

jeremy



London One. Number three. Six shillings.

patrick proctor

his gentle world

scandalavia observed

permissiveness and everything

piccadilly partners

a touching report

bisexual made for two

a journey in country

jeremy

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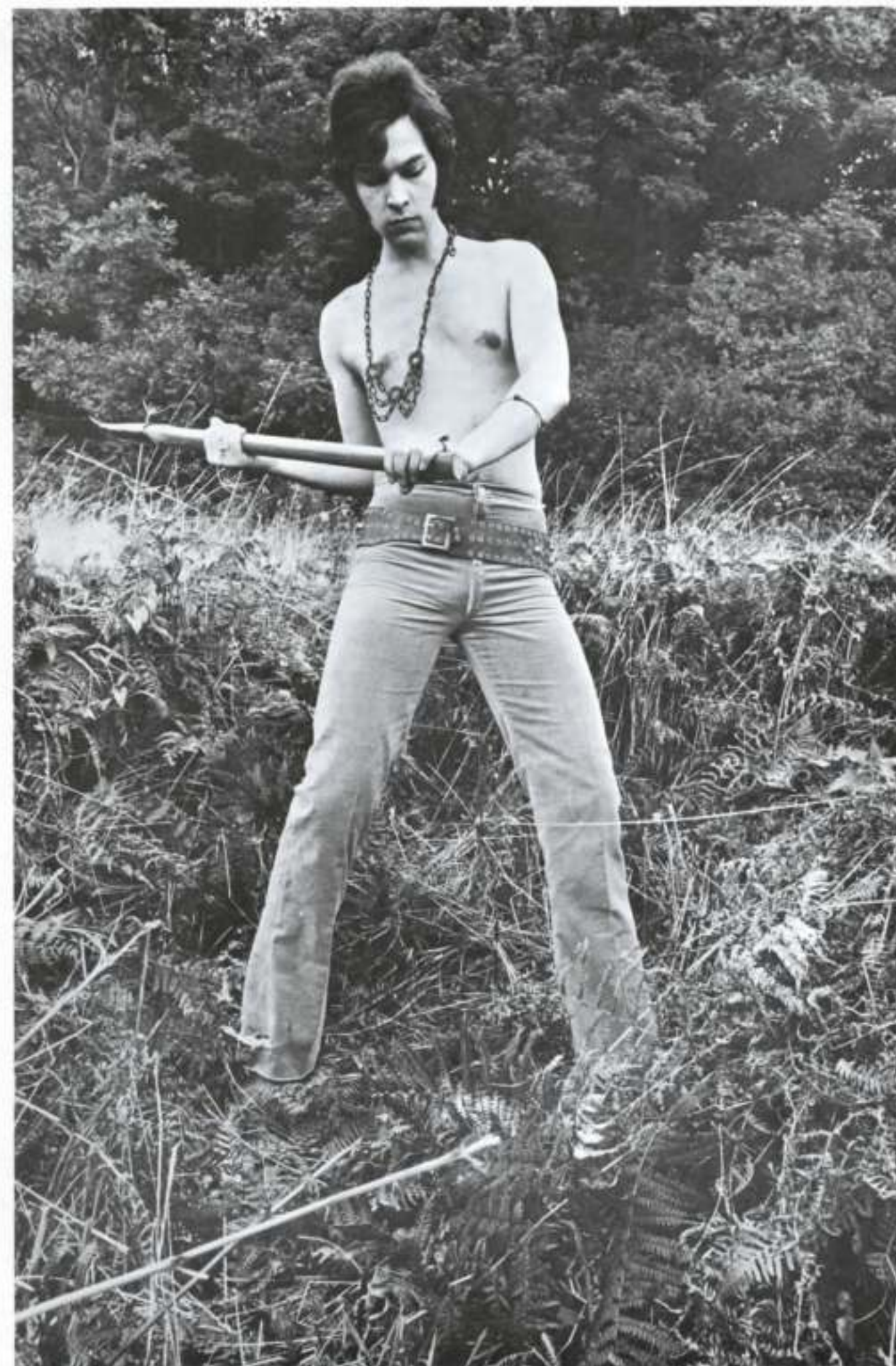
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Who has built the gay ghetto?



IF the Great British Public had its way murderers would be hanged, thieves flogged, hippies forced to conform, West Indians and Pakistanis sent 'home' and homosexuals put away, horsewhipped or 'treated'. One virtue of the present Government is that it has had the guts not to pander to the bloodlust of popular opinion. But social legislation is not enough: social attitudes are always in need of reform. Although in certain spheres homosexuals are acceptable, in general they are still persecuted. For the majority this important aspect of their personality has to be concealed from parents, employers and even friends. This aura of secrecy gives kicks to a few ("It was more exciting when it was illegal"), but for the rest it can be disastrous. We've got rid of Victorian prudery, now let us do away with the Victorian need for furtiveness. It has given rise over the years to a closed world whose customs and language are enjoyed only by the cognoscente and are not surprisingly viewed with suspicion by the outsiders. Since it is unlikely that the intolerant will read JEREMY, perhaps those who pride themselves on their fair-mindedness should

enquire into their own responsibility for this state of affairs. Is it fair that people who call themselves 'queer', thus implying some peculiarity or defect, should expect to be treated 'just like other people'? Why indeed do they refer to these other people as 'normals' and 'straights' if not because they regard themselves as abnormal and bent? Let us put an end to all these labels. The purpose of a liberal education is to enable men to know themselves. This quest for self-knowledge is a life-long task. And yet the very existence of the 'queer world' must suggest that at some stage a definite choice has to be made. Many young people who suspect that they are, at any rate partially, attracted to their own sex, suffer agonies of conscience, because they imagine that they are required at an early age to place themselves in a definite category and to hang an unwished-for label round their necks. And if they're not prepared to commit themselves they remain repressed for life. To continue in this spirit of self-criticism let us admit to another gross devaluation of our language in the glaring misuse of the word 'gay'. Poor little word, once signifying brilliance and cheerfulness, mirth

and light-heartedness. Now it conjures up scenes of the most unspeakable dreariness. Is there anything more gloomy than the atmosphere of many so-called 'gay' pubs and clubs or sadder than the ever hopeful faces of their 'gay' clientele? Finally, whilst it is true that in the past many great artists have been homosexuals and that today homosexuals are frequently creative and amusing people, surely the time has come to acknowledge the fact that they do not have a monopoly of talent and that because a person does not share their tastes he or she is *ipso facto* a bore. This kind of evangelical technique does more harm than good and only serves to alienate those who might otherwise be more sympathetic. We live thankfully in an age where the old shibboleths are disappearing overnight. Let us liberate ourselves from ALL the conventions whether of 'normal' society or of the 'gay' scene or of any other artificial by manufactured world. "This above all," said Shakespeare, "to thine own self be true". Don't be afraid to be yourself. Do your own thing. Be natural - whatever that means for you. Go gay, young man, and release into a drab world the energy of really gay power.

theatre



Promises, Promises (Prince of Wales)

What can a critic do when a show gets rave notices from almost everyone and he finds he thinks exactly the opposite? I didn't like "Promises, Promises". There, I've said it. On the night I saw the show the entire audience cheered and applauded, lapped up the laughs and swallowed, hook, line and sinker, the utterly mediocre songs. But I hated it. "Promises, Promises", is based on Billy Wilder's film "The Apartment", has a tightly constructed book by Neil Simon and music and lyrics by Burt Bacharach and Hal David who've written some beautiful songs in their time but seem to have fallen flat with this, their first Broadway show.

The show doesn't open with a bang, nor even with a whimperingly good number. It just introduces, very quietly, the leading man, Chuck (played with Teddy Bear loveability by Anthony Roberts). We follow him from his office to a downtown bar where an executive asks for the loan of his apartment, so that he can take his mistress back there. Chuck, as we all know, agrees and, by so doing, starts on his way up the executive ladder. Soon five men use his apartment for extra-marital adventures but (end of Act One) Chuck discovers that one of them is knocking off the girl he loves (Fran played by Betty Buckley). He does a big rethink. Fran is thrown over, tries to kill herself, is saved by, and eventually, falls in love with, Chuck, who, in the end, throws in his rat race job and becomes a decent citizen. Happy end. Curtain. Where are the songs? Well the show runs to nearly three hours and the only decent song, "I'll Never Fall In Love Again", comes just before the final curtain. The Bacharach music is distinctive and highly idiosyncratic but not good enough, it starts out but never arrives, and the Hal David lyrics, except in the one good song, are utterly mundane. How this show has run on Broadway and why it will run in London I don't know. But run it will. The queues and ticket touts are out for it in full force and the "House Full" signs are likely to be going up for a long time to come. That's life.

There'll be some Changes Made (Fortune Theatre)

The last play in John Neville's Park Theatre Company Season has proved to be far and away the best of a very poor bunch. The entire Season has left me wondering why Mr Neville was given charge of this Company, why he chose the plays he did - since the Season was supposed to show new, experimental works - and, most of all, whether the Company will continue under his direction, if at all. "Changes" has four characters involved in a very filmy plot - filmy like mist, I mean, not the movies. And though it runs for only two hours with two intervals, the play plods and *needs cutting*. It should be shown on television, because if this ran for an hour on tele it would seem to be absolutely brilliant and lively. What's the plot anyway? Poor mousey Valerie has thrown over her awful city-gent lover Starkey and moved into new digs in Belsize Park. Here she meets mulatto Xenia (half coloured and half Liverpool Irish) who makes the changes of the title when she shows her how to wake up sexually, and live. The fourth character is a sexy East End cab driver who is given a suitably crotchety performance by Alan Lake. The change of attitude in Valerie is all the play is, and to make it run to three acts seems a bit insane. The material just won't go that far. In fact isn't it time we started using that admirable American practice in this country and running plays like this straight through? Intervals only break up the mood of the piece and make you conscious of the cheat in length too. The dialogue is sharp, there are some really glorious lines, most of them coming from Xenia who is a gorgeously camp and exactly the kind of coloured lady who's wildly fashionable with the trends. But even the dialogue cannot support the weight of three acts and has to recross the same field several times.

The best performance comes from Carmen Munroe as Xenia, who is utterly cool and almost completely convincing. Of course she, like the others, is playing a type; but she does it best. Gemma Jones is good as Valerie, washed out and gauche; and David Battley is wildly funny, if not human, as her ex-lover. Donald McWhinnie's direction brings out all the comedy without losing sight of the fact that the author obviously meant, though didn't succeed, to make his characters real human beings.

Pyjama Tops (Whitehall Theatre)

I'd rather dreaded this show after reading all the other critics. But never trust a critic, find out for yourself. It often pays off. "Pyjama Tops" has an idiotic and inconsistent plot, one of the most outrageous

sets ever to have been put on stage, some ropey performances and the oldest and tired collection of gags. Yet it entertains and is a good evening at the theatre. It isn't, thankfully, pretentious. It's a truthful, "about-itself", show and admits in a programme note to having "no deep aesthetic considerations". Because of all this it works.

The plot is one of those typical mixed personalities and bedrooms things with George Sanders men, big busted women and the now obligatory queen. The one new feature in this concoction is the nudity, for on stage is a glass-sided swimming pool into which beautiful, nude girls jump throughout the action. And at the end of the play the three leading ladies give us a very good look at their all. Nudity has been the cause of much controversy in the last year but this show has got it into a proper perspective. Here the nude body is seen for what it is, an object of desire, something we want to look at, very possibly the reason we're in the theatre. There is no Art involved, not the tiniest little bit. Thank God. For, because of this, the nudity is innocent, charming and not in the least discomforting for the audience. It strikes me that only when Art and pretention are involved do we become aware of the sexual and social taboos attached to nudism. Art makes us conscious, and experimental works which think they're being very daring by using a very discreet nude scene just encourage a maintenance of all the old prejudices. By showing the naked body in dim lighting directors clothe it still and keep it as something slightly seamy, titillating and naughty. "Pyjama Tops" shows the nude body in full lighting and allows time to look at it - and after the first instance it becomes innocent and natural and even seems to fit into the play. Though the plot is feeble, it is short, not padded out in the least, so doesn't have time to stale. The gags may be ancient but they move rapidly, as do all the performances. The evening is high-powered and brassy; it doesn't leave time to think. It sets out just to entertain and it succeeds handsomely.

Enemy

(Yvonne Arnaud Theatre, Guildford) Robin Maugham's new play, on tour prior to the West End, upholds my opinion that the only theatre worth making the effort for happens outside London. So, maybe it's a tryout. What the hell, it's a tryout outside London. A lot of interesting things happen at Guildford, at Nottingham, Oxford, Bristol, Glasgow and even, recently, down at Bath, in fact all over the country - whilst the London theatre gets more and more boring and overweight.



Dennis Waterman

flopping along unable to support itself but in too much of a mess to inspire anyone else to support it. Part of "Enemy" was suggested by what happened to the author whilst serving in the Western Desert in the last war. He made use of it in his famous book on the Desert War, "Come to Dust". The action takes place in 1942, by the wreck of an English tank, and examines the development of a relationship between an English and a German soldier. The relationship begins with the "Tommy" stumbling onto the makeshift camp the German has made, being taken prisoner, reversing the situation and then making friends. Ken, the English soldier doesn't quite believe Paul's story and prods and prys until, at the end of the first

act, he gets the truth. Paul is queer and has been covering up. In a finely wrought scene he makes a simple declaration of his need for Ken. The second act introduces a third character, an English officer who, acting as catalyst to the situation, inevitably destroys it. A simple, straightforward plot. But that is exactly the strength of the play. Its two short acts move briskly without a wasted word. In its directness the play is almost old-fashioned, but directness and simplicity are virtues too much lacking in modern theatre. It is a great change to get a play with a plot and intellectual content, which moves and entertains and doesn't leave time to bore. "Enemy" conveys perfectly the sense of futility the ordinary man must feel when he has

to go out and fight a war, a middle-aged, middle-class war. The English and German soldiers stand for the bulk of humanity and the officer is symbolic of all that is above them. He manages to crush and destroy both. This is a play for those who hate war and hypocrisy, and it should certainly be seen in London soon. The three players are admirable, and the playing between Dennis Waterman and Tony Selby, the German and the English soldier, has excellent balance. Ronald Eyre's direction is straightforward and concise, never allowing anything to be overplayed, and Voytek has designed a good, atmospheric setting.

Peter Burton

The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui by Bertolt Brecht adapted by George Tabori

(Presented by Michael White at The Saville Theatre.) Brecht's famous satire on the rise to power of Adolf Hitler, now playing at the Saville Theatre with Leonard Rossiter in the lead, is definitely not to be missed. Originally staged at The Glasgow Citizens Theatre in 1967 it was subsequently presented at the Edinburgh Festival and then remounted at The Nottingham Playhouse earlier this year. *Jeremy* has reviewed it before – and we feel compelled to review it again! For Leonard Rossiter has had time to polish his performance to the point of perfection. He gives one of the most exhilarating and genuinely comic performances to be seen on the stage for a long time. The scene with the Actor (David Bird) in which Ui learns the techniques of oratory and persuasion is a masterpiece of comic timing and invention. Ui, the small time gangster from Brooklyn, whom everyone superficially snubs but secretly fears, is on the brink of taking over the Cauliflower Trust (German Government) from the ailing Old Dogsborough (Hindenburg) played by James Gibson, and shrewdly realises he must aim for the support of the small grocers (German voters) with the most sophisticated means at his disposal. In a hilarious sequence he woodenly apes the Actor and in so doing accidentally evolves the Goose step, the Seig Heil salute, and the exaggerated bodily gestures of Hitler the rabble-rouser. In a marvellously disciplined way Rossiter has mastered the essentially mimetic demands of the role. From a slow, hunched and vulnerable swagger in the early scenes, he graduates to the frenetic and spellbinding gestures of a maniacal automaton in the final scene as he screams at the audience from the top of a gigantic insignia-draped podium. It is the capturing of this puppet-like quality which marks out this performance and also triumphantly vindicates Brecht's original purpose and dramatic method. Ui is a little man, a resistible man, a man in the grip of escalating ambition exploiting the human failings of others and suborning big business, politicians and the law to feed his megalomania – but nonetheless a little man who simply clothes himself with outsize thoughts and gestures. "The great political criminals must be exposed by every means – preferably through ridicule – for they are not so much great political criminals as the perpetrators of great political crimes, which is altogether a different matter" wrote Brecht in his notes to the play. The virtue of this production is that it

preserves and highlights in all the main performances the play's cartoon-like quality of characterisation. David Graham plays the seedy, clubfooted Givola (Goebbels) with a Cagneyesque menace, and Christopher Benjamin plumps around the stage as Giri (Goering) like a fresh-faced butcher in flashy clothes. John Joyce gives a marvellous small performance as the simpering brainless Young Dogsborough and Del Henney as Roma (Rohm) manages to suggest in a subtle way a sinister connection between sadism and homosexuality. The whole production is exciting and energetic and clearly directed by Michael Blakemore, responsible for a dazzling sequence of brilliantly executed and disciplined scenes. The relevance of Brecht's message is pointed out at the very end of the play. Leonard Rossiter steps out of character and refers to a couple of quotations flashed on the screen above. One is by a Soviet soldier explaining the invasion of Czechoslovakia, the other is by President Ky of S. Vietnam telling us one of his heroes is Adolf Hitler. We can never be too complacent, or too sure that the ghost is laid low.

Philip Hinchcliff

opera



Berlioz called *Les Troyens* "my great beast of an opera", and rightly so; an impressive work of epic proportions, with marvellous things in it – but overwritten, especially in the second (and longer) part. For newcomers to Berlioz, it should be mentioned that *Les Troyens* is in five acts which are usually played as two separate operas – Acts One and Two, *The Capture of Troy*, and the other three, *The Trojans at Carthage*. The first part covers the final period of Troy's glory and its overthrow by the Greeks, together with the flight of Aeneas; the second part is concerned with his adventures in Carthage culminating in the romance with Dido, and ends with his departure for Rome and Dido's suicide. The first time both parts were sung in one evening was at Covent Garden in 1957, when it was given in English and with substantial cuts; the production (by John Gielgud) was seen again in 1960, and that was the last we saw of it. Then, earlier this year (and again in English) Scottish Opera staged the complete work up in Glasgow and Edinburgh. Now it has reached the

Royal Opera House in this same form, as envisaged by its composer, sung in French and lasting five-and-a-half hours. The new production has been conceived on a more all-embracing scale than the previous one, stressing its epic nature, the impetus coming from the musical direction of Colin Davis; after his numerous concert versions of the work, it was inevitable that he must one day bring it into the opera house, and this previous experience and wide knowledge of the score, together with his great rapport with Berlioz, was an assurance that when the time came to conduct a theatrical version of the work, it would be an occasion to remember. And it was – with Davis in complete command, and the Covent Garden Orchestra responding in a manner that is not always evident on opera nights – and seldom on ballet ones! Davis has been lucky in his associates. Whilst there are a number of minor miscalculations on the part of producer, choreographer and designer, the evening as a whole was a triumph – albeit a somewhat overlong one. Minos Volanakis' production (his first for opera) is intelligent and highly mobile – no question here of static posturing and a few simple chessboard moves to enable visiting stars to slot in their personal performances without being put out by involved local staging; on the contrary, this is a production conceived in a specific manner, with certain singers (and well-considered interpretations) intended for it. This was obvious in the casting. Apart from Anja Silja, and some additional dancers, the entire cast was drawn from resident strength. If the Troy scenes seem more vital than the Carthaginian, this is probably due to the shorter period involved and the more dramatic action that has to be fitted into it; the second section is devised on a far more leisurely scale, with its endless processions, arias, dances and orchestral interludes, leading to the famous love-duet and subsequent tragedy. The choreography is rather a mixed bag; opera-ballets are hell – the singers standing around, trying to look interested but probably getting their breath lined up for the next outburst, and the poor dancers knowing before they start moving that they are only there on sufferance. However, if we must have them (and on this occasion their junketings did seem to extend an already long evening), then I do not think that Volanakis's ideas for *The Soldiers Strip* featured outside *The Citadel* in Act One really answer the problem – especially as a cabaret for King Priam and his court! Nor does it seem likely that young Trojan bloods would have

performed a sub-Twist whilst hauling in The Wooden Horse. On the other hand, Gillian Lynne's ballet to The Royal Hunt is mysterious and as right as anything can be for a piece of music which already says everything, without need of further illustration. Lynne is also responsible for the charming pas de deux in the love scene, and the gladiatorial display, but the following Negro trio, due to the music, looked as though it had been brought in from a Bal Tabarin floorshow.

The basic trouble with such dance interludes generally, is that the composer concerned, though he may be a genius when composing for the voice, has scant idea of just what constitutes Dance Music. The star of the evening, after Colin Davis, is Nicholas Georgiadis. Just as last year his designs for *Aida* and *The Nutcracker* made the highest claim to artistic endeavour throughout the season, so it will surely be with his work on *Les Troyens*. A pushover for any form of stage magic or illusion, I was happy to see a third of Aeneas' ship taking up the entire stage, apparently surrounded by water: a vast, multi-tiered concrete block sunk seven feet into the stage, on which The Trojan Women (about fifty of them) committed suicide — even if it scarcely suggested The Temple of Vesta: the Wooden Horse indicated by two legs (almost the width of the stage apart) going right up into the flies, without even a glimpse of the belly, thereby giving an awe-inspiring idea of its size: Dido's pyre of gold and black marble, nine feet high, on which she kills herself, whereupon its already heaving smoke bursts into flames; and much more. There are occasions when Georgiadis makes the stage look cramped but that is a small price to pay for such impressive stage pictures. The costumes (silver, black and grey for Troy, warmer colours, with a semi-Indian drape, for Carthage) are lavish without ever suggesting vulgarity or cheapness, and their extravagance never (as it might in lesser hands) hints at Hollywood Baroque. Performance wise, the opera is well cast, if not excitingly so, although each part has its overriding personality — Anja Silja at Troy, Jon Vickers in Carthage. Silja is a fascinating performer and a compelling actress involved in whatever character she is playing; slim and lithe, a mistress of instinctive gesture and movement, she hurls herself at people, structures or the ground with equal abandon — disciplined abandon. She, far more than Suliotis, is surely the natural successor to Callas. Vocally, too, she shares an affinity with the latter — she can do cruel

things to her voice and it will grow shrill, become breathless, occasionally lose control, yet it has a dynamic strength that always serves her; with Silja one's ear bows to the Emotions, and one discounts any technical mishaps as a price to be paid for the dramatic performance as a whole. Her Cassandra is a neurotic, febrile creature, almost physically sick with premonition; no sign here of "a lofty restraint that Sophocles himself would have envied" mentioned by Rolland, the French musicologist, or the statuesque prophetess scornfully haranguing her countrymen, of other productions — or even of other views, such as Shakespeare, Euripides or Giraudoux.



