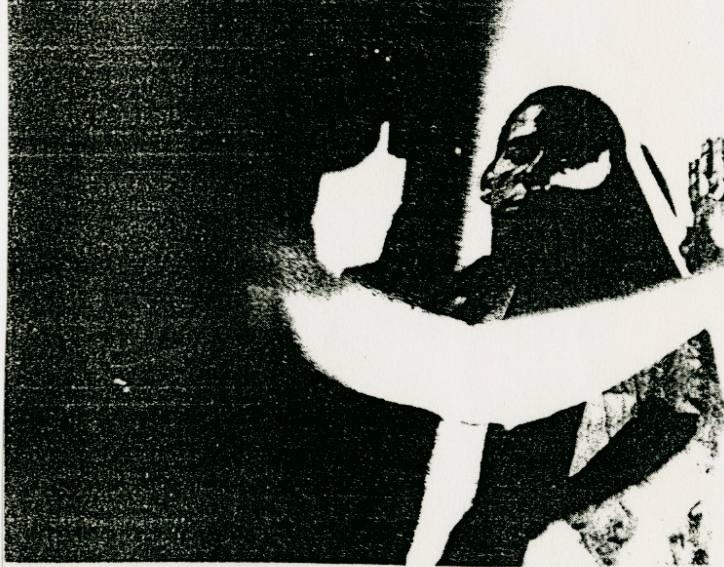


PREVIEW

STAMPEDE!

ARNOLFINI (MAR 31)



● Rush on down to see Blast Theory's "work in progress" on the theme of crowds. This young threesome has been hailed as "one of the most imaginative and technically accomplished of the new British performance groups" by Hybrid magazine, the Arts Council-funded journal of "live art". They've been in residence at Arnolfini for three months getting this together, talking to peo-

ple about their own experience of being in crowds and even getting a look at the secret manual for riot control drawn up by the Association of Chief Police Officers in 1983. When they "Stampede", Blast Theory promise to "combine their unique and compelling physical style with cutting edge technology to make a compassionate and uncompromising piece of theatre"

52 **Venue** 18 March - 1 April

Venue

18 March 1994

A play which really moved the audience

HOW fine is the line that divides heady release from fear of chaos? Is there a difference between the pop fan and the soccer hooligan?

A group of Manor Community College GCSE drama students went to see *Stampede* at The Junction last month.

The performance combined computer, video, theatre and music. It was inspired by the worlds of gigs and clubs and was about the relation between crowds and the individual. This is what they thought of it.

THE audience could 'walk around.'

It was not like a normal play where the audience sat in a set place.

The actors were very good and clear but I think the play moved too quickly and we didn't know what was happening. After the play there was a discussion where people asked questions.

COLIN BOWMAN

I UNDERSTOOD it was about loss of control and crowd violence.

My favourite part was where Zoe went up and had a photo taken and her image was put in different backgrounds.

She was in Miami in one of them.

DARREN BURNS

THE play was very good. Some of the scenes came from around the world.

The movements of the actors were very good, so were the expressions on their faces.

I liked the way we moved around the room with the actors too as they got ready for different scenes.

I liked the the way they took Zoe, got her on video camera and then they put her on a computer screen and then they were able to put her in different parts of the world and they could give her all kinds of different objects to hold or wear.

I liked the way they had a discussion at the end of the play.

MATTHEW FLACK

SOMETHING was happening all around the room.

At first there was a funny looking man watching the telly.

No-one knows if he was real or not, so I tapped him on the shoulder and he then moved.

You had to guess what was going on; it was what came to your head I suppose.

