

AUSTRALIAN THEATRE OF THE DEAF

The basic goal of the Theatre of the Deaf is to create and sustain a professional company of deaf and hearing performers providing high quality theatre for the general public, using a continuous blend of sign language and voice as our special artistic medium.

We must break through preconceptions about the limitations of deafness by emphasizing the theatrical expressiveness of sign language. We hope to enlist the aid of television and film as means of pointing out the visual clarity that gestures lend to the spoken or written words of prose and poetry, and to make Theatre of the Deaf accessible to a greater population throughout Australia.

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THE THEATRE OF THE DEAF, a non-profit organization assisted by The Theatre Board of the Australia Council, a statutory body of the Commonwealth Government, and by the NSW Government Premier's Department through the Division of Cultural activities, is a division of The Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust, and a member of both EPAC and CAPPA.

THEATRE OF THE DEAF presently operates in two areas: Theatre in Education, and mainstream theatre.

We plan three T.I.E. productions for 1983;

ALPHABITS AND CRACKERS (a playful romp with sign, mime, improvisations and the Alphabet) to be developed for K-3.

FINGER PAINTINGS (a selection of stories from twelve countries) for years 3-10.

A new production for years 8-12 beginning second term.

Each play highlights sign language as an active and theatrical method of communication.

In mainstream theatre, we plan to present George Farquhar's THE RECRUITING OFFICER as part of a festival sponsored by The Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust. The production, scheduled November 23 to December 3, in the Sydney Opera House, Recording Hall, is to be directed by Ben Strout, and features the members of the Company.

Ms HILARY BEATON, whose plays SITTING ON A FORTUNE and OUTSIDE IN were presented at the Nimrod Theatre and in New Zealand, will be a writer-in-residence, developing a play about sign language and deafness under a grant from the Literature Board of the Australia Council.

BEN STROUT is the new Artistic Director of the THEATRE OF THE DEAF. An American, he was associated with the National Theatre of the Deaf (USA) from 1978-1982. In that time he toured the USA, Europe and Japan, composed banjo music for their Kabuki-style saloon Western, THE INCIDENT AT SASHIMI JUNCTION, appeared with the Little Theatre of the Deaf on SESAME STREET, and worked on the PBS television series FESTIVAL OF HANDS. A graduate of Williams College (Massachusetts), The National Theatre Institute and the Hartman Theatre Conservatory. He was an actor with the American Stage Festival, the Hartman Theatre and the Pittsburgh Public Theatre.