Vickers' Aeneas (a role he played in 1957) is highly impressive in the more martial or agitated passages — his initial appearance, amidst the frenetic gaiety of the Trojan festivities when he reports the High Priest's horrifying death, brought a notable frisson to the proceedings, as did his brief confrontation with Silja. Like her, he is a completely involved artist, both vocally and physically — though I could wish him to modify some of his loping stances. The lyrical side of the role does not flatter his voice (he is now more the Warrior than the Lover — a reversal of 1957) and though his ardour was evident, the lengthy love-duet never really reached a rapturous summit; however, this may have been due to his Dido. Josiephine Veasey is a singer of refined technique and generously warm timbre, and in certain roles (notably Fricka) she is without current competition; she has proved an impressive Cassandra and Dido in the concert hall. Nevertheless, she is not by nature an artist who immediately catches the eye. She lacks that special magnetism to hold

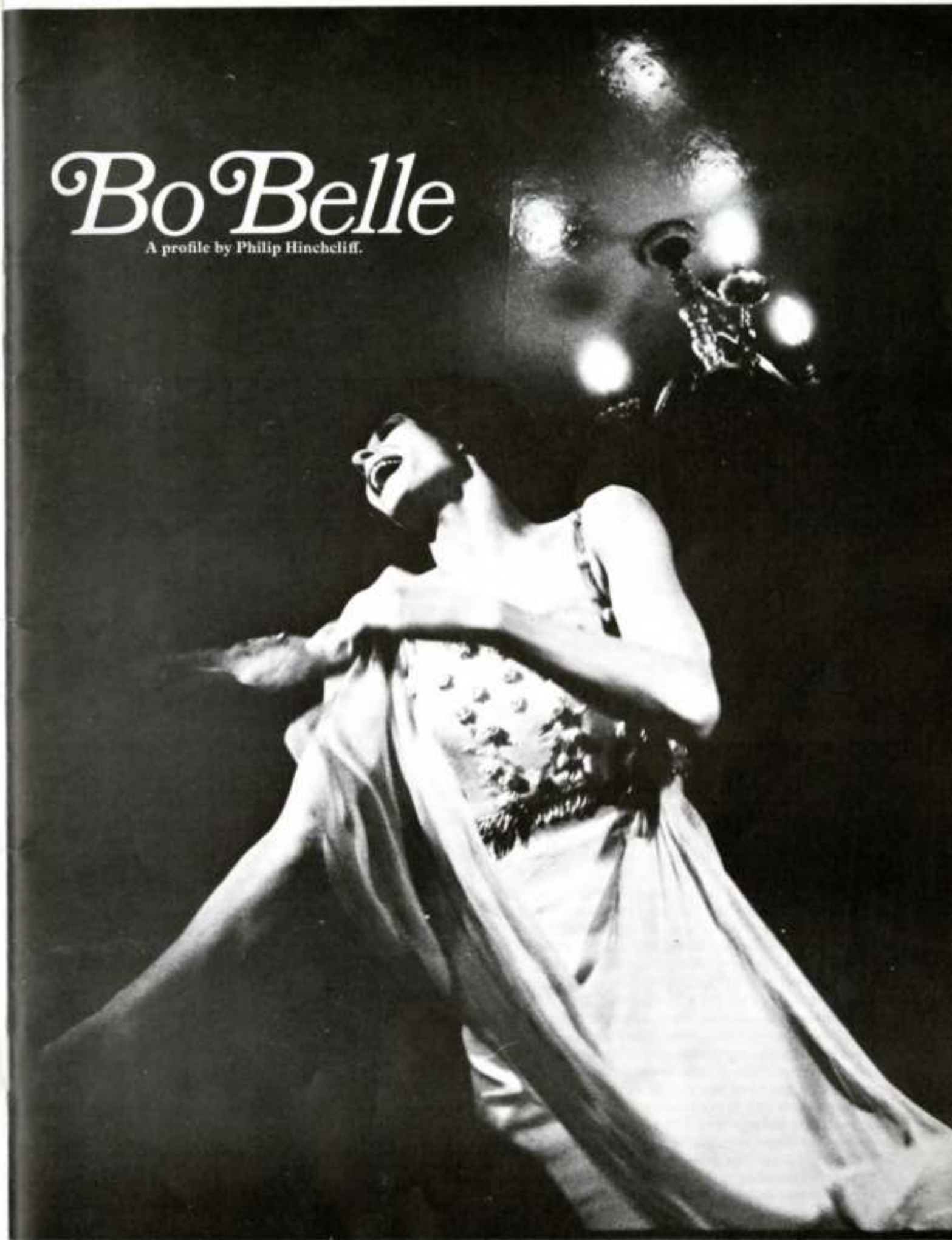
centre-stage regardless of surrounding events which the ideal Queen of Carthage should possess and, at the first performance, she seemed overparted by the role. From her first entry during the elaborate harvest festivities, where her magnificent robes seemed to wear her rather than she them, she did not stand out from the crowd. Right through to the love-duet the performance was passive; but once Aeneas had left matters changed, and she rose to the tragic finale with considerable attack. Vocally, she was always on target, her tone full and creamy.

Peter Glossop was rather gusty as Choroebus (said to be an African prince, but no sign of it here) and looked ill-at-ease beside the rampaging Miss Silja. Apart from these two, the outstanding performance in Troy came from the Greek actress Aspasia Papathanassiou miming the role of Andromache; her entrance, with her small son Astyanax, to mourn at Hector's tomb, surrounded by the recently triumphant and now silent crowd, was the most moving moment in the entire evening. At Carthage, Heather Begg was an authoritative, warmly sympathetic Anna, though her vocal characterisation (not to be confused with tone) lacked the firmness of some concert-hall portrayals we have heard. Anne Howells' was a believable Ascanius — no question here of a girl masquerading as a boy, but a sturdy humorous youth. Ryland Davies was somewhat pale in Hylas's nostalgic aria on the first night, but was far more fervent by the time of the radio broadcast twelve days later. For the latter, the Dido was Janet Baker (she had played the part in the Scottish production), the second of her deputising stints for the ailing Veasey, and singing in English to everyone else's French. And a very good case she made out for Opera in English, particularly with so much unidiomatic French around her! Her performance was superbly assured, the voice cascading forth in an impassioned amplitude of sound; no sign of the strain involved in taking over a role of this size in an unknown production, only two days after a concert and on the night before singing one of several Lucretias at Sadlers Wells. Vickers rose to her, and the duet spun itself out into a golden haze. Silja, on the other hand, sounded blurred and indefinite on radio, thereby confirming my suspicion that she is a singer to be seen as well as heard, the dramatic grasp of her playing dissipating in transcending the air waves; nor, I imagine, would her impact really come across on record.

Jonathan Miles

Bo Belle

A profile by Philip Hinchcliff.





It is a Friday evening at the Royal Vauxhall Tavern and by twenty past eight only a few of the regulars have arrived, scattered along the front of the long bar. The juke box is playing "Honky Tonk Women" and behind the counter the bar boys are limbering up playfully before the approaching rush. At eight thirty precisely (as always) Marion the pianist arrives. In this Edwardian setting she looks unbelievably appropriate, in a matching suit and rouged cheeks talking and moving in quick light gestures. She takes her drink and a cigarette and clambers into position on the small stage in the corner of the room. Pat Kelly, the compère, tonight resplendent with a bouffon coiffure, jogs into an opening number. He's affable and chatty, nudging the still sparse audience into something approaching a good humour. By about nine fifteen the bar is quite full. Peggy the landlady puts in an appearance, beaming welcomes at her regulars. A hubbub of noticeably gay chit chat builds up as Pat cracks a few camp jokes and finishes a duet with a blond and cuddly young singer called Andrew. A warm, pervasive ripple of expectation runs through the audience, one or two thrust their way forward to the edge of the bar which is being cleared of drinks.

"And now ladies and gentlemen it's cabaret time and a big hand please for your very own - Bo." Smattering of applause. Bo trips up a few steps past his manager Martin, whom we suddenly notice for the first time adjusting the tapes behind the bar. Bo takes the mike and introduces himself. He is tall and slender with very smooth skin, wearing a devastating black crochet mini skirt. A young couple obviously here for the first time can't quite believe their eyes as this stunning brunette launches into a mime of "The Happening" and gracefully stalks along the bar top. Bo's attractive blue-grey eyes quickly flicker across the audience, lingering here and there, taking them in, flashing a smile into a corner, testing the mood. Without appearing nervous he is hyper-sensitive to the atmosphere. It's easy to be put off. "You get sent up by some people. I get most angry when they are noisy. The gay ones don't do it, at least, not so that you can hear. It's usually some ordinary butch guy. I often try and pick on one like that. There was one in here not long ago who started shouting so I stopped and told him to come up and take the mike himself. Anyway, he came up on the stage and I said now you can shoot your mouth off so everyone can hear you. 'If you can do better than me' I said, 'then go on.' He looked stupid. You see I've got my dress and make-up - my mask - to protect me. He'd got nothing and just looked a fool. He was very quiet after that wasn't he Mart?" Martin looks solicitous; "I usually deal with the noisy ones. If he gets nervous he gets asthma attacks. Once every six weeks or so I know he's going to get an attack and there's nothing he can do about it. But a bad audience will bring it on through nerves."



Bo is now in the middle of a spectacular number 'I'm Doing Fine'. As he skates along the bar top it seems impossible for him to keep his balance. Peggy says her pub is the only one in London which features drag acts on the counter itself. "I've fallen off it more times than I can remember", says Bo. "Up to now someone has always caught him" adds Martin, "but he's only got to go the wrong way once." There's a strong note of worry and possessiveness in his voice. The edge of the bar is lined with eager faces following Bo's flashing legs and black silk panties.

"People don't realise what hard work it is. They think all you have to do is dress up, put on a wig, and open your mouth in time with the music. A girl for instance couldn't do it, especially on the bar. You have to be athletic. I'm lithe and I've trained as a dancer as well." He finishes the number with a spectacular ballet splits, one arm draped around the pillar which reaches to the ceiling. There's a sudden surge to the bar for fresh drinks at the interval.

Bo has been doing drag for a couple of years. Before that he spent some time in Rep and did a brief spell at RADA ("It sounds good even though it was only a few months"). His real name is Jeffrey Claridge and out of drag he works as a Ticket Control Clerk for Keith Prowse. He's just twenty three but looks younger. He used to do a double act (Pussy and Bo) but is reticent about the break up. They began at the Vauxhall. "It started more as a dare than anything. We thought we couldn't be worse than the act on at the time but we were terrible to begin with. Still, we worked at it. The first time the tape broke down I was at the far end of the bar and I just froze. I didn't know what to do and everyone was trying to make me laugh. I stuck it out until Mart had fixed the tape. Now I would do a bit of patter. But that's simply experience."



"After Pussy left we had to start from scratch again," Martin explains. "People think we earn a fortune but we don't at all. Every time you change the act you often have to buy a whole LP just for one track. Then we've got the amplifying equipment." Upstairs Bo slips out the crochet dress and lights up a cigarette. "I buy all my own make-up and dresses. I just go in and ask for size 36. Sometimes the assistants have a laugh amongst themselves but it doesn't worry me." He wriggles into a stunning green evening dress, adjusts the straps, and retouches his make-up. He never shaves, and the hair is his own. "I don't wear a wig anymore. I do my own hair with Carmen Rollers. What a performance that is too," smiling at Martin. Bo is ready and we go down the stairs, out into the street and back into the public bar ("It's the only way round"). He begins with 'Honey Pie'. The evening dress reveals the boyish arms. "If anything I accentuate my masculinity. I let my muscles show. I know I'm more attractive than half the girls in there anyway. I never feel I'm a woman when I'm doing my act, but I do get that feeling of losing myself in the part. But that's what I call theatre." He starts to sing 'I'll Never Fall in Love Again'. The audience is hushed. For a moment you forget he's miming. "To take off a woman you have to accentuate the movements by just the right amount." As the Bobby Gentry number comes to a close he bends down low and fondles someone's head at the front of the bar. "I try and pick on someone in the audience who looks a bit shy and draw them out of themselves. The gay ones talk about you quietly. They don't miss a thing. If you had a tiny hole in your stocking under there (he points at his heel) they'd notice it. That's why I take so much trouble over my dresses and make-up. Danny La Rue wears too much - big wigs - long eye lashes - too much breast - he over accentuates the female body and gets it out of proportion. I simply rely upon my own body to be attractive. You get your arse pinched quite a lot and you hear them shouting 'Cor I fancy that' but you get used to it. I can usually walk the other way if they start grabbing. Yes, I get propositioned loads of times, but Mart's there and after the show I always go straight upstairs and change. I very rarely mingle with the crowd in drag. It's not good theatre is it?" The audience is largely regular at the Vauxhall and Bo takes the trouble to vary his act. "He listens to a record once and remembers the words," says Martin. "I never practice" says Bo. "I just do my act as the mood takes me. If I don't fancy doing a number that night I won't." Up to a point he prefers an audience who have never seen him before. "I like it when the ordinary ones bring their girlfriends along. They just don't believe it, and you know the man finds you attractive although he tries not to show it."



For the final part of the show Bo changes into another mini dress, this time black and white clinging silk. The pub is much noisier now. Peggy is pushing her way to and from the bar, her hands full of drinks for customers at the back of the room. Although it's forbidden, one or two clamber on the seats for a better view. (They have to be repaired every few months.) The audience is noticeably gay, apart from one or two women including a platinum blonde of at least fifty-five with a tractable young man in a herring-bone suit in tow. Bo sings 'There's Got To Be Something Better Than This' from 'Sweet Charity'. He keeps moving all the time, flinging himself precariously along the bar top, twisting and turning in time with the music. Sometimes his act includes comedy sequences but it is obviously this sophisticated, ultra-feminine cat-walk which really fastens the audience's attention, and which provides the thrills. There's a sudden quiet as he goes into his final routine 'The Show Is Over'. He turns away from the crowd and steps out of the dress to reveal black silk panties and a black lace bra. The audience is tense and expectant. There are one or two suppressed giggles, mostly from girls. Bo again turns away and slips out of the bra holding his hands over his breasts as he turns to face us. "I like to kid them right up to the very end. Some of them still don't know, especially the girls." The music finishes and he holds his arms outstretched. There is quite a long pause. Then he moves quickly off the bar to whistles and applause. The clapping soon dies down. "They've got their hands full of drinks anyway." There is already a surge for the door as Pat Kelly takes over the mike and gives a final run down of the week's forthcoming attractions. Bo does this two nights a week, Fridays and Sundays. "You get quite well known. Danny La Rue has been down to see me. He must be frightened of the competition," he smiles. He has just finished an excerpt for a new film with Herbert Lom and is also appearing in the London Weekend Documentary on drag being screened this month (November). But he's not wildly ambitious. "I do it because I enjoy it, that's all."

The gentle world of Patrick Proctor



Patrick Proctor at thirty-three is one of the most original and successful of contemporary painters particularly noted for his sensitive use of water colour in his paintings of young men. He has had numerous exhibitions at the Redfern Gallery and his work is represented in collections throughout the world. In addition he has designed for the theatre and was a contributor to Expo 67.



JOHNNY CLAMP

"I was born in Dublin and I'm not sure how long I was there. I have been back a few times. I went again last year. I certainly do not feel Irish, but on the other hand I really love Ireland. I change from day to day. Sometimes I'm Muswell Hillish, sometimes I'm Russian. You are free to make up a lot of things about my genealogy. For example, this morning I thought of myself as being a real Londoner. I went into the park. It was fantastic. But people never talk about a painter being a Londoner in the way that they talk about a French painter being especially Parisian.

"I went to three prep schools before going to Highgate School as a boarder. For the last term in the lower school, when I was eleven, I was a prefect. Then I graduated into the senior school, and have never held public office since. I never got out of the junior common room. There was an art master, called Kyffin-Williams, and indirectly, he did encourage me to be a painter. I don't think I ever said to him 'I am going to be an artist.' I started saying that to people after I left school. I have never been mentioned in the Old Boy's section of the school magazine. I would feel quite alarmed if I was. But I do belong to the Old Boys Association. I paid the life subscription when I left. I got a letter asking me for money a few years later. It started: 'Now you are making such a great success as a painter. . . .' But I feel quite strongly about the school. For instance I remember vividly the face of the boy lying in the next bed to mine. He was very beautiful.

"My life began in the Navy, where I did my National Service. I enjoyed it. I was happily stationed in an hotel in Queensgate and spent most of the time studying Russian at London University. When I left art school I thought of going back into the Navy because I had this romantic notion of having an exhibition of water colours by Lt. Commander Patrick Procktor.

"I studied at the Slade but I do feel very strongly about art schools and the whole system that embraces not only the schools but the Arts Council and British Council as well. It's creaking. There are painters in galleries whose entire progress can be written as a formula: development as students, diplomas, prizes and finally the collectors who patronise them. But I don't think the schools are completely useless if they stimulate one's ambition. Suppose for example, I was ten years younger and went into the ironmongery business — actually I did work in an ironmongers for a time — instead of going to the Slade. Would I still be a painter?



"Yes, I taught in art schools for a time — Maidstone, Camberwell and the Royal College. Did you know that you still have to wear a tie in the tutors' dining room at the Royal College? It drained me. It's such a pity that so many young painters have to support themselves by teaching when the first thing you want as an artist is freedom and your own time. What impedes them is having to make a living to exist. You just have to have it arranged so that your time is your own. Mind you this freedom thing can be taken too far. I am depressed by the fact that so many people are so liberated; the whole thing resting on the basis of them just having to walk down to the American Express for a cheque. Yet I suppose that the freedom a cheque gives you is what people are working for at the moment.

"I did once say that to-day the painter has to be a performer, but I meant it in a derogatory sense. The statement was based on things other than work — publicity gimmicks, or camping about on television for example. I suppose I ought to be careful what I say as I haven't seen my performance in *Laughter In The Dark* yet. People tell me that I behave outrageously in it. But it's not really me — I'm

playing a part. It is so easy for a film director to impose a character by his selection of shots when he is editing. The voice isn't even mine because Nicol Williamson dubbed it. No. What I really meant was that a great many talented painters are neglected because they won't play up to the camera.



"In my opinion most published art criticism is hardly worth reading. I look at the *Sunday Times* to see what's on and sometimes the colour supplement has reproductions that I like very much. Most people are frightened of making their own judgement and look at the painter's name before looking at the picture. I used to do it myself. If a person is really interested in painting he stops looking at the name-plate and starts looking at the actual painting. That's why walking around the National Gallery or the Wallace Collection is pure delight to me. No, I don't know of any critic whose judgement is worth taking.

"Yes, it is true that I have been influenced by Bacon, Sutherland and Keith Vaughan, but then they are only a few of my influences. "Why have I chosen water colour as a medium? Oh, there are so many reasons. I am fascinated by colour television. The way in which colour is illuminated from behind and the fact that a person, or an object, reflects an intenser colour near to it. Look at that painting of Ole over there and you can see the purple of the chair reflected in his chin. Buttercup! I have tried to get near to this in my recent paintings. I am also very interested in light — its sources, its reflection and its iridescence. It is a great shame but I don't think many painters care about light any more — that is why the majority of paintings are so depressingly one dimensional. I love the pressure that working in water colour imposes on me. There is no time to hesitate because it dries so quickly. The thought and action are together. It is that immediate. I want to see if I can do the same thing in oils one day. Yes. It must seem a very English thing — my aunt Dolly paintings. You see, I want to be remembered as the best water colourist of my time.

"Painting to commission is like going on parade — taking your talents out for inspection. I've done several portraits: Edward Montagu, Tommy Steele, Cecil Beaton, Dickie Buckle and Michael Fish. The *Standard* asked me to paint a picture of Prince Charles. I painted it, but it was the picture that they dare not publish. I couldn't paint him smiling, and I had to work from photographs and sketches of the dress and crown he was to wear at the Investiture. It was a failure in the sense that it wasn't used. Perhaps *Jeremy* would publish it?



"I've worked several times in the theatre. *Twelfth Night* and *Total Eclipse* recently at the Royal Court and *Cage of God* for the Western Theatre Ballet. But I am waiting for the right thing. I have never been associated with a total success. I think I would like to do Living Theatre at the London Palladium!! The theatre is always late artistically, even the social realism of the theatre. They are late

compared to poets and painters — Bratby's cornflake packets came long before *Look Back In Anger*.

"I don't think I am rich. Painters don't really earn very much money. My needs are very primitive — as long as I have enough for fuel, I have always thought of myself as poor. I am beginning to realise how rich other people are.

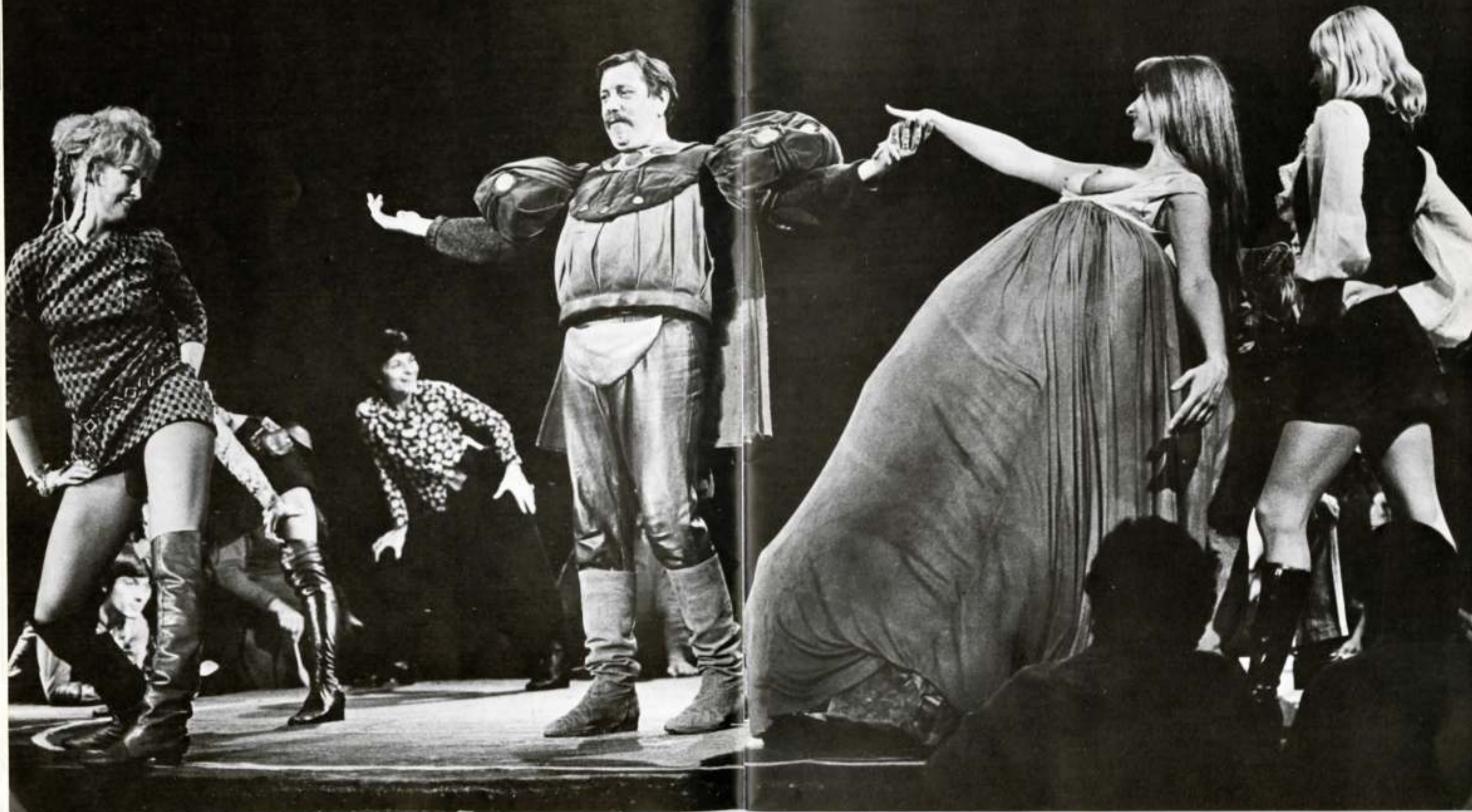
"Personal relationships are vital. I am in love, but there is the question of levels and depths of love. For instance, I might say that I love the window dressing at Harrods twenty times a day. I feel that I am deeply in love, and I also think that the depth of love has something to do with time. So long as you are in love then you can become deeper in love. If you are in love with someone, you shine and you want them to shine back. When people fall out of love it is a terrifying and depressing sight. When you meet people who have stopped loving, you are witnessing the killing of something in yourself. It's like going to a funeral. One is much more responsive to another person through love.



