part of your job?
She smiles... “We’ll see.”

I can feel the walls of The Performance Space
taking shape, as the space from presenting
outre similarly to public boxes, museums, galleries (apart from perfor-
mance) to being an art and technological space. I’m sure I’m not the only one who believes
that The Performance Space director should come as a practising artist while in office
and that Sydney, having been passionately
attracted to the new ways of seeing their home
offered by her work, should not miss out on
a distinctive vision that also implicitly
encourages the work of many.
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Ariette Taylor & Luke Dev enish
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SANCTUARY
The author of the smash hit Away tells an explosive and confronting story of a family secret, a terrible betrayal and a haunted writer's obsession to recreate the past.

Michael Gurr
UNDERWEAR, PERFUME AND CRASH HELMET
Following the spectacular success of SEX DIARY OF AN INFIDEL, Gurr returns with a contemporary thriller that is funny, unsettling and bizarre.

Hannie Rayson
FALLING FROM GRACE
Australia's most popular playwright gives us the riveting account of a top Australian journalist who has made an unprincipled bargain with the American political establishment.

Barry Dickens
REMEMBER RONALD RAY
The professional and personal stakes are high in this compelling drama about women at 40 and power and authority in female hands. Hannie Rayson's first play since 1972.

Steve Martin
PICASSO AT THE LAPIN AGILE
American comedian, actor and movie writer, Steve Martin, stages an hilarious musical between the young Albert Einstein and Pablo Picasso at a Paris cafe in 1914.

Hannie Rayson
THE GLASS MERMAID
Tobsha Learner returns to Playbox with an extraordinary drama of suicide and the woman left behind. This surreal work about love, grief, seduction and regeneration makes a dramatic conclusion to the 1994 Season.

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COMING MELBOURNE’S FRINGE
Simone Hughes teases out decay and renewal in the Melbourne theatre scene.

S e lucrative has outdoor performance proved in this city that flint-eyed entrepreneurs have staked out Melbourne’s Fringe with their usual flair of good prospects. In the ‘gaedt State’ outdoor performance is a naturally attractive idea and on a perfect night it is, well, perfect. The move into one the area signifies a pro-found shift in the toecraks of Melbourne theatre. In the perennial hog call to the funding trough, the Melbourne Theatre Company has always come away with the lion’s — or perk’s — share. And they probably will always. What has changed is the perceived status of the fringe in the scheme of things. Formally, you got the distinct impression that the federal pigs farmers supported the smaller compa-nies more out of compassion than consideration. But tonight, it seems. the fringe has gained legitimacy.

This is best exemplified by the evolution of La Mama. Thera was a time in the days of rage when the bourgeois approached this ancient and tiny former sweatshop with the exact same misgivings as cattle entering an abat-tion. You saw it in their eyes. The bill of fare, of course, often gave substance to their worst fears. Now in its 28th year, La Mama, as the flagship of the fringe has become very much part of the establishment. This is not to say that the work is necessary or safe — there will always be the outs at La Mama but the salubrious whiff of danger has disap-peared. In the coming months, the program is eclectic: to put it mildly. There is a work by Marguerite Duras, something called Paradis e #4 (an original piece) performed by the splendidly named Tesi de Quincyce, and Marcia Hafaydın takes a two-month residence from January. There are the usual poetics, music, fiction and play reading night. There seems to be no hour in the day when the Mother is not nurturing her brood.

Chamber Made Opera, under the direction of Douglas Horton, has very quickly occupied a niche in the market. Like Barry Kosky, Chamber Made tend to court controversy, often a sign of rude health in the arts. Their performance of Robert Ashley’s Improvement. Don’t miss if you can. Last year brought an odd chariot of buss and boys. Underwater, extensive tours of the evergreen Revival and Medea are planned for 1994. Towards the end of the year they will be presenting a dance opera which seeks to explore the musical interface between East and West. Meryl Tankard’s company is to have collaborated but they fell by the funding wayside.

Sadly, there are other funding casualties. Hard luck stories abound. Whistling in the Theatre, for instance, has suffered a late con-sistent with such an unskilled named outfit. But it is an ill wind that blows no good for the diaspora has spawned one gem at least: a brave and curious production of The Blue Beard directed by Bob Pavlich. Staged at mid-night in a lane in an unwelcoming quarter of the CBD, the piece explodes on dark themes wholly consonant with its setting.

Another funding victim is Theatreflows. On the site curve of a company’s life, they are currently at their lowest ebb. Word is that they were brought down by an ill-advised, multilingual, installation style production of Titan Auckbarus. The attempt to rub the multi- tacular glint of the money mandarins was, possibly, a shade too obvious. That is the cy-nical view at least. Sufficient to say it. Theatre-flows is on the brink. RAA Theatre

Australian Nouveau Theatre under Jean-Pierre Mignon and based for some time now at the Gasworks in South Melbourne is also hang-ing on for grim life. Normally, ANT would produce four new works in a year but bu-detrary constraints have reduced this to two: Raymond Couste’s Strategy for Two Hams and Mishima’s Madame de Sade. The-aatre, of course, is subject to something like the forces of natural selection (or unnatural when you consider the whims of the Aus-tralia Council). So while some groups are headed for extinction, others are flourishing in the shadow of the dinosaurs. RAA Theatre is one such. Established in 1989 by Italian-born Renato Cuccio, it has received consis-tently good press with its productions of Greek tragedy including The Trojan Women which toured the Vienna Festival last year. The Bacchus is the next in the series and there is also the promise of a commission plus a piece by Pam Leversha to complement the first two. I have not found it necessary to articulate a manifesto, their concerns being more for quality and value for money. So far they’ve delivered both.

Despite a lacklustre outing titled Dazzle of Shadow staged in a deserted office space. Peter King has made it into another year. He has two separate solo performances planned, the first set in architect Peter Corrigan’s jewelled confection at RMIT. They will be based on King’s ‘spatial’ novel which he explains as fic-tions with no characters only buildings. King professes himself to be ‘fucking sick’ of the theatre scene. ‘I do the usual poor supporter’, (Appetite whetted). Finally, there are the two major compa-nies: Playbox and MTC. Revering the usual trend. Aubrey Meller has descended from Brisbane to take up residence at the Playbox. What is more he declares himself happy with the decision, commenting: ‘I have been wait-ing for this opportunity for about twenty years’. Not only is he proud of the nearly exclusively Australian program but is stimu-lated by the efflorescence of new writing. ‘Somebody’s got to commit themselves to it’, he says. ‘There is certainly the potential.’ Even MTC is getting in on the act. Hotcup by Geoffrey Atherden is the forerunner of com-misioned works promised in future seasons. There is every sign that the old love is loosening her corsets and that can’t be a bad thing. If there is still the stench of economic rationalism (an oxymoron if ever there was one) in funding criteria, a wind is blowing through the bulk of traditional theatre, breathing new life across the spectrum.

PLAYBOX WEIGHS IN HEAVYWEIGHTS
Keith Gallash discusses the knockout Playback season with Tobsha Learner

Tobsha Learner looks serious. She says the line-up of writers for Aubrey Mel- ler’s first Playback series is heavy-weight — ‘Gar, Gow, Rowan, Learner, Williamson, Dickins’. She looks serious. ‘He’s writing about the hanging of Ronald Ryan. Although I write comedy, it’s usually in cardiological terms. I’ve written about men’s sexuality in recent years, this time it’s women’s.’

While Aubrey cleverly placed each of us in context, Hanny was witty. David was nervous and humble (he didn’t know he had to speak until I told him). Barry was seriously bored. Michael was busy and quizzical. Michael Gow was... cryptic...

‘Our narrative skills need the follow-through. New plays coming out of Europe and particularly America receive, and no one’s doing anything about it.’

Wan it be a heavyweight launch? ‘Aubrey cleverly placed each of us in context. Hanny was witty. David was nervous and humble (he didn’t know he had to speak until I told him). Barry was seriously bored. Michael was busy and quizzical. Michael Gow was... cryptic...

SYDNEY ST THEATRE SPACE

Sydney can be an expensive city to work in if you are a young artist trying to survive. PACT Theatre developed and funded an area sydneysydne. A disused industrial space which is now 150 people, fully if simply equipped with house rig, 24 channel lighting desk, 8 channel house audio, projectors and workshop space. The space can be hired for performances, exhibitions, performance, exhibition, video shows, rehearsals, music or multi-arts events.

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Your narrative skills need the follow-through. New plays coming out of Europe and particularly America receive, and no one’s doing anything about it.

Wan it be a heavyweight launch? ‘Aubrey cleverly placed each of us in context. Hanny was witty. David was nervous and humble (he didn’t know he had to speak until I told him). Barry was seriously bored. Michael was busy and quizzical. Michael Gow was... cryptic...

Yes!

‘I spoke about the play, about Bosnia, about being a migrant and I mentioned my Polish origins. I was then besieged by excited artists speaking Polish which I don’t speak. There was a nice feeling of temporary camaraderie especially given the geographical distances and the transyn of competition between us. It felt a good lineup to be in.’

The Glass Mermaid for the Playback Se-aon, there’s a dead philosopher but the wife behind me was 40s, much older than you.

‘I think women in their thirties and forties are great to explore, they have so much more economic and political power than previous generations and I’m part of them. I’m especially attracted to the enigma of women in their late forties, like Silla in the play, who have to re-define their sexual currency and have a

new-found singularity. It’s a difficult journey and one my mother experienced.’

Are you interested in domestic styles? ‘I think I write epic in a domestic context. I deal with big emotional issues — death, grieving, sexuality — with an awareness of the world. Sara’s grieving is juxtaposed with a Bosnian refugee’s loss in The Glass Mermaid. And there’s a sense of a dangerous landscape in my work.

The play’s in its fourth draft and will go through more. Luckily, Playback will work on it, which is something that still doesn’t happen enough. Australia, particularly Sydney, is good at launching new blood, but not so good at the follow-through — the mid career support, second seasons. The opportu-nity to tour and develop through productions of the same work is essential. Partly it is the tyranny of distance and part of it, unfortunately, is regionalism. David Williamson and I talked about all this on the flight down to Melbourne and also about image-based work versus narrative.

I suspect I’m in for a slice of the current and erroneous complaint that performance (cross artform, multi media work etc) is plundering drama funding, but no.

Photo: Nick Mangels
THE VIEW FROM THE WEST

Des James surveys the Western Australian theatre and performance scene.

Looking back towards Perth’s imposing skyline as I climb the impressive staircase of the Repertory Theatre, I am struck by the contrasting symbols of cultural achievement. I am in the theatre, the cold marble of this building, the remote of capitals, inspecting a ramshead, dilapidated, and to be quite honest, dangerous old building which is proposed to serve as a performance space for the emerging performance company Red Desert.

Pineys matter from their perches acknowledging the invasion of their large and empty space. ‘It’ll only take $10,000 to make it safe’, enthuses veteran actor Bill McClosky. His workshop production of Derelict Angels, a dark and poetic, scripted work, introduced audiences to this potential performance space, and to the company’s eclectic vision.

There are many original voices within Red Desert: musicians, visual artists, writers and poets. Co-founder, Marguerite Lengard, is equally positive: she believes Red Desert’s style is characterised by an open spirituality with no preconceptions or fixed ideas. Their experiments and collaborations cross forms, and creative choices are now crystallising and foreshadowing a style for the company, pending funding.

