

BLACK MIME THEATRE

THE ENSEMBLE

"FIRST HEART and NOW..."

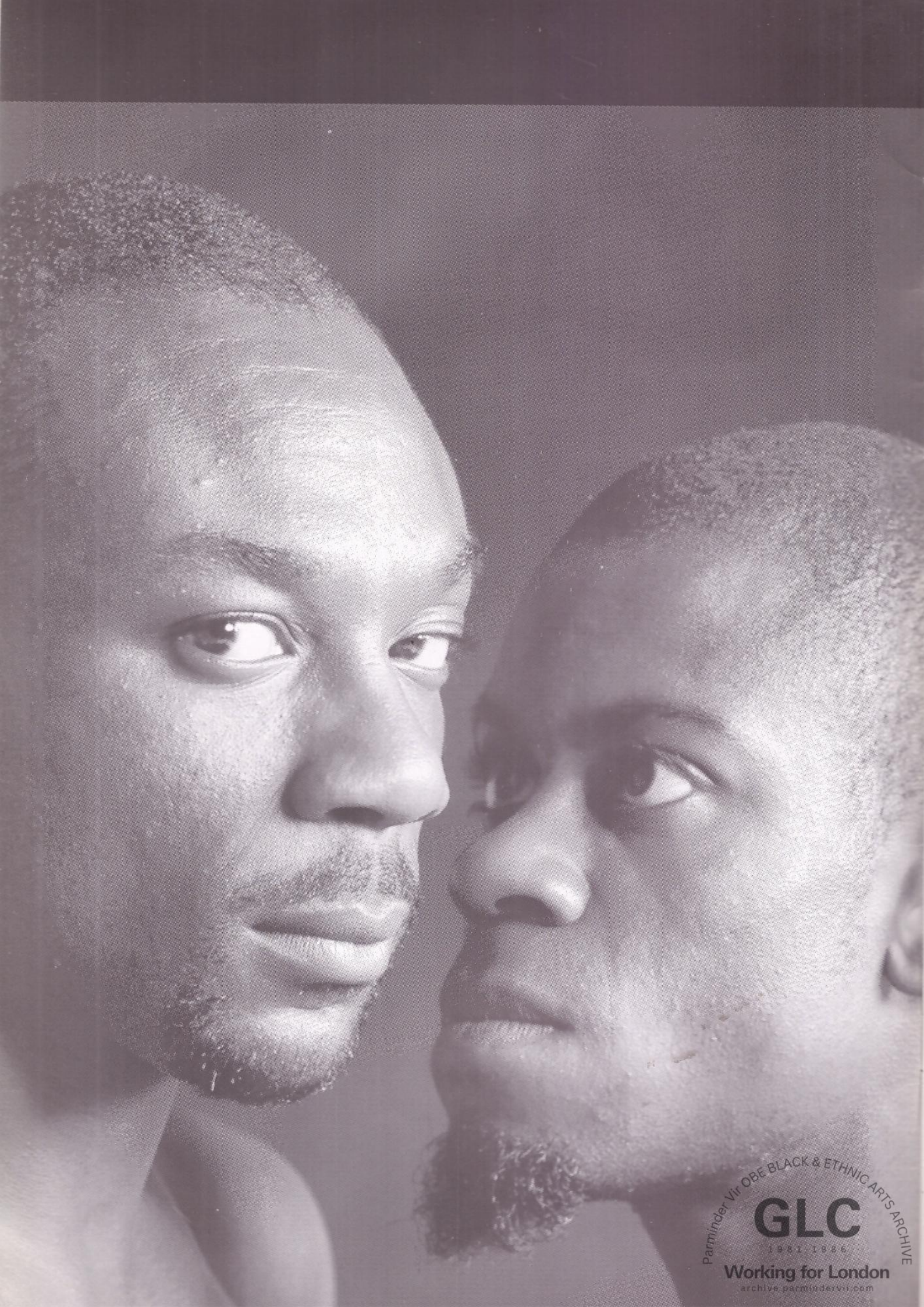
EDR

EARLIEST DATE of RELEASE

Directed by
DENISE WONG

Parminder Vir OBE BLACK & ETHNIC ARTS ARCHIVE
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I THOUGHT THAT I COULD NOT BE HURT

I thought that I could be hurt;
I thought that I must surely be
impervious to suffering-
immune to mental pain
or agony.