Through love you learn the limitations of love. I cannot imagine living in a situation of non-love. "In London I never meet people who send me up in the street, as I did say ten years ago. Perhaps it still happens in the suburbs. The skinheads are supposed to be anti-gay and it's fascinating that there is this new category, because I thought the days of violent teenagers were over. The rockers were always supposed to be gay. I did some paintings of leather-boys a few years ago — twelve pictures and one was called 'Rest Room' and had fifty-six leather-boys in it. Somebody rang up and said they were from the *Daily Mail* Picture Probe and that they wanted to do an article on me as the Rocker Artist. 'Where did you find all those leather queens?' he asked. He thought I was a rocker just sitting in the Ace Cafe on the M1 doing pencil studies of my friends! Honestly I wouldn't know what to do with a leather queen if I had one. "I once said that a painter was lucky if there was even a short period when everything goes right. He must live for that moment. For me? I think it is coming."

Revolutionary Rabelais

A profile of the real living theatre that helped to oust de Gaulle. By Trevor Richardson.



No-one expected 'Rabelais', presented by the Compagnie Renaud-Barrault for two weeks in September at the Old Vic, to cause the sensation it did in Paris. The days are long past when the English looked to Gay Paree for their more risqué pleasures. For several years now the French have flocked to 'le swinging city', the Mecca of the avant-garde, and there are more dolly froggies to be seen in the King's Road today than in the Quartier.

And yet there were ecstasies: it out-rocked 'Hair', out-stormed Peter Brook's 'Tempest' and out-lived the Living Theatre. It was sensational because, drawing on the theatrical vision of all these, it outshone them with (in Ronald Bryden's words) "sheer dazzling professionalism". There was nothing we had not seen or heard before, but never all at once and never so brilliantly performed.

In the Evénements of May 1968 Jean-Louis Barrault was sacked from the Odéon because of his support for the students. The decision was an entirely political one emanating from the Elysée but, coming as it did from André Malraux who was then Minister of Culture, it was a double shock. It seemed scandalous to many that Malraux, deeply respected for his own culture, should turn against Jean-Louis the greatest actor-director in France on these grounds. But "Malraux lay in the shadow of de Gaulle."

Immediately Jean-Louis was inundated with offers of top jobs in theatre and opera in Britain and the United States, all of which he turned down. He sank all his savings into the preservation of his own company as a private concern. 'Rabelais' represents the first fruits of his victory over the Philistines, the resurrection of culture from the deadly hand of politics. He has triumphed. Jean-Louis rose, Malraux fell - "he is nothing now" - and since the passing of de Gaulle Ministers and Deputies have begged Jean-Louis to return to some official position in French cultural life. It will be interesting to see what he does when his six-month contract at the Elysées-Montmartre expires; he has little to lose either way. The company is all-embracing in every way. It is a long time since Richard Wagner projected his idea of the 'Gesamtkunstwerk', the total art form. And yet we are still wedded to the old arbitrary divisions between 'serious' theatre and light entertainment, opera and musical comedy, 'serious' music and pop. There have been welcome attempts in recent years to break down these artificial barriers, notably in the successful concerts given by the London Sinfonietta. But even here the performers are drawn from their different backgrounds for the occasion and return to them once it is over. Under Jean-Louis they bring all their professional skill as actors, singers, dancers, acrobats and wrestlers into one company and it is the experience of working together that produces such superb results.

The critics rightly drew attention to this as the key to Jean-Louis' achievement: "a total theatre of dance, song, rhetoric, poetry and colloquialism" (Harold Hobson), "a blend of documentary, kermesse and rave-up" (Bryden). Physically too the company draws on an infinite variety of human types: sexy girls in sheer black body stockings (without pants and bras), rave boys in tight velvet jeans, huge men, old men, young men, beautiful men. Richard Caron, one of the youngest and most attractive members of the company, has been with them for three years. Trained as an actor he is also an excellent dancer. During his brief stay in London he was, with good reason, besieged by photographers. Sharon O'Connell is a beautiful young American girl and a marvellous dancer. She only joined a month ago. Jean-Pierre Granval, middle-aged, immensely vital, funny and articulate, has worked with Jean-Louis for twenty years. Jacques Alric is a large man, rather morose-looking and reflective, but with a great sense of humour. All of them and their fellow actors are so different, all have their special contribution. And not one of them is or seeks to be a 'star'.

Where on the English stage can you see such a combination of talent? Our native companies are so stereotyped. We have a Royal Shakespeare type, a National type, a Shaftesbury Avenue type. And always it is somehow so careful. Somewhere along the line there is a failure of nerve. Are we frightened of the really provocative girl, the really stunning boy?



Fundamentally perhaps our theatre is still middle class in outlook. Even when members of the Living Theatre or 'Hair' strip off it is with a kind of defiant and boring innocence. Fully clothed these French are capable of a more definite statement. Members of the company adopt a simple attitude to their diversity. "The theatre is life, and in life you have everything..." The physical element is important because it affects everything they do on and off stage. In the street they greet each other and their friends with screams of delight and, oblivious of normal English restraints, fling their arms round each other and kiss. All the actors I spoke to stressed this feeling for each other, this 'togetherness' and it is obvious that it is carried into their work. Jean-Louis says that the one quality he looks for in his actors, especially for this show, is enthusiasm. He doesn't really audition. "If they want to be there they come and if they don't they stay away." "Signing a contract," said one, "is like getting into a boat in the dark. It is easy to make a mistake. The boat might sink. More than anything you must have 'confidence' in your director." Jean-Louis is clearly surrounded by people who are enthusiastic to work together under his direction, because they have absolute confidence in him. I asked them why they admired him so much. "Pouf," they replied with characteristic Gallic shrugs of the shoulders, "we don't admire him," and then with conviction, "we love him." Some critics found the comparison between the student revolt and renaissance humanism too forced, and suggested that Jean-Louis was fawning upon youth. But the cast would disagree. "Jean-Louis doesn't try to be young; he's no pseudo-hippy. He is young in heart and mind." It is his own genuinely youthful enthusiasm which fetches out the best in his actors.

The vitality of the company is amazingly stimulating. But the excitement is not just produced by clever lighting (including four strobes in the last scene) nor by Michel Polnareff's super



rock score (belted out through a magnificent set of speakers in series round the theatre). Why, incidentally, do we have to wait for a foreign company to use light and sound so effectively in our own National Theatre? It is primarily the energetic communication by the actors of their enthusiasm to the audience. Seldom before has one seen on the stage bodies and faces so radiantly alive. As they said themselves, "Each actor must enjoy every night."

This is, of course, a very ambitious standard to live up to and one that could never be maintained without that other quality they possess to such a fine degree, their professionalism. Their verve is not in other words entirely natural. It is the result of a most fortunate blend between a gay and relaxed attitude to life and an extremely serious attitude to work.

Paris audiences are, they say, the hardest in the world. "They think they know everything." Every night, however tired they are, the actors must bring the spectators to life. Although 'Rabelais' is similar in impact to 'Hair' its demand on the actors are much greater. "The technique required for this show is the hardest I have ever known in my life."

This may come as a surprise to those who believe that this type of theatre is easy compared with the more conventional forms. The actors have absolutely no time for improvisation as something to be presented as a finished product to an audience. It is a necessary part of their training but it is only a means to an end. They are equally contemptuous of 'plays without words'. It doesn't matter who the author is provided that the text is 'heavy' (I think they mean as opposed to trite). "A good text supports an actor. Give us Molière, Racine, Claudel, Beckett or Genet any day - Shakespeare's your problem, not ours!" And so with 'Rabelais' the excitement of the words themselves - those marvellous, archaic, bawdy words - serves as a generator throughout the play. One of the most striking features about these people, apart from their physical attractiveness, is their wonderful diction on and off stage, the

product of a rigorous classical training in voice production. Finally the physical surroundings in which the actors work is of vital importance. Two years ago Jean-Louis said the traditional style of the theatre was finished. It had to change. In Paris a cruciform stage in an all-in wrestling arena, in London a ramp down into the heart of the stalls, creates an immediate contact with the audience. But these devices are not intended to be final solutions to the vexed question of theatre design. They are deliberately experimental. Jean-Louis would like to see theatre in the round, in triangles, in trapezia. "The real experience for the theatre man is the stage. He creates this wherever he is simply by acting. A stage is not built by an architect but by an artist, *par un héros*."

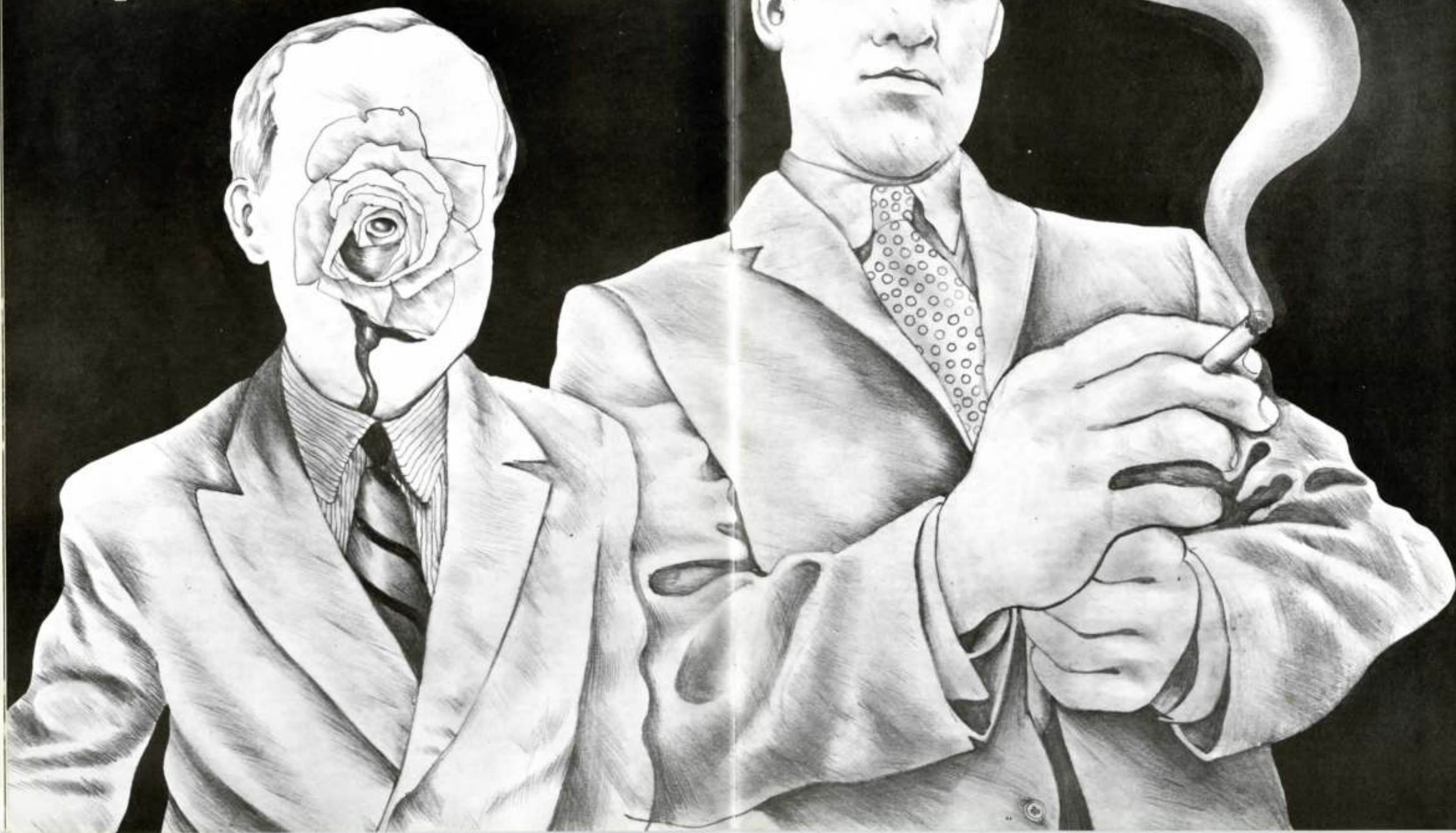
We have directors in England of great stature and vision, some of the best actors and actresses in the world, marvellous musicians and dancers, highly-skilled technicians. There is no dearth of talent but there is a lack of nerve. Is it too much to hope that these people may begin to come together in enterprises like 'Rabelais'? The revolution is under way. It has much to learn from the beauty, the variety, the enthusiasm and the professionalism of the Compagnie Renaud-Barrault. Vive Jean-Louis!

My only criticism of the considerable achievements of this company is that they have not yet solved any more than we have the problem of audience participation. At the end one had a tremendous desire to do something, to express oneself, but nobody did. The nearest we have seen is the rather self-conscious dancing by a few daring ones after 'Hair'. Riotous orgies are now common on the English stage - 'Moses and Aaron' at Covent Garden, 'Samson and Delilah' at the Coliseum, 'Oedipus' at the Old Vic, but audiences remain - not entirely through their own fault - obstinately sedate. No-one, as far as one can see, even masturbates let alone joins in.

Trevor Richardson

piccadilly report

Evidence suggests that there are probably fewer than 200 regular 'rent-boys' working in the London area. It is almost impossible to arrive at the exact number, as numerous boys work part-time 'on the game' in order to supplement their other earnings - There is a high class trade, but in the main this report is confined to the lower end of the game - the boys that work in the West End who are called the 'Dilly Boys'.



Few boys consciously set out to be prostitutes. Usually a chance encounter spells out to them that here is a seemingly easy, and possibly lucrative, means of earning a living. Most of the boys are working-class and come from the provinces – particularly Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool, Newcastle and Glasgow. They drift to London, and because to them London means Piccadilly, they unwittingly make for that place. A few weeks hanging around the bars and pin ball palaces, a few conversations with the regulars, an offer of a beer, and very soon they have slipped onto 'the game'.

Of course, there are those boys, with provincial hustling experience, who deliberately set out for London, where they imagine the pickings will be better.

Most of the boys working the West End are between 17 and 25 years of age, although I have met younger, in one instance, a boy in his early teens. ("I wait until my Mum has gone to bed. About ten-thirty. Then I get dressed and slip up to the West End. I get in before she gets up to go to work at five-thirty. Then I go to sleep for a few hours. I don't do it much though 'cos it makes me tired at school. Usually I do it more at week-ends. Saturday afternoon. That's a good time. I started doing it last year at our ABC. I used to hang around the toilets and men would give me five bob to wank them off. Then I met this other boy who said I'd earn more up the West End.") There are some older 'boys' – up to the middle thirties – but in a trade where youth, or the semblance of youth, is essential if you wish to 'score' profitably, they are very soon forced off that particular market.

Working Places

The 'rent-boys' operate from very definite centres. There are three pubs in the West End notorious for 'rent' and boys are available throughout licensing hours. Such is the reputation of one of these pubs, that young homosexuals who are not 'on the game' would not be seen dead in the place. Two more in the Earl's Court area have their fair share of 'rent' but it's strictly a lunch-time trade, as in the evening they are filled to overflowing with homosexuals who are not 'on the game' and obviously the competition would not work in the 'rent-boys' favour.

There are two cinemas near Piccadilly Circus – in one contacts take place in the stalls and in the other the second circle. These are the least expensive seats in each cinema. The afternoon is the favoured time, as in the evening the cinemas soon fill up with 'straight' movie-goers. There is also a notorious cinema in Victoria. If you wish to watch the film you sit on the right of the central gangway, if you wish to pick someone up you sit on the left. The boys patronise this cinema in the afternoons. The Pinball Palaces in Soho and Coventry Street are particularly popular with the younger end of the trade – those boys who are obviously too young, or look too young, to get into a pub. The amusement arcades are the favourite haunts of small time crooks and those pimping for female prostitutes, so it is not surprising that the boys that drift into these places often become involved in games other than 'renting'.

At the railway termini of Waterloo, Charing Cross and Victoria the boys make contact blatantly. It is difficult to see why the Southern Region should be favoured above the other regions, except in the case of Victoria, which is within walking distance of the areas of Belgravia and Chelsea, where certain of the more affluent clients live. Paddington is popular late at night, as many of the boys live in this area. All the stations are shunned by the boys during the evening rush hour, as they do not want to waste valuable time 'scoring' off commuters who are merely killing a few minutes before they catch their trains home to the suburbs. "All they want to do is toss off in the cottage while they look at my prick. Then they're off. They're not interested in paying or going places. I haven't got time to go around giving them free thrills."

The most popular non-railway lavatories are all situated in the West End within some five minutes walk of Piccadilly Circus in the area bounded by Charing Cross Road, Oxford Street, Trafalgar Square and St. James. 'Renter's Corner' is the name given to the bottom end of Regent Street bordering Piccadilly Circus. The boys stand along the railings at this rather seedy London version of Rome's Spanish Steps.



BOB HOOK

Glossary of Rent Slang

Many of the slang words used by the 'rent-boy' are also used by the ordinary homosexual and by those involved in the drug scene. These are the 'rent' definitions:

cottage	public lavatory
gay	homosexual
hustler	male prostitute
hustling	working as a male prostitute
quickie	brief sex act
rent	male prostitute
renter	client
rolling	extraction of money by threat, violence or theft
punter	client
steamer	client
on the game	involved in male prostitution
to score	to pick up a client
straight	normal
working the cottages	soliciting in public lavatories

Methods of Contact

The boys 'score' in two distinct and different ways. And the methods of picking-up are dictated by location and the character of the boys concerned.

The cool approach is the technique particularly favoured by the boy who does not admit to being homosexual, and it is practised in the pubs. The boy simply stands in the bar, with a near empty glass, waiting for a prospective client to come up and ask if he wants another drink. After a brief conversation, boy and client leave the bar. Clients seldom wish to remain long in the bar once they have made contact with a likely candidate. The boys inevitably stress that it is the client who makes all the active moves and that their role is purely passive. "They pick me up. I do nothing." Except for those boys who are excessively camp, the renter will never behave in an obviously homosexual manner, or make himself particularly sexually attractive to potential 'scores'. This is directly contrary to his opposite number in Spain or Italy, who will often behave in a flagrantly sexual manner, in order to excite his 'score', during the ritual of picking up. The 'cool approach' is also used at Renter's Corner.

The blatant approach is a flagrantly sexual technique and is practised by boys 'scoring' in lavatories. The rent boy stands at a urinal stall until a potential client comes to stand next to him. The boy will then deliberately reveal and manipulate his erect penis, thereby exciting the score. A few mumbled words, or a nod of the head, indicate that the two should meet outside. This method is not popular with the majority of rent boys for several reasons. It is dangerous to behave in this manner in a public place, as plain clothes police sometimes watch the West End 'cottages'. Because the initial contact is sexual and not verbal, the rent boy may have picked-up someone who is not willing to pay. It compromises the boy who stresses that he is not homosexual for he has behaved in a deliberately homosexual manner and it is a method of contact favoured by many homosexuals not on 'the game'. The vast majority of boys will only resort to 'cottaging' if they are desperate to score.

Clients

The client is called a 'steamer' or a 'punter' by the 'rent-boy', and clients fall into four main groups:

Old or Middle-Aged Steamers are by far the biggest group. These are men who because they are too old, or unattractive, cannot pick up free 'trade'. They are often wealthy and if they like the boy may try and put the relationship on a more permanent basis, taking the boy to live with them. The initial pick-up usually occurs in a bar, or the boy may be introduced by another 'steamer'. Boys may embark on a whole circuit of 'steamers', each patron upping the bid of the preceding one, though this is more usual with high class rent.

The Married Man. This group may not necessarily be old, or sexually unattractive, but because they fear the consequences of a more permanent relationship, with a free homosexual partner, they choose to buy their 'trade'. The pick-up usually takes place in a lavatory at the 'steamers' commuter terminus. He would not relish going to a bar that was obviously homosexual.

The Tourist. The middle-aged tourist comes to London armed with his 'Gay Guide' and makes for the listed homosexual bars. Those guides often conveniently omit that trade costs money, as the rent bars are frequently lumped together with ordinary 'gay' bars. The tourist, if he is American or continental, will not be unduly surprised to pay for sex, as they are accustomed to doing so in their own countries. Yet London probably has more free 'trade' than any other large city in the world.

The Kinky Steamer. The members of this group use 'rent boys' because they find it difficult to contact other homosexuals with similar bizarre tastes. This excludes the leather and motorcycle brigade who have a large, free scene going on various commons most evenings of the week. Rent boys will seldom go with a client who they think may be sadistic, and never if they are told the 'steamer' has "a nice friend at home who would like to make up an interesting threesome". This is the dangerous end of the trade, where the boys are usually very wary of accepting too much alcohol or the offer of drugs. "I went back with this bloke to his flat. I saw him slip a pill into my drink.

But I knew what to do as I had seen it at the pictures. When he went to the toilet I switched the drinks round. He was out like a light in ten minutes. So I rolled him and got out quick." Another boy who went with the same man was not so lucky. He woke up in the early morning in a park with a ripped shirt and severe stud and leather lash marks on his buttocks and back.

The boys seldom have anywhere to take the score once the initial pick-up has been made. Many of them have no permanent place of residence, and if they did, it would not be in the renter's ethical code to take the 'steamer' home. The venue is therefore put squarely in the client's court, and this presents problems for the married man, or tourist. However, there are hotels, situated mainly in the Victoria and King's Cross areas, where it is possible to rent a room for a few hours, although the 'steamer' will have to pay the full night's rate for the use of them. The boys will suggest one of these. Some of the boys will take full advantage of this, and after the 'score' departs, keep the key and use the room to sleep in that night. If the score cannot afford the extra expense of a room the boy may suggest using a bathroom at a certain hotel close to Piccadilly Circus. This is not particularly popular now, because bona fide residents found it difficult to take a legitimate bath and the hotel's management employed a detective to check the bathrooms regularly. The boy may suggest going up a dark back alley for a 'quickie', but unless the steamer is either stupid or drunk, he will fear the possibility of being 'rolled'.

Tariff

Rent boys tend to exaggerate their earning capabilities. Three to five pounds would be an average score for the majority of them, but if a boy is particularly lucky he may score three times in one day. This requires robustness, strong will power, or the cunning semblance of sexual excitement, if the boy is to fully gratify the appetite of his client. "It's difficult enough to get a hard-on with some of the old 'steamers'. So I try not to 'come-piff' before they do. They don't seem to bother about it once they've come."

One boy said that he had received twenty pounds from an American. "I think that he thought the fivers were one pound notes." The same boy said that he often got ten pounds if he stayed all night.

Often the boy has to do very little to earn his money – "sometimes they shoot before I've had time to take my clothes off" – merely a short session of mutual masturbation. Fellatio is common, but usually the boy insists on being the passive partner. Likewise anal intercourse, with the boy passive and the 'steamer' active. It is a curious fact, but seemingly masculine boys will nearly always play the passive part during the sex act. This is surely linked to the 'rent boy's' code of ethics, where to be active is tantamount to admitting that he is homosexual and many of them stubbornly insist that they are 'straight'.

If the steamer requires refinements like kinky sex the boy will insist on a higher rate of pay. This ranges from fetishists who wish that they, or the boy, or both, dress up in unusual garments – female underwear, leather pants or rubber suits – to the extreme masochist who wants to be beaten or urinated on. Sometimes the requests are ludicrously simple – "all he wanted me to do was to undress and keep smiling at him while he wanked off".