Academic and artist David Williams would sympathise. His Ex-Stasis Theatre attracted both funding and a spot in the 1992 Festival of Perth on the basis of his adaptation of Deborah Levy’s novel Beautiful Mutants. The work, performed in a large pool of water, displayed the company’s evocative visual and physical style, and its intention to experiment with dramatic conventions. The development of Ex-Stasis’ next major work (which I understandable about the artist Frida Kahlo) has been beset by a slower than hoped for response for funding requests made by the company. Although short on experience in some areas, Ex-Stasis has a growing reputation as a company of imagination and invention, and is keenly regarded in the West.

So is Fieldworks, a movement-based, peripatetic collective guided by the creative vision of Jim Hughes. His choreographic, film, and theatre background is central to the creation of the company’s multi-artform performance works. Fieldworks is not theatre, nor dance (although most of its artists have movement backgrounds). It is performance — combinations of themes, patterns, obsessions, and ideas. Through improvised movement, invention, and a group process hinging on Hughes’ infectious vision, performers sustain ideas from single performances over a series of works. Funding support from the Performing Arts Board for 1994 will enable Fieldworks to consolidate its ensemble, and explore new works.

The Australia Council and the West Australian Department for the Arts are not ungenerous in their support of performance in the West, but for experimental work less so. However, a far more substantial, and broader vision of cultural development has been made available by the State Government than almost anywhere else in Australia. Although this support is couched in the language of incentives, and notions of art ‘paying its own way’, a progressive decision has been made to steer away from the creation of yet another State Theatre Company.

Andrew Ross asserts that the work of Black Swan has effectively shifted the ground defined as ‘mainstream’. Convention has determined the margins in the past, but for years, audience taste has demanded a grittier and more experimental fare. Black Swan’s main casting policy, and its production and development of new Australian plays is only extra-ordinary in the sense that few mainstream theatre companies have been adventurous enough to acknowledge significant shifts in Australian culture, and offer a confident programme which reflects it.

This may simply be a matter of perception: current running of the successful national tour by Bran Nue Dae bears Black Swan’s thesis out. You still get the original play and a new play (Bran Nue Dae). But with more substance, more work which is created and performed by Australian Aboriginals.

Black Swan is not the only performance company to focus on Aboriginal artists and ideas.

Deck Chair Theatre, the Fremantle based company shaped by the impressive skills of Angela Chaplin, touches many cultural bases. With solid but limited funding, Deck Chair has created an extraordinary range of work including the highly ambitious, multi-artform paranormal opera My Spiritual Development by Esmee, and the much performed Baramdas by Kath Thomson. Angela Chaplin’s collaborations with women artists have included some of the most interesting ‘theatre’ based work in the country. A collaboration with Roberta Brown and a new work by Nicky Cocks, Pitts, Factory Girls, continues Deck Chair’s imaginative sourcing of material from its work.

Back in the heart of the city, in the shadow of the massive towers which stand sentinel past glories belong to the Swan, and the State Theatre Company. In 1954, Noel White was appointed headmaster of the reformed Carnegie School, a compound for Aboriginal children who slept there in dormitories, and whose ‘art of the fringe. White noted that ‘the children were good at drawing. He noticed a child, Parnell Dempster, drawing on scraps of paper and when it was provided he started to draw with materials, materials, pastels, crayons, books, sheets of paper. Within weeks the children were producing complex geometrical designs and naturalistic, local landscapes.

White was not a artist: his knowledge of materials and the code of naturalism was part of the general, low-grade proficiency of a primary teacher. He seemed not to direct and claimed not to interfere. He made more time available for art activities: in the first two months he dispensed with a formal timetable and let the children improve in art, song, dancing and drama, on whatever they recalled of, or proposed for, their culture. Later he encouraged after-school work and led night classes. The children responded enthusiastically being forbidden a night class was regarded as quite a punishment — and made what White called ‘many beautiful expressions of art’.

The work was exhibited, at first locally. At Karratha in 1948, then, promoted by Florence Rutter, in many capitals and regional centres of Australia and New Zealand. Rutter wrote of ‘unbelievably beautiful designs’ and of finding ‘a good market’ for the children’s art applied to ‘mattresses, curtains, carpets, wallpaper’. It was in 1950, the Carnegie art was exhibited at the Overseas League, London. The Daily Mail judged the children’s landscapes ‘and inevitable karrangoo’ to be ‘pure, and as easy to read as the face of heav-

THE LIE OF THE LAND

Comment on the exhibition: 'Nyungar Aboriginals: artists of the South-West — the Heritage of Carrolup, Western Australia'.

Peter King

ers World thrilled in titles: ‘They were not taught’.

Travellers World went on: ‘These children... living under desperately miserable conditions... are highly untouched and produce absolutely naturalistic pictures... Everywhere evidence, in fact, of an almost unique ability for reality-seeking making’. This is to propose that for all cultures all innate tendencies towards the practice of art, if left untouched and naturalistic, would ‘switch into naturalistic representations, artworks comprehensible and attractive to the cultured for of a minority but dominant culture. The Carrolup art is hardly evidence for that the children were taught by that culture; indeed, their own Nyungar culture had been wrecked by it.

The history of that wrecking — relocations (it is likely that the children had never seen the Carrolup landscape before), poor dietary and living conditions — is detailed in John E Stanton’s excellent catalogue. Fifty-eight works are exhibited, ranging from White’s headmastership and more recent works of contemporary Nyungar artists. The abstract pieces, the geometric designs, are not on show. They might be evidence that abstraction as well as naturalism was used in the children in the making of the so-called ‘minor art’ would have resonances with the ‘minor literature’ identified by Deleuze and Guattari, a subverting practice of a dominant language — eg German — used to destroy a subculture — eg the Cieck Kaluka — in which the language is made to st nerve and waste. The Nyungar landscapes was for a unconscious language that bridged the people and the land. Two 1948 watercolours by Reynold Hart are titled ‘Carrolup Country’: there were no dancers or dances left?
ALICE’S RESTAURANT

Nikki Gemmel eats her red heat out at Swingers Cafe

T

here is a cafe in Alice Springs called Swingers and it’s just about the only place to go. There are a lot of places to do a lot of drinking in Alice Springs but not a lot of places for eating. The town has a population of 24,000. It has 72 grocery outlets, ranging from the big supermarkets to pet stations and corner stores. It has about six cafes, a handful of good restaurants. Or there’s a 24-hour truck stop run by the network of local women cooking in a very big way. Do it or starve. Or go to Swingers again and again and again.

It was a bit of a novelty when it first opened. This is the town that gets its first traffic lights in the early 80s. And there was a local media campaign telling residents that when they’re crossing the road the chance of getting run over is five times less than Swingers. And now Swingers. Opening early for muesli and yoghurt and fresh juices, and steam-rolling the other cafe, the lentil burgers and flourishing enormously sad salad sandwiches. There’s also a blackboard menu and a small kids’ menu. Kitchens are usually one of the most expensive, but not, nice cakes like carrot and orange poppy seed and drinks like mango smoothies to appease the visiting Darwinians

EASTCOAST HOTLINE

Keith Gallash works the phones to get the latest from the Griffin, QT and La Boite.

R

on Horin is a worries— a creative worrier— so when I talk with her I accelerate, inform, assure, debate (as I did as co-dramaturg with her on Kafkas Dreams). I say to myself: Slow down, listen. Ron, describe your style as a director. Directed used to not like to think about that— style— but she’s unruffled.

I got a penchant for the quirky. I’m not inclined to naturalism. I like plays that already suggest a strong visual and theatrical world.

If you’ve seen her accounts of Hilary Bell’s Feast or Timothy Duh’s Kafka Dream you’ll know this. What’s next? Silence, then... ‘I like to play with space and with physically.’ Are you a repressed choreographer? (I’ve always enjoyed this impulse in her work.) I suppose so, but you need plays that offer movement, you can’t impose it.

The movement — recurrent circles, triangles, right angles, accompanied by the music and chanting — was remarkable in the tiny Stables Theatre for Kafkas Dreams. I wanted more space.

Now you’ve got it with the Sydney Theatre company woman of Kafkas. ‘There’s a little more around the “choreography.”’ Won’t you lose the claustrophobia that is part of the script — the oppressively wet family life. Don’t you long for the love the writer, the nightmare Yiddish Dream Theatre? ‘It’ll breathe but we might close the Wharf Theatre stage in a bit. It has looked pretty big lately for the likes of Angels In America but designer Stephen Curtis is familiar with the space.’ I’m not pursuing an aesthetic. The morality of Kafkas Dreams is tough — do you choose the tortured life of a writer over a desirable social life — and it’s in Timothy’s words and the rhythms from scene to scene. ‘It’s musical!’

Yes, and use music too because it can be tough and then suddenly lyrical and transcendent. (Okay, back to why. Why non-dramatic, spatial, physical, choreographic musical? Why (not the right word) “multidisciplinary?”)

She’s directed plays Rusty Jo, American, South American, subjects Jewish and Chinese. A pause... ‘traces and tricks of my European Jewish background. I’m not comfortable with the idea of doing “Australian” plays in the way that used to be done.”

A second call to Brisbane, this time to Chris Johnson, one of its artistic directors and Theatre Company. It had been rumoured that QT was going the way, current temps of others, of appointing ‘non- creative artistic directors’. I was relieved and pleased to hear of Chris’ appointment.

What happened to your work in the time

who’ve wandered in by surprise... ‘This sort of place, in Alice? Prices a bit on the expensive side, but the costs of actually getting things to the middle of the continent mean that everything’s a bit on the expensive side in Alice. It’s about the trade-off for a ‘better life’ those city folk tell me they came to Alice for, twelve years ago.

The cafe’s run by a woman named Andy Davey. With a fierce band of Amazonian women behind her. They make you wait, but it’s the only place in town to so speak and it’s worth it in the long run. I have this theory about the local women who fits the group at Swingers. Alice is a woman’s town. They’re strong out there. It’s an important area for Aboriginal women. It was their sanctuary. The Todd River bed the Northern Territory Government wanted to put a bulldozer through several years back to make a dam. It was the women out there fighting the politicians. It was the women who stripped down to their skirts and painted their breasts and marched through the streets several years ago, pouring the gum down the gutters to stop their men ripping apart their families. The women didn’t just become people, they went into town from as far away as the WA border, marching, making demands and they’re not surprised people. And there were Aboriginal women beside them, just as tough. You arrive in town and it takes a while to be welcomed. The women, they stare you up, check you out. Of course the politics and decide. And the men of Alice? I dunno, soliter somehow, strange. It’s like the women are stronger than the men, that there’s not an equilibrium. Several men have told me they ALWAYS have to wait longer to be served in Swingers. Paradox. I couldn’t say. All I know is that early on I was told by a local ‘this town is good for women, you find yourself, and yeah. I think I have. Sometimes the wait at Swingers can be too long and sometimes I’ve left before I’ve been served. But I always go back.

Kafka Dreams

Keff McFarlane

East Coast Hotline

Keith Gallash works the phones to get the latest from the Griffin, QT and La Boite.

Ron Horin is a worries — a creative worrier — so when I talk with her I accelerate, inform, assure, debate (as I did as co-dramaturg with her on Kafkas Dreams). I say to myself: Slow down, listen. Ron, describe your style as a director. Directed used to not like to think about that — style — but she’s unruffled.

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What happened to your work in the time

with the Chung Ying Company in Hong Kong?

