

■ The audience for the musical, *The Gates of Paradise* (1, 2, 3, 4) sits on the huge revolve of the mainstage of the Wielki and rotates periodically, following the action on stage.

● *Le public de la pièce de théâtre musicale The Gates of Paradise (1, 2, 3, 4) était assis sur un gigantesque plateau de la scène principale du Wielki qui tournait périodiquement tout en suivant l'action de la pièce.*

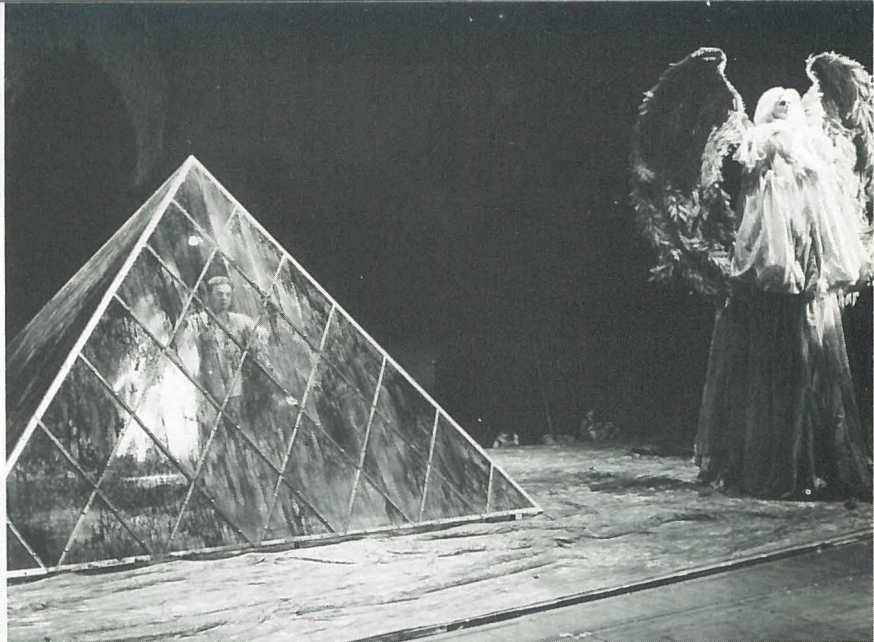
▼ In *The Gates of Paradise* (1, 2, 3, 4) sitzen die Zuschauer auf der Drehbühne des Theatres Wielki, die Zuschauer zum Ort der Handlung rotiert.

standing young dance students. The mass of children is composed of dancers and a Polish Scouts choir.

As the story unfolds, the revolve turns, as the wagon it is on moves forward and rearward through the extensions of both huge stages. At one point, it comes almost to the front curtain, which slowly rises to reveal the auditorium as a strange land of leaping flames. Through the smoke and tongues of red fire, the Knight Templar in full battle-dress rides a white horse down the center aisle up onto the mainstage, riding off with a naked young boy before him in the saddle. Later the front stage elevator rises to reveal the knight and the boy on its lower level. Another startling image is the boy inside a glass pyramid, rather like I. M. Pei's new Louvre construction. A large rose window also descends from the flies just behind the main curtain for another scene.

In staging this as musical theatre, Marek Grzesinski was inspired first by a famous documentary film about the gangs of homeless children who roamed the Soviet Union, after the Revolution had destroyed their families. Some marched south to sunny Odessa, hoping to find a promised land. Another image from modern times was the odyssey of the flower children to California in the 1960s. Only a bare stage with suggestions of time, place, and mood could work for *Paradise*, Grzesinski has said. But it was also a conscious decision, in line with his search for "a new theatrical space" that breaks the barrier between stage and audience.

GLENN LONEY



ZBIGNIEW FELIJSIAK

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JULIUSZ MULTARZYNSKI

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JULIUSZ MULTARZYNSKI

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