My world was warm with April sun
my thoughts were spangled green and gold;
my soul filled up with joy, yet felt
the sharp, sweet pain that only joy
can hold.

My spirit soared above the gulls
that, swooping breathlessly so high
o'erhead, now seem to brush their whir-
ring wings against the blue roof of
the sky.

(How frail the human heart must be-
a throbbing pulse, a trembling thing-
a fragile, shining instrument
of crystal, which can either weep,
or sing.)

Then, suddenly my world turned gray,
and darkness wiped aside my joy.
A dull and aching void was left
where careless hands had reached out to
destroy

my silver web of happiness.
The hands then stopped in wonderment,
for, loving me, they wept to see
the tattered ruins of my firma-
ment.

(How frail the human heart must be-
a mirrored pool of thought. So deep
and tremulous an instrument
of glass that it can either sing,
or weep.)

by Sylvia Plath

A LIFE OF CRIME

Michael Meade found a African story in which the hunter father takes his boy hunting with him one day. Having killed a small rat, he asked the son to keep it. "The son, thinking it was nothing, threw it in the bush," the story says.

No more game comes along that day, and at dusk the father asks the boy for the rat so they can cook it and have something to eat. The boy tells the father, "I threw it in the bush." Then, according to the story, "The father took up his axe, and hit his son, who was knocked unconscious; and the father then left the boy lying where he was."

Almost every man remembers that blow coming in. So this event seems to be a part of father-son material: the father gives a blow, and the son gets it. And it's a wound the boy remembers for years.

And what of the blows from the mother? "You are very frail, you know; you shouldn't play with those boys." "How could you kill such a beautiful little bird?" "If you don't stop that, I'll send you to a foster home! See how you like that!"... The father gives a son a vivid and unforgettable blow with an axe, which has the hint of murder in it; many a mother makes sure the son receives a baptism of shame. She keeps pouring the water of shame over his head to make sure.

Beatings, slaps in the face, verbal batterings are injuries. Blows that lacerate self-esteem, puncture our sense of grandeur, pollute enthusiasm, poison and desolate confidence, give the soul black-and-blue marks, undermining and degrading the body image....these all make a defilement. They damage and do harm. *Iron John by Robert Bly.*

"I am not saying some of us don't commit crimes, but if you are hungry and can't make the bread because nobody ever showed you how, you have to steal it to survive.... I went to prison once when I was on remand and then I was let off. But by then they had slapped me in the face and I had become a prisoner with a number. Once again I am a piece of paper" *Prisons: The Criminal Justice System. NACRO Report.*

'Cutting' and other forms of self-mutilation are common responses to the pains and the tensions, to the emotional and sexual deprivations experienced by women and girls in prison. Madness, or at least the spectre of madness, lurks as a constant fear in the minds of many women in prison. Threats to their sanity are made from so many sides that even the toughest women fear that one day they will break. Being alone in cellular confinement is one most testing time and even if women find that they can cope with punishment it is long before they begin to wonder if their very coping with solitary confinement is not abnormal in itself. This state of unreality, of no longer being able to trust oneself, is one of the most typical and feared of prison-induced states. *Women Inside by Silvia Casale*



The Black Mime Theatre is dedicated in its efforts to combine enlightenment with entertainment. A company daring in the exploration of the emotions, with stories to unfold before an audience captivated by the energy and honesty of the artists.

I thought this after seeing the company for the first time in a show entitled HEART. All the performers were black but as the show started conceptions of colour vanished, allowing emotions to surface. So often this transition is denied black performers.

In our country we learn of black peoples lives mostly through the news. A lot of the time it's sensational and surface, leaving out precious details. The contributions of black talent play an important role in addressing those details ignored.

The physical feats of this company are eye-catching and they balance their physical abilities with their emotional strengths.

Both performers and audiences stand to gain from good theatre. We learn about and celebrate ourselves. And thankfully we are not only hearing about our countrys talented black performers but seeing them in action.

My warmth will continue to grow for a company who free artistic souls and celebrate a heart to heart with its audience.

Cathy Tyson 1993.