Kaffa

It took me totally outside of my Australian context. I was lucky to be with the company as it moved to its full cultural maturity away from its British origins. It had a small group of Chinese ‘actors’ with an extraordinary range of traditional opera and dance skills playing supporting roles to British actors in plays for the British. There was no equivalent to NIDA. They were left to their own devices to mount their own productions in sports areas or housing estates for Cantonese audiences. And the work was good. I think I was consciously selected by the board and the company as artistic director to break from British tradition, to forge a connection with Australia.

It was a generous time for the company and me in which its reputation was secured both in Hong Kong and overseas, significant, in the run to a kind of Chinese rep production outside of Asia. I learnt a lot. Though I was careful to begin with text-based work we could share because we spoke different languages. By the time I left the company was performing in its own language. We had learned to work around, over and above language with a very physical, rhythmic, group energy, putting language aside so that the performers could use their vocabulary of movement, sound and rhythm and the like to create original works.

What really transformed the company was the ‘one size’ attitude. It was a powerful trigger for a company often regarded as youthful and entertaining. A nervous Hong KongCapital, the capital went local on a group of an untiredDb online who had performed with the company and now directed it in a sell out season.

You advised him...

'I didn’t have to. It was a work about being Chinese. It said we are already going back to the mainland, not just waiting for it to happen. Acknowledge it. Talk the responsibility. The work had pride and poetry. I couldn’t have directed it however well I knew the company, it was outside my context. The audience laughed as always but there was also a stillness like never before.

You were executive director as well as artistic director of Chung Ying.'

'It gave me access to government, to policy, to working with the actor on the floor. It wasn’t mediated through one general manager, not that there aren’t good general managers. So you’ve carried this over in some way into the QT? You’ve got various executive officers.

‘One for finance, one for production and touring. It’s a big role and you can’t just visit one or two places recurrently, and, critically, one for policy and planning. The company has its own marketing consultant, but as I learned in Hong Kong, I must say I seem to say it to surprise people here, that person is better placed working outside the company advising the whole executive team. The restructuring was covered by the financial pages of The Courier Mail which uggers well. It was too early to be asking Chris whether the Chung Ying style and concerns would be left in her first season, but state companies didn’t have what they used to be (as Chris Westwood’s programming for the State Theatre Company of South Australia shows — owing not a little to her Belvoir Sts) . They need not constrain the vision that comes from within. And I think, the wisdom of Chris Johnson’s managerial strategy reassures the capacity of artistic directors to be managers as well as a time when some would prefer these companies dissolved and their funding passed the way of independent producers.'
DANCE AND BEYOND
Keith Gallasch talks with dancer and choreographer Kim Walker about the influx of great choreographers for the Festival season

Tn am. Darlinghurst, Sydney, and it feels like one hundred per cent humidity already. But in the pause that refeshes between choreographing the very physical realisation of Tim Winton’s That Eye, The Sky, directed by Richard Roxburgh for that actor’s new theatre company, Burning House, in Sydney and the musical Jesus Christ Superstar in New Zealand, Kim Walker beats the heat in his express desire to get to Adelaide to experience the riches offered by William Forsythe and Mark Morris. In Christopher Hunt’s 1994 Adelaide Festival there were two programs by Forsythe, an American directing the Frankfurt Ballet, and three by another American, Mark Morris. With his own company and including a dance-driven version of Purcell’s opera Dido and Aeneas, this is a Festival with dance at its centre. When he first saw Forsythe’s work in the mid 80s, Kim, no stranger to the demands of modern dance in the Sydney Dance Company, was absolutely astounded and started at the sheer individuality of the work, at the power of the ideas and imagery, that a ballet company was working like a contemporary dance company.

I was astounded too. Chance took me to Forsythe’s sold out ballad at the Chalet in Park St, Sydney, in 1993. It was a giant work, a fantastic journey: dancers’ heads spraying through small holes in the stage floor, a monstrous claw-foot consuming the theatre, lighting that was not afraid of the dark, un-camp dancing across ballet gender lines. It was a night of great theatre, not a soul from four years of age to eighty left behind in the end. Such a thrilling event. Forsythe is reputed to have said that the theatre is dead—well, he’s kicking it back into life. Thanks to Leigh Warren, Adelaide got a taste of it, and it is to be hoped that we can have Forsythe in Adelaide again, as he will take on the responsibilities of Enemy in the Figure. That work will be seen again, this time as part of Lam’s Theatre, the new dance space for the Adelaide Festival Centre.

Kim says dance has changed enormously over the last decade—audiences are now used to responding individually to demanding works and making their own meanings. There are also great ensembles, including a new ensemble of Australian, who are not afraid, who can create huge works and intimate ones, and works that are the translation of the ‘vanishing’ that disturbs as much as it entertains.

What Kim likes most is the very idea that a ballet company like Forsythe’s is at the cutting edge of dance, or so he expects — and gets a new, a wider audience. It’s a visit, he says, that will also confirm just how good Australian dance is. He says that Forsythe’s contemporary ballet and contemporary dance not to be insular, to give dance a place, for example, in opera (a word changed forever in the late 20th century) as in Meryl Tankard’s integral participation in the Australian Opera’s Orpheus and Eurydice, and to start us in the way we see and experience our bodies. Forsythe’s idiom seems to lead from the most unexpected parts of their bodies, inventing new spaces.

Virtuosity is distributed across these ensembles and not just the stars, but the supporting cast, generating both a tribal feel in the big works and an acknowledgment of each performer in the collection of skills, roles and skills of idiosyncratic dancers. They create performances for audiences to work at. With time and timing and to who follow, who to desire, and yet, suddenly, pull you forwards into a powerful central image. You don’t have to like or understand the work, it is about the visceral, demands of Forsythe and Morris, theirs is performance at its most powerful. You’ll be mad if you don’t like it. You’ll be a little less sane when you do.

Before Kim heads out into the steam, reflecting on how radically the other contemporary and traditional dancers and the One Extra Dance Company (and the subsequent Dancing Dreams in Sydney), he happily observes that contemporary dance is fuelled both by its latest rapport with Asia (Christie Parrott’s Sato Opera’s Orpheus and Eurydice is a very recent example) and its own phenomenal energy, a capacity to re-invent itself as pure dance and as an intensively theatrical experience lacking for nothing. His is a very workable Belgian Anne Teresa de Keersmaekers’ Rosas Dansen Rosas and Achterland.

Working in international spaces of any kind is a stranger in any, the experiences slowly shape Kim’s own next project as far away as he feels it might be. In the meantime he’s not going to miss out on Morris and Forsythe in Adelaide and we both wish we could afford tickets to Perth.

WALLS, STEEL BLADES AND A TAFFETA DRESS
DUMB TYPE AT THE ADELAIDE FESTIVAL
Colin Hood on the not-so-Dumb Type

The concept of performance (as a quasi-theatrical medium on the fringe of other media) remains constantly in flux owing to our technologically mediated perception of the theatricality of everyday life. One cannot ‘exit’ from the alienating machines of theatrical illusion to touch base with a more concrete life-world (the home of happenings, street theatre and other ‘grounded’ performative idioms) when that life-world is already enmeshed in the networked virtuosity of technoculture.

In PH, a work performed at the Museum of Contemporary Art in 1992 (as well as in Europe, Japan and North America), Dumb Type created a machine environment engag- ing performers, spectators and technician alike. The perverse mix of cultural, ethnographic and image repertoires was played out and I pinched a phrase from Kurt Vonnegut Jr here — like a ‘snaggle-toothed thought machine’... ‘whirling with the jerky, noisy, guddy pointlessness of a cucking clock in hell’, while the choreographed movements of the more human elements reflected the style of American minimalist dance and task per- formance (Teiji Furusashi — founder of Dumb Type — cites Meredith Monk as an influence here).

It would be tempting to compare these painstakingly blue-printed works to the architectural precision of Oskar Schlemmer’s Bauhaus Theatre (where the mapping of movement and moving geometried bodies in co-habitable space was a prime component). True, one of the principle motives of the Dumb Type col- lective project (founded in Kyoto in 1984) is to bring artists, architects, designers and per- formers together in the production of new utopian experiment.

But the debt to European modernism (in my mind at least) tills more in the direction of the formalist directions of Raymond Roussel and Marcel Duchamp, where a collision of sex, biology and imagined machines is more indica- tive of the ‘closed space of consciousness’ than ‘the shape of things to come’.

The Japanese blending and consciousness of techniques of perception, violence, and other cultures is often judged as a culturally specific and de-politicised mode of cuteness and kitsch. Dumb Type’s take on this work, S/N (signal/noise) — expected to be performed at the Adelaide Festival (in a world premiere from March 8-15) will certainly move more to the political edge — engaging with those ‘dependable’ oppositions (‘vice and virtue’, ‘normal and abnormal’, ‘safe sex and good sex’). A training ground for shape both global and local responses to pre- sent scenarios of oppression, racism and the AIDS epidemic (which in spite of its obvious presence, has received very little public attention in Japan).

S/N will explore and explode some of the barriers which shape the mindless escape that what Dumb Type describe as ‘human system interaction’. For the new work (which had already been adapted into a multimedia instal- lation as an installation in Brussels, Vienna and Tokyo), Dumb Type anticipate an acting out of the fantasy of the system of interaction between the active ‘motions’ of the system as a whole and the lesser reactive ‘emotions’ of the individual as he redrawing visions of the future upon the imagined wall of our millennium.

We can look forward to seeing something like a high level of critical speculation — a glowing critical eye and ear to those constantly mutating assemblages of post-industrial life-support and cultural systems.

DANCE DEGREE ZERO
JEAN CLAUD GALLOTTA
IN AUSTRALIA
Keith Gallasch talks with Julie Anne Long about workshopshopping with the internationally renowned French dancer-philosopher Jean Claud Gallotta.

He has extremely intense, unblink- ing, blue eyes and an unbelievable memory.

Julie Anne Long (Associate Director of The One Extra Dance Company and long time collaborator with the Open City Performance Company) is describing Jean Claud Gallotta at work with twenty-two choreographers from Australia, New Zealand and Japan.

In the initial exercise he asked us to read each other’s bodies as maps, looking for a detail to spark a memory. The next day he remembered exactly what we’d done. His feedback was to us individual, perceptive and detailed with no throw away comments. ‘I’d seen a piece of Gallotta’s shown on SBS’s Eat, Carpet, a group of twelve or so overcoated dancers in a field on a chill, sunny morning stamping the churned earth, momentarily bird-like, horse-like, moving individually and then with a sud- den collectivity without any musical prompting, just as suddenly struck, as if by a virus, falling into the earth. Like the best postmodern dance, here was everyday movement made strange by unannounced movement, alternation between individual preoccupation and group forces. It was not surprising then to find that the book I was reading was about the work of Beryl Stock. Christie Parr, Leigh Warren, Sue Heap, Jane Pirani, Mag- gia Sietema, Jim Hughes and Page Gordon signed their work for two weeks with Gal- lotta in Melbourne in January.

