



*The Upstairs Studio Theatre in the Market Theatre complex. This theatre seats up to 152 people, and can be changed into any format or shape.*

auditorium layout. Both the stage and seating rostra can be broken up and moved around according to the requirements of various productions. Most of the productions mounted in the upstairs theatre, involve two basic layouts however. Either an end stage format with the stage raised to 90cm at one end of the auditorium with all seats facing the front of the stage in the manner of a proscenium arch format. This format is employed when a production requires considerable solid scenery. The other layout typically used 'upstairs at The Market Theatre' is an arena format with the

stage at floor level. As with the main auditorium, there are no flying facilities. The upstairs theatre, when arranged as described above, seats a maximum of 152. Its lighting is controlled by a 48 way Tempus M24 memory board with 100% patching facility (48 2½kw Tempus dimmers) to 50 outlets on the grid. The Tempus M24 memory board and its backup F.X. unit are both totally portable, making rigging and plotting in the auditorium more convenient and time-saving. The sound system consists of a Revox B77 reel to reel tape recorder, an amp. rack consisting of an octave equaliser,

a 4 way Mic/Line mixer and a mono 2 Channel 100 watt amplifier with 4 Electro-voice 50 watt Monitor speakers.

The Laager is the experimental venue of The Market Theatre complex, which again uses predominantly 'end stage' or arena formats. Its lighting facilities consist of a 12 way 2 pre-set manual dimmer board, with 24 outlets on the grid and its sound system is made up of a Teac Tape recorder reel to reel, a 50 watt Peavey mono amplifier and 2 Peavey speakers (50 watts). The Laager seats between 65 and 85 people, depending on the production and its layout.

The Market Theatre is in many ways an idealistic enterprise, surviving against all financial and political odds in a country where many still find the idea of multi-racial theatre a threat. Manim and Simon have survived such bigotry and the censor board meetings which are its bureaucratic manifestation, and continue to succeed despite, or perhaps because of, adversity. Their theatre has won 22 local theatrical awards so far and increased its box office by nearly 50% since 1982. This recent increase in popularity and profits will, says Manim, allow the Market to subsidise more experimental work in the Upstairs theatre and in the Laager, especially since Johannesburg Council has allowed the theatre a concessionary 'pepper corn' rent on the Market premises.

Production plans for the future include *Othello*, especially if Janet Suzman (an honourary patron of the Market) can play Desdemona. Generally however, Manim and Simon want "to concentrate on the work we do best, and are best known for, and enjoy the most." It appears then, that Britain can look forward to more exports from what has been called with some justification "the only truly national South African Theatre", which serves as a splendid example of successful independent theatre and as a fascinating barometer of the progressive changes initiated by theatre in South Africa.

*The author wishes to thank Mr Mannie Manim, the Managing Trustee & Director, and Mr Wesley France, Production Manager, for their assistance & technical information.*



*The Laager Experimental Theatre is the smallest theatre in the complex. It is an experimental venue, that has a flexible stage and seating arrangement, and seats a maximum of 80 people.*



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