'Rolling'

'Rolling' cannot really be categorised as a form of male prostitution, yet it is a method of obtaining money practised by the more unscrupulous 'rent boy'. It is a hazard open to all homosexuals who solicit in certain public places and it takes one of two usual forms.

Homosexuals searching for trade in a public place, such as a park, will be approached by a boy. When the man has declared his interest, the boy will suggest a 'quickie' there and then, if the place is conducive. The boy may carry through the most rudimentary sex act – brisk masturbation or fellatio – or he may merely embrace the man and then suggest that to go further would be 'dodgy' in that location. Afterwards the victim will discover that his wallet is missing.

The other method is often practised with one or more

accomplices. After the homosexual has declared himself, the boy, often reinforced by his mates, who appear as if from nowhere, will then threaten him with exposure to the police, or violence, unless the man holds over his wallet and watch. There is evidence that a gang of teenagers, all pupils at a well known comprehensive school, work the commons of South West London in this manner. They set a pretty and younger boy as bait and emerge swiftly from the trees when the contact with a likely victim has been made.

'Rolling' occurs most often in the lavatories of cinemas, or it may happen in ordinary public lavatories, if they are suitably deserted and unattended. Parks, or commons, are also favourite places.

'Rolling' is also a term used by rent boys who steal from a 'steamer's' flat. This may be a surreptitious act, or accompanied by the same threats of exposure and violence as above.

There is evidence of organisation of 'rent boys' but nothing like the exaggerated claims of the stories in some Sunday newspapers. It is organised in a very loose way and certainly could not be termed 'Big Business'. It is true that an homosexual, who because of his position cannot search publicly for trade, will seek a contact in the underworld to supply him with boys, who in return may receive money. And very often an ex-rent boy will attempt, Fagin-like, to surround himself with a group of youngsters, in return for offering them protection and a home. But the boys soon find they can make much more by cutting out the middle-man and going free-lance. Stories of boys provided for 'week-end orgies' at the country homes of 'well-known personalities in showbusiness and politics' are largely apocryphal. But, it is certain that until recent 'scandals', there was a market in members of the Guards regiments who were on a tour of duty in the capital. But these proceedings were almost always organised by the guardsmen themselves.

The majority of boys interviewed had never heard of organisation and had no wish to be anything but free-lance.

The Law

The rent-boys' attitude to the police might be termed brazen tolerance, for they are fully aware that there is very little the law can do to stop them. Of course, the police are fully aware of the situation and seem content to let it exist, so long as it exists in well defined areas. Occasionally, as a result of a complaint from a 'straight' member of the public, who, perhaps, has been subjected to an unfortunate incident in a lavatory, or because one of the popular Sundays has decided to make one of its annual forays into Soho's 'neon-lit jungle', the police sweep into obligatory action. For a few days the bars and lavatories are quiet, but soon the mud settles and it's trade as usual.

The laws that can be contravened are contained in four separate sections of the *Sexual Offences Act 1956 as amended by the Sexual Offences Act 1967* and these laws apply equally to the homosexual who is not 'on the game'. There are no laws specifically aimed at preventing male prostitution. Rather they are aimed at importuning, public indecency, acts involving minors and living off immoral earnings. The fact that money changes hands is largely immaterial.

Section 12 of the Sexual Offences Act 1956 made the act of buggery an offence by both partners to the act; and by section 13 gross indecency between male persons was also made an offence. Both these sections were re-enactments of earlier Acts of Parliament. However their effect has been very substantially modified by the Sexual Offences Act 1967, which provides that neither buggery nor gross indecency between males shall be an offence provided that both parties are consenting, over the age of 21, and that the act takes place in private. This means that no prosecutions can now be brought under sections 12 and 13 of the 1956 Act unless it can be proved that the sexual act took place in public (and this includes a public lavatory or any situation where more than two persons are involved or present), or that one or both parties are under 21 - in which case both parties may be prosecuted, but only with the consent of the Director of Public Prosecutions, who may exercise his discretion. This might mean, for example, prosecution of the older but not the younger partner. If one of the parties is "non-consenting" the other party will still be



guilty of an offence, or alternatively he could be prosecuted for the offence of indecent assault on a man contrary to section 15 of the 1956 Act. Penalties range from 10 years for an offence of buggery committed against the consent of the other party, to two years for less serious offences, in which case fines and probation orders are frequently imposed. The modifications in the law provided by the 1967 Act do not apply in full within the armed forces and the merchant navy.

Few boys consciously set out to be prostitutes...

Curiously then, the age restrictions work in the rent-boy's favour. If the boy is under 21, he merely has to plead that he was not consenting and the steamer, who is always over age, gets punished. In any case most acts go undetected. It is interesting that the majority of boys are very hazy about the legal age of consent. Inevitably they think that 18, or in some cases 16, is the legal age.

The law relating to "living off immoral earnings" concerns the organiser only and it is extremely difficult to make charges of this nature stick. Therefore the rent-boy is most vulnerable to charge of importuning and to avoid this he must just be careful. And, of course, the law does not protect a rent-boy over the age of 21.

Kept Boys

At the upper end of the scene is the 'kept-boy' who has little or nothing in common with the humbler 'rent-boy' save for one factor - the sex act is exchanged for money. In every other respect the game is totally different.

The kept-boy almost always comes from a middle-class background. He may even have a public school and university education; above all he must be beautiful - some of his 'rent-boy' counterparts are very unattractive indeed. Of course there are boys who emerge from the lower depths, who even start in the 'Dilly', but it requires intelligence, skill, the suppression of accent, and beauty to do so.

The kept-boy will not be as young as a rent-boy. Usually in his early 20's he may remain in business, if he preserves his looks, until his late 30's; though usually by this time he will have amassed enough money to retire comfortably.

Intelligence is all important: "I try to read as many reviews of plays, books, concerts and exhibitions as possible. That way I can talk intelligently about what is happening quite easily."

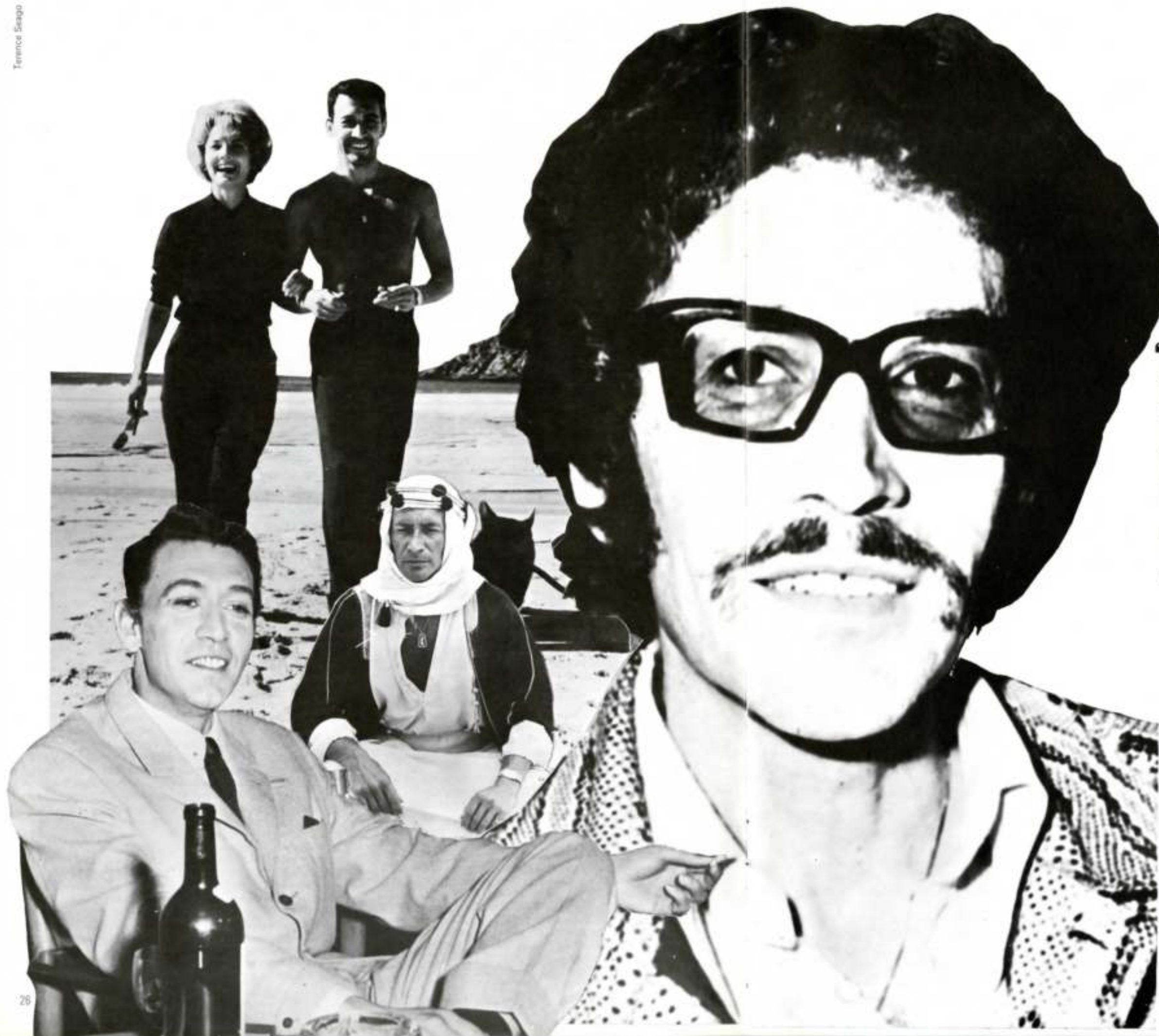
Because his relationships are much more permanent and he often lives with his patron, he is forced to adopt a style that is socially acceptable if he wishes to prosper. Very often he may hold some semi-official position in the patron's household like secretary or housekeeper. If he is happy he may stay with one person for many years. He may even be in love with that person.

The business transaction is very seldom a simple hand-out of cash. Usually he is content to have his clothes and other personal needs provided, plus an allowance. The permanent 'kept-boy' often benefits considerably when his patron dies. There are high class boys who have a rota of distinguished and rich clients, earnings, which are often considerable, being paid directly into their own bank accounts.

To break into high class trade a boy must patronise those places and move in that milieu frequented by the rich. There is very little point in going to the 'rent' pubs, or even the other 'gay bars', although certain pubs in Chelsea or Belgravia might yield suitable clients. Personal introduction at drink and dinner parties is the soundest method of scoring. If the boy has the means, visits to the South of France, Tangiers and the Bahamas may be rewarding.

Tim Hughes.





**'My passion
is sex.
I think
I'll change that.
My passion is
sophisticated sex.'**

An interview with the handsome hero of
'Department S'.

Count Bosie visits Jason King in the flesh...

You see James Bond on television and films lying on a bed being massaged, but somehow you think it can't be real: but I found out the other day that it is. I went to meet Jason King. I arrived in the depths of Surrey and stood outside a wire fence. Believe it or not, there was a guard on the gate – and it was only a Health Farm. I was shown into a waiting room, and down a long, steamy corridor I caught a glimpse of Peter Wyngarde being massaged by a tall blond. Another blond was giving him a manicure. I was offered a glass of carrot juice.

Peter Wyngarde's dreams of becoming a detective lasted a long time. He never wanted to become a train driver or any of the other things that most youngsters set their early aims on. His greatest hero was Sherlock Holmes.

But he became an actor instead.

Now in "Department S," the dark haired wiry effervescent Peter fulfils that early ambition by becoming an ace investigator attached to the department of the title.

The character he plays, Jason King, is far more than a mystery-solving operator; he is a best-selling crime novelist. He approaches each case with the imaginative mind of a fiction-writer, seeing it as if it were through the eyes of his detective-hero. Jason King is therefore an idea role for Peter Wyngarde in many ways. It fulfils that early ambition, and Peter himself is a man with a vivid, romantic imagination. He can write, too; in fact, just before accepting this role in "Department S," he wrote a film script which he was planning for production at the end of his new assignment. A Jason King kind of story? "Well, a sort of thriller," he says.

He looks more Latin than British, which is explained by his Anglo-French parentage, born in Marseilles and the son of a diplomat who, inevitably, moved from one country to another and had taken his family with him to the Far East when World War II broke out. When sent elsewhere, Mr. Wyngarde Senior left his young son in the care of friends at Lung Hua in China, and the next thing Peter knew was that he was in a Japanese internment camp.

His escape from his insecurity was to find an outlet in a world of fantasy. He read a lot, indulged in day dreams, and found camp acting a form of escapism without realising at the time that this would lead him eventually to a theatrical career. He even wrote his own adaptation of "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," playing the dual title role and also producing the show.

Another possible reason for his natural talent for acting was that he was a nephew, on his mother's side, of the noted French actor Louis Jouvet. When he left school in England, Peter skipped the formality of drama school training and went straight into repertory, attracting serious critical

attention (and audience acclaim) for the first time at the Bristol Old Vic with his portrayal of Cyrano de Bergerac. Later, he became a director at Bristol and then moved up to the London Old Vic.

His first major success in the West End was in "Duel of Angels," with Vivien Leigh, and it was this production that took him to America when it was presented in New York and also on tour. He remained in the States and Canada for television shows and between trips back to England appeared in several Hollywood productions including "The Innocents," "Gallagher" and "The Wonderful World of Walt Disney".

One of his early TV appearances was as Sydney Carton in "A Tale of Two Cities," which brought in an overwhelming number of fan letters, all from the fair sex, and it was at this period in his career that he had to overcome the "romantic" tag that threatened to tie him down to heart-throb roles. But he has always succeeded in avoiding being type-cast, though the classic cast of his features tend to make people think of him as a classical actor. "I'm not," he maintains. "I've had my fair share of Shakespeare, of course – but I've also had my fair share of everything else."

He has played Casanova and crooks alike. His innumerable British TV shows have included a successful cliff-hanger series "Epilogue to Capricorn" and "A Midsummer Night's Dream"; "South" and "Taming of the Shrew"; "A Tale of Two Cities" and "Lucille Ball's 'Lucy in London'"; such series as "The Saint", "The Baron", "The Prisoner" and "The Avengers".

Among his other West End plays has been "Night Conspirators", among his films, "Alexander the Great", "The Siege of Sidney Street", "Night of Eagles" and "The Innocents". He has played everything from drama to light hearted comedy, and has read short stories on television.

He doesn't like talking about himself but he delights in talking about other people. His performances look easy and natural but he is probably the most conscientious actor in Britain, worrying about everything ranging from make-up to dialogue. There's a lot of Peter Wyngarde in Jason King! We sat down together and I offered him some carrot juice. He promptly turned round and said, "My dear boy, if I have any more carrot juice I shall die."

He talked about himself.

"My tailor is a closely guarded secret. I work with him on the design and styles. As I use the same clothes I wear in the series for my everyday life, I have been inundated with letters and phone calls pleading with me to put them in touch with my tailor. My tailor has decided to remain exclusively mine.

I adore flying. I am trying to improve my tennis and my passion is sex. I think I'll change that, my passion is sophisticated sex.

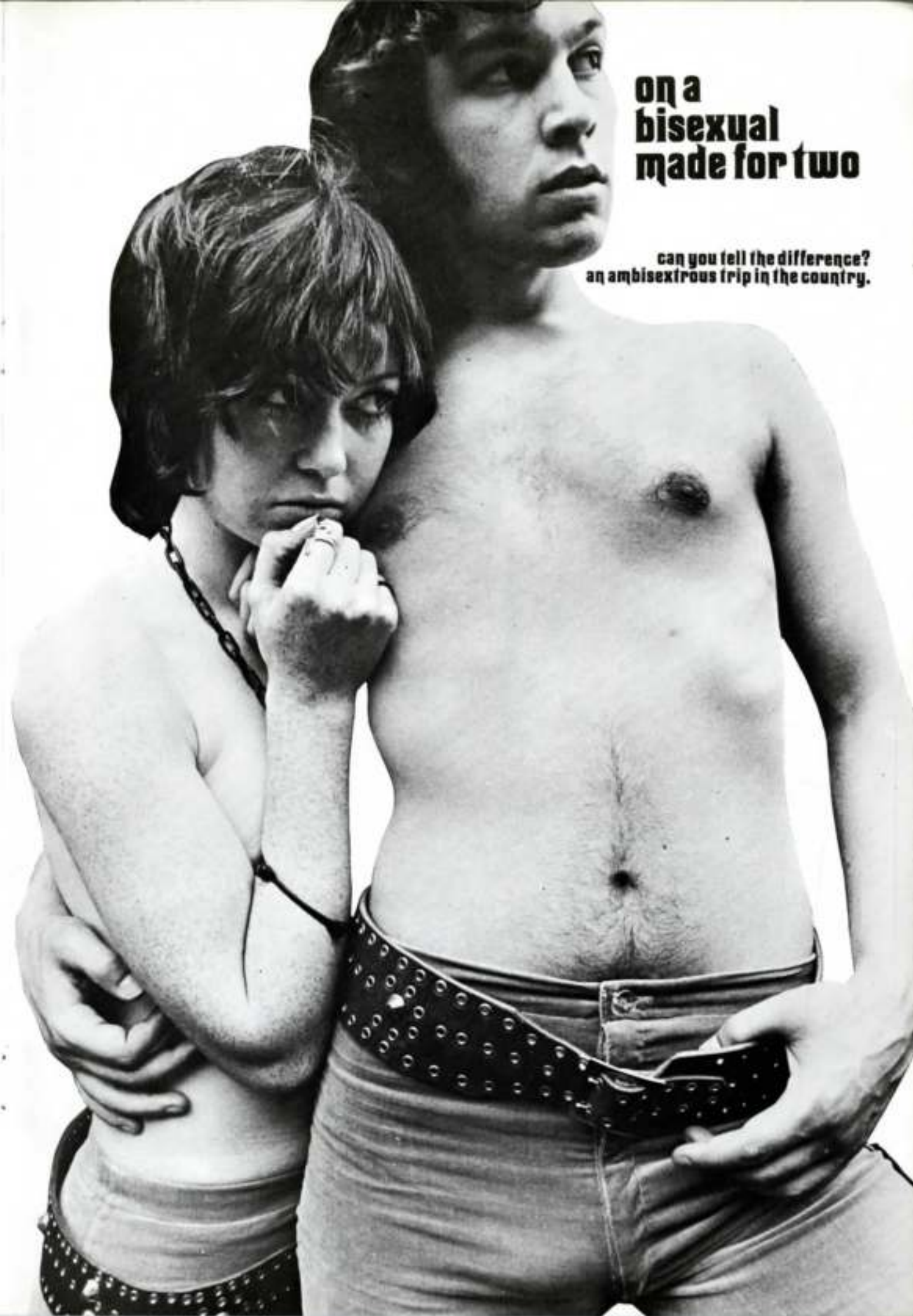
I don't really want to tell you the kind of car I drive, as it is easily recognisable, but it is a sports car – a lovely gun-metal grey – and there are only twelve in the world.

I'd like to make 'Jason King' movies. I feel that the Jason King character would lend itself so well to movies that they would sell, and eventually I would like to direct."

And with that Peter Wyngarde vanished into the steam-bath!

on a bisexual made for two

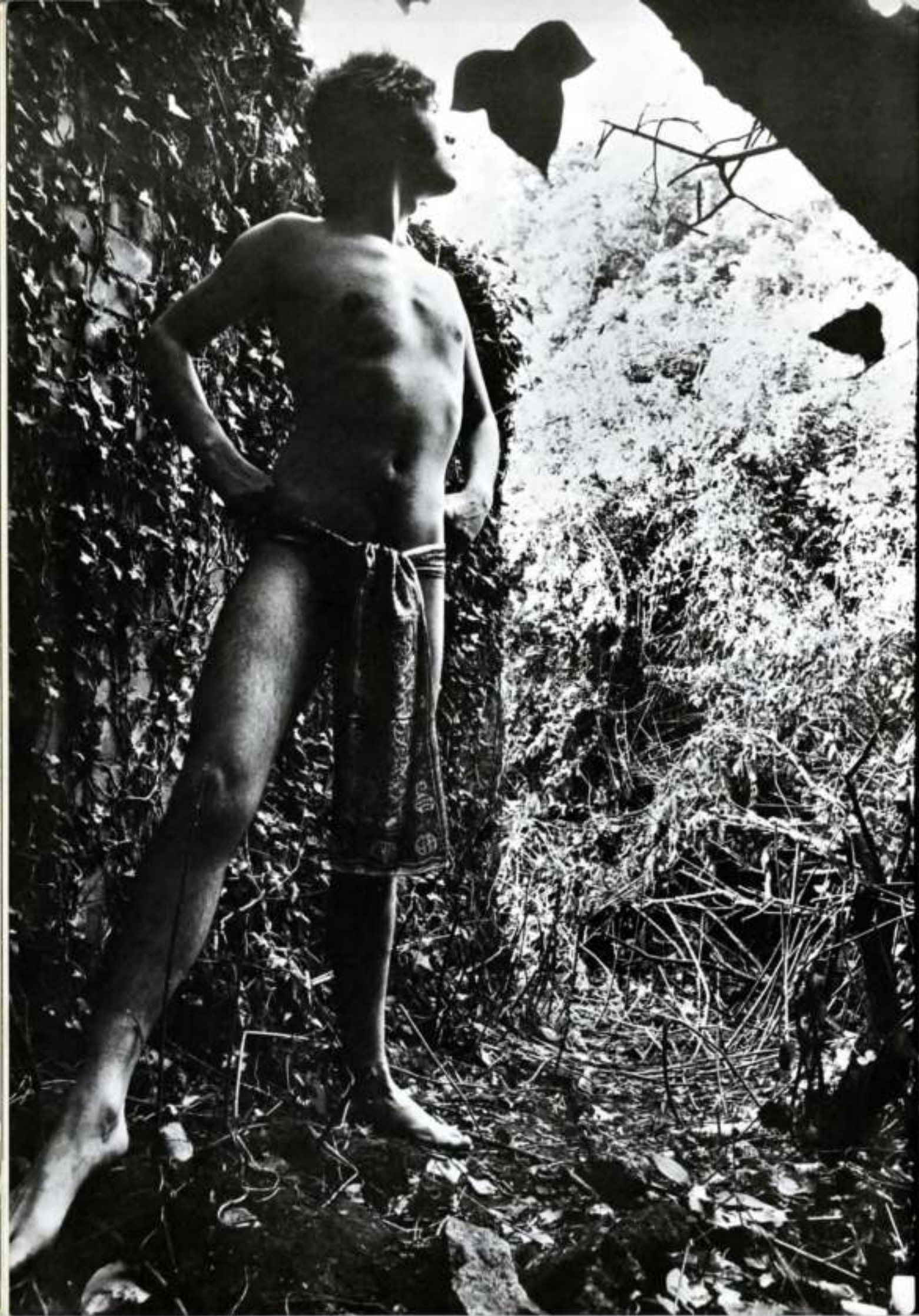
can you tell the difference?
an ambisexual trip in the country.