E.D.R

EARLIEST DATE of RELEASE

"... highly physical, deeply emotional and wonderfully accessible." **Bill Harpe, The Guardian**

Director: Denise Wong

Cast: Tracey Anderson
Michael Mannash-Daniels
Carol Moses
Cassi Pool
Benji Reid

Musical Director: Errollyn Wallen
Musical Tuition : Tracey Anderson

Choreographer: Susan Lewis

Designer: Ann Hubbard
Lighting Designer: Richard Jenkins

Stage Managers: Hugh Wong and Joanna Rawlinson
Administrator: Tara Harper
Research by: Nikki Batten and Rose Newman

For details on Black Mime's Women's Training Project, the Summer School and other training schemes contact:
Tara Harper on 071 928 1311.



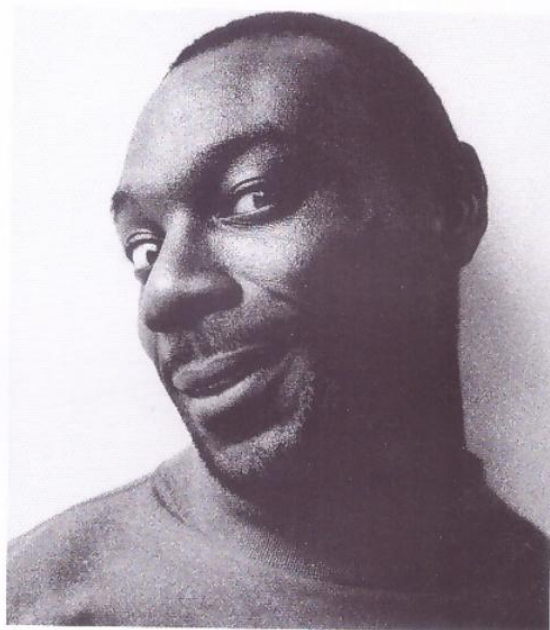
TRACEY ANDERSON

Tracey trained at Rose Bruford College of Speech and Drama. She has previously worked with the Women's Theatre Group, Quicksilver Theatre Co., has appeared in several productions with Theatre Centre and worked with Black Mime Theatre (Drowning and Heart). She has also appeared on the Black Comedy Club circuit with her cabaret characters, Dr Aunty Dorathy and Deena Bross.

MICHAEL MANNASH-DANIELS

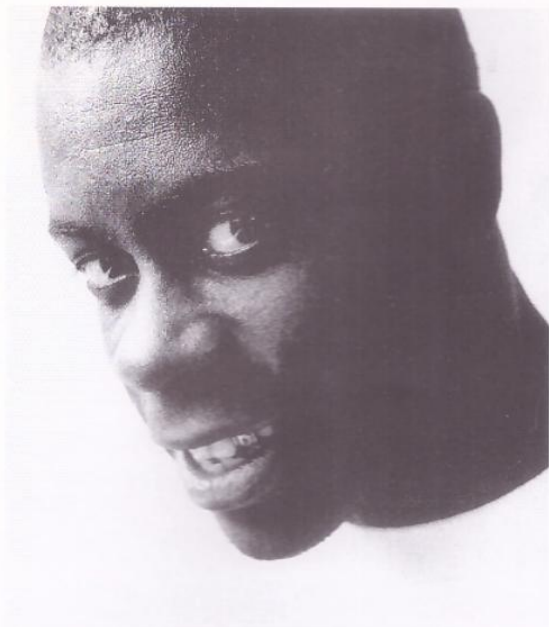
Michael has worked extensively on the Fringe and in Community Theatre. His taste for Theatre began with

Dracula Spectacula, a school production in which he played the venomous count himself. Since then work has included; Threepenny Opera, Cavalcade, Collossus, Mutants, (a science-fiction production at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe), The Invisible Man, directed by Jeffery Kissoon; a national tour of The Marriage of Figaro, (winner 1990 Best Fringe Award), and more recently, Anthony and Cleopatra with the Liverpool Everyman and Talawa. Heart marked his first production for Black Mime Theatre.



CAROL MOSES

Carol has recently graduated from Rose Bruford College. Her credits include T.I.E. work and touring the stand-up comedy circuit. E.D.R. is her first show with Black Mime.



BENJI REID

Benji trained at Manchester Youth Dance Theatre and the Northern School of Contemporary Dance. Benji has worked with David Glass Mime Ensemble. (Bozo's Dead), a cross collaboration with TAG & Dundee Rep. (The Tempest), Phoenix Dance Company on workshop projects, Irie Dance Co. (Let Reggae Touch Your Soul), and has toured as a dancer with Soul II Soul. His first production with Black Mime was Heart. TV credits include, Signals, Channel 4 (Dancing in the Street) and Granada TV (Celebration) and Swatch (watch advertisement). He also has considerable experience as a Street Dancer and as a Dance Tutor.