His background is in the visual arts and he has a life-long companion. He’s a philosopher of dance in search of “degree zero”, enrol- ling us to pare down movements to an almost neutral state, free of any embellishment. Even the most esoteric gesture, ‘she reaches for a cup in progressively simpler moves — are overlaid by habits and personal style. In the mornings we were dancers learning- giving a vocabulary for the afternoon workshops. This was a bit much, but like the rest of the process, people got into it because it was sustai- ned. I liked the afternoons. Gallotta would outline a bizarre story and we’d each have time to choreograph and perform our own solo version of it. 1 — You arrive in a very polite manner. (I was never quite sure if he was being translated correctly) 2 — You see a book. 3 — You eat it. 4 — You’re cut out of the fire curtain. 5 — You touch your head to it. 6 — The curtain goes up. 7 — You enter the stage and say a phrase from the morning class vocabulary “You’re cut out” and he’ll give his response which, to me, added up to a dramaturgy of movement focused very much on timing and rhythm. It had your own language of steps and movements but you had new ways of dealing with them. We’d absorb his astonishingly detailed and concrete comments and take them into our work on a new story the next day. In many ways it was about responding to and understanding exter- nal rhythms internally. Gallotta’s focus on the interior is something not often offered dancers, I was very well received to it. It was a good group experience and a great individual one.’
Adele and Perth are famously beckoning the rest of Australia especially with dance: Perth with de Kerstemaker and Parrott, Adelaide with Forsythe, Morris and Bangarra. Performance works abound with theatre, taking second place in Adelaide, but traditional theatre of ritual, myth and the court (including Wayang Kulit, Kyogen, Bunraku in Adelaide and the Drummers and Dancers of Kandy and the Drehu Kanak dancers in Perth) is strongly represented. Performance in Adelaide includes: Sarah Miller’s Mixed Relations program for Artists’ Week, Birthday Cake! Fugu! Where? from New York, the UK’s Rose English in My Mathematica, Doppio Teatro’s Filling the Silence, William Yang’s Sadness and from Japan, Dumb Type: S/N, Dusan Erotica, and the Hakutobu Butoh Company. Perth offers new opera — Chamber Made’s Recital and Smetanin and Croggan’s Kafka adaptation The Burrow. On the theatre/performance front there’s The Lift from the UK at PICA (15 seats/ performance only), the freeway spectacle Topoli-no from the Netherlands, Astrid Hadad (fantastically beyond description) from Mexico and Jon Rose’s Violin Music in the Age of Shopping. The big breakthrough in Perth is the street offerings: the photographs are enough to want you to take to the streets to see the alarmingly everyday Les Hommes En Noir, the lifelike Les Voitains and the array of street cleaner-warriors, Les Petons. Perth offers mostly conservative music from remarkable musicians — why not have Bushmet play the Schmitteke Liturgy for Viola & String Orchestra! The relatively progressive stuff (Bartok and Ligeti) is left to young British pianist Rolf Hind (who also performs live with de Kerstemaker) and Roger Smalley. Adelaide focuses its energy on an excellently conceived ‘Two Worlds’ Music’ for over a week in the Town Hall with Japanese and Australian music, composers and musicians. The Adelaide bonus is that some great Handel and Purcell will be played live in conjunction with Mark Morris’ choreography. There are more plays in Perth (Playbox’s Lear, Gate Theatre’s account of Marivaux’s The Cruising Hearts, Cheek by Jowl’s Measure for Measure, Black Swan’s Doel Heart by Nicholas Parsons, Mamet’s Oleanna and Singapore Theatreworks’ Laa Jau while Adelaide, always in a more contemporary Australian frame of mind, limits itself to White’s A Cheery Soul with director Neil Armfield in the expressionistic mode that made The Ham Funeral work, Gow’s Fairies and the Taylor-Dervish Playbox collaboration Disturbing the Dust — both breaking the well-made play rules. Adelaide is still Australia’s premiere arts festival offering radical programming of music and dance while Perth is good in bits, very attractive bits.

MERYL TANKARD

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WILDHOUSE
Linda Wallace

An unsung Among Perth duplex doesn’t know what’s about to hit it.

This “renovators dream” property is set to become a dream home/ nightmare, an UK installation artists Heather Ackroyd and Daniel Harvey start work for the Festival of Perth. Dreamhouse! — maybe, if you feel at home in a lounge room full of mushrooms, moulds, crystals, and grass sending itself up the wall.

Heather and Dan have made a name for themselves turning derelict houses in Europe into living wonders.

Dan says of their work, “We create a series of situations which allow simple, natural things to happen, that is where the beauty lies.”

They started years ago in sculpture and theatre, moved into growing grass skirts for the likes of fashion guru Vivienne Westwood.

and ‘living set’ designs for film directors Derek Jarman and Peter Greenaway, and then moved into planting grass on the sides of buildings, carpeting them with a fresh springs green. People have even been known to make love against the lush walls...

Of late, the pair’s motto seems to be, if it lives, install it. And no space is the wrong space — evidenced by the range of interiors elaborately transformed by their green thumbs.

One of the corridors beneath the Palais de Chaillot in Paris was planted with barley and then 1 000 locusts were introduced to eat the strange garden. Another corridor had 1 000 books with grass planted between their pages, and mushrooms and moulds sprouting everywhere. They say that some people find the work disturbing, while others are more humomously engaged.

In northern France, the artists used an old caretaker’s cottage at a deserted leisure centre to create the installation Implanté Spirit. A month prior to opening they coated the bathroom with a thick solution of flour and water, planted the floor with earth and mushroom, threw in a rotten grapefruit for good measure and then sealed the room.

According to Heather the bathroom grew the most extraordinary moulds, vivid blue-green, pinks and yellows, and, as she says, “people couldn’t believe the state of it.”

“We were playing with all things which are hidden from view in our culture - moulds, decay and rot... but at the same time, the bathroom was incredibly beautiful... people were mesmerised by the transformation.”

She speculates that our mania for cleanliness points to an active repression in our psyche of the natural order, and how “very few people can relate to nature in its fecundity and wildness.”

To get reacquainted with abundant nature pay a visit to 894 91 Lake Street, Northbridge, Perth from 21 Feb to 7th March.

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FUTURE SPEAK
AT THE ADELAIDE FESTIVAL

Linda Wallace

N
urrie Neumann will morph (or at least, talk about it) Alloquaere Rosanne Stone will talk of desire, vampirism, memory and multiple entry from the standpoint of cultural and transhistorical theory. Linda Dement wants your body bits, and Minksi will take you on a mouse-sexed hypnosis tour. The day is February 26th: the place: Elder hall, Adelaide; the event: Future Languages, as curated by the VNS Matrix, four cyberfeminists with attitude.

The members of VNS Matrix end Artists’ Week in the future: “from cyborgs to VR, life in the developed world increasingly mediated by technological devices. How will we experience ourselves and others in the future”? they ask. “Who will be in control?”

Future Languages, with the help of a host of international and Australian artists will investigate the challenges of high technology and culture. The first challenge of the day will no doubt be Simon Penny, beamed as a welcoming telepresence live from his seat as the first Associate Professor in Art and Robotics at Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, USA. Post-Penny, Future Languages starts talking.

Queenslander Glenda Nader is fascinated by the voices, languages and answering machines of others. She is concerned with public/private, differently sexed, telecommunications. During Future Languages, she’ll discuss the technological shibboleth of her model. Nader, an artist and writer, says she has a compulsion to seek out the points of rupture in the ‘informatics of domination’ (to quote her latest, Quarter) and that she has taken the form of research into “how women can make themselves in cyberspace rather than have ourselves as we have been seen in the old media.”

One artist who will be remaking women literally, and inviting participation, is Linda Dement. Throughout the day she’ll be coordinating the workshop Cybergirls Girl-monster in the tradition of Mary Shelley, Hellenik and Helene Cixous. Dement asks that you “donate your body bits - whatever you can scan in will be what she is made of.”

The workshop will be an opportunity for women to put their own flesh into cyberspace as a bodily presence, using languages of gesture, skin, muscle, fantasy, flesh. Participants will be asked to take the bodies of data away on floppy disc for further manipulations.

Dement says that the workshop is to be a women’s representation in the new technico-realms: something other than Mac鄢pla?yment, Virtual Valerite, calender girl screen-savers and online porn.

Maria Fernandez will discuss technology in the colonial and post-colonial cultural inflection. Sally Prior, an Australian computer artist will explore the possibilities of interactive multimedia through an artwork set in a new context: the library. And in the workshop, we’ll talk about computer games in technospeak.

Sadie Plant, from the UK will deliver a paper called Cybermism: Hooking Women’s drugs and intelligent machines. From W.A., Zoe Sofoulis is on the same panel, called Cybermism: Future Languages, and will be talking with women artists and technology, cars and prosthetics.

Helen Gladstone, an artist and academic from Queensland, has for more than 20 years concentrated on an investigation of the relationship between military and civilian popular culture. In recent Future Languages he poses the question: ‘Wailing over split milk: the legacy of the military century, what might have been?’

At the end of the day, we’ll be in a better position to know what will be.

Zona di Transito

Virginia Madisen researcher on the project talks with Ama K

Mostar. First, she left with her Croa
tian friend and neighbour who said she was a daughter, while ac-
ccompanying the Serbian troops his real daughter’s birth certificate.

Then, second time, to protect her

croatian neighbour’s help. She said,

her, but this time he saw someone she

wasn’t there. He was in the moment,

the he acted as if he never knew us.

I’m now listening back to Ama on

one of her tapes. She said that she’s

saying this word, ‘stranger’. She

then for her mother who says, "You

people don’t know how to cherish some-

ting, these are the murderers, the

foreigners.”

Ama is speaking to me from her

other country, the one she no longer

recognizes, but still inhabit

its. She is trying to speak in

English, to speak to a ‘you’ and to

fully inhabit this space, this zone of

transition we call exile or ‘being a refugee’.

An important part of being a refugee is not so much being in flight but rather

being outside of time, of moving out of a geography and into a place which

really doesn’t have a temporal dimension,

a place in between times, a twi

light zone, a ‘Zona di Transito’.

Dennis Faber

Zona di Transito (the joint project of Dennis Faber, Tony MacGregor and Derek Nicholas) is a multi-site installation, one of a number of works commissioned by the Ade

elaide Festival Centre and the Cultural Exchange Australia. Zona uses two main sites to explore the landscape of the refugee. Three rooms in a Adelaide warehouse are dedicated to a holding camp for the refugee experience (Petra). A radio feature (Ihoupis) reweaves the soundscape heard in the workshop. Ama’s voice is the one I’m hearing now. A voice, cool and steady, a voice of 18, in flight and yet in limbo. We are still living with Mostar in our heads and it is still

butting the shape of that old bridge. Even though that bridge is destroyed, we still like to think that Maybe some day, when we are home, our luggage will be the luggage of return.”

Zona Di Transito opens in Adelaide on February 22 and will run until March 2. For details see the program, and can be heard on ABC FM’s The Listening Room, on March 21 at 9:30 pm.

ADENALLE INSTALLATIONS

Linda Wallace

These range from such diverse practitioners as Montico Boonma from Thailand, Japan’s Toshikatsu Endo, and Lu Shenghong from Shandong, China.

Indonesian artist Heri Dono believes art is for everyone, and that the relationship between art and life are false. His Kode Biru, produced in Yogyakarta in 1992, included puppets, music and even a sandstorm representing the

Dutch Indian and Java’s tormenting presence of dances of Java, reactivating an old tradi-

on in contemporary form (to be performed on Feb. 26 also).

The collaboration of local artist Fiona Hill and Malaysian-born Syunn Gill (the

local artist who recently moved from Adelaide to Singapore) looks at the move

ment of plants across borders and cultures, and variations in their use and meaning in different cultural positions and contexts. It is not only diversity but difference.

