

YUGOSLAVIA/PRODUCTION

HEAVENLY PERFORMANCE

When performance artist/director/designer Ping Chong decorated the stage of the theatres in Belgrade and Skopje, Yugoslavia this past September during his European tour, the critics credited his magical images to more than the workings of up-to-the-minute stage technology. While he makes his art out of the elements of sound, light, settings, and movement common to all theatre, the results are attributed to a brilliant imagination.

Chong was in Yugoslavia performing *The Angels of Swedenborg*, a theatricalization of 18th-century philosopher Emanuel Swedenborg's visions of Heaven and Hell, realized in a combination of dance, theatre, music, and audio/visual elements.

In *Angels*, a 20th-century yuppie, entrapped by technology, dreams of Heaven and fulfillment. Most of the play is

devoted to his visions. Chong has filled his stage with his idea of Heaven — a wooden corral filled with clouds of hundreds of feathers which stir and float when disturbed. A pack of angels, looking as if they had escaped from a 14th-century Italian painting, dressed in warm pink-brown costumes with laced-up cummerbunds, full-sleeved blouses, and skirts, and wearing wings and sweet-faced masks, enact little celestial dramas, disturbed occasionally by the wily advances of a huge green reptilian devil. In the end, our protagonist leaves his electronic workshop for the feathery world.

The sights and sounds are designed by Blu (lighting), Jan Hartley (audio/visual design), Brian Hallas (sound engineer), Mel Carpenter (costumes), and Chong and John Fleming (direction and choreography).

Director/designer Ping Chong created his idea of Heaven in *Angels of Swedenborg*, — a wooden corral filled with hundreds of feathers, and angels wearing billowing shirts and skirts and sweet-faced masks. His devil is depicted as a huge green reptile. The show toured Yugoslavia this past September.



JOE M. JEFFCOAT

AUSTRALIA/SEMINAR

ISSUES IN DESIGN

As Australia continues to build world class performing arts spaces, builders, architects, designers, and users are learning that the key to a successful facility is proper planning. That was the topic of conversation at the seminar, "Theatre Spaces: Issues In Design," held on the campus of the Australian National University in Canberra on 16 June 1989.

Principal speakers included architect Roderick Ham, Sue Natrass, general manager of the Victorian Arts Centre Trust, and myself, theatre consultant George Thomas Howard.

"Designing User-Friendly Theatre Facilities," which I presented, outlined essentials of both the backstage and front-of-house facilities and how they are interrelated; the advantages of different sized spaces; the relationships between various activities within the theatre; and the use of manual, semi-automated, and fully automated stage

equipment.

Ham's presentation, "The Theatre Design Team — How Does It Work?," discussed the relationship between clients, users, architects, and consultants. Both my and Ham's presentations stressed the importance of communication from client or user to the architect and consultant. If you want windows in the dressing room, say so. If you do not want windows in the dressing rooms, again, say so.

Natrass' presentation, "Arts Centers and The Community — The Benefits and Costs," described the operation and operational problems associated with arts centers — various uses of the spaces within an arts centre and their funding possibilities; the benefits to a community; government funding; attracting traveling bookings.

Each presentation was followed by lively and very beneficial audience discussions.

GEORGE THOMAS HOWARD

UK/PROMOTION

ZERO 88 SENDS DINES TO NYC

Imagine the surprise of Rick Dines from the BBC Lighting Department when he learned that he will be spending a weekend in New York City as the winner of a Zero 88 drawing at the 1989 ABTT Trade Show last May. Zero 88 teamed up with Virgin Holidays to offer a Broadway Break Weekend for two as a special introductory promotion for Zero 88's new Beta collection of power packs. Dine's December 1989 weekend in New York will include tickets to a Broadway show. *Cue International* editor, Ellen Lampert, drew the winning ticket.