CASSI POOL

Cassi is a founder member of Upfront Theatre Co., and has appeared in productions directed by Spare Tyre, Anna Furse and Karen MacLaclan (Kahoon Kahoon). She has also worked with Voices in Motion a dance theatre company directed by Susan Lewis, and Black Mime Theatre (Drowning and Heart). Training includes work with Peta Lily and Black Mime Theatre.





DENISE WONG

Artistic Director

Denise trained at the Rose Bruford College and Circle In The Square, (New York). She was a founder member of Black Mime Theatre in 1984, taking over as Artistic Director in 1986. She has directed eleven productions to date, including *Rainbow*, *Superheroes* (winner of London International Street Entertainer of the Year Award 1990), *Drowning and Heart*. She created the first ever Black women's mime troupe in September 1990 and the first Black Mime Ensemble in April 1992.

Other work includes; Shared Experience Theatre Co., (*The Closing Number*, directed by Mladen Materic); *The Bacchae*, directed by Nancy Meckler; Kiss International Theatre Research (Holland), Kaboodle Theatre Exchange, (UK and Holland), Common Stock Theatre Co., The Young Vic, Derby Playhouse and Theatre Foundry. Denise's most recently directed Union Dance Co. in their production *Driving Force* in Spring 1993.

SUSAN LEWIS

Choreographer

Susan is an innovative choreographer and performer. She trained initially as a Physical Education teacher and after working with the I.L.E.A., she attended the Laban Centre for Movement and Dance. She has organised, led and taught several movement and voice workshops for Harrow Arts Centre, Chisenhale Dance Space, The Laban Centre and Munirah Theatre Company. In the last year Susan has been involved in training and developing herself as an artist, which has been made possible with a 'Developing New Venues for Dance' grant from L.A.B. She is now an 'attached' choreographer to shinkansen and the I.C.A. and recent winner of the London Dance & Performance Award - Dance Umbrella in Association with Time Out 1993.

ERROLLYN WALLEN

Musical Director

Errollyn Wallen originally trained as a dancer in England and America, then studied music at Goldsmiths' and King's College, London University. She owns and runs Studio X Recording Studios in Camden and regularly writes for film, television and radio in addition to her work for the concert hall, theatre and dance. Her current commissions include new work for the Birmingham Contemporary Music Group, a song cycle for Women's Playhouse Trust and a percussion concerto for The 1994 Young Musician of the Year Competition.

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BRETEVSKI STREET by Lin Coghlan
Touring schools from Feb '94-May '94
For ages 10-13 years

TURNCOAT by Diane Samuels
Workshop tour to schools Feb '94-March '94
For ages 14 years and upwards

MIRROR MIRROR by Janys Chambers
Touring schools from May '94-July '94
For ages 7-9 years

DREAMING IT UP by Noel Greig
A collaboration with young people
Touring to venues June '94

RICHARD JENKINS

Lighting Designer

Richard Jenkins trained in lighting at the Laban Centre for Movement and Dance. His previous lighting credits include Trestle, Claire Russ Ensemble, Merseyside Young People's Theatre, Doo Cot - Theatre of Figure and Shadow and Rejects Revenge. At present he is the Production Tutor for Hope Street, a community and training project based in the Everyman Theatre, Liverpool.

HUGH WONG

Stage Manager

As Hugh's first engagement in the arts, he has spent the last year with Black Mime touring (Heart) as assistant stage manager. Now as Stage Manager for Black Mime, Hugh has completed placements at the Tricycle Theatre, Battersea Arts Centre and The I.C.A.

ANN HUBBARD

Designer

Ann has designed for fringe, community and West End theatre and joins Black Mime again to design costumes for E.D.R.

JO RAWLINSON

Stage Manager

Jo trained at Rose Bruford College and has worked extensively on the fringe, recently including (small) Objects of Desire, Kindertransport for Soho Theatre Company, Trios at Riverside Studios and The Lion for Talawa Theatre Company.