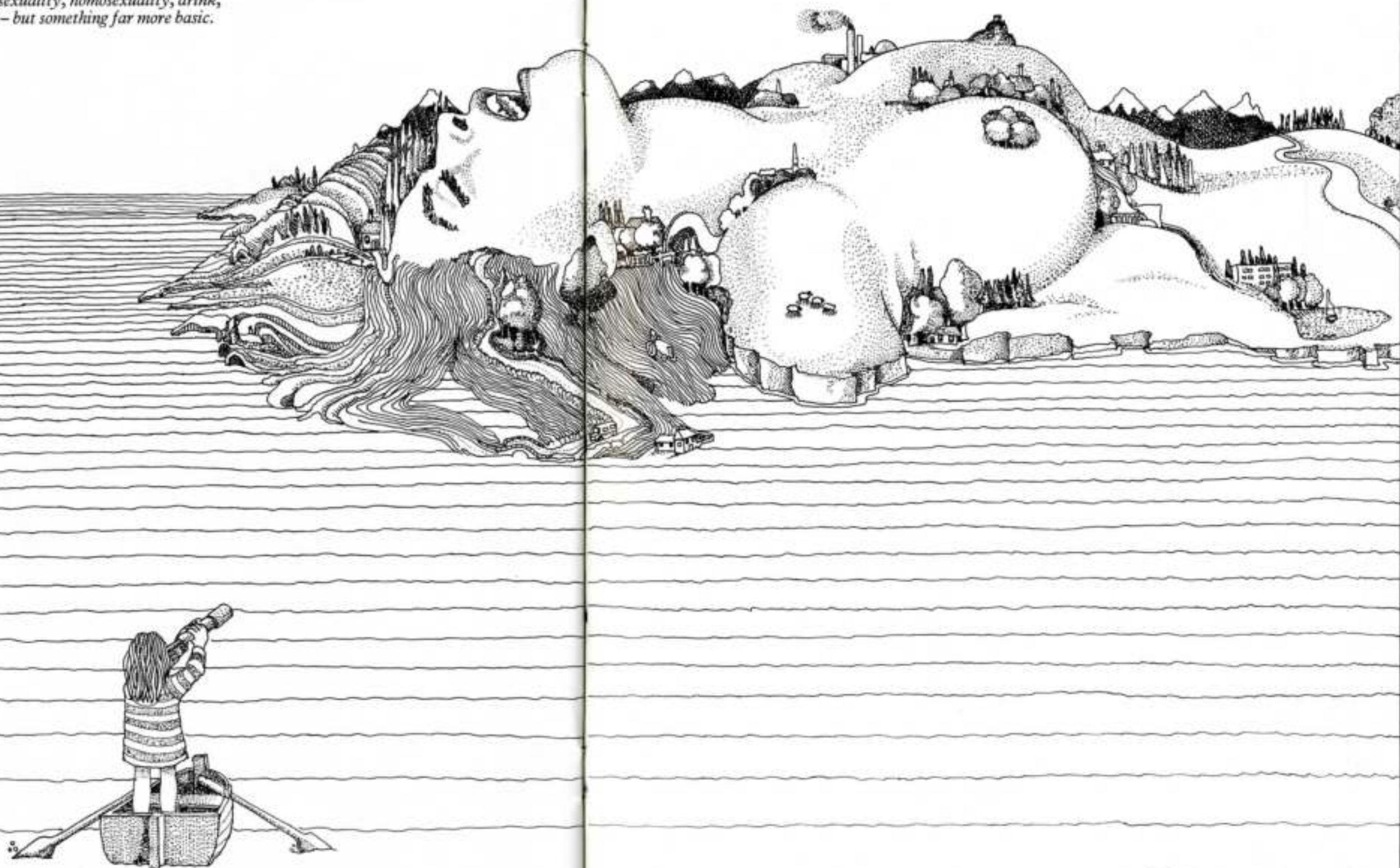
Photographs by Johnnie Clamp.



Clothes by Mail Boutique, Miles Place, 123a Broadley Street, London N.W.8.

Scandalavia observed

Jan Smith goes to Sweden and discovers that the real problem is not heterosexuality, homosexuality, drink, drugs or even suicide – but something far more basic.



In dear dirty London last June, one of the offerings in the Charing Cross cinema belt was *Sweden, Heaven and Hell*. The lesbians, the addicts, the frenzy that is Sweden today! said the posters, all writhing bottoms in black suspenders, so that snoozing up on the No. 19 bus from Chelsea, where the only frenzy comes from tourists breathlessly awaiting the queers, lesbians and addicts who probably live in Surbiton, you develop a firm sympathy for Sweden well before you get there. Just because they've managed to put a reindeer in every pot, and a condom machine on every corner, they should suffer? Suffer they do. Observers arrive by the plane-load, determined to prove that sexual freedom on a Welfare State feather bed does not make for True Happiness. Equally prolific are the people who get carried away in the opposite direction, lauding Sweden as a paradise where everything possible has been done to take the worry not only out of being close, but from every phase of human existence, from the subsidized cradle to the old-folks' home in the converted palace. Yes, you can tell a lot about a person from what he thinks of Sweden. Politics, sex, drink, religion, all the traditionally unmentionable bogeys are there, like ducks in a shooting gallery for the trigger-happy tourist.

If you stay away from Charing Cross, and arrive in rural Sweden, any fantasies from your Ingmar Bergman period will remain pretty intact, blossoming into a lovely reality. In Smaland, the pale slender trunks of birches lend grace to a flat landscape of red farm houses and yellow rape fields, tucked between lakes and forests. Not the *gemütlich* Julie Andrews sort of forests you get in Germany/Austria, but ones of almost sinister silence where strolling actors and medieval flagellants may burst forth at any moment. Presently though the forests stop and it's all Smiles of a Summer Night – the Orrefors estate with its wide lawns of flowering chestnuts, apple trees and an 18th century villa on a shimmering lake where important visitors are housed in light modern rooms with parquet floors and ticking grandfather clocks. Admittedly there was a factory, and real Swedish glassblowers *did* live in the red cottages of the company village, but from 5 pm onward Orrefors assumed such an idyllic quality that by 1.30 am, with the sky a pale lucid blue above the appleblossom, it was hard not to leap out of bed in search of wild strawberries, cavorting on the lawn like Isadora Duncan at the sheer geographical miracle of it all. As the Swedes are starved of light in the winter, and scorn heavy blinds, it was also rather hard to keep awake next day. It was here in the Orrefors factory, snoozing by a glassfurnace, that I met David Jenkins, an American writer who has lived five years in Stockholm as a political/economic correspondent for a chain of US magazines. Something of a permanent expatriate, Jenkins has no time for people who jet in to write about Nordic love nests and the perils of socialism. "In New York the publishers changed the title of my book to *Sweden and The Price of Progress*," he said. "Who said anything about a price? But that's the way they like to imagine over there. They think that because Sweden's socialist it must be wicked." Actually about 90 per cent of Swedish industry is privately-owned. It is the distribution of revenue that is socialistic. Jenkins is no Swedophile, his main complaint being that the Swedes lack any analytical spirit, accepting their organized society with smug superiority and a total absence of good old American self-criticism. People who need people to tell them what's wrong with themselves may be happy, but hardly stimulating, runs his argument. "Susan Sontag came over here a while back so I rang her up, just friendly like, and she really attacked me, said my book was biased and everything was marvellous. But she's changed her mind now," he concluded triumphantly, getting out a cutting.

After nine months in London, Stockholm on a spring morning did me more good than a dozen Guinnesses – which would probably exhaust the British £50 travel allowance anyway; (that is why most Scandinavians speak English with an American accent). To hell with the sex magazines – the sight of all those clean, tanned male necks, regularly trimmed by lady barbers, was aphrodisiac enough. For a whole morning I sat in sidewalk cafes drinking coffee among the gleaming skyscrapers and boxed petunias, murmuring *clean, clean*, like a traveller who has finally struck water in the Sahara. With the highest standard of living in the world, nobody looked poor, dirty or starved, the streets were spotless, the taxidriers pleasant, the

children angelic as the legendary Angels and capable of entrancing a score of bishops if Sweden had that many. True, there was a conference going on for the state church, with flocks of black gaitered and white ruffled Lutheran priests surging through the city, but this only happens every sixth year and normally the clergy is seldom seen and never heard. Wodin and Thor have been replaced smoothly by cleanliness and efficiency, with Christianity lasting no more than a split century or two. Wastebins are lined with plastic bags, escalators spring to life when you step on them, lavatories flush, automats disgorge everything from cooked dinners to french letters, and the tube trains, serving 50 stations since the 1950's, are fragrant and graffiti-free.

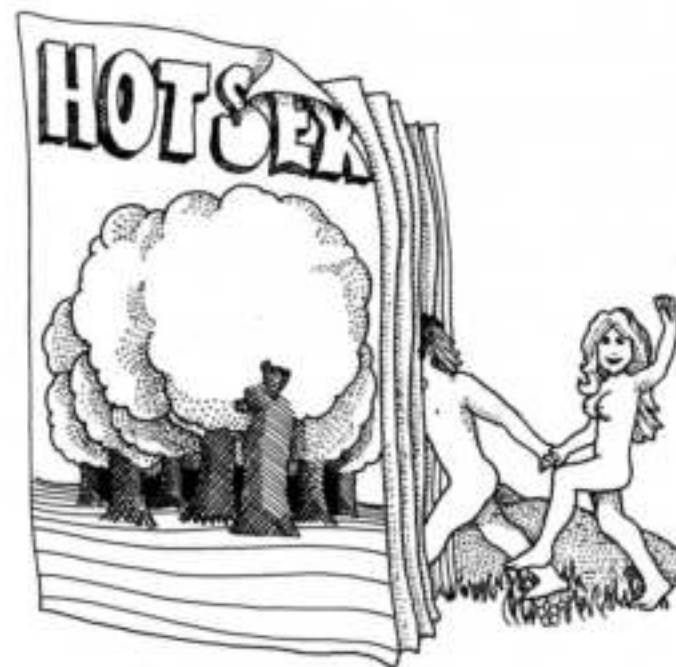
Here, as in Copenhagen, the inner-city, industrial area slum is almost unknown. Apart from the lovingly-preserved Old Town, all cobblestones and churchbells, and a few renovated worker's cottages inhabited by the Swedish equivalent of the Paddington set, there is practically nothing architectural between the 18th century Government/baroque and the post 1930's apartment houses, set in parklands and each with its children's playground of sandpits and monkey bars. Ragged pensioners with accordions are unknown, and I never heard a Swede cough or saw one spit. No one accosted me with pencils, bootlaces or pamphlets for the relief of distressed orphans or homeless donkeys, and though there was a handsome red fox standing dutifully by the traffic lights in Tusmötöveg, a southern suburb where apartment dwellers talk of seeing elks from their kitchen windows, the actual city was blissfully dogless. If you have been disenchanted with the Welfare State in England, Sweden is the perfect shot in the arm. Of course the Swedes grumble about taxes, as high as 90 per cent of their incomes and seldom less than 30 per cent, but then on retirement they get a pension equal to 65 per cent of their wage during their peak 15 years. Government grants and allowances fall like manna, hospitals are free, doctors scarce and expensive but well-refunded. Kindergartens and nursery schools, insufficient even there, charge a small fee according to means, but schools and universities are free, with plentiful loans for living expenses and text books to be repaid when the graduate starts working. Strikes are rare, few people get fired and not many change jobs.

Obviously Sweden has had inbuilt advantages – a small population which even now is just around 8 million, a wealth of natural resources like timber and iron that earn money without bringing the worst horrors of the industrial revolution into its traditional agrarian countryside. Its House of Nobles, the Rittershuset, abolished itself in 1866 (though there is a bicameral system) and though there was appalling poverty in the 19th century, under King Oscar, there were no smug notions that the poor should remain a god-ordained part of the scenery. The really desperate emigrated to America, the rest got together to form the Social Democrat party who by the end of the First World War were the largest party in parliament. Watch for a film called *Adalen*, about a kind of Swedish Sharpeville where striking workers were fired on by the police in 1931.

Religion is run by the state, rather like an historic monument. Paul Britten Austin, Ingemar Bergman's brother-in-law and author of *On Being Swedish*, mentions a Swedish schoolboy touring London who was made to visit two churches in one day – didn't people know the Swedes were atheists? complained the indignant father. Churches exist simply to get married in – when the road has thawed out sufficiently – and if you put Lutheran on your census, like 90 per cent of Swedes, it's in the same spirit as English agnostics put C or E, to save trouble. Since Gustav Adolphus's involvement in the Thirty Years War, on the side of Catholic France, religion has somehow been linked with unpleasant things like wars and expense. The unfortunate sinking of the royal ship *Wasa* in Stockholm Harbour in 1628 (resurrected in 1961, and sprayed with chemical preservatives to become a major tourist attraction) and Charles XII's defeat at Poltava in 1720 were the final straws. Films of Trooping the Colour set Swedes falling about with mirth. During the last war Sweden helped both sides, discreetly and in equal proportions, the profits now being visible in the endless miles of super skyscrapers and expressways and in the invisible, but more significant high educational standards which mean compulsory comprehensive

and co-ed school from 7 to 16.

If there's one thing the Swedes like even less than war and religion, it's lady monarchs, since Queen Christina, sourly described by Swedes as a feminist or even a man in disguise, bolted to Rome in 1649 with the cream of Sweden's art treasures. Thanks to Christina, the throne remains the last all-male preserve, and it is she who seems to sum up the whole essence of the mysterious "Swedish character" which Swedologists analyse so endlessly. Hipped on philosophy, Christina invited Descartes to Stockholm to explain the mechanism of passion, her aptitude for the subject being so small that she could find nothing better to do with him than to put him in the palace library, where he soon caught pneumonia and died. It is tempting to think it couldn't happen today, now the palaces are heated, but knowing the sober Swedish pragmatism, whole committee-rooms of well-intentioned Latins could still freeze, as much from the prohibitive price of liquor as the surfeit of brisk, clinical sex. Contrary to what the more frustrated non-Swedes may think, the pornographic magazines now widely available in Sweden, and more so in Denmark, have nothing to do with passion. Not that *Hot Sex* and *Black Power Love-In* will actually destroy your vital powers, but like cookery photographs (which they resemble in showing everything except the smell) they can quickly destroy your appetite for at least 6 hours. If there is anything remotely encouraging about those shiny rows of vaginas and penes in glorious technicolour, it's knowing that Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton must look just as funny as you do.



The first ones I saw were in Denmark, where magazine censorship, such as it was, was abolished completely last year. I was walking by the Tivoli Gardens, sympathizing with a young man from the Danish Tourist Bureau about his weekly visits from quivering Americans – 18-year-old daughters corrupted after being sent to buy *Time* magazine, threats to sue the Danish Government – when he stopped to buy a paper. "There's one," said Mr Klepsh, pushing aside the *Reader's Digest* to reveal more fully what I'd subconsciously identified a split second earlier, in my vague fashion, as two girls eating a chocolate ice-cream. "I mean how could that possibly corrupt a girl of 18? Everyone does it, after all," he said, hurrying me off to look at the acrobats in the open-air auditorium. The magazines were a marvellous moneyspinner with tourists from less advanced countries – Italians positively swooned with ecstasy – and a good way for housewives to make a little pin

money but (said Mr Klepsh) as long as one had an apartment, and a tin of Nescafe, Nature took its course in Denmark without any such assistance. In a more specialist shop, brightly lit with neon signs saying PORNO and staffed by wholesome men who might have sold life insurance, I managed to buy a couple, avoiding Mr Klepsh's scorn by saying that my husband was a photographer; but by Sweden interest had definitely waned. Some prisons stocked them, and most homes had a few sandwiched away on the bookshelves, but there was certainly no suggestion of curling up on the sofa for an after-dinner perv. They are simply for the tourist, the incarcerated, and people over forty, and if anything is going to corrupt young girls in Scandinavia, it's the shortage of hotel rooms in summer, when everyone from Grand Buffaloes to International Truss Manufacturers flock to Stockholm and Copenhagen for conventions (or the imagined lack of them). Whatever the Swedish character is, passion remains as foreign as it was in Christina's day. Everyone warns you that the Swedes are formal, mad about shaking hands and addressing each other by professional titles (people ringing my ancient, non-English hotel had to ask for Froken Redacteur Smith), but I was unprepared for their sheer tireless precision. Ask a Swede how big Sweden is (970 miles long) and he won't simply give you a rough guess. He goes away and looks it up, translates it into English and Swedish miles, and then explains the difference, by which time the dinner is cold and you've forgotten the original figure anyway. And on the subject of statistics, it's no longer true that Sweden has the world's highest suicide rate. It is now about sixth, beaten by Switzerland, Japan and a few other highly industrialized countries; and as attempted suicide is not a crime, the Swedes have fewer qualms about listing cases that other nations might disguise as accidents.

In Sweden, nothing is left to chance or impulse. Everything is pored over by committees and experts, and even public taste is subtly edged higher, with special lectures for department store staff on the essentials of good taste, whether it is furniture or knitted toy reindeers.

But it is in hospitals that the ox-like Swedish system-worship can be seen at its worst. In Ulricksfors, a stone's throw from Lappland and Sweden's answer to Thargomindah, I was rushed to hospital with a sore throat. Barely able to speak from pain, I was violated with metric thermometers, slashed on the finger with razors, jabbed with syringes and drained of urine and then left alone in a sterile cell for nearly an hour before anyone got around to saying open wide, let alone in English. A young Norwegian eventually diagnosed tonsillitis. "But I had them out when I was seven," I gasped. He looked horrified – but relieved that it hadn't happened in Sweden. As no foreigner had ever been in the hospital, and all Swedes are treated free, the bill is still being estimated.

Various explanations have been given as to why the Swedes are reserved/boring/melancholic/unable to communicate without alcohol, ranging from the climate to divine plan. On two weeks' acquaintance I can't say they are one jot more afflicted than, say, Poles or upperclass Englishmen, but that's what everyone kept telling me, including a Chinese man who said the girls "lacked spontaneity". Danny Kaye has given Denmark, an equally rich and godless country, a cosy veneer of schmalz, but nobody has yet created a gay, lovable, carefree Swede. One of the two Swedish men I went out with was admittedly very dull. The other, a husky blue-eyed blond who radiated charm and cooked the best bit of meat I ate in Stockholm, turned out to be Jewish – which is probably the story of most girls' lives from Albuquerque to Adelaide.

Titles are very important, largely because of the shortage of surnames, and in the telephone directory Svenssons Lindqvists, etc., are listed alphabetically, by profession, which is hard if you don't know whether your man is an architect or a xylophone manufacturer. There is also some reluctance about using the second person pronoun, *ni*, so that unless speaking to children, animals or lovers, it is necessary to say "and how is Herr Professor Erikson's sore toe this morning?" to avoid unseemly familiarity. This though is being abolished. "We all call each other *du* now, from the doctors to the housemaids," said a Swedish physiotherapist, obviously proud of her hospital's modern attitudes. There is also, as in Danish, no word for please.

My main trouble with language came from my particular assignment in Sweden – the investigation of the Swedish prison system and its new experiment of weekend visits by prisoners' wives and girl friends to provide sexual outlets, or, as it is known in official circles, keeping the prisoner in touch with his social environment. What with Swedish formality on one hand, and their total incomprehension of English circumlocutions on the other, it was all much harder than it looked back in Chelsea. Explaining words like "conjugal rights" and "importuning", let alone asking if lady prisoner governors are "career woman" types, reveals the vastness of the cultural gap. Everyone over 15 has conjugal rights in Sweden, and importuning is not an offence. A real honest-to-goodness rape, usually some foreigner who doesn't understand Swedish girls can say no like anyone else, fills the entire front page of the newspapers.



Consequently, a lot of my time was spent getting up courage to ask prison governors – handsome young law and sociology graduates in natty sports clothes, who might have been advertising aftershave or outboard motors – whether the inmates could or couldn't. Behind the plastic barbed wire fences of Skänninge, where guards idled among the flowerbeds during the three-hour visiting periods in the cells (sorry, rooms), no one knew for sure, but up in Ulricefors there was no question about it. By a lake well-stocked with salmon and ringed with pine trees, prisoners could spend from Saturday to Monday with their womenfolk and families, showing the world the wisdom of Swedish humanitarianism. "Of course even on the inside you can always ring a taxi to take you to the railway station," said Governor Anders Lindholm, passing a payphone where prisoners were dialling girl friends for the coming midsummer weekend, "but we're very proud that no one has abused the system since it began last year." There was a fence,

about seven feet high, and as in all Swedish prisons, there are weekend holidays after the first eight months, in the unlikely event you are in that long. There'd been a little clucking in the papers about the weekend hotel plan, and lots of journalists skulking around the Ulricefors railway station, but not nowadays. The experts had spoken and everyone was happy. The popular story that Swedish jails are really full of destitute Finns, who have smashed windows in order to get a warm bed for the winter, was denied by prison authorities. It was only one, they said. Retribution and debts to society are unknown, and deprivation of liberty – for a month, four months or even four years is considered punishment enough, if you cannot probation or fine instead. In sparkling rooms somewhere between a Travelodge motel and my hospital room at Ulricefors, prisoners look forward to weekly saunas, sunbathing, and earning good money making overalls or prefab houses. The escape rate is around 10 per cent, and there is not much attempt at reforming anybody, but the Swedish humanitarian conscience is satisfied.

As a result of all this heterosexual licence, homosexual activity seems to have dropped spectacularly – sharing a room in prison was unthinkable – and in a country where the word gay seems as unknown as the word passion it's rather hard to envisage a homosexual of the camp variety. The fact is that since you can openly advertise for boyfriends in *Dagens Nyheter*, you can afford to look just like anybody else. This seemed too, to account for the dearth of lesbians (by Kings Road standards). The previous weekend I'd been invited to a cricket match at an outlying recreation park, where among the half-naked Swedes, a dedicated team of Indians, Jamaicans and English expatriates ran about in white sweaters and the other trappings of a game that is as foreign to Sweden as bullfighting. Even the police cars kept stopping to watch. With a patient Swedish wife I sat by a berry bush feigning deep interest while a young English girl, who was scoring, shouted 'good show', 'oh well played', and other esoteric encouragements.

Since you can openly advertise for boyfriends... you can afford to look just like anybody else.

How, I asked Mr Jenkins, did Swedish women manage to retain their femininity in an emancipated society? "Well", he said, picking at a frayed cuff, he had to admit that after five years, he was leaving for Denmark. "I came back from Paris once with this sexy black underwear for a girl and she just refused to wear it, said I was trying to make her a sexual object," he said sadly. What on earth though have Swedish women got to grumble about? Universities admitted them in 1873, local government in 1909, the vote came in 1919 and in 1924 a new marriage code abolished the husband's guardianship and streamlined the divorce laws. In 1925 the civil service barriers fell, and since 1939 employers have been forbidden to dismiss them when they become pregnant, and obliged to give them reduced pay and six months leave until they return. All unmarried mothers get a male welfare officer, who at a pinch will even babysit if you are dashing off to work or lectures. Out of 384 MP's, 46 are women, including one known unmarried mother. Divorce, where the concept of guilty parties is unknown, usually takes about a year, incompatibility or separation being the main grounds.

Most of the top feminists like Eva Moberg and Barbro Backberger were on holiday in June, off to their summerhouses in their Volvos, but the main complaint seemed to be that women, while technically equal, were not filling enough of the traditional male fields, and that until a woman finally ousted Tage Erlander as Prime Minister, everyone was going to feel hideously second class. Even the freedom about sex, quite startling after England where four local authorities out of five have refused to start family planning clinics even for the

married, is seen as a field for discrimination. The RSFU, a private, nationwide body which runs the condom machines and contraceptive boutiques, was a particular target. When they put out a bright new advertisement some years ago, *Honestly, Now, Can He Trust You?* feminist wrath descended. It was putting the responsibility on the man, and therefore discriminatory. So the RSFU responded with an alternative, *Honestly, Now, Can He Trust You?* showing the same bright-eyed couple. Another advertisement, which suggests that feminine responsibility isn't all it might be, showed a girl in a bikini, Morocco bound. "Have a lovely holiday, Anneke, but don't forget your pills," warned the ad. Contraception is the first defence against unwanted children, and adoption in Sweden is almost impossible, so meagre is the supply. Abortion, though, is much easier in England or Poland. With the trend to oral contraceptives cutting the automat profits, the RSFU in June opened the first *Bloom or Och Bin* shop (Flowers and Bees) in Hötorgsgatan, where teenagers can buy sunglasses, deodorants, tampons, condoms, suppositories, sex books and fruit juice. Smiling couples advertise it in the newspapers, which also run a sex advice column by Sten and Inge, the authors of *The ABC of Love*. "They wanna know if it's okay to have orgasms with a Pifco vibrator," said Mr Jenkins, obligingly translating. No, it's not... unless you can find an extremely low-powered one.

the word gay seems as unknown as the word passion.