To increase the feeling of total immersion in the site-specific environment, the artist

lovers can walk from installation to installation, with a detailed walking map available at each site.
OPEN YOUR MIND TO SBS

In a new weekly program SBS goes beyond the canvas to find art in the most unusual places. Tune into 'IMAGINE' Fridays 7.30pm from February 18th.
BOSCO RUNG HAS HIS SAY

Rung scales the hype as SBS and Radio National lift their arts game in 1994

SBS is set to rival ABC TV's Review with Imagine, another whole half hour a week devoted to the arts in a country whose cultural life is thriving says producer Veronique Bernaud. But apparently not thriving enough to warrant more than half an hour a week for probably half of the year. And, again, like Carpet Burns, requiring a little help from the Australian Council (just like REAL TIME). Of course, commercial television offers the arts nothing, so we are inclined to be supinely grateful to SBS because it's braver than the ABC. The press release for Imagine, thrice iterating its interest in 'design and creation', promising to 'ask people behind the scenes where their inspiration to create comes from' and 'to reach the wider commu-

city', sounds a bit too close to Review.

Not so producer Janne Ryan and presenter David Marr of the hour-a-day new arts program for Radio National. They're out to re-define arts journalism and journalism across the board and without a press release: 'highly political' says Ryan over the phone. 'We'll investigate the processes of power in arts and culture... we've got to stop seeing art as separate from the rest of our lives... a creative program with its own experiments in sound... it's not only the arts that are per-

formativ'e; she's got the same team (Portus, Rigg, Jelbart, Wakely, Prior, Short) who fronted and produced the last round of pro-

grams as reporters and commentators this time.

Wont that reproduce the same caution and pedagogical inclination of the past?

'We've had reactive programs, now we'll create. Now David will interact with our team and we'll be bringing in independent com-

mentators who feel they've got something to say.'

She's picked the right time as theatre and performance engage more directly with the world than any time since the 70s.

As for Imagine, it's rumoured to be more impressive than its press release and includes reporters like Pippa Bailey and Paul McGillic with inside arts experience. With a forbear like Carpet Burns, a remark-

able cumulative document of Australian performance and curious collaborations, it does have a lot to live up to. Let's hope it gets a better deal than The Bookshow and that it gives some room to the work that Review simply doesn't or can't cover. That would be start.

Both SBS and the Radio National team promise a creative edge. Ryan has commis-

sioned short, original works (a rarity on ABC radio) from Sherre Dys. Virginia Madsen, Open City and newcomers out of the Universi-
	y of Technology Sydney's media course, Patrick Gibson and Daniel Grafton. Imagine offers 'vignettes shot to intrigue and enter-

tain: performance pieces from the fringe exposing some of the most creative artists around'. Hate that word 'fringe'.

We live in hope that media managements will allow both shows to develop, that Ryan realises her vision with Arts Today and that Imagine has one.

---

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A Queer Peace Came Over Me

'Someone once told me that the only way to deal with a situation you can't control is to laugh at it.'

--- Shirley Jackson

I'm watching a transsexual in a black body-suit winking diamantés, dancing with self-assurance and grace. They are part of the Mardi Gras Ball: it marshals in one place, for a temporary moment, all the techniques of glamour our culture has acquired. Here are all the glamour-tech-wise rules of survival, packed in a joyful art form. Techniques which not only embody the art of refined pleasure but also promise of a non-violent world.

The Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras is Sydney's festival contribution to the global polysexual culture. Every year the leading talking head from the fundamentalist movement, the Rev Fred Nile, prays for rain on Mardi Gras night. Every night, so far, the weather has been just fine. Late February is when summer heat cools and dancing in the streets seems like a fun thing to do all over again. A million people crowd around Oxford Street to watch the parade. An effigy of the Rev Fred's head will pass by to wild cheering, in amongst Slats For Jesus in string bikinis and the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, an order of gay male nuns. Apart from a few distressed and distorting looking teenage boys mouthing foul bigotedries, the crowd are relaxed, drinking in the streets, enjoying the spectacle. 'Black lives matter' holds hands. Masters with trailing slaves get their dog leads tangled on the great posts. The police stand around with their hands in their pockets.

The parade ends at the showground and the Ball. I love the Ball! This is an alien zone where certain rules about bodies and their surfaces, signs and their bearers, are suspended for the duration. I am dancing along with everyone else, with a singular assemblage of movements, all woven together in time and I feel like I am dancing Nietzsche's dance. Like everyone else, I dance and dream, the whole of our bodies, at once. The rules do not apply to me. Together in movement, endless repetition of movement in trace. Then suddenly I am aware of my body, dreamlike, swimming, floating, only to the fact that I go on dreaming, dream- ing and dancing, dancing and dreaming. I am dancing, dreaming, thinking, but thinking only that I want to continue the dream, play my part in the ceremony. I see in my lucid moment that we wear masks that maybe hide our animal selves, but sometimes too they are what name our animal selves. I am conscious of the essential nature of appearances. They are all there is that can call one's own. A queer peace comes over me. I am without a mask, I feel a million ways to sexual masks, the endless procession of being.

In my lucid dreaming, I am dreaming. I see the fabulous sheep wrapped in the black body-suit. I think I saw her earlier in the parade, strutting her stuff with Slats For Jesus. Her long legs and narrow hips shimmer in sheer black stockings. Her slender arms have unadulterated sex-power. What a masterpiece of appearances! To call her a deprivation is not high praise enough. The whole creation speaks to me, nibbling whispers of appreciation. I am so happy. This instant is pure bliss. This instant was made for her and for me. While there are other extras, for her spectacle. What I love about this is this cast, these promiscuous images, this insidious larceny — the body as a sentence or a song.

The problem with the Ball is how to get home afterwards, with a singular assemblage of little packs of bashers. These self-appointed tribunals insist on policing wayward bodies like hers, and hers, and ours. They bend the will of the other. The thought that all is not what it seems. Any deviation of the signs the body displays, however rare and beautiful, must be punished. They are the nightmare of reason; they judge you guilty at a glance of a truth presumed concealed. They take your naked and naked confession. They turn a body's well-turned phrases and lines into a life sentence.

The ghost of Walter Benjamin walks by in the shadows, a melancholy witness. He says bashers are self-appointed fraud squads who exemplify his strange theory of violence: 'A cause, however effective, becomes violent in the precise sense of the word, only when it bears on moral issues.' The moral issue is fraud. He misreads the signs from the body. He should know. When those vicious little packs of bashers who became the Nazis took Parts, Benjamin, the Jew, killed himself with an overdose, in fear of falling into the Gestapo's hands. He knew a thing or two about the police and the police of the body and its signs. Yellow stars, pink, and black triangles — alienating signs, a violent imposition of an alleged truth.

Anyone who acquaints themselves with the violent act of the Ball at Mardi Gras acknowledges an alien body. But from this instant there are the barriers of representing anything, they are set loose for promiscuous play. Walter's ghost speaks to me in the darkness, in a moment of the danger. He says this is why the Mardi Gras is non-violent: 'The evocation of violence in principle is quite explicitly demonstrable by one significant factor: there is no sanction for lying. My glorious transsexual that Jesus is free to appear as whatever she likes. Her glamour belongs. She is an allegory. And in the nature of allegory, to a pure and intended land of non-violence. This makes it clear that there is a shape of human agreement that is nonviolent to the extent that it is wholly inaccusable to violence — the proper shape of "understanding"."

But once outside the alien zone of understanding, once outside the orbit of the beat, the bashers lurk in the shadows, ready to attack the gap between sign and body. This then is the double-sided life of the lie: an aesthetic simulation, freed from the moral order of representation: as punishable and disturbing, to fundamentalist violence.

Only when, lying and deception was promoted as a sign of the flourishing of a self-creation can there be a possibility that we can dance and dream in peace. When set free to signify whatever its desires, not only is the body freed, but the thought of peace can awaken. The minute the ecstatic delirium of the body is forced back into the mould of the moral law, violence is inevitable. Creating the space of appropriation for dissimulation is also the creation of the techniques of peace. A space which is not the over, indeed literally familiar image of peace, but rather an ecstatic orgy of transgression but co-sensual violence, an alien one of desire outside of all-too-human order of peace. A mooncape of unknown pleasures, seduced by the strange attractor of the rhythm, for as long as it lasts. Hurting towards Befellheim to be reborn.
Anchee Min.
Red Azalea. Life and Love in China
Victor Gollancz: London, 1993

I began reading this book with a mounting sense of irritation at the clumsy translation and careless editing. In fact, the language sometimes benefits from its raw originality of expression — bad translation is sometimes curiously close to good poetry — and the writing is frequently superb, but there are almost as many times when it simply sounds daft.

Nonetheless, this is a remarkable book which should be read by anyone interested in modern China, and that strange business usually described as the 'Cultural Revolution'. Its proper title was 'The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution' and, as such, it grew out of, and was sustained by, propaganda, polemic and massive proletarian cultural activity, including the 'eight model operas' of Jiang Qing (confusingly referred to as Jiang Ching throughout the book). The author, Anchee Min, gives an extraordinary account of her life during this period, as a 'rationalized youth', sent out into China's countryside to learn from peasants and workers. Her story is a very tough, harrowing and illuminating account of the spiritual and cultural desolation of it all, but the most absorbing aspect is the author’s affair with another woman, and the shocking intensity of psychological warfare underlying every activity at Red Fire Farm. Anchee Min is finally plucked from this hell-hole by scouts looking for the right type to play the proletarian heroine Red Azalea in a film beloved of Jiang Qing. At this point, she enters into another sexually ambiguous affair.

Red Azalea echoes, in many ways, old Chinese operatic themes — a woman stands outside a screen imagining her own lover have sex with someone else; women are really men, men are really women, and so on. It's all very current in the West now too, with M Butterfly, Lai Lai, Farewell My Concubine also exploring these old Peking Opera themes. The most fascinating thing about this tale, however, is its wide trail of clues that Anchee Min’s lover in the second half of the book, her film studio ‘supervisor’, is none other than Jiang Qing herself — Mao’s wife. This person, who is supposed to be a man, but looks like a woman, has played the part of Nora in Ibsen’s A Doll’s House, as Jiang Qing did, photographs pin-ups, as Jiang Qing did, knows by heart the screenplay of Western movies (Jiang Qing particularly loved the 1933 MGM Greta Garbo film Queen Christina, which also contains the classic theme so beloved of Chinese tradition, in which a woman disguises herself as a man and is thrown into very close proximity with the object of her affections, provides intimate revelations about Jiang Qing’s life with Mao, and so on. And, at one point in the book where Jiang Qing and the supervisor are supposed to be in the same place at the same time, the author is not herself present, so it is always possible for Jiang Qing to assume the identity of the supervisor. To cap it all off, this ‘supervisor’ (never named) appears to live in a place where there is a stone boat — just like the Summer Palace of the former Empress Dowager Ci Xi. Not surprisingly, Anchee Min is rescued from misery and oblivion by a sudden interest from ‘upstairs’.

The author has not been subtle about this, and it amazes me that no review I have seen has mentioned the identity of the supervisor. It may be that the writer is using a kind of symbolic representation of the complex, bewildering sensuality of this extraordinary woman who was both villain and victim in a feudal and patriarchal society, or it may be that she means us to think she really did have an affair with Jiang Qing, but didn’t know it at the time. Maybe she’s just toying with naive foreigners who don’t know much about China. There is a certain classical Chinese artifice about it all. But the most important and engrossing thing about the book is its chilling portrait of Jiang Qing as a woman who was passionately sensitive to human individuality and yet driven to use a vicious ‘proletarian culture’ as the ultimate weapon against it. In this, however, she is exactly like the other women trapped in the barren, salty fields of Red Fire Farm.