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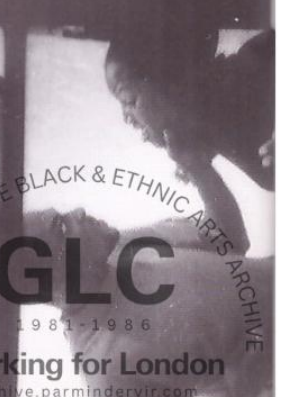
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BLACK MIME THEATRE

THE ENSEMBLE

April 1992 The Ensemble emerged as a bright new company with lots of energy and verve and a story to be told. Heart was the successful production that sold out at many venues while entertaining and provoking audiences up and down the U.K. We couldn't have wished for a better beginning.

"A telling exploration of the battle of the sexes." *Jeremy Kingston, The Times.*

Now a year later sees a change in line up with a new addition, Carol Moses and the favourites, Cassi Pool, Tracey Anderson, Michael Mannash Daniels and Benji Reid still with the company.

The second subject matter proved harder than the first. Prisons and their failure to rehabilitate or deter the escalation of crime we now face on the streets, formed the basis for *E.D.R.* and challenged Black Mime to go as close to "the edge" as they could in performance style to "crossing the line."

To what extent can you render a situation real on stage through mime, and what is its impact on your audience? For us it has been an exciting and moving rehearsal process. We hope that *E.D.R.* is able to touch our audiences as Heart did last year.

"Where The Ensemble really score is their shuffling of social comment with comic-strip humour." *James Christopher, Time Out.*

Black Mime this year intends to do something for the young people who have been supporting our work. For the first time in August 1994 we will launch a Summer School for young people interested in movement theatre and with a desire to create their own kind of theatre. Keep watching for further news or better still contact the office and get your name on the mailing list.

"...this company has something worth saying and says it elegantly..."
Robin Thornber, The Guardian.

BMT thanks the Arts Council, London Arts Board and London Borough Grants Committee for their assistance in our training scheme for company members. We are glad to have had the opportunity to train with the following tutors:-

**Nigel Charnock - DV8 Keel Watson Susan Lewis Sarah Brignall
Paul Allain Ron Murdoch Michael Malowes Phillip Gaulier**

Denise Wong
Artistic Director

100% ALIVE

- Pick up someone else's litter
- Send your mum some flowers
- Strip right down to your underwear
- Go for a run around the block
- Tune your radio to Kiss and pull the knob off
- Believe in yourself
- Eat a pineapple
- Write the alphabet backwards
- Meet an old friend you haven't seen for years
- Make a record
- Dance the dance electric
- Plant a tree
- Phone someone you love
- Give up your seat on the tube every day
- Take a bath in milk
- Climb a tree
- Watch 'It's a wonderful life'
- Get on a bus you never got on before
- Drink a glass of water
- Clean your ears
- Dream for the day
- Visit New York
- Listen to Jazzie B's next show
- Get up an hour earlier tomorrow
- Do 100 press-ups
- Eat something you've never tried before
- Ride a Merry-go-round
- Say hello to a policeman
- Spend an hour in a place of worship
- Send someone a telegram
- Put your sofa in the kitchen
- Go to a museum
- Learn a second language
- Go and see Ryan Giggs
- Get your nipple pierced
- Play football in the street
- Give £100 to a down and out
- Make a statement
- Learn something new every day
- Throw away your watch
- Laugh
- Take a picture of your back
- Get on a bus you've never been on before
- Dance in the front garden
- Shave your head
- Feed the birds
- Visit an art gallery
- Write a poem
- Feed someone else's meter
- Carry a flower all day
- Paint your toe-nails
- Take your granny to the movies
- Stop saying no for a whole week
- Put on a dress
- Write to your MP
- Make a wish
- Go home a different way every night for a week
- Learn to listen more
- Sing a song at the top of your voice
- Help a stranger with their shopping
- Write a fairy-tale
- Go for a day without speaking
- Every day at the same time stop and think about something wonderful
- Say a prayer every night
- Have a day without TV
- Read a page from a book by Charles Dickens
- Hug someone of the same sex
- Put your change into a bottle for a year and give it to charity
- Visit Great Ormond Street Hospital for a week
- Go to the market and spend 10p
- Help someone today
- Wear a wig
- Make everyone at work a cup of tea
- Take a friend to the zoo
- Croon to your partner under a full moon
- Do a jigsaw puzzle
- Get your hair cut
- Dance in the rain
- Fast for a day
- Buy a hat
- Use a fountain pen
- Walk home today
- Feed the dog
- Invite your neighbour to tea
- Give your favourite possession away
- Memorise a Woody Allen joke
- Tell the truth for a day
- Scream
- Put the kettle on
- Take up knitting
- Listen to Rodigan's next show, in the park
- Spend an afternoon speculating on how to make a million
- Forgive someone
- Do one thing to make the world a better place to live
- Write to Mother Teresa
- Turn your radio up full blast
- Teach a child to read
- Buy a book on Jeff Koons
- Stare at the clouds for a full ten minutes
- Buy Marvin Gaye's 'What's going on'
- Tell someone a secret
- Begin something you've always wanted to begin
- Talk to a child about the future
- Think purple
- Wallpaper the inside of your car
- Go on holiday and don't take any luggage
- Say yes for a day
- Put your name on a star
- Stop someone getting AIDS
- Learn to fly
- Do a cartwheel
- Tell someone your dreams
- Walk on the grass
- Make a million pounds
- Talk about God with a friend
- Wink at someone ugly
- Buy the next record you hear on Kiss
- Buy your boss a present
- Tell someone you appreciate what they do
- Buy a friend your favourite book
- Tune into Caesar tomorrow morning at 4am
- Photocopy this ad and get someone else to do it
- Only boil as much water as you need
- Learn a new word every day