But if the Swedes have dusted the cobwebs off sex, they are an awful proof that man cannot live without his neuroses; and most of the leftover tensions have simply been transferred to drink and drugs. Men who have spent half an hour stressing the right of a recidivist embezzler to a normal sex life will turn pale at the mention of cannabis. Sweden goes into convulsions of condemnation at the expense of the drunken driver, convicted on a tiny .05 per cent of alcohol in his system, the equivalent of two weak beers, so that he is the most constant offender in Swedish jails. In Sweden's only prison for women, a stately chateau called Hinseberg, a 58-year-old woman who had swindled several old people out of their life savings was adamant that she should stay in the closed section. "I'm not going down there with that type of girl they've got in the open part," she said, meaning not the few perky Finnish shoplifters, or the prostitutes who'd stolen tourists' wallets, but two university students who had got 18 months for possessing cannabis.

Murmurs about the failure of prohibition in America, or that pot is not quite the same thing as heroin, fall on deaf ears. The 275 state-run liquor stores shut at 6 pm weekdays and grocery stores sell only beer. But at least it's better than the old rationing, which allowed only 3 litres a month (men only) and caused the invention of the famous wooden sandwich, which constituted the necessary, accompanying, meal. An English journalist warned me against travelling on the underground at night, because of the drunks, and with Scotch at 10 US dollars a fifth it was clear why the latest American style hotel, the Park, had soda and coke machines on every floor. The liquor tabus also explain why service in restaurants is generally bad – restaurants in Sweden are spelt with a capital D for drink, and if you are going to advertise your depravity, you damn well deserve to wait.

But in the rush to report that the Welfare state is boring and that premarital sex causes suicide, no one has ever got around to mentioning the real problem in Sweden, which is food. Once again the climate is held responsible, the bitter snowbound winters that encourage Swedes to distill their potatoes instead of sautéing them, and to make bread from the bark of trees, but even this might have been preferable to the meat made from paperpulp, or as Mr Jenkins swears, shredded linoleum from demolished pre-war houses. Ryvitas are a godsend and *gravad lax*, a kind of seasoned raw salmon with fresh dill, is lovely, as is the boiled turbot, but when it comes to main courses the Swedes are a disaster. Their food is, in a word, tasteless, and worse still, the Swedes don't know it. Whole

tribes of them, going to Majorca or the Canaries on package tours for around £22, insist on eating the same fearful mush, blanketed in laundry starch gravy and swilled down with blissfully available wine. Not that the English and Americans are always blameless, but kipper and ketchup at least taste like food. "My dear, I'm absolutely desperate for a nice steak and kidney pud," said a nice young Englishman at my hotel. "I shall fall on my bended knees with gratitude, outside the first Lyons'."



Perhaps, then, it is the food that makes every man I know sob with disappointment about the Swedish woman, and it may be she whom Dr Johnson meant when he said that a man who will not mind his belly will not mind very much else. The Guide Michelin had yet to find the courage to classify Sweden's restaurants. "You're not gonna make me eat that goddam linoleum," Mr Jenkins would grumble, leading me cunningly into vast gleaming supermarkets and pausing by freezers of chicken, no doubt in the hope that some vestigial femininity might flicker into action. Remembering his tribulations with the frayed collars and Susan Sontag, a home-cooked dinner seemed the least he deserved, marooned in a country of resplendent, woman-less kitchens. The freezers, the central heating, the draught extractors and the refuse grinders are all there in Sweden, just like good old New York, but the Reismans and Galbraiths, the McLuhans and Packards, Dylans, Mailers and Portnoys, as equally indispensable to the American landscape, have yet to arrive.

groom for improvement

hair piece

I once knew a chap who at the age of 15 was as bald as a coot. We actually rather envied him at school. Well, I mean he got away with murder. Junior boys always mistook him for a member of the staff, prefects could never quite bring themselves round to beating somebody who looked old enough to be their father, and he never got thrown out of local pubs like the rest of us. When he went up to Oxford his mature appearance helped him further. Proctors never reported him for minor misdemeanours like smoking in a gown and he was quickly accepted by all the elite societies.

One of his most spectacular successes was whilst an undergraduate. He was walking across a zebra crossing one day when suddenly he was struck by a car unable to stop. At least that was his story. He received minor cuts but after a stiff brandy or two he was none the worse for it. At this particular period in his life, however, his tailor's bills were mounting and he was piling up the credit in other directions to enable him to live like a young lord (which he wasn't). So our hairless friend sued the motorist. He claimed the accident had caused him severe shock and apart from seriously affecting his studies it had resulted in an alarming loss of hair. Insurance company doctors inspected him. There was no denying this youth was almost hairless and since his own family doctor hadn't seen him for years because of a bonus of good health, he said all the right things like "this young man had a fine head of hair before this catastrophe in his brilliant career."

Now my friend certainly had no great academic career ahead of him and he was far from brilliant. We will concede he was clever, though. He received a substantial sum of money from the insurance company, spent most of his time following the smarter hunts, got a bad degree and joined the ratrace of big business where he now seems to be doing very well.

The whole point of this story is that in 20 years his looks haven't altered one bit. By contrast I have just been looking at a picture of myself taken about the time we were school contemporaries. I had a mass of golden curls then, and although my hair is still golden and has a natural tendency to curl, it is getting decidedly thin on top – and I don't like it curly anyway. In fact my hair is beginning to become something of a problem. My bald friend, on the other hand, has simply to go for a regular trim every two weeks or so and little happens to make his hair look a mess.

Baldness, of course, is a biological lottery. It can happen to any of us, just like going grey. While one half of the male population go on growing, the other sheds. And the shedders sink a substantial fortune into any means of keeping their hair on whilst most around them are losing theirs. Covering up those tell-tale areas has become big business in the past year or two. Most popular of the artificial substitutes is the hairpiece or topper. These are made from real human hair (which incidentally costs the same as gold per ounce) and special care is taken to choose a shade of colour or mix which blends perfectly with your own natural actual hair – cos if you go to the trouble of investing in a hairpiece you don't want it to be a bad one which everybody notices. Deception can be a very costly business.

Most of the hairpieces on the market are skilfully made, and once in place and styled into your hairline are reasonably undetectable, unless very close examination is made: and you're not likely to let a total stranger go that far with you (or are you?).

Most are made-to-measure and cost between £100-£150. Obviously the price is largely determined by the area of baldness and amount of hair used. There are now some ready-made cheaper versions on the market, also made from human hair. These cost about £60 and the same care is taken

to match up perfectly the addition so as to enable you at least to boast of a miracle cure.

Many people are bothered about toppers and hairpieces blowing off in strong winds, being hung up with the hat or giving the whole game away in the swimming pool by quitting its owner and floating off. Nothing to fear at all. They are held on very securely, and although you can take them off for swimming and going to bed at night, you don't have to and they are no discomfort to wear for long periods. You may have good reason not to want to take it off at night – so there is no fear of it being left behind on the pillow next morning.

If hairpieces bother you, an ingenious new means of getting on top is by one of several extension methods. Most adopt the weaving principle and the additional hair is either attached to your own or to long wefts. Either way the finished result is a sparkling new you.

If, like my old school chum, you've been bald for years and reconciled yourself to it, or simply want a change of face just for fun, wigs can cover up everything and even give you a new hair colour to suit your mood or wardrobe.

Those made from human hair are very expensive, but there are many fun wigs on the market ideal for parties. Although made from synthetics, they look and handle like hair. Prices of these range from about 10 gns upwards. Wigs are fast becoming an integral part of the fashion scene and most swingers are likely to have at least a couple in their wardrobes before long.

And if like me you have the sort of hair that looks stunning when you walk out of the barber's but is an uncontrollable mess the next day, there could be times when a wig might turn out to be your best friend.

Get a head and get on top!

Rodney Bennett-England

These wigs, cut and styled, cost from 14 guineas upwards. For details write to Jeremy Wigs, 45 Carnaby Street, London W.1.



Diary Dearie



Sunday 14th. George suggests we take a drive this afternoon, and arrives to collect me at two; in the back are Launce, who is full of Pop Music chatter, and Able, who sits making sketches as we hurtle through Surrey and only occasionally returns to this world. Take tea by river, but rain descends and we are forced to seek shelter in order to avoid soggy scones.

All return to Able's and watch the box – treaty Paramount melodrama starring Barbara Stanwyck who (emotional in boxy shoulders and overwhelming pockets) keeps telling the various men in her life that she Doesn't Want To Talk About It; nature of It never specified.

Monday 15th. Wake up with phrase Lovely Glowing Child in my head – why? as know no one (I'm afraid) whom it would fit!

Tour Kensington shops seeking wedding present – end up with records, parts of which I want, so shall tape these before wrapping – for Anna and Alastair who get married on Thursday. Also buy new face-pack; this promises Petal-Soft Skin and Youthful Glow in ten minutes – feel that two hours would be a short time for such a project!

Lunch in small, darkly lit establishment, on Spaghetti Bolognaise – made with special rubber spaghetti. Then to Inland Revenue, re Income Tax which I never understand; place is filled with eccentrics – old men who fall down, old lady in wool hat, and another old man in (unbelievably) cloth boots. Am ushered in to inner sanctum where elderly female clerk discusses my case (sounds medical) and says I shall receive my code number in near future; reply that I have no idea what that means but I am nevertheless glad. Elderly female smiles pityingly, and I leave.

Telephone rings this evening, and agitated voice reveals itself as Mrs. Worreston, mother of Anna (Thursday's Bride) who says they've been Let Down; at once imagine A. has been jilted – all the clocks will be stopped at the hour it occurred, she'll wear her wedding dress forever, and mice will romp in the ruins of the wedding cake – but this flight of fancy demolished when Mrs. W. explains that her uncle, who was to be the principal usher, has gone down with jaundice and is, she adds impressively, yellow All Over. It would be interesting to consider this picture at length, in the case of certain people – but not when it's Mrs. W.'s uncle, who is fully seventy.

So, she continues, will I be the usher in his place? Startled, I agree but ask if it's difficult. No, just give out the form of service and show everyone to their seats.

Wednesday 17th. George rings to ask if I'd like to go for a week on the Norfolk Broads – a party of us. Enquire as to party – Oh, him and Launce, Able (if he can be kept in the present long enough for the idea to jell with him), Robin and (a pause)

Dominic; am in love with Dominic (for the past two years) so agree to expedition. Oh yes, says George casually, and the dogs; am less enthusiastic about this (I'm not St. Francis of Assisi) and enquire as to size of the boat – on hearing that it sleeps eight realise that dogs may possibly have quarters of their own and never be seen.

Thursday 18th. Much time spent on appearance this morning (black suit, red ancillaries) before going over to Chelsea to final confab with Mrs. W. re my ushering. Everything's ready at the church, she says, so hie me thence. As there is another wedding in progress (it has reached the Photographs On The Steps part) I enter the church from the rear and, it being of modern design, I appear from behind the transparent screens either side of the altar – like a vision?

Get the programmes (or whatever they are called) all lined up, give a bundle of them to each usher (there are four of them, wholesome college lads with open faces – Mmm!) and station myself on one side of the main entrance, with semi-deaf pew-opener on other side. And away we go, me handing out the data with a Heartbreak Smile and a witty line – 'Don't Forget Your Script, love, Or You Won't Know The Plot.' Everyone looks well, and am pleased with reactions on faces of several dear friends on beholding me in current capacity. Anna looks lovely – all piled hair, and long trains, and husband-to-be Alastair as dishy as ever – Yes, that weekend at Ipswich was a Rich Human Experience. Service takes no time at all – I stand throughout, and endeavour to terrify (by narrowing my eyes) any children who might consider Playing-Up.

Do big organisation job afterwards, getting guests into cars, making those with cars give lifts, etc. and so back to reception at Mrs. W.'s. Immense gathering – lots of lovely people, but also large number never seen before. My Aunt Eva hoves into sight, who says 'It's All Rather Sad' (the wedding, the reception?) and adds that Avis has had a period ever since she got married a month ago. Say Oh Dear (on descending note) and reflect that Aunt E. manages to combine elements of both Victoria gentility and Charles the Second bawdery with remarkable ease. She then introduces me to young man and woman called John and Mary and leaves us; we all stare at each other until (I don't know how) conversation gets off on illness – Mary speaks of her brother's gallstones, then John recalls his pleurisy, after which they both move back to Mary and her mother's imminent death (reason unspecified) and I make excuse to get away. Discover Launce talking to pin-striped City type – cannot imagine that they have anything in common, unless L. is planning some lustful venture; as I approach City type is saying that 'Once Motor Insurance gets into your blood you can't get it out'; like grease-paint? Launce looks relieved at my appearance (obviously it's not the gentleman's conversation that brought on this tête-a-tête) and says 'This is Bruce' (sounds like a dog!) and 'Shall we go onto the terrace?' As it is warm, we do so; stand out there drinking, and Genevieve, joining us, says it makes her think of Proust.

Gathering finally breaks up at five with departure of the Happy Couple

Home, and Marc comes round for the evening, and we discuss our emotional problems – well, to be truthful, we discuss his present one, and my hopes of future ones!

my enemy



Lord Maugham, better known as novelist and playwright Robin Maugham, had the Lord Chancellor of England as a father and England's most successful, if not finest, novelist for an uncle. Uncle was, of course, W. Somerset Maugham, author of some of the best short stories in the English language and of at least a handful of plays to rank with Wilde and Pinero. And surrounding Uncle Willie was a cloud of mystery and a hint of scandal, both brought out beautifully in nephew Robin's family biography, *Somerset and All the Maughams*.

Lord Maugham is in London at the moment for the opening of his new play 'Enemy' at the Saville theatre. Somerset and his brother, Robin's father, looked very much alike and those craggy Maugham features are too well known to need any further description. Lord Maugham is immediately recognisable as a member of that family, the same chin, tenacious set of mouth, and penetrating eyes, but his features seem to be much finer and, to judge from photographs, he is a slighter, more elegant man than his famous uncle.

A famous uncle must be almost as much of an asset, or a handicap, as a famous father and I asked if W. Somerset Maugham had greatly influenced his work.

"To start off with, when I first started writing, he

both influenced and helped enormously. He'd go through my manuscripts and, on one occasion I remember, in an early travel book of mine, 'Nomad', he found a sentence that wasn't quite right. 'Let's write it again', he'd said, and we had. But it still wasn't right and he'd written it out ten times before it was right for him. That was a terrific lesson to me. "He influenced me as a boy, though my parents disapproved. I read all of his books and I still think he's a very good writer. I think I've broken away from the style of thing he wrote completely now though. My last novel, 'The Second Window', wasn't at all the sort of thing he'd have written, the whole form is different. This is true, too, of my new novel 'The Link'."

Of course, one of the most noticeable traits about the writing of Somerset Maugham is a lack of true feeling. He has no compassion for human beings. There is always a sense that his voice is whispering through his words – "See, how foul the human race is. How like animals they are, and such fools, too." This isn't at all true of Robin's novels and plays. Both the last novel and the new one are large books, far-reaching and densely populated. And though several characters in each are unpleasant, they are written of as people, with no sense of scorn. As a writer Robin Maugham is immensely interested by people

Probably his most famous novel is his first, 'The Servant', which is now over twenty years old. I asked if he'd changed it very much when he rewrote it recently as a play. (It was successfully staged last year at Guildford with Peter Wyngarde as Barrett, the role Dirk Bogarde played in the film.) "The Servant" started off as a novel, then I wrote it as a play, which Losey wanted to direct, but of course things in the theatre were rather different then and it fell through, and we made the film. The play was staged in Worthing and on opening night, I remember, all the residents with their season passes filled the first six rows of the stalls. In one scene, before it's clear that the girl isn't really Barrett's niece, she had to kneel down in front of him with her arms around his waist. It looked as if she was going down on him. Clatter, clatter, clatter, sound of seats shooting up, and, in a great whiff of moth balls and with a clatter of bangles, the serried ranks of the first six rows left. "The new version of the play, which has been very well staged in Madrid and Stockholm, and in an emasculated version in Paris, where they're very censorious these days, was brought up to date. Peter Wyngarde did it absolutely beautifully and we wanted to bring it into the West End. But the only theatre available was too small and there seemed no point. I like to think of that production as being on ice and hope that Peter Wyngarde will be able to do it again at a later date."

'The Servant' was followed by seven travel books, including 'The Slaves of Timbuktu' which told of Robin's travels in Africa with Michael Davidson, and how, at one point, after discovering the existence of slave markets, they purchased their own slave. Certainly some of the material from this book was used in the African section of 'The Second Window'.

Another non-fiction venture was the series 'The Wickedest Man in the World' which he wrote for *The People*. Here he had truly fascinating material, for the subject was Gerald Hamilton, sometimes thought to be, and sometimes admitting to be, the original of Christopher Isherwood's outrageous hero Arthur Norris in 'Mr Norris Changes Trains'. Hamilton himself has some very pertinent comments to make about this in his new autobiography which is due out later this year. 'The Servant' was but the first of many novels, including 'The Rough and The Smooth', a further work in the study of sexual attraction, dependence, and the dangers involved. Amongst the many plays is 'The Claimant' - seen in London about five years ago with Eric Portman and that excellent actress Cathleen Nesbitt - which tells the story of the Tichborne Claimant. This is obviously a case which has held interest for the Maughams, for Robin's father wrote a book on it himself and 'The Link' is closely based on it.

'The Link' has a strong homosexual theme to it and this prompted me to ask if the author intended to write a full scale homosexual novel. It was a question that might irritate many writers, and Lord Maugham spoke out passionately: "What is a queer novel? Is 'The Second Window', just because ten per cent of it is concerned with homosexuality? Is 'The Link' homosexual?" "I don't regard queerness as either the normal or the abnormal, and I'm more and more convinced that, if anything, the normal is bisexuality. For instance I have discovered most Africans, most

Polynesians and most Sudanese to be pretty bisexual and we all know that we have a certain amount of both male and female chromosomes in us. "I'm firmly against what might possibly be called 'coterie homosexuals' just as I'm as firmly against all 'coterie heterosexuality'. It is bad, stultifying. I think it's wrong, I really do. And I think that we simply must learn how stupid it all is. "It is very cramping for artistic impulses and it is very annoying when people ask 'Is your book queer or not?' If you've got to divide things up in, for example, 'The Second Window', eighty per cent of the characters are heterosexual. Exactly the same principle applies with 'The Link'. Is it necessary to divide the characters up? "I just write the thing, for better or for worse, exactly as I see it coming in my mind. I hope I am writing about contemporary life as I see it and, admittedly there are some absolutely queer or absolutely heterosexual people, but I'm not interested in people because they're one thing or another, or a mixture, I'm interested in them as people, as characters who are alive or who come alive in my own mind. In 'The Rough and the Smooth' there isn't one homosexual character. That wasn't intentional - that was the way it came alive in my mind and that is that. It is perfectly possible that I'll write a novel in which all the characters are homosexual, but it won't be done deliberately, not thought out in those terms, but thought out in terms of Smith, Brown and Jones, people, who just happen to be queer."

'The Link', which is published here in November, is far and away the best thing Robin Maugham has yet written and in it he is using what is for him a new style of writing. The whole of the long novel is written in short, sharp scenes, briskly moving, but which come alive immediately and which, in the sexual passages, add to the excitement and create a real erotic intensity. Character is more sharply delineated than in anything he has written, with the possible exception of 'The Servant' and the characters' motivations, all of them stemming very much from hetero- or homo-sexuality, are firmly rooted in reality.

'Enemy', reviewed elsewhere in this issue, is due in London shortly. One report on the play compared it with 'The Servant' and I asked just how valid a comment this was. "Both Noel Coward and Terry Rattigan think that it's infinitely better than 'The Servant', with a far wider canvas and far more compassionate. All of the three men have to be played by young actors because otherwise there is a danger that people will think it's an age versus youth play. Which it isn't. It's much more complicated than that. I think it will be the young who'll dig it much more and the Establishment are going to loathe it. The dyed-in-the-wool Establishment are going to feel their most cherished values, King and Country and the whole of that scene, menaced."

And what new works can we expect? "I've almost finished the first draft of a play about a crucifixion in A.D. 20, a very difficult and ambitious work, and I've an idea for a new novel. Though I shan't be able to think about that until after the new play."

Certainly with 'Enemy' and 'The Link' appearing almost simultaneously it looks as if we're in for a Robin Maugham autumn.

Peter Burton.

Divine's Inspiration



This is the page that sorts out the men from the boys. Each month Michael Divine will be putting up his opinions for you to knock down. Whatever your inclinations, if you've got worries or would like information, write in complete confidence to Michael Divine, Jeremy Magazine, 45 Carnaby Street, London W1.

In 1948 Dr. A. C. Kinsey investigated the sex lives of over 4,000 American males. He defined a homosexual experience as physical contact with another male followed by orgasm, and found that 37% of all males had had such an experience at some time in their lives.

Kinsey refused to divide people into distinct categories of heterosexuality and homosexuality, but devised his famous seven-point scale of sexual behaviour. Leaving aside his first three points and 55% of all men, the mainly hetero-inclined, his scaling showed that (a) 18% of all the white male population are equally hetero and homosexual; (b) 13% lean towards the homo; (c) 10% are more or less exclusively homo; (d) 4% are and always have been exclusively homo.

Suffice it to say that partial homosexuals, or what we often call bisexuals, outnumber the exclusive homosexuals considerably. And bisexuals today fall into quite a different camp from the queer queer of about five years ago. Nowadays, to appear gay is groovy to the extent of making a boy more alluring to his girlfriend.

"Gay today, straight tomorrow" is the cry that's carrying young men out of the Permissive Sixties into the Pernicious Seventies. And pernicious they could well be: worthless and destructive.

Sure, living for the here and now is what life's about, but if being gay is part of it then it's as well to make it both enjoyable and personally valid. Sooner or later the gayboy is going to ask himself "Am I really gay - and what is straight anyway?"

The fact is that no one has the right to judge what is normal. But we do judge - for ourselves. We see what we think the majority is doing (though statistics put that in doubt) and then hang-ups start spoiling our fun.

That's where this page comes in. Now I'm not setting myself up as God (a demi-god maybe), because nobody can solve anyone else's problems. But I can open a few eyes, dispel the common fears and suggest some food for thought. Thereafter, it's up to you.

Which is what life is really all about: finding out what we are and what our potentials are. We're not likely to transform ourselves from nature's dictates and if they start crowding us in, it's dead easy to curl up in a hole. And dead boring. The enjoyment of living lies in learning how to use our virtues and vices to our best advantage.

Let our Thought For The Week come from the lips of Oscar Wilde: "The one advantage of playing with fire is that one never gets even singed. It is the people who don't know how to play with it who get burned up." There now.