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IN THE FLESH

Jane Goodall


Ait it works 'talk amongst themselves', to adapt an old adage: and while the artists who create them may be closely attuned to particular dialogues, a different kind of attention is involved in picking up on the wider patterns of conversation. One of the critic's jobs is to pay this kind of attention — and, hopefully, to start some kind of productive new lines of dialogue in the process. While journals like Art + Text, Photofile, Art in Australia and Agenda have kept the critical circuits buzzing around experimental and performance art, nobody thus far has attempted to give us an overview of what has been a very vigorous field of activity.

Anne Marsh's general study of performance art in Australia over the last two and a half decades is long overdue. The sheer volume and variety of Australian performance art makes her task a daunting one, and the difficulty is compounded by the need to distribute the coverage across five different state capitals. Although everyone who is interested in experimental art will find examples of crucial omissions (Sydney readers will wonder why the influential work of Sarah Miller, Open City and The Sydney Front is not included), the author must be given credit for organising a vast range of examples in a clear and interesting way.

As a documentary contribution alone, the book is invaluable. Marsh points out that performance art exists only in the moment of its enactment, and many of the works she discusses were never effectively documented. Documentation is often considered a humble task, but Marsh herself has a flair for it, and musters a wealth of photographs, interview material and descriptive accounts. Her own descriptions are well judged and usually give a good sense of the special qualities of the artist and the work. I especially enjoyed her accounts of the work of Jill Orr and Derek Krecker. It is only in the case of the work of Stelarc that I found her psychosomatic approach becoming intrusively judgmental. Stelarc's work tests the limits of our critical parameters in some complex ways, and an introductory study of this kind does not allow much scope for engaging in critical complexities. On the other hand, some of the work done at Inhospitable by Mike Parr and Peter Kennedy seems to call for some up front critique. This doesn't mean to say that the book fights shy of critical issues, but an author whose task is primarily one of introduction is not well placed to engage in polemic.

One of Marsh's most important concerns is to give an explanatory account of major critical shifts that shaped performance art practice. Here she identifies the influential roles played by individual critics — notably Donald Brook, Achille Bonito Oliva, Lucy Lippard and Laura Mulvey — and points to the ways in which the Power Lectures were often instrumental in transforming the critical agenda. The shift from the avant-garde and essentialism of counter-cultural performance art, through to an anti-essentialist concern with the construction of subjects, forms the main focus of the first part of the book. Marsh is less effective in dealing with the diversification of theoretical and social concerns in the last ten years and might be accused of adhering to the principle of the unified narrative. Here again, though, her own options as a critic are rather severely constrained by the requirements of an introductory study, and if the critical voice in it seems inhibited, this could be partly the fault of an over-anxious publisher. Whatever its limitations, this study should be a vital sounding board for artists, critics and audiences.

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EVERY SENSE OF THE WORD
A survey of Performing Women
Virginia Baxter with Annemarie Jonson & Linda Wallace

The freedom of movement offered by the new performance ‘writing’ has attracted a notable range of women. In the beginnings of a survey, here are just a few, who are stretching the limits of performance:

BARBARA CAMPBELL
Barbara Campbell’s Backwash is the kind of work that resonates long after it is first experienced – it seems to etch a mnemonic groove that flips now and then into spontaneous replay. Backwash weaves a loose intertextual narrative that takes in Heart of Darkness, Apologia now, the 1937 Stinson plane crash in the rugged southern Queensland of the artist’s youth, and Campbell’s own recollection of childhood. Through devices such as the fetishistic recitation of lists (childhood scenes highlights of the artist’s hometown, the list of all the men from Campbell’s district killed in the Great War, the list of men in the Stinson search party) women’s voices mark out moments that punctuate time, and remebered spaces of the tragic and mundane.

The tableau Campbell creates is at once melancholic, poignant and celebratory – it evokes that desire to repeat and retrace that is deeply embedded in children’s chants, in poetic prosody, even in the organic rhythms of physiology. The ‘banal’ and ‘historical’ intersect in this text of retrojection: this is a place where men in boats and planes plunge into the spaces of nature and war to create the signs of a history, while women work the rescue switchboard. The cracked voice of Gracie Sileo conveys the story of her role in the Stinson rescue, and Campbell tells how Gracie, after 60 years as district telephone, had literally carved her own circuit of memory between connections on the switchboard. Linking time, naming and space in the same way that memory forges neuronal circuits along which the backwash of recollection flow.

Backwash, originally performed for the 1993 Australian Perspectives at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, has been adapted for radio and will be broadcast on ABC FM’s The Listening Room in May 1994.

VICTORIA SPENCE DEVORAH POLLARD
The girls that brought The Fall of the Roman Emperors to the depths of downtown Cunabura are back. This time the site is Giles Gym and Bath House at Coogee where Victoria Spence and Deborah Pollard are creatively developing their new performance. Dripping With Ennui with ‘Mad Woman’ Tania Leman and ex-Sydney Frontier Claire Grant.

Conducting the work in an arena that is both architecturally and culturally idiosyncratic, wearing ballgowns, mouthguards and boxing gloves, they hope to shed new light on the power relations involved in the creative process. To lay to rest any rumours that the Australia Council have funded a summer holiday at the beach, Spence and Pollard invite seriously interested parties to drop in at any time and watch them slaving in the salt sea spa.

CLARE GRANT
Clare Grant is best known for her work as co-curator of, and performer with, The Sydney Front since 1986 in Walt: John Laws Suede: The Pornography of Performance: Photographs of God. Don Juan, First and Last Warning, and Passion; and for her solo performance work Woman in the Wall. Written with Mickey Furuya, Nigel Kelkaway and Sarah de Jong. As well as directing and dramatic work this year with Victoria Spence and Deborah Pollard (Dripping With Ennui), Clare will shortly take up the role of Co-Director (with writer-director Sally Richardson) of Playworks, the national network for women writing in theatre and performance.

T.A.P. Gallery
(Taylor at Palmer)
Level 1/278 Palmer Street,
Taylor Square 2010 Ph & Fax 361 0440

TAKING BOOKINGS FOR 1994
2 large exhibition spaces
Base for Art Bulletin
Taylor Square Arts Festival
Life Drawing Mon 7pm
Life Painting Wed 7pm

Ten Years Street has moved to larger premises. T.A.P. (Taylor at Palmer), an open policy artist-run-initiative has 5 years experience in presenting a broad spectrum of artists in all mediums. Over 700 artists have shown their work in this time and T.A.P. has a growing reputation for allowing artists the freedom of their own curatorial.

NOELLE JANACEWSKA
Noelle Janacewska writes across performance, radio, print and installation. New performance works for 1994 include: Jing on the Cake exploring (in English, Polish and some Korean) the Cold War, weather, language, cake, department stores and family secrets from the perspective of second generation migrants (Adelaide Artists Week, February 1994); and The Marti Curie Chat Show, a commission for the Salamanca Theatre Company in Hobart — a performance about women, science, technology and the limits of ‘reason’ — hosted by the world’s most famous female scientist. The Marti Curie Chat Show opens in July, directed by Brigid Kitchin (from all-women performance company, PartYline). Noelle’s The History of Water (performed at STC’s New Stage in 1991) will be produced by Jane Ulman and broadcast on ABC Radio later this year.

MICHELLE ANDRINGA
Portable performance: work in the digital age keeps Michelle Andringa on the move. Curator and producer of the performance program for TISCA — the international electronic arts event held in Sydney in 1992 — Andringa’s own work spans from the information culture: using domestic technologies, live movement and voice. Her latest piece is Swee Tine, an exercise in digital choreography, featuring the curious movement of Virginia Barrat. Video editing on the AVID system enabled the construction of movement phrases through frame grabs, and its elegant faltering capabilities. In February Swee Tine will be projected with an overlay of red laser line tracing. This Amiga-driven loop will trace an iconic jewel — reinventing the dancer with a 3D type illusion.

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MAKING SENSE OF THE MACHINE

John Potts

The Australian music-text group Machine For Making Sense will soon embark on a national tour. John Potts spoke to members Stevie Wishart and Jim Denley about the machine, and about their individual pursuits here and overseas.

"Five lovable mad-cup avant-gardists" is how one critic has described The Machine For Making Sense. While the description is certainly limiting — not to mention patronising — it conveys some of the appeal of this ensemble in performance. Spoken word, spoken non-word, musical improvising and electronic noise are melded so that no one element dominates. Nothing is predictable in a Machine event, as audiences will soon discover for themselves. The Machine is conducting an Australia-wide tour in April and May.

The Machine For Making Sense is now in fact a six-piece entity. The original five mad-cuppers are Jim Denley (flutes, sax, voice), Stevie Wishart (vocals, harp, and guitar), Chris Mann (text and voice), Amanda Stewart (text and utterances) and Rik Rue (sampler and tape manipulations). Augmenting this line-up is Julian Knowles (sound projection and electronics).

Having formed in 1989 after the ARS Electronica in Austria, the Machine first performed in Hungary and England. They toured Australia in 1991, inciting a critical furor along the way. One negative review in a Perth newspaper provoked a barrage of replies, all favourable to The Machine and anti at the review's narrow focus. The Machine had become a focal point of aesthetic debate: not a bad achievement for a first national tour.

Since then, The Machine's program has been to take one major piece on tour each year. A Machine event is a form of improvised composition or composed improvisation. With so many sound sources colliding, there is always scope for the unexpected. As Jim Denley observes, the composition is "stacked up in a certain way, and falls differently each night." The 1994 tour will include input from a random access, recordable CD, whose chance selections include silences.

Such Cagean elements within The Machine should come as no surprise. John Cage himself was reportedly such a devotee of Machinist Chris Mann's work that in the last years of his life, his essential reading was the Bible and Chris Mann. An intriguing combination, and one that raises even more intriguing questions. How exactly did Cage read the two works? At the same time perhaps? Did he ever confuse the two?

One of the paradoxes of The Machine involves the notion of 'making sense'. The interaction of spoken language, music, electronic treatments and appropriated noises all somehow come together: it makes sense for these musicians and writers to coalesce. Yet much of the spoken matter is in defiance of making sense. Amanda Stewart and Chris Mann speak in fragments, shards, non-linear jabs of language. These utterances often make little rational sense, instead probing away in the lateral manner of background consciousness.

Jim Denley and Stevie Wishart, two of the Sydney-based Machinists, both emphasise the importance of Australian speech and language to the Machine. 'Speech is the first inspiration and reference point,' Denley says of The Machine. His own solo work, including the 1992 CD Dark Matter, often explores the relation between vocal utterances and musical improvisation.

A similar emphasis forms one of the connections between The Machine and Stevie Wishart's other main interest: medieval music. As director of Sinfonye, a British-based medieval music group, she has pioneered an innovative approach to the performance of medieval music. Taking the text as a starting-point, improvisatory skills are employed. Musicians often being taught by ear, as in medieval practice. Sinfonye's five albums have sold well; the group's unconventional approach has earned it a following outside classical confines — including a large rock following in Europe.