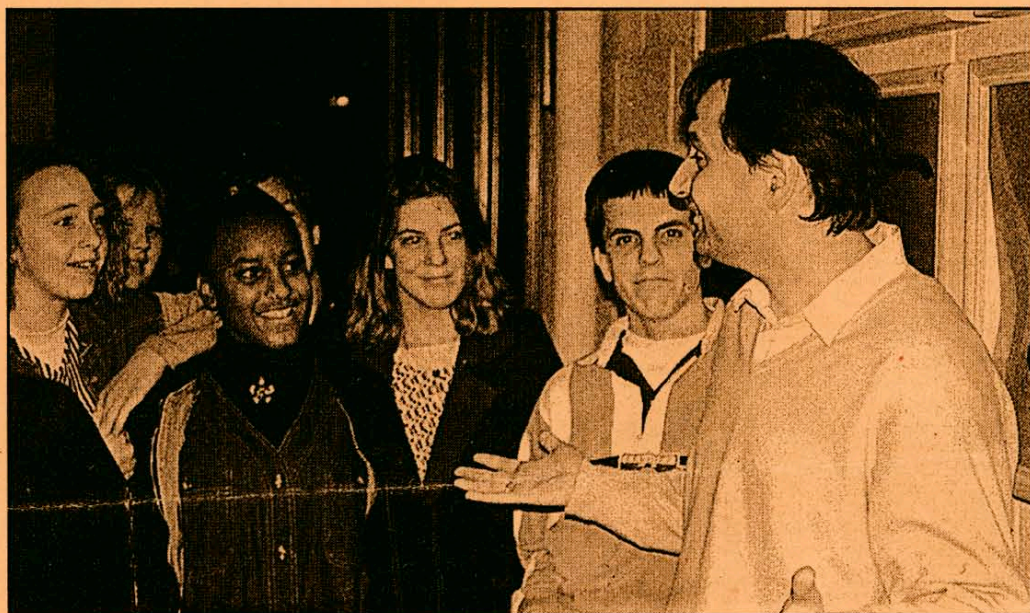
Some of it I didn't understand at all but other bits which I did, I thought that it was very effective.

Soccer hooligan
and pop fan
inspires a
new production



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NOVEMBER 9 1994



Under question . . . Manor students Sarah Jackson, Shevonne Jackson, Zoe Hunter and Matthew Flack interview Paul Bogan.

I liked the way the show involved the audience at all times.

I also thought that it was good the way that after a three-minute break after it ended that we were allowed to have a talk and ask questions with the people that had done the show!

SARAH JACKSON

STAMPEDE was about people losing control.

THE bit I liked best was when they acted like heavy metal freaks and I think it was really good acting.

KEVIN BLEACH

IN the first half-hour I did not understand what they were trying to show us, but later in the show I started to understand it.

They were showing us about crowds and about copying people doing something.

It was a good show because they showed us about doing screen images and how they can change them around by computer like adding things to them and taking things away.

After the show the actors came out and we had a chat about the show.

They wanted our views on

how the show went.

DAMAINE PURKIS

IT WAS about losing control and crowd behaviour.

It was very different and I didn't know what was going on.

We had to stand up and the actors did little plays in different parts of the hall so we didn't know where to go next, so it was confusing.

There was one sketch that they recorded on video and it was on on a screen and another three people copied what they were doing.

RACHEL ABLETT

● ***Stampede (for the exits)***

I was there at the Blast Theory performance, 'Stampede' too. I do not agree with Ken Lush (letters Venue issue 312) that the critic's review in the previous issue was vacuous and told us very little about the performance. It did tell us a great deal about the critic's reactions to the work in progress. I think that the critic should be allowed to express his/her own feelings about performances seen - surely that is what they are employed to do. The artistry is in conveying something of the flavour of the performance as it affected the critic, whose judgement the readers or editors trust. In this particular case, by reviewing a totally different performance than the one expected the critic was making a valid comment on the Blast Theory's work in progress, which I would agree with. I felt that it was an appallingly embarrassing piece of theatre/drama/performance art!

I do not think that the particular review in question was artistic or well-written, but this is a criticism I would level at most of the reviews I read in Venue. Shirley Brown's are something of an exception.

I was horrified that the Arnolfini had thought fit to invite a paying audience to watch this work. For a centre which encourages and displays innovative art work of quality I believe that this was a mistake. There are exciting performance artists working in the U.K. today, but how on earth could this group's work have been deemed worthy of our attention? There was no artistry displayed, no connection with the audience, just a few hackneyed ideas strung loosely together with amazing sloppiness. This performance did not satisfy me that the group had been working productively for three months. Of greater concern to me was what this said about the artistic direction of the Arnolfini. The sky is the same but the quality of air can vary!

Arnolfini Patron, Bristol, name and address supplied