In future I shall be answering your questions, but for now try some of mine in this fun quiz. Be honest and answer Yes or No:

- 1 If you really fancy a boy at work, is it a mistake to get off with him?
- 2 If your best friend makes it with someone he knows you fancy, would you think less of him?
- 3 Would you cancel a date with your boyfriend if you suddenly thought you didn't look good enough for him?
- 4 When you're out with your lover and see someone you fancy, should you hide the fact?
- 5 Should you make a play for a dishy boy secretly if your boyfriend is present?
- 6 Do you need to know the names of your boyfriend's parents?
- 7 When your boyfriend throws a tantrum, do you try to make a joke out of it?
- 8 When having sex, should you do something you dislike to please your partner?
- 9 Your boyfriend spends a night with someone else; should you then feel free to do the same?
- 10 When making love, should reaching an orgasm be uppermost in your mind?
- 11 In lovemaking, should one partner always be dominant and the other submissive?
- 12 True love means you should depend on your lover for everything. Yes or No?
- 13 When your lover disagrees with something you believe in, should you always defend your views?
- 14 If they're really in love, lovers should rise above such details as dirty teeth, bad breath. Yes or No?
- 15 When you and your lover are with friends, should he devote himself entirely to you?

Check your answers and find out how good a lover you are.

1 Yes, friends are for work, lovers for later. 2 No, a real friend lives his own life. 3 No means he matters. 4 No is human; pretence harms relationships. 5 No is sound sense, nor are you sex-mad. 6 Yes shows interest. 7 Yes, humour puts anything in perspective. 8 No, being natural helps understanding. 9 Yes, only for well-balanced friends; spite's the wrong reason. 10 No, anyone can do that alone. 11 No, monotony kills love. 12 No, independence is healthy. 13 Yes wins you respect. 14 No shows mutual consideration. 15 No, devotion is the path to boredom.

Score two for each correct answer and see how you rate.

28-30: Whether you know it or not, you're potentially a great lover... or you're so bloody shrewd you need watching.

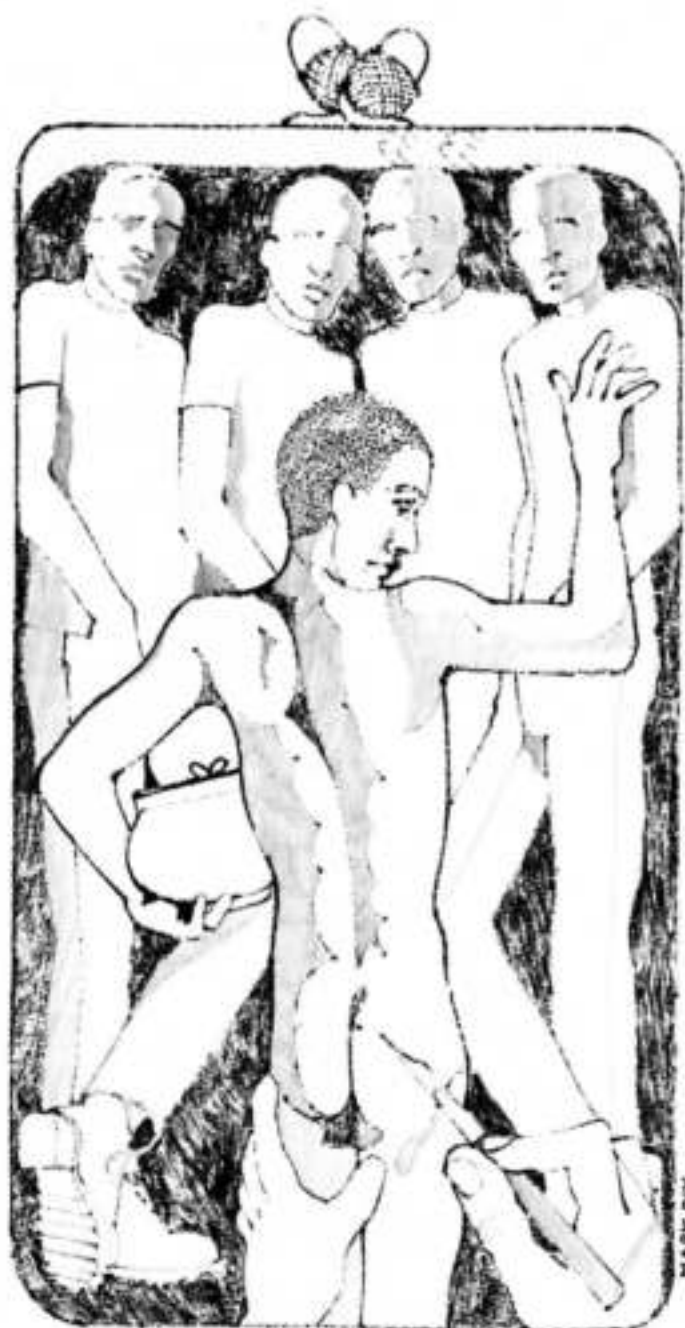
20-26: You're a pretty good lover, and lovable too. But you still need to learn how your partner's interests come first every time.

4-18: You don't really know what friendships are made of, least of all love. Stop thinking so much about yourself and start giving back what you enjoy being given.

0-2: That's shattered your ego! And don't dismiss this quiz as a load of rubbish - this page will be required reading for you from now on.

Skinhead

A short story by Paul Lewis.



The last train out of Victoria ambled over the Thames. Upstream, Battersea Bridge, dotted with fairy lights, ended in a glow of closing pleasure gardens. The train was full; passengers tried not to touch each other as they dozed, and when they pulled in at Battersea Park several had fallen asleep in heaps. Slammed doors and a mob of kids pounding up and down the platform woke them. Prim typists drew in their knees, covering them with more skirt, as the cherry boot boys slung themselves low in the opposite seats. Pointed, obscene comments flicked while the gum revolved at the mouthback. The targets looked hot and stared out the station gaslights. Silence settled. The train still didn't move. A hiccup jumped out of a throat and a whole typing-pool outing went off into a sharp shriek of laughter.

As the whistle was going two boys ran through the barrier, wrenched open a door and bundled in across another set of shrinking spinster knees. They wedged themselves in not quite opposite each other: a scrawny blond and a dark good looking boy with an op-art shirt that was supposed to make his chest look massive – but didn't because it was dirty. The blond boy hugged a handbag. It was the kind of bag tottery grannies swing themselves down the street with. The handles had gone but it had a painful looking clasp like two oversized acorns compressed together. Every time their eyes met over this they shook with unexploded laughter. The blond pretended to hide the bag under his jacket and folded his wrists over the swelling to look pregnant. Both boys kept their coat sleeves pulled up to the elbows as though they were cooling burns. Their forearms had been shaved in patches and were illustrated with angry new tattoos. They had serpents and bluebirds in yellow, green, blue and red, all against a background of inflamed flesh, and the dark kid had 'Malco is Great' across his fist. Most of the passengers flinched from this evidence of an ordeal of male initiation. At Clapham Junction the boys jumped out.

Awaiting iron ball and pickaxe, a street of empty houses stood backing on to the far side of the common. They had been built for families with children, resident grandparents, visiting aunts, uncles and cousins, but all that was left of those ghosts was the odd trace of nursery wallpaper to show where later generations had peeled away. Families had got smaller, or poorer, the houses split into flats; strangers came and went and left a little less. Now the street was dead and all its lights were smashed. The boys walked along the middle of the road kicking a stone, the housefronts staring woefully at them. At the end of the street they turned into a garden of rank weeds growing behind a row of rusty spikes. As they scuffed it the leaf mould on the path released a sweet sour smell of things that had been buried for a long time. The house windows were blocked on the ground and first floors with broken boards and bits of newspaper. None of the rooms had any doors and the lurching stairs had no balustrade. Malco groped in his companion's handbag for a lighter, struck it and, in the yellow light, negotiated the holes in the treads.

'You there?' Malco called.

'What?'

'Not you. Them.'

A sudden noise like wood splintering startled them

and they jumped back. A seething cat with a knotted coat streaked past them screaming and went down into the bowels of the house to hunt rats.

'Cut that, Bastard!' Malco looked for something to shy at his pet.

As soon as he could breathe steadily he muttered, 'Bloody cat.'

'Where'r they?'

'Shut up whispering!' And then, in a firmer and louder voice, 'I'm going to bed. They're not coming tonight.'

Bobby's face froze as Malco turned toward the landing and the light touched a row of blokes at the stairhead, motionless, arms folded. There were more at the bottom.

'Did you get anything?' said one. He had the same uniform of boots and jeans with thin braces and shirt sleeves neatly rolled to mid-bicep, but, as he appeared to be the leader, Malco gave a feathery laugh that sounded like a gasp in the stairwell throat of the building.

'I said, did you get anything?' asked another speaker, this time from the lower landing.

'Here, which of you...?'

'Answer me,' said a third calmly with no suggestion of command.

'Yeh. 'Course. 'Course we got it.'

'It?' queried the first speaker, looking over his head.

'Bobby's got it. Show him, Bobby!'

Bobby eagerly held the bag aloft, but when there was no response he lowered it again.

'What's that supposed to be?'

'It.'

'Thought you were going to rob a bank.'

'We did, we did! Honest. Go on, take it?' Malco snatched the bag from Bobby and offered it to the row on the upper landing. Not one pair of arms unfolded. The only animation that showed in the eyes at either end of the flight was the flicker of the lighter, now dancing tremulously.

'Well?' The lighter was getting hot. Malco shut it for a few seconds. A car passed, filling the rotten house with light. Bobby swallowed audibly.

Malco snapped the flame back into being.

'What more do you want?'

'You haven't proved anything, yet.'

'We got these, ain't we?' Bobby burst into speech, extending his patterned forearms as a plea.

'Take them upstairs.'

The ranks closed in. Malco was stiff with fright but managed to strike some sort of pose and walked up the stairs. Bobby turned and tried to do a bunk. Malco didn't even turn as he heard the result. He at least preserved the dignity of being able to walk into the room where his friend was dragged and dumped.

Cycle lamps had been placed in the corners and when Bobby had stopped convulsing and was beginning to unwind under the disinterested gaze of the guards lounging at the door, the order was given for the captives to strip. Malco hesitated for a second, but seeing one of the gang change his stance, as though about to step forward, began to take off his clothes as slowly as he could without giving anger or showing that his hands were shaking. The eyes watched, dispassionately. He had no tie, so couldn't stall for time there. He had got a vest, but decided that had better come off early as he would look ridiculous in a vest and no trousers. He was bending down to undo his laces

when a command forced him to leave his shoes on. Escape was an impossible dream anyway, and to run naked into the night almost laughable; but with his trousers round his ankles he lost his bid for dignity. Someone chuckled but was silenced by his colleagues.

'And your pants.'

Malco's thin diaphragm was trembling very slightly as he forced his rib cage to expand and contract evenly. He was in the middle of the room surrounded by twelve anonymous and apparently casual observers – and one friend who was feigning unconsciousness on the floor. He put his hands to his sides, swiftly pushed his pants down to his ankles and straightened up again. Having done this much he felt he could afford a defiant stare.

In a bored way the assembly removed its eyes from Malco to Bobby.

'Take 'em off!'

Bobby was rigid and breathing hard; his eyes were clenched shut.

'Get 'em off him.'

The ensuring scene embarrassed Malco more than his own stripping. They didn't waste time lingering over their victim; merely pinned the struggling and begging Bobby face down, tore his jacket off and cut up the back of his shirt. His trousers and pants were rolled tight round his ankles and someone managed, by pinching his nose, to stuff a handkerchief into his mouth and gag him. Two moved to hold Malco but, for the first time, an individual emerged from the group.

'Don't touch him!'

They fell back as he approached Malco and took out a thin, sharp pointed object. Malco was bewildered to see that it was a pen.

'Cool, aren't you? Turn round,' he said, very softly. Malco shuffled round and held himself for whatever was to be inflicted. The boy knelt behind him and gripped Malco's trembling thigh with his left hand.

'Bluebird?'

'Uh?'

'I asked you, bluebird?'

Unable to understand, Malco tried to play safe. 'If you say so.' He despised the way his voice shook in that intense, silent room. He tried not to see the faces around him.

'Bluebird it is.' The speaker jabbed the point of the pen into the right buttock and quickly lifted his hand to Malco's hip to hold him as he tensed.

'Steady. You'll muck up my pattern.'

No sound escaped Malco as the pattern was pricked out. He kept his mind on what worse thing might follow. But, suddenly, it was finished. The tattooist hit him hard across the bum with the back of his hand.

'Pull your pants up. You're indecent.'

Malco obeyed.

'What about the other one?' someone asked. Bobby was in a genuine faint now and they ungagged him for fear of suffocation.

'Leave him.'

'Let's biro him!'

'I said leave him!'

The tattooist picked up the handbag, opened it and scattered the contents, about ten one pound notes, over Bobby's body.

'Catch!' he said to Malco as they left. 'Big boy.'

films



coming shortly...

"The Damned", Luchino Visconti's latest film, probes the German soul on the eve of Nazi power. Dirk Bogarde, Ingrid Thulin, Helmut Griem, Helmut Berger, Charlotte Raming and Florinda Bolkan head the cast of the Pegaso-Praesidens production. The film is in Technicolor and widescreen and is released through Warner-Pathé.

"Modern as tomorrow, as harrowing as nuclear energy, and yet as thoughtful and romantic and amusing as spring in Paris" is how the handout describes Warner Brothers-Seven Arts' "The Madwoman of Chaillot" - "an entertainment of extraordinary proportions, with a universal appeal probably unsurpassed in modern motion picture history." Don't be put off - Katharine Hepburn can't be bad and Richard Chamberlain tries hard. Derived from the French stage classic by Jean Giraudoux, the final shooting script was by Bryan Forbes.





▲ "Justine" was produced by Pandro S. Berman and directed by George Cukor in Panavision and DeLuxe Colour. It stars Anouk Aimée in the title role, and Dirk Bogarde, Robert Forster, Philippe Noiret, Michael York and Anna Karina, and was adapted for the screen by Lawrence Marcus. The drag dance in the Alexandrian cabaret sequence may not be up to London standards, but it's better than anything the cinema circuits have seen for some time.

The critics have not been kind to "Staircase". But by Hollywood standards 20th-Century Fox were brave to take it on — and if Stanley Donen's methods of direction fall short his motives for production deserve support. Perhaps the next big film treatment of a homosexual theme will succeed in more than box office terms. And Burton and Harrison act superbly, of course. ►



"The Madwoman of Chaillot"



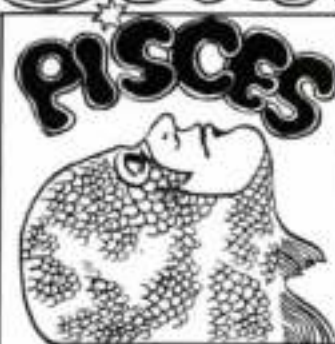
"Staircase"



STAR GAZE



AQUARIUS
(21st January - 19th February)
A run of lively luck over the last month will continue and will influence your personal relationships. Special friends could prove a trial towards the end of the month. There are plenty of other cookies to crumble so why not start now?



PISCES
(20th February - 20th March)
Good opening (financial) for you this month linked with favourable signs for some new kind of contact. Don't let this excitement blind you to the main chance though. And don't waste your money on things you can get for free.



ARIES
(21st March - 20th April)
Expect a letter from across the Channel which could have a great effect on your life in this, and following months. It could mean a stimulating link up with a person you never expected to come. A mixing of business and pleasure will work well for you.



TAURUS
(21st April - 21st May)
Taurians open this month with friction and you may be left with a nasty taste in your mouth. It's neither one thing or the other, they might say its non-specific. In many ways a month of ups and downs, more down than up.



GEMINI
(22nd May - 21st June)
A very lucky month where everything comes up to expectation. Make the best of it, but don't go to excesses. Just take it as it comes. Don't go looking for it. Who knows? Maybe the heavenly twins will be really bountiful.



CANCER
(22nd June - 22nd July)
A long difficult period is on the wane. Things are perking up. So stop looking down. Everything's coming up roses - lucky old rose. Try a new approach to things; wear your heart on your sleeve and don't hide the things that you feel.



LEO
(23rd July - 23rd August)
Don't wallow in tears and self-pity just because things aren't going exactly the way you want this month. Try a little more control and close friends will rally round your flag, boy. Shoot hard from the hip. Hold yourself erect, and aim straight.



VIRGO
(24th August - 23rd September)
You seem to be heading for a tumble, though maybe only a small one. You will certainly annoy people by your indecision. For goodness sake, act. Stop sitting on the fence. It's damned uncomfortable and very dangerous.



LIBRA
(24th September - 23rd October)
Even though all round you seem droopy you still burst with vitality and energy. Use this to help your tired and floppy friends and be ever willing to extend yourself to others' troubles. Try some new positions and get a fresh angle.



SCORPIO
(24th October - 23rd November)
A bumpity love affair will continue to bother you, slow it all down a bit, play it cool and you'll find things going your way much more. Some of the trouble may well be of your causing; don't get too cock-sure and wreck things completely.



SAGITTARIUS
(23rd November - 21st December)
All stops out this month, all signs say go. Trade should be good and this will make you feel cock-a-hoop. Towards the end of the month travel will dissipate this feeling. Not to worry. Have boots, will travel and see who else is travelling.



CAPRICORN
(22nd December - 20th January)
Broken rings signify some kind of rupture. Perhaps you've been thinking too big. But the worst of scars can heal. Once the harm is done there's no point in sobbing over spilt emotion. Try and lick it up and see what happens.

gay guide

The London gay scene is extraordinary in its dullness, boorishness, witlessness and total cliqueishness. The number of gay clubs in London is diminishing as public recognition of homosexuality grows and the state of the few remaining clubs goes, in general, from bad to worse. Obviously it is possible to draw some conclusions from law changes and the increasing acceptance of homosexuals, but the main thing that has come out of it all is the lack of gay places to go to. And if somewhere new does open its doors it is snapped up by a bisexual-to-normal crowd, the poove-followers for whom queerness is still trendy. And what clubs do we have that are worth a visit? Too damned few. Why? Because gay clubs seem to go through a singularly cannibalistic process of feeding off each other and then rising phoenix-like from each others' ashes - to mix a metaphor. Take the case of "Le Duce" in D'Arby Street, Soho, now in its fifth glorious year and third management. It sprang from the dying loins of "The Lounge", for when "the Lounge" closed down most of the staff and management reappeared as "Le Duce". The other most notable example of this regeneration is Kensington High Street's late night discotheque, "Yours or Mine". It opened this year just before the final door-closing of "By Appointment" and, once again, same staff, same crowd. A case of "All-change, no-change". "The Lounge" and "Le Duce" were clubs proper. "By Appointment" and "Yours or Mine" which unlike the first two were licensed, worked on club lines but without club memberships and, as long as you had the cash, you were in. It's interesting to note that the new proprietors of "Le Duce" have started to run it on these lines too - though just how well this will work for what is basically a gay teenybopper scene it's difficult to imagine. Of course, when looking for a club or disco to go to you have to be very aware of exactly what clique you belong in and, if you're anything like this writer and don't fit comfortably into any, then you are firmly out in the cold. It is part of the whole gay set up that you have to run with at least one pack of hounds. "Le Duce" caters to the young set, has had varying fortunes, from being

THE club, to being the club NOT to go to, has been full of "pretties" and has been fixed full of junkies, and is, now, getting back its balance, its "pretties" and a lot of old members. What it offers is very specialised, a good juke box, uncheap cokes, almost always a distinctive and good atmosphere, a young, in-on-the-swing crowd: a bit like a gay "Marquee" and sometimes almost as many girls. It is certainly a stronghold of the new toleration and bisexuality. All sex is simpler with the young set - just a grind and not specifically a grind with a "bona homme" or a "dolly polone". A club like "Le Duce" mirrors new attitudes and the new morality more than any nude West End play or Avant Garde movie. "Yours or Mine" is geared to a different, tighter and uptighter, scene altogether man. Here the ultimate is cool. Fashion. Poise. WHO YOU KNOW. Or even WHO was in YOUR boutique buying today. This is the trendy, dolly scene where the impression is that if any of the boys, or girls, have sex it's in front of their bedroom mirror - on their own. You can only call it a club, for the set that currently go to "Yours or Mine" are linked as in a club and will all flock off to the next disco as soon as it opens, leaving the wreckage behind. The staff are a bit like the members, and some of them - like the people they serve - were first noticed at "By Appointment". Everyone complements everyone else, discreetly, of course. Clothes differ just enough for you to know that there is more than one "in" fashion centre in London and personalities are tightly, but differently, styled in their own limited range. See or be seen. Certainly celebrity spotters can recognise the odd face with its attendant hangers on. The model from the with-it ad., the small-time pop star, the odd television superhero. And the average person? Well, stock up with lolly, dress up with care, and please, please, don't forget that oh, so indifferent mask. Without that you're completely lost. If you don't get in, and these days they've become very discriminating, don't worry too much. Nibble a sour grape and think of the high cost of drinks and that terrible pace to keep up. This crowd is one of the saddest of them all. Where do the cliques stop? Is there a chance anywhere of finding a more friendly middle and old age? Sorry old dear, not a bit of it. The older sets are now, and ever will be, tighter bound up than any of the others. There are the steady drinkers, usually loathing women. And in another corner those without much money to lay out on a boy, a certain club type, tending to be a bit leary-beery and smacking of the

East End. Nearby are the - and this is the only way to describe them - piss-elegant: enough money, a decent flat and job, maybe even able to stretch to keeping a boy. But clannish, boy, clannish too. So, is there any hope? Only if queers mingle more with each other, break down the self imposed barriers in their own circles. Use their imaginations, demand larger, lively and better clubs. And refuse absolutely to put up, as they do now, with the mediocre simply because it's all there is. Encourage someone to open somewhere really worth going to. Quality and quantity may, then, walk hand in hand. Until then though... click, click, clique. —PETER BURTON—

tummies



We took our tummies this month to Inigo Jones (14 Garrick Street, WC2. 01-836 6456. Last orders 2.30 pm and midnight). It was so convenient to Covent Garden, but rather a dash to make the last orders after *The Trojans*. Somehow the smoked glass gives the decor away. It is intimate and it is comfortable, but the atmosphere is just a little too contrived. We all know the waiters are the prettiest in London, but the one we had seemed more anxious to dash home or out to an amorous appointment than to serve us properly. But then we were the last diners in the restaurant and insisted on enjoying our meal long after everyone else had gone, because the food was superb; the tinkling harpsichord was soon forgotten. Melon is not the most original of starters, but if you can't get a good melon in Covent Garden, where else can you go? Ours was ripe but beautifully fresh, and the avocado had the same fresh-from-the-market taste. We decided to take advantage too of the new season's mussels as an extra starter and the sauce presented an angelic new angle on the tired old *marinière* concoctions that too often assassinate the flavour of a shellfish which though humble is delicate. Elsewhere it might have been a mistake to follow that up with a selection of the sole in white wine sauce dishes - but none disappointed. Nor did the flinty *Pouilly Fuisse*. Exhausted by frozen

or canned vegetables served in the most exclusive establishments, our tummies were delightfully served by the crispy fried courgettes and the fresh cauliflower. Again the sauce was a masterpiece. Technicolour pudding trolleys are now, alas, the thing, so in our own private campaign for their abolition – may they roll no more – we decided to freshen up lightly with a couple of water ices. Our only reservation about the entire evening was the bill. We do like our vodka martinis before and our *Romeo and Juliets* afterwards, but just the same we were surprised to be presented with a check for over £11. We've decided in future months to steer Tummies clear of bumper-binge-special-night-out restaurants, delightful though establishments like *Inigo Jones* may be. All the other good food columns can tell you quite enough about them; they can afford de-luxe eating when someone else is picking up the check. But we insist on paying for ourselves and insist on discovering fresh food decently and cheaply cooked for your sakes – and our tummies. **David Weston**

poppers



DIANA ROSS & THE SUPREMES' new L.P. "Let The Sunshine In" has everything, yes everything. In fact, it's a complete do-it-yourself crying kit, especially if you have the problems I have. "I'm Living In Shame" is my favourite track off the L.P. I don't know, fancy singing about it. I mean, we all are, but singing about it? Super L.P. and well worth listening to. This new big, butch film "The Wild Bunch" features a tune sung by some Mexican peasants. It turns out to be SOLOMON BURKE's "She Wears My Ring" and in my opinion a nicer version you would never hope to hear. So let's hope that they release it as a single. He's a funny man, clever, a writer, bursting with personality, kind and generous, but frustrated with a talent he so wants to have recognised – as a writer of songs. I heard one of his songs, a Bossa Nova actually. I heard DUSTY SPRINGFIELD sing

it, and it was flowing with melody. So when is somebody going to give this poor man a chance? You will never guess who it is, the other side of a fool – SPIKE MILLIGAN. MICKEY MOST is going to produce NANCY SINATRA and "Highway Song" is the title of her first record. What a combination for a hit record, NANCY & MICKEY. I can't wait for the New Year to hear it. Watch out "Boots". COLIN PETERSEN – BEE GEE'S drummer is JOE LOSS's nephew. Not all the Irish are Navvies. 21 year old JONATHON KELLY who wrote



and sings "Denver" is far from navvified. He's certainly got a good start in life with Colin Petersen and his wife managing him. Can't be bad. ERIC CLAPTON, ace guitarist with BLIND FAITH, may marry his 18 year old girl friend. This means he will have LORD HARLECH as his father-in-law. How does that grab you, Royalist Lovers? Let's have a feature every month. You write to me and tell me who your favourite, most beautiful pop star or group is, and we'll publish a picture of the most requested one. When you write in, write BEAUTIFUL POP on the back of the envelope. Damn – there's very little ink left in my pen. Still who knows, this could be the start of a beautiful friendship with you all. Take care.