TUNE TO 100FM,
CLOSE YOUR EYES,
STICK A PIN IN THIS
PAGE AND DO IT.

Kiss
100fm

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Black Mime Theatre wishes to thank AVIA for their kind donation of five pairs of trainers for this production.



SUPPORT THE FUTURE OF BLACK MIME!

Black Mime Theatre is funded by The Arts Council Of Great Britain, The London Arts Board and the London Boroughs Grants Scheme and Yorkshire and Humberside Arts Board. The E.D.R. rehearsal process was supported by the West Midlands Arts Board and took place at the Sweatbox Dance Studio, Wolverhampton and the Glasshouse, Quick Silver Theatre Company, London.

CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP

If your company would like to be associated with Britain's unique Black Mime company, call Tara Harper on 071 928 1311 to discuss how we can help promote your services.

or write to:

Black Mime Theatre
22 Colombo Street
London SE1 8DP

DONATIONS

All contributions no matter how small (or large) are gratefully received. Black Mime thanks Miss A Forde, Birmingham for her kind donation.

Black Mime Theatre thanks the following for their support

The staff at:

The Cave in Birmingham.

The West End Centre, Aldershot for supporting Black Mime over the past four years.

Especially Lyn Maree at Southern Arts and Gem Barnes.

The Inmates and Staff at:

HM Prison Cookham Wood

HM Prison Grendon

HM Prison The Verne

HM Prison Holloway.

Hackney Victim Support Unit, Insight Arts Trust,

Clean Break Theatre Company, Quicksilver Theatre Company,

The Sweatbox Dance Studio, Wolverhampton.

Ex-offenders and their friends and families who contributed to this research.

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BITTER 'N' TWISTED

(Or the Ten Commandments of Black Love)

A Love Comedy by Michael Ellis

BLACK THEATRE
co-operative

In order to be reprieved from a life in limbo after their own deaths during a jealous crime of passion in 1967, a Jamaican couple are forced to return to their former home in Brixton. It is now occupied by a liberal-minded Black Professional Couple and together they have a task... to produce a blueprint for 10 new commandments to ensure the survival of Black Love...



Sylvester Williams & Jo Martin in 'Temporary Rupture'
by Michael Ellis BTC National Tour 1988

Photo: Amrando Atkinson

Spring '94 Provisional Tour Schedule

Tues 8 Feb - Sat 26 Feb

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Box Office: **071 402 5081**

Mon 28 Feb

Liverpool Poly

Fri 4 & Sat 5 March

The Dancehouse Theatre, Manchester

Box Office: **061 242 2555**

Wed 16 March

Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

Box Office: **0902 322380**

Thurs 17 March

Victoria Centre, Wellingborough

Box Office: **0933 277 400**

Fri 18 & Sat 19 March

The Cave, Birmingham

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Tues 22 March - Sun 3 April

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Tues 12 April

The Inkworks, Bristol

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Weds 13 April

21 South Street, Reading

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Thurs 14 April

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