The connections between medieval and contemporary music are most evident on Wishart's solo album Wind, released on the Australian Tall Poppies label. Improvisations on violin and harp-gurdy (a medieval stringed instrument) are treated and extended with digital electronics. The 1990s shake hands with the 1200s, and postmodern medi-aevalists like Umberto Eco would no doubt thoroughly approve. Wish was voted one of the best albums of 1993 in the British music magazines Gramophone and Wire.

Wishart and Denley spend part of each year in Europe; they have interesting views on the relative merits of the Australian and overseas contemporary music scenes. Both see the Australian environment as a very healthy one for improving musicians. They praise the sophistication of audiences, the availability of recording facilities, the high caliber of musicians, and the unmatched cross-pollination of approaches. Unlike the more conservative European scene, where improvisatory music grew largely out of free jazz, Australian new music thrives on collaborations and movement across different media.

So why go overseas? Bigger audiences, for one thing. And bigger recording companies, plus the chance to perform at huge music fes- tivals. Plus liaisons with like-minded expo- nents. The Machine performed last December at Experimental Intermedia in New York, impressing the influential composer Robert Ashley with their work. This year, Wishart will participate in a Swiss symposium of female improvisers. She also points to the stimulating nature of travelling back and forth between hemispheres.

And what can be done to improve the Australian contemporary music environment? Regular music festivals would be a positive start. Oh, and a lift in the quality and quantity of music criticism. At the very least, the upcoming Machine tour should give the critics something to write about.

SYDNEY FRONT
REQUIESCAT IN PACE

They will not rest in peace, for as they made us, their audience, restless with their restlessness, they will doubtless, each busy themselves at other per-formative things, spurning the sentimentality occasioned by their casually self-inflicted death, for they had unravelled the workings of performance, bared its bottom and re-dressed it with Desire, and, having done all they could, disappeared themselves as performers into stage managers in their last work Passion and then executed altogether. They will be missed, but the memories of being herded about, refused seats, undressed, interrogated will not (go missing). In all likelihood they will do a Melba since they never wanted to be a full-time concern in the first place: where's the pleasure in that except to guarantee continuity of funding? As they said often enough, the need to work together, to generate desire and create pleasure came first, not some topic or subject or issue. Appropriately and darkly, the image that stays with me is the moment in Passion when a brightly lit transparent surface appears in The Performance Space ceiling, and someone, above, a half-glummed shadow, throws soil, gradually darkening the space, burying us. Part of me would have preferred a boulder rolled across that light to complete our ritual participation in the Christ myth, but there was something transcendentally mundane in it so true to the Front's capacity to excite, irritate, move and offend.
A THOUSAND WAYS TO GO

Annemar Jonson investigates two Australian groups with a penchant for crossing their genres and mixing their media

A s the American avant-garde composer Philip Glass has put it: 'in the art, there are a thousand ways to go'. And while his 'deepest desire' regarding contemporary music—'to hear it all, not successively, but all at once at one time'—may be logically impossible, Cage's rallying call to ecticism echoes in the work of Australasia. The performance interests of the Sydney-based 'new music' ensemble, established in 1979 by artistic director Roger Dean, include digitalised sound/sound/human art works, the century American and European avant-garde, new Australian composition, collaborations involving experimental sound, dance and visual art, and improvisation. While certain members of Australasia have been known to sport a mean set of flares while playing up a storm on the double bass or keyboards, they might equally be found huddled over a sampler mixing with the high-range.

Dean describes Australasia's approach to new music and sound as 'pluralist', and both 'modernist and postmodernist' in its performances. According to Dean, the variety of forms of music and sound with which the group engages happily coexist: he brooks no delineation between 'high art', 'low art', and 'sound/performance' on the other. For Australasia, contemporary performance works on a continuum, offering multiple targets for adroit exploration, with plenty of elbow space for technologies, contemporary classical, dyed in the wool modernists, and outsiders on the digital frontier.

The group's recent performance history is a case in point. Rodrigo y Gabriela, Australasia's final concert for 1993, featured a number of works involving the hybridisation, formal play and to-die-for techniques that have come to represent certain aspects of the postmodern — or at least perhaps the modernist avant-garde — in performance. Greg White, for instance, who has worked with Sandra Bardsley, Haeld Smith, Kirsty Belbalzr, Jennifer Fowler and Gillian Whitehead a regrettable rarely under-taking in the milieu of new music composition whichPremiers by and large anachronis-
ically gynopithic. Australasia's work is available on CD on a number of releases, including Tall Harvey on Soma, with three new recordings due for release in 1994, including a double CD featuring, among others, '610 improvisations on a text/sound performance-based recording by Huel Smith. The 1994 performance season comprises three concerts at the Sydney conservatorium: Composing with Improvisors in February focuses on sound, word and movement, and includes a collaborative work with the dance troupes Kinetik Energy, and Phasing in, scheduled for August. Features music from Australasia, the US and European performance-based groups. The December, The Asian Mirage, centres on inter-actions of Asian and Australasian music.

THE OCCIDENTAL JOURNALS

Tony MacGregor goes in search of Japanese sound culture and James Joyce

Late one Friday night last November, I spent two hours wandering around Oska's Ueno-hachi district in search of the late night Wake Bar Cafe. It was cold, I was hungry, tired and frustrated, straight off the Shinkansen from Tokyo (heading eventually for Kobe). Every set of directions sent me off on another fruitless circuit of the same narrow alleys and indiscernible facades, until a cold night, searching for a Japanese bar that advertised itself with the words of James Joyce: 'the noise downstairs wake they up' and, the flyer goes on to say, 'architecture, construct and context by Toru Arima; sound art by Yukio Fujimoto', and the rest is the art and the reference to Joyce that got me going — after all, I was in Japan for the sound: the separate but related audio art events being held in Japan in November 1993. At Xebec Hall in Kobe, the Australian Sound Art Meridan featured performance a collaboration by Toy Pered and Joyce Hinterding, with an audiotelephone work by some twenty other Australian artists (curated by Alessio Cavallaro). And in and around Tokyo, Sound Culture Japan '93 was a mix of performance, installation and discussion: the sound art event was set up and run by the TOA Corporation, a manufacturer of commercial public addressing equipment, and is actually at the ground floor of their corporate headquarters on the Port Island in Kobe Harbour — a mix of gardens, low rise offices and apartment buildings surrounded by container terminals. TOA see Xebec as part of their Research and Development commitment, and to Australian artists (and ears) it's pure luxury — 15 staff, hot and cold swinging doors, everything that opens and shuts, and a cafe on the premises that offers coffee, beer and hot dogs, but is a good place to sit and talk. And the work/ Aesth. scrutiny, simple but beautiful, was on exhibit in one vitrine and historically rich. The works of Joyce and Ione are very different but share a sense of scale that can be described as 'made-ness'.

Sound Culture was more dispersed, less easy to pin down to a key space or key moments, and was even more of a chain of train journeys (my primary memory of ten days in Japan, training). In the shut-
flying of the first 3 months of Australian work (by Nigel Helyer; Rod Berry, Chris Mann), and caught glimpses of the Americans and Japanese (just like a tourist, sometimes), going by train sometimes an hour or so out of Tokyo to the town of Kiyu. At the Yuri-kan, a 400-year old rambling, rough-hewn building that was once a sake and soy sauce factory, but is now a gallery space, half a dozen Japanese and one expatriate French artist formed the installation core of Sound Culture '93.

In one large room, was a collection of iron instruments, instruments where the artist creates motorised arms and wheels. In another, 60 or so little speakers activated by photos cells at night, was a series of sound structures that took whole diffused 'eco-system' buzzing according to the shifting intensities of sunlight through two high windows.

My visit had to be brief (this was the same day I was catching the bullet train to Kobe, getting off at Oska to search for Finnigans Wake Bar, and heading straight out of the street, all the staff sitting in the courtyard, taking the winter sun stood bowed, biding their time). Leaving the Xebec Hall, I headed for the Wake Bar & Box Gallery. On my last frustrating circuit of the same lane-way, a small unmarked door, there were 20 or 30 people, and a sound artists fell out into the streets. They had given up waiting for me and were on their way back. I had to stay — I couldn't leave after all that searching. The last train to Kobe left in 10 minutes. There was time for only a cup of tea.

The Finnigans Wake Bar and Box Gallery is no more than 2 metres wide and perhaps 5 metres long. The walls are lined with tiny wooden drawers with little brass handles. Artists leave objects in the drawers; some of the drawers have had records, CDs, or any collection of paraphernalia graphed copy of Paul Bowles' The Shimmering Sig in another, a broken clock on a cushion. Hundreds of drawers — 120 of them have little keys for winding up music box mechanisms. When they are all wound together, they play a tiny cicadog for Finnigans Wake. That night I couldn't hear them. The jazz was too loud.
SNAP! CLASSIC POP!
MARKETING THE NEW MUSIC

Michael George Smith

The first major posthumous release of new material from the late Frank Zappa is an album titled *The Yellow Shark* (Barking Pumpkin/CD 1227 16002), new arrangements and transcriptions of some of his best work as well as some of his last compositions, commissioned for the renowned German orchestra Ensemble Modern conducted by Peter Rundel. The result is a virtuoso display of orchestral virtuosity that I have, at long last, become too familiar with. There are no new tricks or surprises, only an explosion of music that I have lived with. The album, comprised of 25 tracks, each lasting about 10 minutes, is a testament to Zappa's genius, a celebration of his life and work. It is a fitting tribute to a man who was ahead of his time, a pioneer of experimental music, and a true original.

The album features collaborations with a number of other musicians, including John Zorn, who provides the liner notes. The liner notes are a must-read for any Zappa fan, as they provide insight into Zappa's thought process and creative vision. The album also includes recordings of Zappa's performances from the 1970s and 1980s, which are a reminder of his influence on the music world.

The album is a celebration of Zappa's music and his legacy. It is a reminder of the power of music and its ability to bring people together. It is a testament to Zappa's influence on the music world and his impact on the future of music. It is a must-listen for any music fan, regardless of age or genre. The album is available for purchase on all major music platforms, and it is a true masterpiece that should not be missed.

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TIL DE DIECE SHOPPING WITH DON ROSE

Gallassch has the goods

The CD spins outside the reverie/nighttime of the Jon Rose Violin Music For Restauration (Rei T). I click in the cassette of my meeting with the 'ABC. In the 80s I got disgusted with Musica Viva forever bringing out fringe third-rate string quartets so I printed a poster for a special concert featuring by Johannes Rosenberg. On Restaurants I hear a very real lion. I brose through *The Pink Vis- \n\nA Portrait of an Australian Musical Dynasty* (NMA Publications, Melbourne, 1992), "The book represents analogies and metaphors for what we're talking about. What started out as a joke became a persistent person. Thanks to a journalists' strike in Berlin a whole newspaper page was given over to Rosenberg and the tattie festival I'd directed people, serious people, wanted a persuasive composer-musicologist like this. It is my work. My seventy-five percent Rosenberg projects and most things in this book are eighty to ninety per cent taken from this event being detained at the East German border for bringing out a nineteen string cello and having to play it to the guards."

I don't play him. I'm just a violin player. And political. When Berlin went for the Olympics, she heard the hostility to the whole idea was astonishing. So I created a work connecting sport and the playing of an instrument and used recorded commentary from the 1916 Naut-run Olympics. I did a live version in Sydney for the ABC using arches of the Australian organ at winning medals pictures of the boat. She felt that because of the Naut desire for victory."