Count Bosie

jet away



"Come worthy Greek, Ulysses come Possess these shores with me." Where in Europe can you find those virgin sands, sun-drenched beaches with no trace of oil, clear skies, blue-green seas and the peace and quiet for which you long but which only seem to exist in far off Jamaica? The answer is the Ionian Sea, the 'instep' of Italy, between Crotone and Taranto. But, be advised: if you wish to enjoy this garden of earthly delights, move rapidly! In five or ten years time, this as yet undiscovered haven will have been transformed by property and land speculators. Mile after mile of now deserted beach will be swamped by Lidos blaring out exhausting music, and by typists and schoolmasters on package deals, who, content with chicken and chips in cheap, modern hotels, will burn beneath their ambre solaire and the beauty of the coast will be lost forever. A car is essential and can be hired in advance. A Dormobile would be even better, for places to stay are few and far between. The hotels which have preserved so many tourists from bugs of various sorts and given them air conditioning and hot baths, do not yet adorn the Ionian sea. Simply park the vehicle beneath a palm tree, tread warily over a rough stretch of uncultivated soil avoiding cactus plants which sting, across the single line railway track, down a dried up river bed and you are alone on the beach. In the distance is an off-shore fishing boat whose crew are oblivious of your presence. There is nothing to stop you throwing off all your clothes and bathing totally naked – a luxurious experience (be careful not to peel in the wrong places). Occasionally lorries stop along the roadside and the drivers and their mates, following your example, come for a quick, cooling bathe in the sea. More modestly they wear bathing trunks, but will not object to your nakedness should you desire to start up a conversation. Any suspicions they may have had about you will soon be dispelled, and they are often full of excellent information about the

neighbourhood and its relaxations. Or should you be near a larger town, University students, most of whom are eager to practise their skill in the use of the English tongue with you, are in evidence during the summer vacation. Long hair is recommended. Way off the beaten tourist track, such eccentricities do attract attention. If you are with friends, you will be mistaken for a pop group by the avant-garde youth, or for Jesus and his disciples by the pious. It is one way of striking up an acquaintance. History and Culture are not entirely lacking. This was the area of Magna Graecia, a colony of ancient Greece, where some of the customs of that great civilization are still revered. Inland is Matera where, until the last war, the population lived in caves. These 'sassi' may be visited with interest. Local boys are willing to act as guides. Do not be disturbed if you see the first and fourth fingers of one hand extended – the sign against the Evil Eye – it may not be directed against you particularly, and anyway if you are wearing the camp holiday gear which many people affect as English Tourists abroad, you must expect to be looked upon with a keenness which would be untoward along the King's Road. One further word of advice. Southern Italians take friendship very seriously. Even a casual acquaintanceship is memorable to them. A friend of mine was asked by a waiter called Massimo if he would leave his gold watch behind as a memento of their meeting. Massimo offered a photograph of himself in exchange. Such a suggestion is quite normal, so go armed with superfluous passport photos, or jewellery from Carnaby Street. For food, try roast kid – *capretto ripieno*. Meat can be scarce but you will be fine if you like fish. Experiment with mussels in soup – *cozze alla marinara*. Indeed, unless you can't stick it, any fish is likely to be good. Don't be afraid to drink red wine with it. The vino nero of Taranto is particularly recommended. And if you do bathe in the lagoon near the naval base, beware of jelly fish and small octopus in the rock shallows.

The air fare 2nd class return London-Rome is £58/3/0 if you stay in Italy longer than six days; if less, £74/10/0. Night flights are £42/16/0. Flights to Taranto leave Rome daily at 0915 and 2055, returning 0700 and 1825 hours. £21/4/0 2nd class return; to Crotone from Rome, Monday to Friday at 2030 and Crotone-Rome, Tuesday to Saturday 0720. £19/4/0.

John Greenhalgh.

focus on voices

Looking at the distaff side of the entertainment world you notice that while every nation produces its quota of actresses, singers, dancers, comedienne and so forth, yet certain nationalities will discover a type (within one of these categories), the particular qualities of which are seldom found outside that country. France, for example, has always been renowned for the chanteuse whose heart is apparently in her (often, not-too-strong) voice, whilst Russia is the specialist in ballerinas of a particularly rapturous line and whole-hearted attack. America, of course, is responsible for the blockbusting musical-comedy star par excellence, whose inimitable magic can never be duplicated by denizens (however admirable) of other countries, whether English-speaking or not. And England? Well, our actresses have always had an enviable reputation abroad, whether in places with national theatres and classic traditions of acting, such as France, or in younger nations like the United States, where Stars have always been thicker on the ground than Actresses. But, taking our theatre ladies for granted, perhaps the particular genre found only here (the British Speciality, as it were) is that small band of actresses each of whose distinctive vocal style is combined with a remarkable comedic attack to make their every appearance, or broadcast, a notable occasion. Usually to be found in high-comedy, their oral dexterity has an audience holding its breath for every utterance. Each of these players has an unusual ability to make very line seem new-minted, whether the author be Pinero, Coward or Shakespeare, or else to create something special out of nebulous material – like **Hermoine Gingold** who is the living proof that *It's Not What You Say, It's The Way That You Say It*. Miss Gingold is probably the doyen of our select group, one or two of whom turn up in every decade, and Miss Smith, the current president. Incidentally, it's interesting to note that these two artists, and most of the others in this survey had (except Mesdames Hammond and Greenwood – and even Joan once played a while in *Rise Above It*) early training in, or made a considerable stir via Intimate Revue, a medium (like radio) ideal for developing vocal range and nuance. The manner in which their hands seem to have an almost electric affinity with their voices – the vocal rise and fall startlingly coalesced

with very personal gestures – is another point in common. When I first started regular theatregoing, the ravishing **Kay Hammond** with her rolling plum-under-the-tongue drawl, was chief practitioner of this comic vocal imagery; she had already created two characters that (like Edith Evans' Lady Bracknell) will always have her shadow across them – Diana Lake in *French Without Tears*, and the ghostly Elvira in *Blithe Spirit*, and was currently playing opposite John Clements (whom she later married) in a revival of another Coward piece, *Private Lives*. As Amanda, she was (for me) the only possible replacement for Gertrude Lawrence in this mercurial role. I can still hear the ice clinking in her observation (on hearing that her ex-husband met his second wife in Norfolk), "very flat, Norfolk". Later she moved on to a whole series of Restoration and Georgian revivals – *Marriage A La Mode*, *The Beau's Stratagem*, *The Rivals* (did ever a Lydia, Languish so?), and *The Way of The World*; her Millamant in the latter (a part she seemed destined for), was not so well received as it deserved, but I found it worth the price of admission to hear her drawling dismissal of exercise: "Walking? I nauseate walking! 'Tis a country diversion; I loathe the country and everything that relates to it!"

Joan Greenwood was the next to appear, although her gurgling baritone (rather like hearing thunder through velvet) and chimerical persona only asserted themselves after she had established herself on stage and screen as a sensitive dramatic actress. It is difficult to associate the Greenwood with whom we are familiar, with such earlier stage roles as Wendy to Barbara Mullen's *Peter Pan*, Ellie Dunn (succeeding Deborah Kerr) in *Heartbreak House*, or the corrupt heroine of *Frenzy*; not to mention such unfortunates as that shy A.T.S. recruit in *The Gentle Sex*, a dumb wife in *Girl in A Million* or the pathetic Sophie Dorothea of *Saraband For Dead Lovers*, all of whom turned up among her regular screen appearances of the late Forties.

It was in 1949, as the feather-brained Sabrina in *Young Wives Tale*, that the star personality we know today finally emerged and that husky voice really came into its own. In the twenty years since, her humorous sway has been brought to bear on a whole series of enchanting comedy roles, including Gwendoline (to Dame Edith's mama) in *The Importance of Being Earnest*, the wicked Sybilla in *Kind Hearts and Coronets* (a stylish performance that went unnoticed in the flurry over Guinness's eight roles), and Lady

Bellaston in *Tom Jones*, all for the cinema. The theatre has seen her in *Bell, Book and Candle* (A Lady definitely For Burning), a mockingly fey Peter Pan, and a pair of Hugh Williams's comedies: only occasionally have there been forays into a more serious vein, notably Helena in the first Chichester *Uncle Vanya*, and her remarkable *Hedda Gabler*, both in Oxford and London, where her bitter humour was the perfect counterpoint to the icily enigmatic mood of the role, and served to remind audiences that while cheering a bubbling comedienne over the years, they sometimes lost sight of the dramatic actress.

It was in the early Fifties, in a series of revues and minor musicals that were seldom able to keep a foothold in the West End, that **Fenella Fielding** first came to the notice of fanciers of the fantastic. She began to feel she was getting nowhere (after receiving rave notices for her part in *Jubilee Girl*, which was panned and expired after a few days tenancy of the Victoria Palace) and was only prevented from giving up the business altogether by Sandy Wilson. He cast her as that predatory ancient Lady Parvula de Panzoust, leching after the local yokels in *Valmouth*. This musical (based on the Firbank novel), with its outrageous mixture of sex and religion, was far too ahead of its time to find favour with the general public, but it produced a band of disciples who saw it repeatedly during its limited season at the Lyric Hammersmith, and it finally put the Fielding star in ascendant, as a lady with a special niche of her own. Who else, either then or since (unless, perhaps, Mae West), could have delivered the songs ("But sailors can be rather wearing. And the stoker, I recall, was quite unsparing") or dialogue ("Oh, that wretched shepherd - I could spank the white walls of his cottage") with such stylish inuendo? There followed various revues, films and plays, all successful but none of them especially *personal* to her in the manner of *Valmouth*, and most of them depending on the rousades of the Fielding voice to make their effect. The only outstanding item was the hilarious *So Much To Remember* (of which she was part author), a splendid spoof of the typical Actress Autobiography, but again this proved too specialised a mockery for the public of that (1963) day. At one time she seemed in danger of becoming the victim of her own extravagant personality, but her performance in the long-running *Let's Get a Divorce* finally got this into perspective with the rest of her talents. Recently she had been bringing her swooping tones to bear on a series of dramatic

roles - Arkadina in *The Sea Gull*, Henry James's *The High Bid* and *Hedda Gabler* in the theatre, *Hedda* again, *The Liars* and *Beatrice* on radio. Fenella Fielding starred opposite Kenneth Williams in *Pieces of Eight*, and several films and **Maggie Smith** has co-starred with him too



on a number of occasions. At one time she might, vocally, have been taken for his blood relation. She was playing in the London equivalent of an off-Broadway revue when the American producer Leonard Stillman picked her for his *New Faces of 1956* and off she sped to New York. On her return she went into the revue *Share My Lettuce* with Williams, then joined the Old Vic to play Lady Plyant in *The Double Dealer*, Maggie in *What Every Woman Knows*, and a sardonic Celia to Barbara Jefford's Rosalind. She followed this with the (for her) unusual role of the ingenue in *The Rehearsal* with Alan Badel and Robert Hardy, and remained in Shaftsbury Avenue to establish herself as a brilliant comedienne (and brand her depreciating, Williamslike nasality on audiences) in *The Private Eye And The Public Ear* (again opposite Williams), and *Mary Mary*, for both of which she received awards. She then joined the newly formed National Theatre for more comedy successes in *The*

Recruiting Officer, *Hay Fever*, *Black Comedy*, *Trelawney of The Wells* and *Much Ado*, and consolidated her dramatic status in *Miss Julie*, *The Master Builder* and the Olivier *Othello*.

Her earlier films (a minor thriller with George Nader: *The V.I.P.'s*; that *Volpone* rehash with Rex Harrison) did nothing to promote her as a screen personality, but *Hot Millions*, when she played the accident-prone secretary to Ustinov, changed all that, and *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* has cemented her film future. Here, the Smith delivery cloaked in Edinburghese, combined with those convoluting hands, is used to devastating effect, whether exhorting her pupils to walk with their heads up "like Sybil Thorndike, a woman of noble mien", or graciously depreciating her principal's taste—"Chrysanthemums, Mm—such a serviceable flower I always think!"

The latest entrant to this Witchery-With-Words ensemble is **Patricia Routledge**, currently swooning with apprehension as Mrs Posket in *The Magistrate*. Like Fenella Fielding, she spent the early years of her London career in short-lived British musicals. I first saw her as one of the squawking visitors to Beerbohm's Oxford in the enchanting but ill-fated *Zuleika*, and she was also to be found in *The Duenna*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *The Love Doctor* (Molière with Music), and *Follow That Girl*, none of which were noted for their longevity. She finally made her mark in *Little Mary Sunshine*, that riotous yet affectionate pastiche of *Rose-Marietype* operettas, where her acid-etched coyness was more Arch than the Admiralty. The show (again) did not run, but it did spawn a regiment of Routledge partisans who were on hand for her next appearance, as Berinthia in *Virtue in Danger* (a musical version of *The Relapse*), which opened at the Mermaid and came briefly to rest at the Strand. Then came *How's The World Treating You*, another transfer, this time from Hampstead to Wyndhams; this was her first London showing in a non-musical, and she also played her three roles therein when the play was staged in New York. This led to a second Broadway showing, in yet another short-lived musical and another round of huzzas for her performance in it, not to mention a Tony Award. However, the recent Chichester Festival has got her in front of bigger audiences than any of her London work has done, and with the subsequent transfer of *The Magistrate* to the Cambridge, the inevitable Routledge Hit Performance is deservedly gracing a Hit Play.

Jonathan Miles

T&T



Isn't it frustrating looking for a week-end cottage? We know 'cos we've been trying for years. The other Sunday we donned our tweeds and brogues, leaped into the Landrover and zoomed out of London. We have to report that the cottage situation in the Home Counties is dire. But our time was not completely wasted for at lunchtime we came upon a charming wayside inn, The Plater's Arms at Cocking Green. After mingling in the tap room with ruddy farm hands and sweaty land girls we made for the dining room which we found tastefully adorned with horse brasses. The traditional English dishes were superb and we found the set lunch - game soup, cottage pie and queen of puddings - very satisfying. Still on the subject of food we should like to recommend Robert Carrion's super new bistro in Clapham called 'La Chapelle'. Lady Davida Manhattan, well-known socialite interior decorator, has pulled off a stunning conversion job in a disused Wesleyan chapel which cleverly retains the stark simplicity of the non-conformist atmosphere. Handsome young waiters in mini cassocks silently glide between the eighteenth century box pews arranged into intimate alcove clusters. The hymn-board menus and the bill

discreetly delivered on a collection plate add to the unique charm of London's latest trendeatery, as does the sumptuous Holy Cold Table. And if you still have the energy the Common is near at hand for a post-prandial stroll. Carry on Carrion! Isn't it time some-one had a bitch about the repellent Sunday columnist who churns out every week that nauseating anti-'queer' slime which oozes through the sewers of the gutter press into the sink-like minds of his admiring readers? What crippled mentality, we wonder, lurks behind the progenitor of this filth? Start making wax models, girls, and get out your hat-pins.

It's goodbye to carmen rollers, farewell to horrid hairnets and beastly blow-machines and all the other twice-weekly rituals of the 'riah wash'. Why? Because the 'skinhead look' is definitely in. After several nasty moments with the nail scissors, we took a friend's tip and trolled off to East Ham. There we found Alfie, a real dish, who Delilah-like gave us a good cropping - all for three and six - and friction too!

Did you enjoy Gay Fawkes? We did. We invited all our friends round and had a fabulous display on our patio. The Guy was surrounded by glowing faggots. We had lots of fun with the Roman Candles, but one of our guests was a little too cocksure with a rocket and nearly put himself into orbit.

Treats in store... The annual Leather Goods Exhibition at Earl's Court.

Mary Citroen's soon to be published novel, 'The Queen Must Live' transports the story of Tiberius to present-day Capri. The plot concerns an ageing film mogul who consoles himself for his lost empire by plunging headlong into desperate debauches with the local fisherboys.

Coming to your cinema soon - 'Mission Uranus', gripping story of an eternal triangle in outer space. The exciting new 'COME ON' range of male cosmetics by Monsieur Boot should be available at your chemists by Christmas. We were fortunate enough to be sent a sample of 'COME ON' Nite Kreem and have to report that it's sheer fantasia.

For the first time in this country...



Mayfair Films present at the Sapphire Theatre, 113 Wardour Street, W.1, a selection of gay American and Continental feature films commencing Friday, Saturday and Sunday 28th, 29th, 30th November. Thereafter on Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday evenings each week. Two shows nightly, 8 pm and 10 pm. Doors open 7.30 pm.

For details and membership apply Mayfair Films Ltd, 21 Kent House, 87 Regent Street, W.1. Phone 01-GER-1177, or from Sapphire Theatre at times of performances.

Knickerbocker Glory the inside story



Knickers used to be a very dirty word. The mere mention of them sent schoolchildren into embarrassed titters. And Workers' Playtime audiences on the radio went into helpless convulsions whenever a comic dared to make mention of that particular garment.

Bottoms were also considered rather rude things, and as for any other part of the male or female anatomy, generally referred to as "private parts", these were strictly matters of very personal concern or best left to biology books and teachers.

Permissive attitudes have in recent years released all these things from bondage. Bottoms are pretty commonplace on the cinema and TV screens, we have even had a film exclusively about them – over 300 varieties, in fact – and in this mini-skirted age knickers are strictly for showing. Even male underwear has come in for the style treatment. And about time, too. Mummy's advice to us as children was always to make sure our knickers were clean – just in case we got knocked down and had an accident. But perhaps what we most feared about the casualty ward scene the other end was the cruel exposure of our passion-killer drawers. Scarcely the way to win friends and influence people. In fact many a romance has been killed stone dead in the bedroom on sight of abominations in the way of underwear.

So with trousers coming off much more for public and private entertainment it's not surprising that most self-respecting guys have gone big on sexy pants.

Briefs have got briefer and colour and pattern abounds. You can have soft silks, cool cottons and natty nylon – the new undercover agents that most chaps are proud to be seen in. Advertising aims to entice with a sexual psychology. Maybe you, too, can get ahead with a change of drawers? Don't let passionate breath be the only thing that comes in short pants.

Rodney Bennett-England



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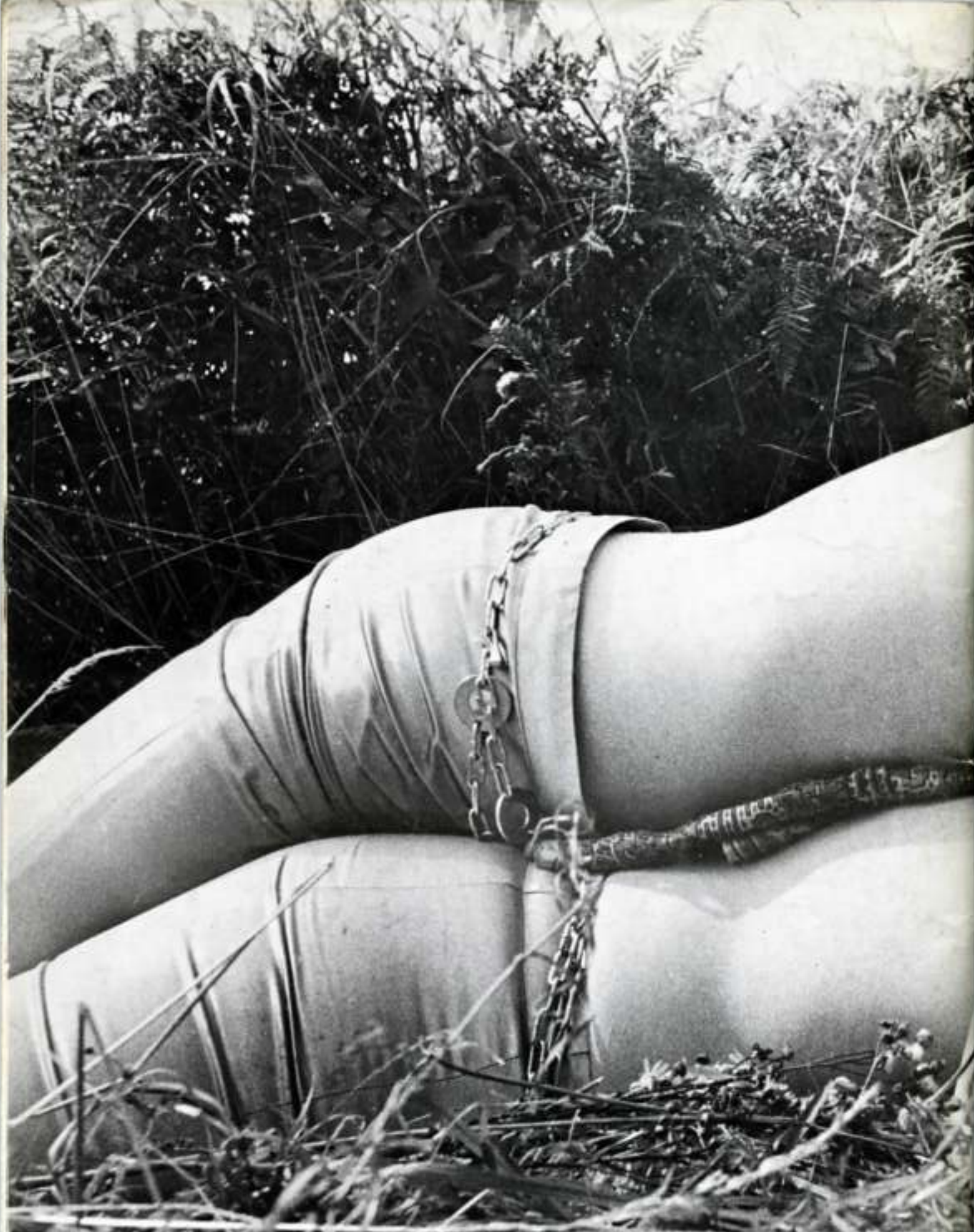
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