A funny-ridiculous passage on Restaurants directs us: the preparation of a cocktail in a cocked chrome glass that is a sound of a squawking bird, interjected with sounds of disaster and Pagannes's hollering. The music was by Warner Classics. It's the philosophy that has seen the label nuture the careers of some of the most important American composers working today, including Steve Reich, John Adams, John Zorn and Bill Frisell, and the eclectical World Saxophone Quartet.

The music technology philosophy that made Nonesuch the market leader in this field. Even so, when the Australian arm of WEA (Warner Elektra Atlantic) first took up the catalogue, it was placed in the hands of the various pop catalogue managers with this result. Around five years ago, it was finally handed to Warner Classics, whose marketing manager is Andrew McCarthy. The companies are still competing to cover the value in music like that of Steve Reich and John Zorn. Dare I say the 'commercial potential'. Nonesuch was doing this kind of music before anyone else so I think it's entirely appropriate they should have the first major success with the Gorkes, which has sold over 25,000 copies in Aus-

Australia. Other companies have followed of course — you've got Point Music through Phillips, and Catalyst through BMG but they're all pretty much in their infancy.

Nonesuch has made a long term commitment to these experimental artists, John Adams, John Zorn, that has been a particular, who has become something of a house composer. And while they may not directly work for them, they employ them to create the Kronos to do so, which creates a kind of family network of creative output from the audio to the label."

"Kronos still remains unique", McKeath expands, "because they're not a pop quartet at all. They play a bit of John Zorn and the odd arrangement of Hendrix. But they still commission some really quite serious con-

temporary music like the Morton Feldman and John Zorn. We've just recorded which as I understand it, is very uncompromising music and is likely to have very limited sales of a couple thousand worldwide. The other thing about the albums is the生态 of things and they'll do albums like "Pieces of Africa" which is a big crossover album which comes up airplay on some like the ABC's youth network. That's why I think they are so successful. They don't restrict themselves, you know?"

The success of Nonesuch in mar-

keting this kind of music attracted Philip Glass, who was already a big player in this market. Glass once commented about the label's "recent flood of releases from the catalogue of this pioneer of minimalism, including the recently recorded piece by the most recent guest, the Italian composer Godfrey Reggio. Anima Mundis (Nonesuch Elektra CD 9 789 721-2), and will see reissues of two early works from the 60s: Music With Changing Parts and Music in Contrary Motion, originally recorded and released on his own label, and in February, a new album of compositions by Bob Dylan. John Hart and Aaron Copland. He did a ver-

sion of Copland's Billy The Kid ballet, arranged for rock ensemble. Quite tuneful but we only sold a couple of hundred copies, because we couldn't get radio exposure. ABC ABC Music would feature it on some of their shows, but the tracks are all too long and esoteric for JJJ."

Touring any ensemble is expensive and there are some guarantees of success in this field. But McKeath is actively chasing John Zorn, with pianist Roger Woodward and his Sydney ensemble, to try and get a second album. "I'm sure the label was interested in this, in the hope of touring him later this year."

Despite a burgeoning music scene, Aus-

tralia's contemporary classical fraternity is bound to independent labels. "We're the only group involved with local music", McKeath explains, "which is unfortunate. Then again, I've been sent very few tapes of that sort of thing. But because of the commercial nature of operations here and in Australia, the opportunity to develop any thing locally is inevitably limited."

This is a fragment of the full text. For the complete text, please refer to the original source.
INSIDE THE CAVE

Stevie Wishart experiences Steve Reich's The Cave in London

E
tering after the Festival Hall had been plunged into utter darkness, a blind audience member guided me to a free seat. Although some left before the end, the reaction was enthusiastic. The duration given for each act are very precise: 64' for Act I, 40' for Act 2 (with only a five minute break in between), and 12' for Act 3. This heralds the methodically quantified nature of Reich's sound-world and the refinement of Beryl Korot's audio-visual technology.

The lights come up on a metallic scifigrid construction dominated by huge vibrotactile screens. Six vibrotactile sets are positioned on various levels of the grid and far below are the remains of the Steve Reich Ensemble (percussionists, four bass violins, violas, oboe, English horn, clarinet, bass clarinet). With surprising immediacy the singers relate the Old Testament story of Abraham and Sarah in a quasi-staccato hyper-chant. Reich's repetitive rhythmic formuata and short range melodies imbue an urgency to the rather laboured pace of biblical language. It is refreshing to experience an operatic style bereft of nineteenth-century European spectacle. The choice of Paul Hillier as conductor and producer of this new edition was an inspired one. He made his name initially as founder/director of the Hilliard Ensemble, then specialising in medieval vocal repertoires. Under Hillier's direction the ensemble performed with a clarity of tone and intonation which Reich's tonal transparency demands. Certainly a non-classically orientated vocal technique has none of the projection of classical opera singers, and so the voices were individually milked, as were the instrumentalists.

The main role of the vocal material was in relation to the bouquet from the Broadway song, sung in English while being typed on closexmik computer keyboards, and projected onto video screens in English, German and French. In this way the audience is informed of how Abraham buys the Cave of the Patriarchs as a burial place for his wife Sarah and their descendants. This brings us to the main subject of Korot's videos in the form of a series of three works with Israelis from West Jerusalem and Hebron (Act 1. 1989), with Palestinians from East Jerusalem and Hebron (Act 2. 1991), and with Americans from New York City and Austin, Texas (Act 1. 1992). Each were asked the same basic five questions: Who is for you? Abraham? Who is for Sarah? Who is for Hagar? Who is for Ishmael? Who is for you? Isaac? While responding, each interviewee's face fills some screens and others endure minute details — woven patterns on their clothing, the veins of a leaf of an inconsequential pot plant, a strand of the interviewee's hair. Korot creates a stunning counterpart between the video as documentation and as an abstracted visual poem.

The answers are spoken in unscripted, unstaged, natural speech, but the overall phrase lengths are exactly distributed to conform to Reich's metronomic score in the style of Different Drums. As with the music, certain key passages are emphasised through repetition, their incessant but not necessarily forward moving energy forming an ideal foil to another element of Korot's visuals — field sound track improved to televised grabs of boxing matches projected onto a huge video screen.

The final night performances included groups from Myanmar (Burma), mask dances from Kalimantan and my last performance; the reception was astounding (I am not used to audiences shouting throughout the piece).

Trips into Hebron. We catch glimpses of the roadside along which we are driven to the tombs of the mosque which toke us over the Cave and remains of a Byzantine church. We take us inside to the hushed splendour of the maqam, the time of the armed Israeli soldiers, Jews and Moslems uniquely worship under one roof.

What was particularly inspiring was to find a new opera which was so contemporary in terms of its subject, use of technology, and exploration of visual and musical composition. The crystalline vocals, and precision of the instrumental writing and performance sound truly minimalist and postfuturist in their rhythmic and melodically tonal myopia, yet so lush in timbral complexity. The honest documentation of human religious debate is lyrically interplayed with the use of video as a non-semantic art form. The sung biblical texts enliven the appreciation of the colloquial realities of the Middle East.

Five months after the event, the strongest memory is of the protagonist's utterings being penned onto parchment. The script filling the acoustic space, the rib filling the screens, their time-honoured speech still have repercussions in religious debate today.

NEW MEDIA HYPE

McKenzie Wark in the Info-Sphere

The growth industry of the 90s is not multimedia but metamedial virtual reality. The growth industry of the 90s is hype about multimedia, cyberspace and virtual reality. Apart from the video games industry, which took off like a rocket, there are more sound bites and press releases about all this stuff than exist in the real world. Hype is a funny thing. Reading all the hype might not tell you about much, besides the future of hype, but hype very may well be the future of culture. In a sense it's like a hyped up drug, for a minute or a short take a look at this new media hype industry itself. New media hype spreadsheet along with the hype itself are now inflating the newscasters: Mondo 2000 and Wired. Both are from San Francisco and combine a magazine format with the informational confidence with Silicon valley info-capital. Being a last, late spin-off from the military industrial complex, new media hype is an old blend of state-subsidised knowledge-capital and free-wheeling small business hackers/tinkerers.

Of course you can specialise in data-hacking. If you can surf the endless wave of raw data pumping out into the info-sphere every moment, there's a place for you. This is not so much a skill in finding information. Any fool can do that now — the stuff is everywhere. The skill is, rather, in not getting bogged down in yesterday's news, in eliminating all the inessentials. It is not so much about finding data other people can't hack, as in recognising the significance of something else, right in front of everyone's noses, that everyone else has ignored. This process even has its own terminology: you can grasp, grok or aen information. To 'grop' is to recognise patterns; to 'grok' is to drink it all in and distil the contours. To 'aen' is a far more elusive form of abstraction for really hardcore data hackers. These things are not they teach you in school.

Then there's a third option: style-hacking. Every cool info-hacker has her or his limitation, and that limitation is style. But somebody has to form the styles — the look, the package, the concept — for everyone else to wrap their boho bundle of skills or goods in. So if you know nothing of Unix and can find a relevant piece of data in three minutes if your life depends on it, try style hacking. Mondo 2000 is basically a style-hack mag. Wired is data-hack. Hardware-hackers prefer to hack machine and code.

Needless to say, all this is somewhat underdeveloped in Australia, but that will change. The members of Rolling Stone can see which way the wind is blowing, and have floated Hype. It's a video games magazine with a technocratic and a hacker undertone. Aspirations as yet unfulfilled, but worth keeping an eye on.

The video game culture covered by Hype matters, because Nintendo and Sega are actually making new media happen. Like many new media, it starts as rudimentary trash aimed at the bottom end of the market. That's how cinema started. Sega is raising a generation of teenagers acclimated to the post-broadcast age. Whatever form culture takes in the future, this is the audience it will have to understand.

On the other end of the scale, check out the 'Art & Cyberculture' special issue of Mondo Information magazine, an extended version of its collection of articles by and for people trying to put the new hardware devices to creative use. New media are not going to go away. The clumsy goggles and glasses 'virtual reality' is neither virtual nor realistic and will probably disappear into the museums alongside the Vitaphone and 3-D movies. Yet ever more abstract, flexible, accessible media will continue to arrive on our doorsteps, whether we like it or not. Whops, looks like the hype mode is back on again.

Franki Baden, the festival director prompted me to conduct all the groups, filly performers, through a collective improvisation — which proved to be a real crowd pleaser and a lot of fun. No language — just a rhythm and typical of the whole event, generous, intense and cooperative. The next festival is hoped to celebrate Independence in 1993.
SPORT

TOOTH AND CLAW with Jack Rufus

Australia's angling puppet Greg Matthews. has come full circle with his new puppet TV series for children. Our first ever cricket puppet, he shocked Australian fans in the early 80's with his spiky hair and flamboyant mustache. More importantly, he terrorised the Poms with his brutal on-field clashes of 'No Fume', Amidst his brash manner and loud proclamations of his prowess, few punters were at a loss for words, except the wicket-takers, as he 'blasted' into the Domain terrorising the bowling attacks. Matthews has been around the block several times, but his latest foray into the cricketing world has been a fantastic spectacle. With his loud, brash and confident delivery, Matthews has captured the hearts of Australian cricket fans. His matches have been highly anticipated, and spectators have been left spellbound by his antics on the field. Whether he's taunting the bowlers or challenging the umpires, Matthews always manages to keep the crowd engaged. As a result, he has become one of the most entertaining figures in cricket. Whether you're a cricket fan or not, you can't help but be entertained by Matthews' antics on the field.